

Hot Trends in ECM

a View from Independent Industry Analysts

"We need to move fast with strong partnerships and Alfresco enabled us to build a transformative, scalable, open, easy to use platform and we did it in just six weeks."

Chuck Robbins, Cisco CEO

Hot Trends in ECM

a View from Independent Industry Analysts

Industry analyst reports often hold the keys to understanding the marketplace and its offerings. Alfresco is thrilled to have been recognized as a "leader" in a number of recently released analyst reports evaluating ECM and content services technologies. It's gratifying to see, in our opinion, our vision, and the hard work of executing on that vision, recognized in the marketplace.

But what does this mean for you? How does this help you make the right decision?

To help answer these questions and jump-start your research for content services, or an enterprise content management solution, we've pulled together some common themes, key points and highlights from these reports, sprinkled in our perspectives from experience and in-depth understanding of the marketplace, and shared our vision of the future: digital transformation evolving into digital operations.

In keeping with the Alfresco mission of helping all of our customers accelerate their business outcomes, we hope that this ebook helps your research.

Alfresco Ranked a "Leader" in Recent Analyst Evaluations:

1. [Aragon Research Globe™ for Enterprise Content Platforms 2019 Report](#)
2. [The Forrester Wave™: ECM Content Platforms, Q3 2019](#)
3. [Ovum Decision Matrix: Selecting a Content Services Solution, 2019-20](#)

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Happenings in Enterprise Content Management

Change in the Enterprise Content Management (ECM) landscape is accelerating. The digital transformation of entire industries is driving IT teams and system integrators to find modern platforms to digitize critical business processes, and connect people with all of the information they need—quickly and effortlessly. Technology advances and disruptors continue to surface and change the way companies view enterprise content, while also opening up brand new possibilities for a competitive advantage.



Gone are the huge portfolios of separate but tightly integrated technologies that attempted to support the entire life-cycle of content via a single platform and its associated technologies.

[Ovum Decision Matrix: Selecting a Content Services Solution, 2019–20](#)



An evolving market and the modern ECM platform

ECM is increasingly reinvented as “content services.” Baseline requirements like document management and records management are now powered up with integration, predictive analytics and automation capabilities that support the modern enterprise.

Analyst Viewpoint

In analyst evaluations of the marketplace, a few common themes emerge:

- The importance of innovation—and AI—is accelerating
- Cloud-native and hybrid deployment models are now commonplace and broadly accepted
- A one-size-fits-all user interface is being replaced with UI choice and application design tools
- Traditional ECM capabilities remain important, but differentiation is often found in content services that comprise AI and machine learning, records management, development tools, massive scalability and ability to handle highly-complex problems

User Experience at the Core

Analysts agree that user experience is intrinsic to a content platform's success. Gone are the days of the one-size-fits-all interface. User experience has become a critical consideration. The enterprise must look for platforms that offer the tools and components that allow it to build apps and UIs to meet the specific needs and experiences of its users. In a fast-paced, agile world, users need simpler processes that support the way they work, wherever they work, allowing them to perform effectively.



Enterprises must consider user experience as essential--not a luxury. They need flexible platforms with a range of app and user interface design and development tools to tailor their employees' experiences.

[The Forrester Wave™: ECM Content Platforms, Q3 2019](#)

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Alfresco—Adaptable UX Built In

In response to these needs, Alfresco has created the Alfresco Application Development Framework, which allows companies to rapidly build engaging web applications for users. For a modern user experience right out of the box, there is Alfresco Digital Workspace, featuring a simple UI that lets users access files and work-related items quickly and easily.

Analyst Viewpoint

Analysts mentioned Alfresco in the following key areas relating to user experience:

- Alfresco Application Development Framework provides a user-friendly, rapid app development capability with more than 150 reusable Angular-based user interface components and services, command-line tooling, and JavaScript APIs, and highly automated test coverage
- Alfresco Digital Workspace provides a modern end-user application and simple UI right out of the box
- Strong mobile support enables today's modern workforce

Intelligent Technologies Take Center Stage

Intelligent technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), predictive analytics and machine learning, and are leading topics in each analyst report cited. These new technologies allow businesses to examine and analyze content in a variety of formats, including images and videos and take action. The sheer volume of data and files generated in today's business demands new solutions to manage, analyze and classify content, and use it efficiently across the content life-cycle to enable better and faster business decisions.



