

CASE STUDY

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Key Facts

Industry:

Higher Education

Product:

Xythos Enterprise
Document Manager 5.0

Audience:

Administrators,
faculty and students

Benefits

- Protects institutional content
- Streamlines academic and administrative processes
- Creates central repository for all student, faculty and administrative documents
- Enables secure research collaboration internally and with outside universities
- Helps in University's accreditation process

Why Xythos?

- Easy-to-use interface
- Robust content security
- Out-of-the-box document library services
- Robust and scalable platform

Pepperdine University is an independent, medium-sized university enrolling approximately 8,300 students in five colleges and schools. Seaver College, the School of Law, the Graduate School of Education and Psychology, the Graziadio School of Business and Management, and the School of Public Policy are located on the University's 830-acre campus overlooking the Pacific Ocean in Malibu. Courses are taught in Malibu, at six graduate campuses in Southern California, and at international campuses in Germany, England, Italy, and Argentina.

Challenges in Centralizing and Locating Institutional Content

Before Xythos, much of the University's content was spread out over several different repositories, in both paper and digital format, making it difficult for administrators and faculty to access and find content. Pepperdine needed a way to centralize its institutional content and protect valuable documents containing the University's intellectual property. Administrators also wanted a central means of capturing procedural information related to various business processes to better catalog best practices and faculty wanted access to convenient digital portfolios for storing and managing research material.

The IT team at Pepperdine first considered developing their own solution, but soon realized that it was not economically feasible due to the extensive time and resources it would require, in addition to potentially significant maintenance and support costs. Commercial document management vendors, like Documentum, were also considered, but the University quickly ruled them out because of prohibitive licensing and deployment costs. Xythos finally emerged as the most appropriate vendor choice for Pepperdine, because its applications provided the University with a combination of out-of-the-box functionality combined with a flexible content management platform that could be easily modified and which could scale to serve the University's future requirements. "We didn't see anything else comparable in Xythos' price range. Xythos offered a powerful set of library services that were critical to us," said Don Thompson, Associate VP of Planning, Information and Technology. "Not only is Xythos easy to use, but it was also rich enough to provide the flexibility we'll need in the future."



Web-Enabling Administrative Processes Through Xythos

Pepperdine has several administrative and academic processes that it plans to use the Xythos Enterprise Document Manager for, including:

Centralizing accreditation information:

Most universities undergo an accreditation process every ten years or so to review its faculty, curriculum, research and resources—in short, to validate the ability of the university to provide an education for its students. It is an exhaustive process that requires each university to aggregate massive amounts of data for the accrediting committee to review. Pepperdine will be undergoing this accreditation process in two years time, and the process of gathering the needed documents is already underway. Previously, paper documents for the accreditation committee would be gathered manually, requiring extensive time and effort to collect the required data from a variety of disparate sources. Now, Pepperdine is using the Xythos Enterprise Document Manager to centralize, store and manage all of the information needed for the accreditation committee and allow faculty and administrators to easily upload their information to a common folder within the Xythos system. Finally, instead of sending the accreditation committee boxes of paper to review, the committee will be able to securely access the files they need in the Enterprise Document Manager via the web—streamlining this document intensive process without placing sensitive information at risk.

Faculty review:

The process of evaluating faculty for rank, promotion and tenure, is currently performed manually via paper documents. Typically, a faculty member will assemble a portfolio of their work within a large file box, which is then stored in a locked classroom for committee members to review. The University plans to web-enable this time-consuming process with Xythos, allowing faculty to upload information related to their review directly from their computer into a secure web folder. Committee members will then be able to review that information over the web with the Xythos system governing what they can view and allowing them to comment on documents and even receive automatic email notification regarding the status of the entire procedure. As a result, the time needed for each faculty review process will be reduced, making it more convenient for all participants and allowing the University to be more responsive to its employees.

Archiving institutional content:

The Graziadio School of Business and Management plans to use the Xythos Enterprise Document Manager to archive its institutional content using the product's document classification and retention capabilities. Currently, the school does not have a simple way to archive its faculty reviews and publications, preventing these documents from being easily searched and used. The School intends to migrate this content into the Xythos system by scanning or migrating the content electronically so that all of its information can be maintained in compliance with school policy and be organized for easier access and discovery.

Student portfolios: Pepperdine requires that each of its undergraduates assemble a writing portfolio before they graduate. Currently, writing portfolios are submitted for review to faculty members as paper documents. Now, the University plans to have each student submit their writing samples electronically, using Xythos instead. This change should reduce process time and cost while making it more flexible for both students and faculty. The University will also benefit as it will be more easily



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able to administer and track student portfolios over time.

Inter-institutional collaboration: Faculty at Pepperdine routinely collaborate with Pepperdine employees at its other campuses as well as with faculty at other universities. Xythos will be used to share research data safely and seamlessly through secure file links, helping the University avoid the security risks associated with email based file sharing. Xythos’ unique ticket feature will allow Pepperdine users to share documents via the web while maintaining document access control and employing password protection and data encryption to improve interinstitution collaboration security. Integrated document library services (check-in/out, version control, file logging) will also provide Pepperdine faculty and staff with the document collaboration tools they need to successfully work together, even when they are miles apart.

Don Thompson and his team have recognized the value of making business processes more efficient and effective by building collaboration services into each step of the process. Industry researchers support Don’s position asserting that integrating collaboration services into the business process will enable interactions to proceed without context change, thereby accelerating business cycles and lowering coordination costs.

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For more information please call 1.888.4XYTHOS or visit www.xythos.com

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