Enterprise Content Management - A Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

Managing information and content on an enterprise-wide scale is challenging. Enterprise content management (ECM) can be considered as an integrated approach to information management. While this concept received much attention from practitioners, ECM research is still an emerging field of IS research. Most authors that deal with ECM claim that there is little scholarly literature available. After approximately one decade of ECM research, this paper provides an in-depth review of the body of academic research: the ECM domain, its evolution, and main topics are characterized. An established ECM research framework is adopted, refined, and explained with its associated elements and working definitions. On this basis, 68 articles are reviewed, classified, and concepts are derived. Prior research is synthesized and findings are integrated in a concept-centric way. Further, implications for research and practice, including future trends, are drawn.

Keywords

Enterprise Content Management, Literature Review, Research Framework, Content Management, Document Management, Knowledge Management.

INTRODUCTION

Huge amounts of content are produced at an increasing rate every year. The terms *information overload* and *content chaos* aptly describe the inefficient situation prevailing in many organizations (see vom Brocke, Simons, Cleven, 2011c). Employees, and especially information workers, search for documents and information in different repositories through the entire company. Documents are stored in different locations and systems, in different versions, languages and formats. Collaboration on documents and co-authoring is complicated; important documents are shared via email. The management of content on an enterprise-wide scale poses a challenge to companies. Even worse, unstructured data makes up 80% of the content (O'Callaghan and Smits, 2005). However, data and information quality of unstructured data is crucial because it contains important, innovative and decision-relevant information that is increasingly becoming a key business resource.

To solve the content chaos, enterprise content management (ECM) evolved as an integrated approach to information management (Päivärinta and Munkvold, 2005). ECM enables content to be managed on an enterprise-wide scale and has received a lot of attention from industry (Wiltzius, Simons, Seidel, 2011). The market for ECM is booming as more and more companies adopt it (vom Brocke et al., 2011c, p. 492). Commercial ECM solutions have become more sophisticated and executable over the years. However, ECM systems (ECMS) are not typically out-of-the-box; they are one of the most complex rollouts in an organization (vom Brocke et al., 2011c, p. 477).

In contrast to the significant attention from companies and practitioners, ECM only received little consideration from scholars. As an emerging field in information systems (IS) research, limited research has been conducted so far (Wiltzius et al., 2011). Most authors that deal with ECM claim that there is little academic literature available. After approximately one decade of ECM research and a slowly but steadily growing body of literature, this paper extensively reviews the current state of academic ECM literature. This in-depth review helps practitioners and scholars get started with the complex and multifaceted topic of ECM, shows the current state of the literature, and points out relationships. Further, research gaps and tendencies are shown and trends are forecasted. This paper seeks to answer the following research question:

RQ: *What is the current state of ECM literature?*