

Freeport LNG Simplifies IT Infrastructure with OpenText and Microsoft®

OpenText Application Governance & Archiving for Microsoft® SharePoint® improves access to records and supports compliance requirements

Freeport LNG Development, L.P. (FLNG) operates one of the only liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals built in the United States in more than 20 years. The storage and regasification facility is located on Quintana Island, about 70 miles south of Houston, Texas. LNG is natural gas that has been cooled to minus 260 degrees Fahrenheit, the point at which gas condenses to a liquid. This liquefaction process allows gas to be stored and shipped safely and economically to LNG terminals throughout the world where it is vaporized and distributed as pipeline natural gas.

Freeport LNG began operations in 2002. By 2005, when the company had received approval from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to start constructing the Freeport LNG terminal, capacity for the terminal was fully subscribed with three separate long-term Terminal Use Agreements (TUAs). Today, with a growing list of customers that include Dow®, ConocoPhillips®, Mitsubishi®, and Constellation Energy®, FLNG is embarking on a major expansion for the terminal to increase its capacity and include another LNG storage tank and underground gas storage.

Addressing information management challenges

The LNG industry in Texas is subject to the oversight of several federal and state regulatory entities including FERC, an independent agency that regulates the interstate transmission of electricity, natural gas, and oil, as well as the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) and the Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC) that oversees the Texas oil and gas industry, gas utilities, pipeline safety, and safety in the liquefied petroleum gas industry. As a result, Freeport LNG needs to ensure that its construction and operations are in compliance with relevant laws and regulations.

To ensure regulatory compliance and reduce the risks associated with audit and litigation, FLNG needed to find an efficient way to access and manage documents and records pertaining to construction and expansion projects. FLNG also wanted to build a secure portal for its customers to access documentation related to terminal operations and create a departmental intranet site where employees could access, store, and manage documents from one central repository.

INDUSTRY

Energy

CUSTOMER

Freeport LNG

CHALLENGES


- Enable a single source of access to save and manage documents and records
- Provide a secure portal for customers to access documentation
- Ensure compliance with federal and state laws and regulations

SOLUTIONS

- OpenText Content Server
- OpenText Application Governance & Archiving for Microsoft® SharePoint
- Microsoft Office® SharePoint® Server 2007

BENEFITS

- Integrated products eliminates disparate solutions
- Easy access to information via familiar user environment, minimizes training requirements
- Simplified infrastructure reduces redundancies, improving productivity and reducing risks
- Timely delivery of information to customers streamlines operations



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JOHN DOAN, IT ANALYST, FREEPORT LNG DEVELOPMENT, L.P.”

To solve these challenges, Freeport LNG selected OpenText, as well as Microsoft® Office SharePoint® Server 2007 for its intranet and customer portal to use as the access point for customers and employees to retrieve documentation stored in the OpenText Content Server repository.

The selection and evaluation work was done by Todd McLaughlin, who at the time was the IT Technical Manager at Freeport LNG (he is now the IT Director at Freeport LNG). Before joining Freeport LNG, McLaughlin worked for ConocoPhillips for 14 years, during which time he worked with OpenText Corporation, OpenText Content Server (formerly Livelink), and SharePoint and built up numerous contacts inside of ConocoPhillips who implemented and supported both solutions. During the selection process, McLaughlin leveraged his experience and his contacts to determine that an integration solution consisting of OpenText Content Server and SharePoint would be the best fit for Freeport LNG. OpenText Application Governance & Archiving for Microsoft SharePoint (formerly Content Lifecycle Management (CLM) Services for Microsoft SharePoint) was chosen to allow seamless access to the OpenText content within the SharePoint environment.

Delivering an integrated platform

While McLaughlin still maintains an active role in the implementation of Content Server and SharePoint at Freeport LNG, after the selection and evaluation process the torch was mainly passed on to John Doan, IT Analyst. When Doan joined Freeport LNG in 2006, it was still a fairly new company and did not have any existing legacy systems. Employees were using shared drives to store information. Consequently, Doan was presented with a “clean slate,” as he put it, when he started looking at the different applications that they would need for their business.

“We had several requirements that needed to be addressed: building web sites, content management, collaboration, workflow, and we also recognized that we needed to be able to do document and records management,” Doan explains. “We learned during the selection process about the OpenText SharePoint integration and that was basically the icing on the cake because it allows us to use Content Server as our document repository. The documents that we need to publish to our customers, such as invoices, manuals, or forms, are stored in Content Server but are exposed in SharePoint through the integration product from OpenText. In addition to providing our customers with SharePoint’s ease of use and straight forward presentation, we do not have to concern ourselves with having some documents in one place and other documents in another place: everything is in Content Server.”

Customer portal

The Freeport terminal consists of three sections: the LNG receiving facility (including docking facilities and associated piping and equipment), the LNG storage area, and the vaporization facility and associated piping and equipment. On average, one LNG carrier can offload cargo at Freeport’s receiving facility every other day. The LNG

flows from the receiving facility into the two LNG storage tanks where it is stored in a liquid state until it is sent through pipes to the vaporization units. After vaporization of the LNG and warming it to the required send-out temperature, natural gas is then put into the send-out pipeline to be delivered to FLNG’s customers.

