

Case Study: **THE REJECT SHOP**

The Reject Shop Improves Productivity and Workflow with Alfresco

The Reject Shop Ltd. is Australia's largest discount variety retailer offering a wide range of quality consumer goods and branded merchandise, all at consistently low prices. The company is headquartered in Melbourne with warehouses in Melbourne, Queensland and Western Australia.

The Challenge

With 320 retail stores and 5,000 team members spread across Australia and three remote warehouses, The Reject Shop creates a lot of paperwork. Before Alfresco, paper documents were gathered once or twice a week at the warehouse locations and taken by courier to the head office for invoice processing. This was expensive and caused a delay in getting documents into the hands of the company's Accounts Payable department. In the warehouses, items would sometimes go missing and the head office would receive paper documents a week after the actual event happened, making it difficult to address queries related to cost and quantity.

"Boxes were piled on top of each other and the accounting department was struggling to process all of the paper documents," said Edwin Chong, The Reject Shop's IT project manager. "Not only were they processing what was coming through, but also creating a pile as it was processed."

Documents were first stored onsite, and then eventually moved to offsite storage. This made it very difficult to locate a particular invoice when there was a request from an auditor or a price inquiry from the buying team.

"Many times, because it was so difficult and expensive to recall a box in the warehouse and locate an invoice, we would simply contact the supplier and have them fax or e-mail the invoice again," Chong said.

The Solution

In an effort to automate this process, The Reject Shop began looking for a solution that would simplify its document management workflow, accept scanned documents and metadata, and integrate with SAP. After evaluating several solutions including OpenText, the company chose Alfresco One.

The company began working with Alfresco technology partner pernextas, based in Germany, for their certified SAP-Alfresco integration solution named connexas, and system implementation partner Lateral Minds, based in Sydney. In March 2013, Alfresco was rolled out to The Reject Shop's accounts payable team.

"We wanted to present documents to users in SAP. We didn't want the user to have to go to some other system to see the documents, then jump to SAP to key it all in," said Chong. "It was really about keeping users in SAP, but having a system on the backend to capture these documents and an integration mechanism to present these document links effectively to the SAP user."

In addition to the strong SAP integration with connexas, the company chose Alfresco based on its ease of use and open architecture.

"We didn't want to be locked down to one particular proprietary standard. We wanted to go with something that was open source," Chong said. "Alfresco was very competitively priced and could do what we needed and more. It has a great community and felt like a nimble platform we could start with and grow into."

The Results

The Reject Shop currently has over 60,000 documents stored in Alfresco today. When a paper invoice comes into a particular warehouse, it is scanned and uploaded into Alfresco so that it can be processed by the accounts payable team.

One of the biggest benefits has been the cost savings associated with fewer courier deliveries from the warehouse locations to the head office, fewer offsite storage fees, and the speed at which documents are passed on to the head office.

“Rather than waiting a week – and a week is a very long time these days – AP is receiving documents within the hour,” said Chong. “They don’t have to look at piles of documents anymore and have confidence that they can pull out any document they need and provide it to anyone who needs it. They are great champions of the process.”

In the future, The Reject Shop plans to extend the Alfresco platform to manage documents associated with its outsourcers and freight forwarders in China as well.

“Our whole logistics and supply chain process is very paper-intensive as well,” said Chong. “It will be fairly straightforward to leverage what we have already done with Alfresco into that overseas AP process.”

Alex Lee, CEO of Lateral Minds says, “ *Our partnership with The Reject Shop through their journey of Digital transformation proves once again that the combination of the Alfresco One ECM platform and Lateral Minds deep ECM experience can enhance productivity, save money and solve real business problems for our customers.*”



Lateral Minds is an Alfresco Gold Partner and has been successfully delivering Enterprise Content Management solutions since 2002. We provide Consulting, Training, Implementation and Support for the Alfresco One Enterprise Platform. We also provide Australian hosted Cloud-based Alfresco solutions.

Technical Details

The System consists of the Alfresco ECM Platform, integrated with SAP using the Connexas integration toolkit, and a specialised Lease Management System.

- ⇒ With 320 Retail stores, 5000 team members and 3 remote warehouses, The Reject Shop creates a lot of paperwork.
- ⇒ Instead of one week, documents are scanned and available within 1 hour anywhere in Australia!
- ⇒ This solution removed the cost of couriering the documents, storing the documents, it removed the delays in processing and finding the documents and provides Disaster Recovery to the critical records of business transactions