



**Buyer's Guide to Leading
Enterprise Content Management
Solutions**





We've got a lot to say about the top ECM tools for your automated workflow needs. Don't have time to read it all? Cut straight to the chase with a complete side-by-side view of all solutions available for you [here](#).

ECM Comparison Report

In today's fast-paced business environment, enterprises need a robust and reliable solution to manage their digital content effectively, securely, and without the risk of a compliance meltdown. If you're reading this report, you've likely narrowed down Enterprise Content Management (ECM) as the solution and are in the final stages of meticulously comparing and contrasting your options to find the best fit for your business needs. But with the vast number of ECM platforms available on the market, choosing the right one can be a daunting task!

This report compiles the most up-to-date information on the top five ECM platforms, perceived by reports, consumer feedback, and our own hands-on experience. Specifically, we will review the following:

- Alfresco
- Box
- Laserfiche
- Microsoft SharePoint
- OnBase
- OpenText

Use this report to weigh the pros and cons of each ECM tool and gather the final pieces of information needed to make an informed purchasing decision — supplying your enterprise with ECM that best meets your niche needs.

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Alfresco

Overview

Alfresco is an open-source Enterprise Content Management (ECM) platform acquired by Hyland in 2020. Alfresco remains a competitor to OnBase — also owned by Hyland — providing document management, collaboration, and content governance capabilities. In addition, alfresco offers cloud-based and on-premise deployment options and integrates with many typical business applications.

Features at a Glance

Open Source

Document Management

Data Capture

Enterprise Collaboration

Information Governance

Analytics

Pros

- Highly customizable
- Open-sourced and cost-effective
- Scalable to match the needs of a growing business
- On-par collaboration tools and centralized document management

Cons

- High level of technical expertise may be required
- Very significant time and talent are needed to customize solutions fully
- Dated and complex user interface could be complicated for new users

Scalability

Alfresco is reasonably scalable. Its cost of entry is variable depending on the needs and size of the organization, and the product supports features that sufficiently fulfill the needs of businesses in any industry. As an open-source product, Alfresco is ideally situated to help the changing conditions for organizations of most sizes — but having such flexibility and customizability comes at the cost of a very steep learning curve.

Integration

Like OnBase, Alfresco has great integration features that connect well with other enterprise systems, including CRM, ERP, and HR. These features allow users to easily plug in with existing infrastructure and perform work where they're most comfortable. In addition, Alfresco's advanced integration features allow for seamless workflow with reduced manual data entry.

Level of IT Involvement

Being an open-sourced product comes with its downsides — namely, a high level of IT involvement. Alfresco users have reported the need for advanced programming chops to effectively wield, manage, and customize the platform for more specific business goals. That may not deter bigger organizations with dedicated IT staff. However, smaller businesses without significant IT expertise may encounter knowledge barriers.

Security

Most ECM platforms, particularly those included in this report, feature a standard and functional baseline of security features — and Alfresco is no exception. Alfresco is compliant with industry standards and regulations, including GDPR and HIPAA. Alfresco's distinguishing factor is its compliance-forward security features developed from years of experience with government and intelligence agencies. Standard features include data encryption, role-based access control, audit trails, and additional security classifications to people, records, and folders that exceed normal access controls and permissions.

Conclusion

Alfresco is a highly configurable platform with raw power potential ideally suited for hands-on teams with advanced technical expertise. If you're an organization comprised mainly of IT professionals and programmers, then Alfresco might be the perfect ECM for you. However, organizations with diverse specializations and "computer-stuff" knowledge might be better suited by different products, regardless of how customizable Alfresco can be.

Our Ratings

Productivity:	3	★ ★ ★
Scalability:	4	★ ★ ★ ★
Integration:	4	★ ★ ★ ★
Ease of Use:	2	★ ★
Security:	3	★ ★ ★

Box

Overview

Box has been an innovator in the marketplace, focusing significantly on secure cloud-based ECM with additional capabilities delivered by artificial intelligence and machine learning. In addition, box wields a customer-led roadmap enabling the software to be a continual top performer among ECM offerings.

Features at a Glance

Document Capture

Workflow

Information Governance

Metadata and Classification

Collaboration

Content Migration

Pros

- Accessible from anywhere with an internet connection
- Robust Security Features
- User-friendly UI

Cons

- Limited customization options compared to some competitors
- Pricing can be high for larger organizations
- Limited workflow capabilities compared to some competitors
- Strict governance ensures security that can get in the way of productivity

Scalability

As a cloud-based tool, Box is designed to be highly scalable and accommodating to businesses of all sizes. However, two contradicting caveats make Box difficult to rate when discussing scalability. First, Box's highly collaborative but strictly secure features and complex customization tools work great for larger, more regulated, and equipped agencies. But its subscription-based pricing model is more suited for smaller organizations and not the type that would necessarily benefit from strict security. That puts Box's sweet spot somewhere in the middle. Regardless, Box is highly rated for promoting remote/mobile access with top-of-the-line file sharing and commenting features — perfect for supporting many users simultaneously.

