

SEVEN WAYS FEDERATION IS BEING APPLIED IN THE MODERN ENTERPRISE

INTRODUCTION

Business is transitioning quickly to an information-based economy, in which the value of knowledge, information and services is more valuable than manufacturing and output. In the information economy, content is key to unlocking that value. Content contains deep insights that drive more effective business decisions, spur new ideas for goods and services and contain the knowledge organizations need about their customers to better meet expectations. As content continues to be created and accumulated at an ever-accelerating rate, organizations are struggling to discover, understand and leverage its value.

Establishing processes to capture, extract, find, use and govern the information that enterprise content contains is complex—and compounded by three main challenges: organizations managing content by document type rather than by the information it contains, a lack of infrastructure and processes to manage and use the content and legacy systems. In fact, most organizations still use [multiple business systems, repositories and databases](#) to create and store enterprise content and data. As a result, they develop siloes of information that hinder their ability to view, interact and unlock the value of their information. To address this challenge, most organizations need to implement new tools such as a content services platform as part of a digital transformation.



Content federation is an integral part of a content services platform. It helps organizations bridge siloes of information to provide enterprise-wide visibility and actionability.

WHAT IS CONTENT FEDERATION?

Information is commonly stored in databases, content repositories, collaborative content stores and archiving systems. Content federation integrates that information, so users can interact with it from a single pane of glass. With this capability, employees can find and leverage information they need in content across an enterprise's entire IT ecosystem.

Essentially, federation addresses one of the most common challenges with the new information economy: accessing and interacting with content to unlock its business value. That can be in the form of customer support having full access to content to achieve first-call resolution, a business analyst accessing multiple data sources to identify new business trends or fraudulent activities, or an employee logging-in to a portal to have unfettered access to their information regardless of system, platform or location. Yet most companies are far from delivering federated content across their organizations. In some cases, they have implemented federation within specific departments, or for specific projects, but very few have federated content across lines of business or geographies, never mind the entire IT ecosystem.

Instead of federating content, an organization could consolidate repositories and migrate content. Often companies don't have the means, nor the will power, to migrate all their content repositories into a single data lake or overhaul their legacy infrastructure. As a result, many simply wait for legacy repositories to break—but operating an information-driven business demands proactively facing digital transformation head on, making content useful to all users.

ASG'S CONTENT FEDERATION

ASG's content federation solution, ASG Mobius Content Services, connects and syndicates content across repositories including cloud platforms, business applications and databases. Purpose-built integrations with popular applications from Microsoft, SAP, IBM and others eliminate the need for custom-coding and deliver one federated view of content from CMIS (Content Management Interoperability Services) or non-CMIS repositories. Full-text searches can be conducted against connected, federated content repositories and databases. All searches can be saved and reused as needed. Searches can also be filtered by field or line to improve results.

ASG pioneered content federation and was a member of [OASIS](#), the organization that defined CMIS. Two decades later, it has evolved alongside technological advances and business landscapes, empowering ASG to continue helping companies implement federation across a variety of industries and use cases. Learn which applications of federation will most benefit your business.



WHY DO YOU NEED CONTENT FEDERATION?

Today, organizations need to be faster, smarter and more innovative than ever to succeed in the information economy—especially when it comes to leveraging content. These demands are heightened by several variables:

- **Data volume acceleration**—According to [IDC](#), the collective sum of the world's data will grow from 33 zettabytes in 2019 to 175 zettabytes by 2025. Organizations must be able to capture and store this growing volume of information so it can be managed and accessed and eventually, understood, trusted and used to deliver value to the organization.
- **Struggle to democratize data**—While data and analytics used to belong exclusively to IT, the average user—from marketing and HR to sales—requires access to content so they can analyze or manage it without the support of IT. Content siloes have made the democratization of data difficult, if not impossible, at many companies.
- **Demand for employee efficiency**—C-suites across every industry have become hyper-focused on employee efficiency as both an enabler and output of digital transformation. Many organizations are relying on automation to improve efficiency, when they could also consider turning to federation, which can increase efficiency for existing processes by streamlining workflows.
- **High employee expectations**—Today's users are digital natives. They want easy-to-use applications, simple user interfaces and direct access to the content they need, whenever and from wherever. As a result, organizations are under pressure to make information management simpler and available from one point of entry.
- **Growing regulations**—With the recent surge in data privacy laws, it is critical for organizations to apply governance rules and comply with regulations across all content—which requires knowing where it lives, how it is being used, who has access to it and at what granularity, and how long must it be kept. Without an enterprise-wide view of information, organizations have no visibility into or control over their compliance.

The better organizations can manage content, the better they can serve their business, stay in compliance and empower employees to drive value. That's what ASG helps our customers do.

FEDERATION: SEVEN APPLICATIONS AND BUSINESS BENEFITS

Organizational Support

1. IT INFRASTRUCTURE

To compete in the information economy, well-established organizations are under pressure to modernize. As a result, many are paying closer attention to the overall costs for legacy IT infrastructure and the size of the administrative staff required to maintain them. While IT would prefer to focus on innovative projects, many are stuck dealing with redundant or inefficient legacy systems.

Consolidating systems would make the lives of IT easier, but it's not so simple—especially when systems haven't been upgraded in 10 or more years or have undergone customization. What's more, the longer a business has existed, the more content systems and siloes it needs to address. Organizations don't want to migrate content from a dozen or more repositories—opening a Pandora's box of modernization needs—simply to reach regulatory compliance or manage governance policies. Ripping and replacing this technology will be complicated and, likely, cause disruption to internal and external users.

Content federation eliminates the need for a “rip and replace.” Instead, organizations can implement information management solutions with federation capabilities for a full, actionable view of all their content across every legacy system. That way, organizations can see the immediate benefits of integration without a massive upfront investment—decommissioning outdated legacy systems gradually and as needed. ASG has helped several well-established Fortune 1000 customers with redundant systems execute this exact transition.

That said, customers with smaller IT footprints can also benefit from federation. Startups and digital natives are architected for integration but are less likely to invest in tools, such as an ERP system, that manage and integrate the different repositories used for each department. Federation can provide that single pane of glass without further investing in more systems.

2. CALL CENTERS

When a customer contacts a company's call center, they often ask questions that require the employee to access multiple systems—whether it's related to billing, shipping status, coverage or address. All that information lives



CUSTOMER SUCCESS: LIBERTY MUTUAL

Liberty Mutual, a large global insurer, wanted to migrate its content to the cloud—which required bridging multiple legacy repositories. It adopted ASG Mobius Content Services, using its native content federation capabilities to provide access to unlimited content for thousands of Liberty Mutual associates. Using federation, Liberty Mutual was able to find and retrieve documents from multiple document repositories seamlessly—which gave it more time to migrate repositories with no impact on business productivity.

With greater control over archival, distribution and integration of all company content, end users could access their information with complete transparency. Additionally, Liberty Mutual reduced infrastructure spends and reinvested savings in new development initiatives rather than ongoing maintenance costs.

in different places. Rather than having to log in and out of multiple systems to track down or move the content, employees can leverage content federation to make all customer information available to them and focus on resolving the call.

With ASG Mobius Content Services, customers can adjust the user interface to meet their needs or create custom portals for users to search, view and access information. For example, call center employees may prefer fewer buttons and require quick access to specific screens, while an employee in accounting or records management may want more controls. Even with enterprise-wide implementation, ASG Mobius Content Services can support multiple portals, so each department has the look and feel that best suits their needs.

No matter the access point, ASG Mobius Content Services offers rapid click-to-glass for internal and external use, so users can access information quickly when they need it. As a result, employee efficiency is immediately enhanced. Searching through multiple systems is complex and time-consuming—and in a call center environment, timely turnarounds are essential for quality customer satisfaction and retention. Rather than simply finding answers, employees can focus on truly serving the customer.