Artificial intelligence is one of the hottest topics today when it comes to data. With the advent of Intelligent Content Analytics (ICA), AI can now be applied to content in ways that were not possible in the past. ICA represents the ability to expose the information held in documents and assist the enterprise in making faster and more informed decisions.

[Aragon Research Globe for Enterprise Content Platforms, 2019](#)



Alfresco Intelligence Services

We launched Alfresco Intelligence Services to bring sophisticated AI and machine learning capabilities to our customers to let them extract valuable intelligence, address specific business needs and drive faster, more informed decisions. For example, extract a name and birth date from a scanned passport to complete an application, or extract vehicle license plate numbers from a photograph for an insurance claim. While the underlying technology is highly sophisticated, our customers need only to configure simple Alfresco rules and associated actions to carry out a use case.

Alfresco Intelligence Services help streamline business processes by intelligently extracting critical information from document scans, video feeds, photographs, and other unstructured data sources and adding to a case file as structured data. It offers a way to use AI and machine learning without the need for data scientists to configure and train AI over time.

Analyst Viewpoint

Analysts mentioned Alfresco in the following key areas relating to intelligence technologies:

- Extendable, highly scalable cloud-based framework seamlessly integrates discrete third-party AI services, allowing enterprises to gain valuable insights from their content
- Requires no expertise in AI technologies, increasing AI adoption and reducing time-to-value
- Normalizes the output provided by multiple AI and machine learning services, enriching documents, scanned images, videos, and photographs
- Retains the enriched AI data (as an AI rendition) so that enhanced intelligence can be leveraged without recurring costs, and data can be reused any time as needed
- Allows further reference of AI analysis results across large volumes of content with tools that detect potential patterns, trends, and correlations

The Essential Shift to the Cloud

Each analyst report focused on the cloud in some capacity. Enterprises are shifting content management to the cloud-enabled platforms to capture efficiencies and cost savings, deliver new solutions faster, and increase global access to content. While you can run legacy ECM systems in the cloud, only cloud-native platforms make it easier for enterprises to take full advantage of cloud scalability, cost advantages and innovative new services such as AI and machine learning.



Cloud is an important element of digital transformation, and the whole ethos behind content services is that they are cloud-native.

[Ovum Decision Matrix: Selecting a Content Services Solution, 2019–20](#)



Alfresco's cloud-native approach, with flexible deployment options

We believe that many enterprises want to use cloud innovations like containerization and micro-services, as well as AI and machine learning to create a competitive advantage, but few have a clear pathway to success. Our cloud-native content services approach helps our customers accelerate their digital transformation plans and evolve their business.

The Alfresco Digital Business Platform enables enterprises to manage their legacy, mission-critical, content that is often massive in volume and complex in nature. Alfresco has the tools and expertise necessary to help organizations migrate from their outdated, legacy ECM systems to the cloud-native Alfresco Digital Business Platform with minimal risk.

Analyst Viewpoint

Analysts mentioned Alfresco in the following key areas relating to the cloud:

- A modern, cloud-native open source platform; a cloud-friendly but flexible solution—deploy in the cloud, or start on-premises or hybrid and shift to cloud as needs progress
- Containerized deployment based on Docker and Kubernetes, which enables a more agile means of managing content within the context of a digital business process
- Gives users the ability to deploy, scale and manage large production implementations

Modernization: Transform for the Future

Digital transformation initiatives are driving the need for IT modernization ... and it isn't too late to get started. Content services platforms play a very key role—helping the enterprise manage content effectively and use it to drive business value. Today's modern IT requires agile development, micro-services, DevOps and containerized deployments. Cloud deployment enables the use of innovative technologies, like AI; and flexible deployment models allow businesses to get ahead while operating the way the enterprise needs.



Alfresco Software has diligently executed on a strategy to deliver a full set of content, process, governance, and AI services, now enabled by an app development framework.

[The Forrester Wave™: ECM Content Platforms, Q3 2019](#)

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Alfresco—simply a better way

Having a strong vision is one thing, but executing on that vision is what brings value to our customers. We believe these reports validate how complete our strategy is, and how strong our performance is in fulfilling that strategy in the market. Alfresco software, powering the daily work of more than 11 million people worldwide, continues to deliver on our brand promise of “simply a better way” to work.