Intergration

While it offers much in terms of integrations, Box users report that the actual functionality of these integrations ranges from useful to mostly unhelpful. That said, Box integrates with well-known third-party applications, including Google Suite, Microsoft 365, Salesforce, and more. In addition, it offers an open API for developers to create their own custom integrations — provided you have the expertise.

Level of IT Involvement Required

At its core, Box is a user-friendly platform that requires minimal IT involvement to kickstart, thanks in part to an easily digestible web-based interface. Navigating Box is also not terribly difficult, and most users can wield the tool without too much training. On the other hand, custom integrations will prove tedious to non-developers, requiring IT involvement to navigate the open API and customization tools.

Security

Box is hyper-focused on security — an attractive feature for government and financial services. In addition, Box offers several compliance certifications to bolster further its security ratings, including HIPPA, FINRA, and SOC 2. Box's presence as a cloud-based system will always concern those who desire complete control over their data-hosting software. To help alleviate qualms, Box offers aggressive user access controls, monitoring, and encryption. Though some users have complained that Box is secure to a fault. You can't win em' all.

Conclusion

Box is an obvious choice for highly regulated organizations needing strictly governable software. Box is easy to use, great for collaboration, has sufficient workflow capabilities, and can support a large user base. The drawbacks? Box might be an overwhelming tool for small organizations, while not a competitively priced option for large organizations. In addition, customizability features leave something to be desired.

Our Rating

Productivity:	4	★ ★ ★ ★
Scalability:	4	★ ★ ★ ★
Integration:	3	★ ★ ★
Ease of Use:	4	★ ★ ★ ★
Security:	5	★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Laserfiche

Overview

Laserfiche is a jack-of-all-trades ECM platform servicing customers in almost any industry with intelligent content management, business process automation, and solid data analytics. The platform's primary administration is SaaS, though it maintains on-premise and hybrid options. In the software's 30-year lifespan, Laserfiche has kept pace with market innovation and is quick to evolve with the needs of the ECM market.

Features at a Glance

Data Capture

Document Management

Lifecycle Management

Data look-ups, including in-video keywords

Workflow automation

Broad intergration with Microsoft apps

Pros

- Low-code customizable workflow automations
- Focused product road-map
- Frequent updates and speedy innovation
- Large supporting partner program

Cons

- Expensive start-up with additional costs
- OCR and search have impressive functions but inconsistent or slow results
- Difficulties with multitasking

Scalability

Laserfiche is often considered an excellent choice among small and mid-sized organizations looking for a straightforward ECM solution with decent support backed by a knowledgeable partner program. However, the downside for small to mid-sized organizations comes down to price. While Laserfiche arguably brings more to the table than free limited license ECM options, it comes at a premium price that may be difficult to justify. Furthermore, Laserfiche's troubling data capture reviews and limited multitasking capabilities mean it might not be the best consideration for larger organizations who are looking for speed and accuracy of tasks for many users at once.

Intergration

Laserfiche has straightforward connectivity with Microsoft's core productivity apps and a large variety of third-party apps, though the latter comes at the cost of high complexity. More on that below.

Technical Alliances

Microsoft has a global partner program and many technical alliances available to support Power Automate, with consultation costs ranging from no cost to \$200,000.

Level of IT Involvement:

Laserfiche is considered a low-code platform and receives much praise for its intuitive and easy-to-navigate UI. Laserfiche is also rated highly among lean organizations with little time to waste thanks to good support and easy integration with Microsoft apps. Its major weakness, however, comes in the form of tricky third-party integration. Laserfiche's third-party app integrations are rated as significantly complex.

The platform's extensive partner community makes connecting with software experts to assist with said integrations easier than most offerings — but will require additional costs.

Security

Laserfiche is a secure platform with standard security functions. Laserfiche defines two levels of security — product, and process. System admins can assign roles and manage users at both the product and process levels. In addition, Laserfiche provides AES-256 encryption for customer data and encrypts all content contained in the cloud with HTTPS over TLS 1.2 or higher.

Conclusion

Laserfiche is a great middle-of-the-road platform. It's easy to use right away to perform simple to more complicated automations using low-code features that actually feel low-code. Its most significant flaws are some slow or buggy multitasking and OCR. Additionally, there is a high starting price — and the complexity of integrations outside of Microsoft Apps might mean extra costs for some. The plus side? The platform has a strong track record of supporting updates and a clear roadmap for development, meaning it will continue to grow and be successful.