3. TAX SEASON

During tax season, financial services companies experience a major spike in requests from customers. They must enable internal and external access to deliver a high volume of statements at record speeds. However, without the necessary tools to discover, retrieve and share content across all the repositories, financial services companies struggle to deliver on requests in a timely way. When this task is left to manual intervention, customer service suffers.

ASG Mobius Content Services is used by several Fortune 200 customers during peak tax season. There are few enterprise content platforms—with federation capabilities—that perform well with high volumes. However, ASG Mobius Content Services handles epic workloads and retrievals without any degradation of performance. No matter the volume, ASG Mobius Content Services remains stable and can sustain split-second click-to-glass.

One ASG customer uses ASG Mobius Content Services federation during tax season to enable all their investors to pull their tax statements. ASG Mobius Content Services was able to handle 50,000 retrievals an hour during peak demand, so internal and external users never had to suffer downtime.

4. MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS

When companies grow through mergers or acquisitions, they often absorb multiple, redundant systems that maintain customer information. For the sake of efficiency and compliance, it's important for companies to achieve visibility across these systems to know what content exists and what may be duplicated. To identify and address redundant information, content must be indexed properly. ASG Mobius Content Services offers index mapping, so when a user searches for a piece of content, the solution:

- retrieves all content matching the index value across disparate repositories
- automatically resolves the relationship between the common universal indexes defined in ASG Mobius Content Services and the repository-specific indexes in the underlying archive
- resolves format differences by applying the appropriate mask for each source repository.

ASG Mobius Content Services also offers unparalleled interoperability, which makes merging organizations, and their systems, more feasible. ASG Mobius Content Services offers several connection options, including REST API and pre-built and customized adapters. For the latter, ASG Mobius Content Services offers an Adapter Software Development Kit to facilitate content retrieval from custom applications housed in repositories connected to ASG Mobius Content Services. This web services-based integration framework enhances the plug-and-play interoperability of the system, connecting any user to any source. That way, IT systems and content siloes aren't the barriers hindering mergers or acquisitions.

Business Needs

5. COMPLIANCE AND CONSUMER PRIVACY

In today's tightening regulatory climate, auditors are becoming more stringent. Regulations are being interpreted and enforced more strictly and larger fines are being given out. In particular, auditors are paying close attention to how long content and unstructured data is being maintained within a system—which is where the Right to be Forgotten becomes so important.

When consumers request that their personal information is deleted, organizations must look across all their systems and find out where that information lives—which requires logging in and out of every system. Federation allows organizations to achieve a single view of the content in all systems, so they can locate and delete consumer information as requested. If consumer information is stored under different account numbers and across separate systems, Mobius' index mapping makes field names comparable. That way, no customer information slips through the compliance cracks.

One ASG customer, an investment banking company, was working on a project addressing several compliance regulations, including the SEC, FINRA and GDPR. The bank wanted to search for one customer and see where their information existed across six or more systems and shared drives. With federation, it was able to not only find information, but also redact sensitive information to achieve compliance.

6. GOVERNANCE

Federation should be a key pillar of organizations' governance strategies for internal and external audits. No matter the number of systems, organizations must answer the same questions when it comes to customer information:

- Is the information being handled properly?
- Is it stored so that it can't be adjusted?
- Is it encrypted at REST?
- Is it redacted, as needed?

With federation, employees can quickly pull up information, make any changes, save those changes across the enterprise, and show auditors it complies with industry regulations.

For example, if a marketing employee is working in a federated Mobius repository, they may search and find content in the product development team's OpenText repository. Employees can pull up that content, view it, download it to their computer and make changes to it. When they click save, the most updated content will get saved back to the OpenText repository, as well as to Mobius. That way, when organizations apply policies or make changes, they can do so across multiple repositories to drive an integrated, end-to-end governance strategy.

7. EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY

To do their jobs effectively, employees must be able to search, view and interact with content without falling prey to data protection risks. For example, ASG worked with one insurance company to assess how their back-office departments were searching and accessing information and logging in and out of multiple systems to do so. ASG found that the company was having issues with a long ramp up time for new employees as well as a high turnover rate because these systems were confusing and difficult to use.

Content archiving was also entirely disjointed. Employees were putting invoices into one system and, in 18 months, would switch to a new system. Documents, processes and productivity levels were impacted. ASG met with the employees to discuss how they could leverage ASG Mobius Content Services to federate multiple existing systems, simplify their search and storage and reduce redundancy. With the ability to quickly search for content, employees were able to do their jobs without being burdened by workflow—enhancing their business output.



CUSTOMER SUCCESS: SEI INVESTMENTS COMPANY

SEI Investments Company (SEI), global provider of investment processing, management and operations solutions, needed a way to collaborate across disparate systems and different types of content. However, with multiple terabytes of content in one repository alone, it would be a major undertaking to centralize the publishing, storage, access and distribution of documents. The delivery of collaborative content from its SharePoint system was also a challenge. SEI needed a solution that would:

- make content available to the right people
- reduce time spent searching and retrieving content across several repositories
- limit the risk of exposing internal content on the Internet
- control costs

SEI selected ASG Mobius Content Services because it was cost-effective and customizable, fit SEI's business needs for federated content access, and delivered content to external audiences. SEI used ASG Mobius Content Services to create custom-built web applications for accessing SharePoint content. With federation capabilities, SEI had gained a single view of content, which drastically reduced the time required to search and retrieve customer documents. As a result, SEI managed to keep its team small, deliver more value to the organization and meet their objectives of controlling cost and risk.

ASG Mobius Content Services architecture is built to serve employee productivity. Other vendors want to deliver fast search results, but their database often gets out of sync with the other existing repositories and sources. ASG Mobius Content Services does not create a separate database that takes content from different systems. ASG has built an architecture for ASG Mobius Content Services that is exceptionally solid and fast, so that users can access all disparate databases and still see split-second results.

CONCLUSION

Content federation is the future of visibility and agility in the enterprise, and as such, there are so many useful applications for it today. Every company is information driven, which requires using content to fuel offensive and defensive strategies. However, the current infrastructure at organizations is not conducive to this reality—or these stakes. Organizations must know where their content is, how to access it and how to use it to drive business value—else they risk noncompliance with regulations or fall behind competitors.

Federation enables the future of work. It empowers the employees who will drive innovation, but who are currently hindered by siloes that hide the insights they need. Employees require modern tools to get the content they need, when they need it, from wherever they are. With this access and actionability, employees will be unstoppable in leveraging content to deliver better customer service, faster turnaround times and elevated productivity.

IT professionals who are skeptical about implementing content federation need not worry. It will make their lives and the lives of business users and employees, easier. Federation goes beyond a single-pane-of-glass view. It unites the enterprise, inciting collaboration, alignment and consequently, innovation. Organizations that work to modernize their information management strategies and tools today are actively investing in their longevity. Employees want to work at companies that empower them and customers want to work with companies that lead the cutting edge. Optimizing content management helps organizations—new and old—become that company and federation is an essential step in doing so.

RECOMMENDED READING

To learn more about ASG Mobius Content Services and federation capabilities, explore these other pieces.

- Case study:** [Securely Moving Content Management to the Cloud: Liberty Mutual Managing More Than 1 Billion Documents in the Cloud with ASG Technologies](#)
- Brochure:** [ASG Mobius Content Services Deployed on Amazon Web Services](#)
- Datasheet:** [ASG Mobius Content Services: Information Governance, Compliance and Privacy of Personally Identifiable Information](#)
- Whitepaper:** [Modernizing Your Content Infrastructure to Digitize Your Business](#)

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