Analyst Viewpoint

Analysts mentioned the following key areas relating to the Alfresco Digital Business Platform:

- Delivers openness, interoperability, and hybrid deployment options through its modern, cloud-native open source platform—a complete platform for content and process-rich applications
- Strengths include mobile support, ECM, BPM and governance capabilities, with flexible deployment on-premises, cloud or hybrid
- Accelerates development of complex integrated solutions through a rich set of open APIs and re-usable visual components, which comprise its Application Development Framework

Alfresco's Vision: Digital Transformation Moves Toward a State of Digital Operations

For some time now, companies have pursued digital transformation to drive innovation in order to create competitive differentiation and business value in a changing world. Digital transformation often focuses on the "digital outside"- the portals, websites and apps that touch end-customers and the wider ecosystem. The challenge comes when this digital outside must connect to the digital inside—operational systems employees rely on to get work done. When they don't connect properly, customer experience suffers, and employee frustration rises.

Digital operations considers the digital inside as well as the digital outside of business operations. By mapping business processes from inside the business to the outside world and back again, you can re-imagine how you would like to operate, spot pain point, and identify what needs to be done. From here, you can make properly informed investment decisions that are more likely to yield positive results.

Innovation is about looking at how we can do things differently, streamline manual processes, remove unnecessary steps. It's changing the way we operate.

Jim Williams, Managing Director and Head of Operations and Shared Services Technology, Alfresco customer RBC Capital Markets



RBC Capital Markets

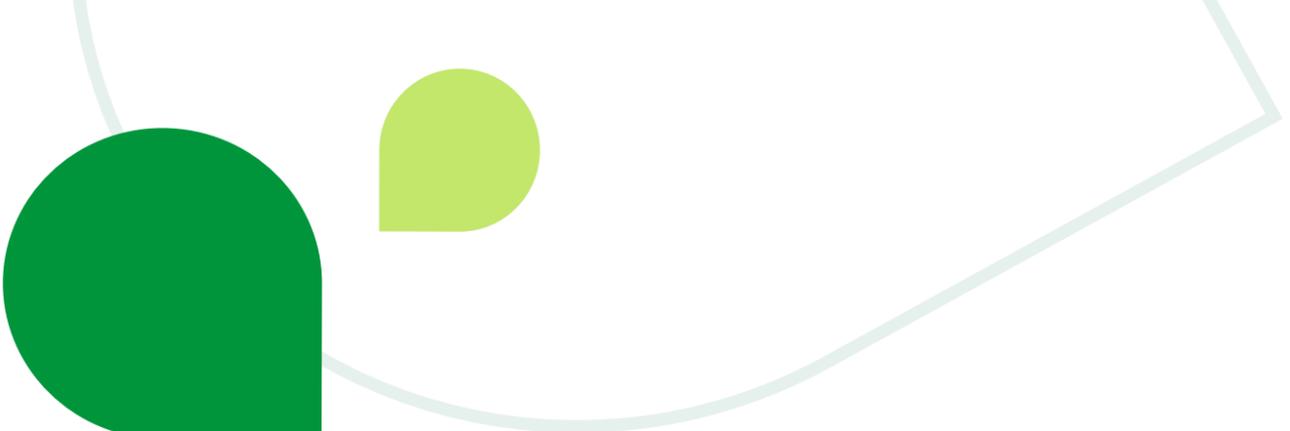
The future of ECM is digital operations

Alfresco believes that content is at the center of digital operations, supporting the connected business processes required to drive exceptional experiences. As barriers between markets break down, ECM is already evolving into content services – reflecting the shift towards modular, cloud-native services and away from the monolithic ECM approach of the past.

Combine this with tightly integrated process and governance services, open APIs, and the easy integration of cloud services like AI, and you have a platform that sits at the heart of digital operations. In doing so, Alfresco is helping enterprise architects, CIOs and digital leaders solve big problems more rapidly, changing the way organizations do business.

Learn More

To learn more about the topic of ECM and digital operations, visit this blog post and download a recorded webinar: [Why Digital Operations is the Future of ECM](#)



Want to learn more?

Download the reports from Forrester, Ovum and Aragon below to help with your content management platform research.

1. [Aragon Research Globe™ for Enterprise Content Platforms 2019 Report](#)
2. [The Forrester Wave™: ECM Content Platforms, Q3 2019](#)
3. [Ovum Decision Matrix: Selecting a Content Services Solution, 2019–20](#)

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