Our Rating		
Productivity:	2	★ ★
Scalability:	3	★ ★ ★
Integration:	2	★ ★
Ease of Use:	4	★ ★ ★ ★
Security:	3	★ ★ ★

OnBase

Overview

OnBase is Hyland's premium content services platform that upgrades core applications with new capabilities to capture, store, and manage data in one platform. Unlike Hyland's other ECM solution, Alfresco, OnBase is not open-source, trading availability for soundly built features, modules, and immense integration. OnBase is available for on-premise, cloud, or hybrid deployment and offers individual or enterprise-tier licensing.

Features at a Glance

Document Management

Data Capture

Workflow automation

Case management features

Security and compliance controls

Robust third-party Integration

Pros

- Large supporting partner program
- Many plug-ins and custom APIs
- Broad-range usability across industries and department
- Powerful integration capabilities

Cons

- Premium price
- Several clunky UIs
- Highly functional but technical

Scalability

OnBase is a modular platform with many add-ons, allowing users to tailor their solution with features that meet specific business needs. It can be deployed across many systems and easily meet content needs. It is handy for many users at once. It is not, however, cheap. OnBase is intended for large organizations or mid-size organizations with complex needs. It is not a suitable solution for small-sized organizations.

Integration

OnBase's main differentiator is its strong integration capabilities with core, third-party, and legacy systems. The system is quite effective at centralizing information from old and current sources into core systems and workflows using intelligent data capture. OnBase also has a full range of connectors and APIs available from Hyland or third-party sources, allowing businesses to easily integrate with their existing ERP, CRM, HR systems, and much more.

Required Level of IT

As we said, OnBase integrates seamlessly with other applications, enabling users to manage OnBase functions within apps they already know and understand. That's a very good thing because OnBase's UI isn't particularly pretty, although UI improvements are a top-ticket item in future updates. Furthermore, OnBase promises to be a low-code application developer for citizen programmers. That's mostly true. But OnBase's sheer variety of configurations means a high level of IT involvement is recommended (and often necessary) for users to achieve maximum effectiveness. Fortunately, OnBase offers many free training programs and resources and

is supported by a knowledgeable partner program to supply additional implementation and management support.

Security

OnBase has all the standard security features, including role-based access controls, audit trails, data encryption, secure APIs and integrations, and more. OnBase is a solid choice among government and healthcare organizations and agencies thanks to data retention policies and compliance with regulatory requirements, including HIPAA, GDPR, and Sarbanes-Oxley.

Conclusion

OnBase is a beast of a tool with a lot of modulation. It's by far one of the most configurable tools on our list, which is why we highly recommend it for large organizations and users with complex needs. The caveat? Quality training, development, and support are a must to make the most out of such a large piece of software. Luckily Hyland's partner programs mean there is no shortage of educational materials and people to help you get the most out of this solution.

Our Rating

Productivity:	5	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Scalability:	3	★ ★ ★
Integration:	5	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Ease of Use:	2	★ ★
Security:	4	★ ★ ★ ★

OpenText

Overview

OpenText Extended ECM is a robust solution designed to help businesses manage their content effectively. It boasts a comprehensive set of features and has been considered one of the more powerful ECM solutions available for quite some time. It is available for on-premise, cloud-enabled, or hybrid configuration. In the past years, OpenText has been aggressively innovating and expanding its collaboration with AI capabilities to further enhance the usability of unstructured data.

Features at a Glance

Records management

App integrations

Content collaboration

AI and machine learning data capture

Workflow automation

Open APIs, plug-ins, and add-ons

Pros

- Content Suite for capturing, archiving, and managing data
- Open APIs for high customization
- Promising innovation cadence with AI collaboration

Cons

- Steep learning curve
- High startup costs, costs for assisted training, and on-site help
- Post-purchase support needs improvement.

Scalability

From a services perspective, OpenText is highly flexible to support businesses of all sizes. The platform can be deployed on-premise, in the cloud, or a hybrid environment, giving companies the flexibility to choose the deployment option to suit their needs best — though it should be mentioned that recent product updates have focused highly on improving cloud models, as is becoming very standard across the ECM industry. In addition, OpenText successfully supports many users across multiple systems, making it ideal for large organizations with complex content services needs. High costs, however, make OpenText unsuitable for smaller organizations.

Level of IT Involvement

OpenText ECM platform is a complex system requiring significant IT expertise to implement and manage, revealing the platform's number one flaw. OpenText users report difficulty finding and accessing available training. Free self-training modules exist, but are reportedly overwhelming or not entirely helpful.

Integration

OpenText has sufficient integration capabilities. Data capture is successful at centralizing data for workflows and integration with core applications. Specifically, OpenText integrates well with Microsoft Office, SAP, Salesforce, Google Suite, and more. It can also integrate with other OpenText products, such as its business process management and customer experience management solutions. Lastly, APIs, connectors, and plugins are available, further enhancing customizability.

