Adapting to Changes in Modern Content Management

How low-impact file migration can help your campus evolve

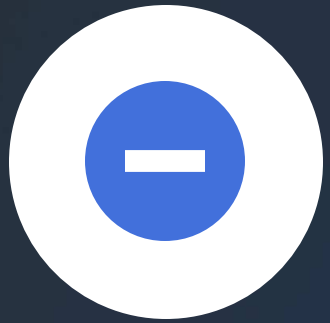
The world of content management is constantly evolving.

Vendors are regularly creating new platforms, upgrading old ones, and changing their pricing models – starting ripples of change in the ECM and collaboration market.

These ripples eventually reach higher ed institutions in the form of waves; as many learn that their existing content platforms are no longer meeting their technology or budgetary requirements, they often take on massive migration projects to transition to a new one.

But these large-scale migration initiatives can pose many risks and challenges for an institution, if not managed properly.

Common Migration Risks



Data loss

- Incomplete/failed file transfers
- Loss of file fidelity and document versions

Security

- Improperly managed file/folder permissions
- Loss of key classification metadata

Disruption

- Lack of change management
- Disruption to staff, students & campus operations

Risky Migration Business

Historically, the lack of productivity, reduced efficiency, and even motivational decline inside an organization were once considered to be inevitable, though temporary, side effects of large-scale migration to a new platform.

While most traditional migration methods will address the need to move content into a new system, they don't cover you for many of the risks we've outlined.

Custom Integration

Rudimentary Copy

Vendor Import Services

Traditional migrations have their drawbacks.

For a one-time migration, custom integration can be expensive in its own way. The consultants and developers behind the custom solution must understand the differences between the source and destination platforms regarding file properties, permissions structures, naming convention, versioning and more. **The costs to manage all of those friction points across systems can add up very quickly.**

Using a more low-tech solution such as a rudimentary copy can also have drawbacks. When an organization copies over their content, they are taking a “snapshot” of their files in their current state – any deltas that occur between copying the files and uploading them into the new system will not be carried over. Risks include losing previous document versions, file ownership, and other important artifacts. **These losses could disrupt campus operations while the transition to a new system takes place.**

Most cloud vendors do offer their own import services; however these are simply not designed to extract files from legacy ECM platforms. These services can suffer the **same drawbacks as custom integration and rudimentary copy jobs.**

But migrations are evolving, too.

Along with a change in the content management market has come a change in the world of file migration. Legacy migration approaches simply don't make sense while adopting modern platforms. While businesses are moving faster than ever, they can no longer afford to take on such risk and disruption during their transitions.

Now, organizations are looking for a seamless, low-impact migration so they can focus on their core business. And there are a few key components to a modern migration approach that can deliver what the traditional methods cannot: predictable outcomes, minimal disruption, and granular insight.

Three Pillars of Low-Impact Migrations

Pre-Migration Analysis

Continuous Copy

Validation Reporting

Pre-Migration Simulation & Analysis

Instead of doing a bulk lift-and-shift of content and dissecting the source platform or waiting for users to discover file transfer failures, data loss, or other issues, modern migration methods offer migration simulation and analysis capabilities. This enables organizations to perform a "dry run" of their migration, while the content migration tool identifies any possible errors or conflicts between the source and destination platforms, so they can be remediated before the content starts moving.

Key insights to be gleaned from migration simulation procedures that can vastly impact the quality and duration of your migration include:

- Files that will be ignored based on the parameters of the migration (file type, age, etc.)
- Files that require remediation for successful transfer (incompatible file names, size limit, etc.)
- Files that have been shared both internally, externally, and with whom
- Estimates on how long it will take to migrate the content

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Continuous Copy Migration

Traditional migrations, like the previously mentioned rudimentary copy method, often have a primary migration phase followed by one or more delta migration phases that can take days or even weeks to complete. This causes an increase in the amount of system downtime for the final delta in a cutover. Additionally, this creates frustration for end-users in cases where they may delete a file in the source system, experience a migration cutover, and then see that the file has reappeared on the destination system. This can occur because most migration methods do not propagate delete operations during delta migration phases.

In a continuous copy migration, a one-way synchronization will be created to replicate the source platform on the destination side so that users are able to continue working while the migration takes place. When it is time for a migration cutover, a very short downtime window allows the final bits to transfer from source to destination just before go-live. This also provides maintenance of full file fidelities such as permissions, versions, author information, and metadata, as well as providing comprehensive change detection and delete propagation.

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Reconciliation Processing & Validation Reporting

The highest hurdle at the end of any migration is addressing any reconciliation challenges. This includes identifying and handling content that has not yet successfully migrated and determining when the migration can be considered “done.”

Every migration should include validation reporting: an accounting of content on both the source system and the destination system. The goal is to identify all items in both systems and account for them, even if they are not all migrated. If done properly, there should be a “bottom line” comparison that factors in things like ignored items or items that already existed in the destination system in order to come up with matching numbers that prove the migration was successful.

Validation reports provide the evidence needed to prove to the migration team, project sponsors and auditors that the migration was successful – while also proving to end users that their data has been kept safe. Then, and only then, can the migration be considered “done.”

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Now, your organization can evolve too.

With modern migration methods that enable low-impact transitions to modern content management platforms, higher ed institutions can be much more agile with their content. Now that they can reduce the massive disruption, risk, overhead, and time involved in traditional migrations, organizations can more easily adapt to – and benefit from – the constant changes in the world of file storage and collaboration.

Increased Efficiency

Improved Collaboration

Reduced IT Costs

Streamlined Operations

IT Modernization

See how these organizations did it.

Indiana University migrated **more than 2.5 petabytes of content and 140,000 users** to OneDrive after their original storage provider increased their prices by nearly 3X.

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The University of Miami decommissioned aging hardware and enabled better collaboration by **migrating their on-premises content to Box and Google Drive**.

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Start your path to digital evolution.

Migrations can be complex – but they don't have to be. Whether you're moving from on-premises to cloud, or from one cloud platform to another, we've got your back. Take a look at some additional resources to help you start planning your big move.

7 Best Practices for a Successful Migration

Migration & Sync Case Studies

Ready to get started? Contact us.

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