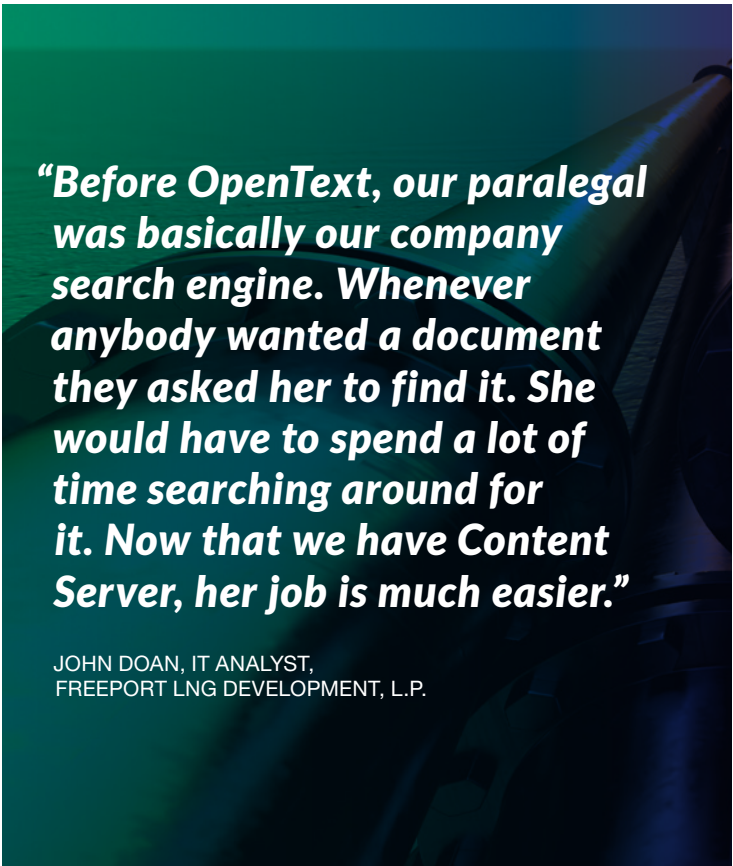
The SharePoint portal framework allows FLNG to present information related to terminal operations to its customers in a secure web browser view. Through this extranet customer portal, customers can download their cargo schedule, invoices, documents, and forms, and also access the gas nomination system where they nominate how much gas they want to have delivered each day. All customer documentation resides in Content Server and is accessible via the Document Library Web Part. This Web Part allows documents stored in Content Server to be downloaded and viewed from within SharePoint. “This portal ensures the timely delivery of information to our customers to help streamline operations,” says Doan.

Developing new internal processes

Internally, Content Server is currently used by legal, finance, and commercial to store and access documents. For instance, the legal department saves and manages legal agreements and discovery documents in the ECM repository. Since the company is subject to federal and state regulations, Freeport LNG needs to ensure that it is compliant with the relevant laws and regulations and ensure information is easily searchable and retrievable if necessary. “We need to make sure that we are compliant in every regard,” Doan explains. “Before OpenText, our paralegal was basically our company search engine. Whenever anybody wanted a document they asked her to find it. She would have to spend a lot of time searching around for it. Now that we have Content Server, her job is much easier.” The company plans to implement a document retention policy stipulating that all documents are stored in the OpenText repository.

FLNG is developing an employee intranet on the SharePoint platform. All content will be stored in Content Server but delivered to staff in SharePoint through the OpenText integration product. For example, people will be able to go to the HR site in SharePoint to find and download the forms that are available to them rather than having to know where the documents are stored in the repository within Content Server.

Doan says that being able to use Content Server as their only document repository is a big benefit not only for the company but for its end users as well. “There are things that we do in SharePoint that we can’t do in Content Server, and there are things that we do in Content Server that we can’t do in SharePoint; being able to integrate the two products means that we do not have disparate solutions. For example, if I have an invoice that I need to make available to a customer, because the systems are integrated, I will not have a copy of that document in SharePoint and another in Content Server and have to synchronize and manage those two documents. It is the same concept with our



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intranet site with HR forms and internal documents: employees will log into the SharePoint site to access documents stored in the Content Server repository so that the HR manager does not have to maintain documents on two sites.”

Doan adds, “Simplifying our application infrastructure is a key benefit to the IT department for supporting the solution and to our users. The redundancy that they would have faced to do their work is reduced, resulting in improved productivity.”

As the company continues to develop its intranet application, it plans to roll out the system to all departments and eventually discontinue the use of shared drives. “As we discover the different departmental requirements, we intend to leverage more of the OpenText to SharePoint integration features,” says Doan.

The best of both worlds

Doan's vision is to take advantage of the best characteristics of both SharePoint and OpenText. “The OpenText solution is a well-established document management system. It has very powerful records management capabilities that automate the creation of retention and disposition schedules. It also enables history tracking and audit trails, which will allow us to manage content from initial creation through final destruction stages. When required, we will be able to find vital information quickly, as well as audit and report on regulated activities,” says Doan. “Although SharePoint 2007 is still relatively new, we are finding it is easy to use for building websites, team sites, and collaborative portals.”

Doan concludes, “With OpenText Application Governance & Archiving for Microsoft SharePoint, we can use Content Server for storing documents and SharePoint for collaboration and presentation. So basically, we can marry those two applications together. Although there is some overlap between SharePoint and Content Server, we plan to use the best functionalities of each application; where there are overlaps, we will just choose whichever platform is best, depending on the requirement.”