Security

OpenText provides typical security and compliance features, including encryption, access controls, audit trails, and compliance reporting. Additionally, OpenText has a team of security experts that monitor the platform for potential security threats and receives high marks from users for regularly releasing security updates.

Conclusion

OpenText is a comprehensive solution offering businesses a complete package of functionalities, security and compliance features, and a large user community to support. It's a very well-rounded powerhouse that'll do most, if not all, you need it to — provided you have the knowledge base to tap into its complex features. That's because — like all good things — OpenText is complicated and expensive. As such, OpenText is best suited for larger businesses with significant IT resources and resources in general.

Our Rating

Productivity:	5	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Scalability:	3	★ ★ ★
Integration:	1	★
Ease of Use:	4	★ ★ ★ ★
Security:	4	★ ★ ★ ★

Microsoft SharePoint

Overview

Microsoft SharePoint is a widely-used platform providing a comprehensive suite of tools for managing content, documents, and collaboration. SharePoint allows users to store, organize, and share documents with many sought-after features that benefit remote workers, small and large teams, and Microsoft-heavy users. Microsoft SharePoint is predominantly a cloud offering. On-premise configuration does exist, but is not the product's primary focus.

Features at a Glance

Document management repository

Workflow automation

SharePoint Designer customization tool

Security and compliance controls

Integration with all Microsoft Apps, including Power Automate (see our RPA Comparison Report)

Pros

- Robust integration for Microsoft business users
- Customizable and approachable UI
- Supports all the necessary features of an ECM platform

Cons

- Limited scalability for non-Microsoft users
- Few packaged APIs are available
- Additional customization is required for more targeted objectives

Scalability

As part of a multinational tech corporation, it's no surprise that Microsoft's ECM offering would emphasize collaboration. As such, SharePoint offers robust cloud functionality, allowing many users safe access from anywhere and anytime with sought-after components like coauthoring, chat, and audio/video meetings via Microsoft Teams. That's all well and great for scalability, particularly for large organizations with many users or teams needing remote capabilities. Furthermore, SharePoint offers several pricing options, allowing organizations to pick and choose based on specific needs.

Required Level of IT Assistance

SharePoint utilizes a straightforward UI — a definite plus for non-IT users. In addition, features like SharePoint Designer enable users to customize workflows for specific needs within the Microsoft suite. However, as it is a frequent theme, customizations and third-party add-ons outside of core Microsoft features require significant technical expertise to implement.

Integration

Microsoft SharePoint is... well... a Microsoft product. Therefore it will integrate exceptionally well with the rest of Microsoft's suite of products, including 365 apps, Azure, and Power Bi (desktop automation). If your organization already utilizes the Microsoft business suite, SharePoint is an attractive offer. Outside of Microsoft apps, SharePoint integrates with other third-party systems, including various ERP, CRM, and HR tools. However, significantly fewer pre-built

APIs and plugins are available, and the cost and effort of personal customization are high and with varying results.

Security

SharePoint's security needs are covered by Microsoft 365 and Azure AD. Additional features like version control and user-access controls are implemented to protect data integrity internally.

Conclusion

Microsoft SharePoint makes sense for Microsoft users. It offers many out-of-the-box features and enables additional features to be added through SharePoint Designer. It's great for highly collaborative teams and remote offices as an add-on to the Microsoft suite. However, Microsoft's reliance on its own infrastructure does impose several shortcomings, specifically on the side of integration and customization for small businesses without IT expertise. Furthermore, users looking for the control afforded by on-premise solutions will find greater functionality with other offerings.

Our Rating

Productivity:	4	★ ★ ★ ★
Scalability:	5	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Integration:	3	★ ★ ★
Ease of Use:	3	★ ★ ★
Security:	3	★ ★ ★



About KeyMark

KeyMark is a leading provider of intelligent automation solutions focused on enabling better business outcomes through a comprehensive list of solutions such as capture (OCR), workflow (ECM), case management (DCM) and robotic process automation (RPA) solutions, artificial intelligence, and machine learning technology. KeyMark helps clients leverage this technology to maximize productivity and decrease manual labor in almost every industry including financial services, healthcare, insurance, manufacturing, distribution, utilities, logistics, and the public sector.

Through decades of proven experience and partnered with the industry's leading vendors in automation, KeyMark can source and supply tailored-fit solutions, allowing organizations to scale effectively, achieve operational agility, and receive award-winning Extended Support. Additionally, KeyMark is the creator of Forms InMotion, an innovative software-as-a-service solution for forms automation; and CloudCapture, a business process outsourcing (BPO) service that includes invoice processing, digital mailroom outsourcing, data processing outsourcing, and document conversions.

For more information, call 864-343-0500 or send an email to sales@keymarkinc.com.