

Westfield Protects Vital Corporate Data with Open Text Document Server, Alchemy Edition

Assists Disaster Recovery in Wake of September 11 Tragedy

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– Roxana Pombo,
Project Manager for Document Imaging
Westfield Group.

The Westfield Group is one of the world’s leading retail real estate management organizations—a fully integrated group of companies involved in funding, developing and managing regional shopping centers in the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom and New Zealand. The centers accommodate approximately 21,600 retailers and comprise close to 10.6 million square meters of retail space.

The Challenge

In August 2001, Westfield finalized the purchase of retail shopping space at the World Trade Center (WTC) in New York City—just three weeks prior to the September 11, 2001 tragedy. The management office was still hiring and training staff on that day. Two years earlier, Westfield had searched for a solution to manage documents and images at retail locations across the globe. It needed a system to scan and store everything from digital photos to construction engineering data, while also allowing domestic and international offices to quickly access the documents. “Our IT department researched 10 different applications with database management capabilities to support our document-imaging project,” Mazen Sadat, Westfield’s IT manager, said. “Our selection criteria included a solution that was user-friendly, provided support for our multi-file platform (CAD, PDF, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, TIF files and more), ease of implementation and operation, and Web support.”

The Solution

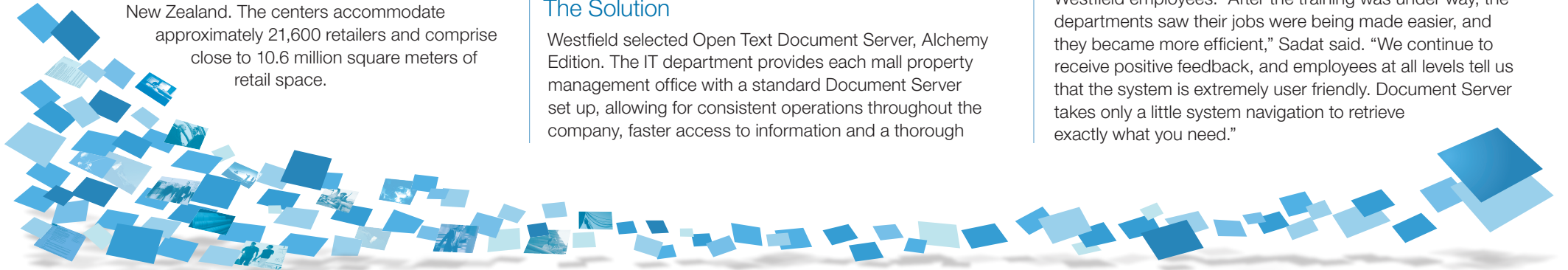
Westfield selected Open Text Document Server, Alchemy Edition. The IT department provides each mall property management office with a standard Document Server set up, allowing for consistent operations throughout the company, faster access to information and a thorough

disaster recovery plan. “The edge for Document Server was its ability to manage unstructured data, its intuitiveness, the capabilities of the support staff and the ease of which our staff learned the solution,” Sadat said. “Document Server exceeded our requirements.”

Westfield deployed Document Server within several departments, including Legal, Leasing and Administration, Design and Construction, Strategic Planning, Accounts Payable, Finance, Tax, Marketing, Corporate Communication, e-Business, IT, Human Resources and Risk Management.

According to Westfield, the key component of successful document imaging is to first simplify the information to be scanned and fed into the repository. Westfield has three high-volume scan operators on staff who scan as many as 10,000 pages, or approximately 800 documents, each day using Kofax Ascent Capture as a front end for production capture into Document Server.

The Document Server system is user-friendly, according to Westfield employees. “After the training was under way, the departments saw their jobs were being made easier, and they became more efficient,” Sadat said. “We continue to receive positive feedback, and employees at all levels tell us that the system is extremely user friendly. Document Server takes only a little system navigation to retrieve exactly what you need.”



The Results

Document Server has proven effective in everyday and extreme situations. After September 11, Westfield was able to provide vital data concerning the property to attorneys, insurance companies and other organizations. The information assisted disaster recovery and demonstrated the value of effective document and image management. “We were fortunate to have had so many of our files from the WTC office already scanned and housed at both the WTC office and at our corporate data center in Los Angeles,” Roxana Pombo, Westfield’s project manager for document imaging, said. “We were glad to help speed the information gathering process for this horrific event ... We shared leasing and insurance data located on our Document Server system in our corporate office by transferring the information to disk, and then, sending it to authorities and various organizations in New York.”

“In the beginning, we wanted to reduce the time it took to re-enter information and decrease the amount of space to house thousands of legal documents,” Sadat commented. “We ended up reducing the number of hard copy pages by 1.8 million in more than 12 different departments throughout Westfield. It is crucial to our company that we retain the integrity of our data, safely archive it and develop a successful disaster recovery plan.”

“We have eliminated much of the administration necessary to maintain, file and archive paper documents,” Sadat said. “Document Server retrieves documents 10 times faster than our previous method. We have also eliminated a lot of filing cabinet and office space. Less administration translates into

money saved.” Sadat and his team provide full support for all IT functions, as well as document-imaging expertise. “We began this project with full support from our management team and our employees. Seventy-five percent of our company has moved to electronic files, and this is just the beginning.”

Benefits

- Created digital archives
- Supported disaster recovery efforts
- Retrieved data 10 times faster than before
- Reduced hard copy documents by 1.8 million

The Profile

Customer: The Westfield Group

Industry: Retail real estate management

Business Solution: Open Text Document Server, Alchemy Edition

Business Challenge: Managing and sharing millions of paper documents in locations across the globe

For More Information

Open Text, an enterprise software company and leader in enterprise content management, helps organizations manage and gain the true value of their business content. Open Text brings two decades of expertise supporting 50 million users in 114 countries. Working with our customers and partners, we bring together leading Content Experts™ to help organizations capture and preserve corporate memory, increase brand equity, automate processes, mitigate risk, manage compliance and improve competitiveness.

<http://faxsolutions.opentext.com>

Sales captaris.sales@opentext.com
(800) 304-2727

Support support@opentext.com
(800) 540-7292

www.opentext.com

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