

opentext™

Success story

Waikato

Industry

- Government

Solutions

- OpenText™ Content Suite
- OpenText™ Core Share

Services

- OpenText™ Professional Services



Waikato Regional Council embraces digital future to sustainably manage natural resources

New Zealand local government organization is modernizing information management with OpenText Content Suite and OpenText Core Share.

Results



User-friendly, customized views for searching, sharing content speeds decisions made on latest data



Confidence in security, audit trails maintains compliance, appropriate retention and disposal of records



Collaborative, mobile workspaces support internal and external professionals working to make the mighty Waikato the best it can be

"The OpenText content services platform has improved functionality and offers users a better experience and more options. We have the right information at the right time to make the right decision."

Joanne Bell

Information Management Team Leader
Waikato Regional Council Community and Services



Caring for our place, empowering our people—that's Waikato Regional Council's (WRC's) vision. It's about working together to care for the world we live in to make the Waikato region the best it can be, now and for the long term. A region that has a healthy and sustainable environment, a strong economy and communities that are as resilient as they are vibrant.

The Waikato region is the fourth largest region in New Zealand and covers most of the central North Island. It is an area of more than 35,000km²—about 25,000km² of land and 10,000km² of coastal marine area – which includes 11 territorial authorities. Within this area, the role of WRC includes managing the use of natural resources, regional transport planning and passenger transport services, protecting and restoring natural biodiversity, controlling harmful pest plants and animals, providing flood protection and drainage schemes, keeping water users safe, responding to pollution incidents, and preparing communities for civil defence emergencies and coordinating the response when a disaster strikes.

This means the council processes a high volume of project planning documents, environmental reports, contracts, technical specifications and more, all subject to public records legislation. All this content must be easy to locate, share, track and archive for the council to be effective in its job.

Therefore, WRC prioritizes technology-enabled information management. **"Good information practices are hugely important,"** explained Joanne Bell, Community and Services Information Management Team Leader.

"We're committed to having engaging and efficient solutions. When done right, good information practices make life a whole lot easier for everyone else in the organization and anyone that comes after them." Furthermore, the council works to manage content in a way that embraces a digital future for its workforce and citizens. **"Staff members and contractors are increasingly wanting to work in more collaborative and mobile ways and expecting a user friendly and intuitive interface,"** Bell said.

Outdated document and record management systems were not up to the challenge. Complex, inconvenient interaction left users frustrated and caused errors or delays. For instance, standard document functionality did not support teamwork: employees developing large policy spreadsheets within tight timeframes experienced delays waiting for files to become available. Also, due to limitations of previous systems, the council had not maintained its retention and disposal schedule for several years.

Council team members moved forward, even if it meant downloading material outside the records management system. **"If we are not offering the functionality within our system, then staff members are going to find ways to work around it,"** Bell said. **"We need to give them the tools they need to do their jobs."**

WRC evaluated new content management systems by functionality, ease of use and integration. They teamed with OpenText™ Professional Services to upgrade to OpenText™ Content Suite, add OpenText™ Core Share and other capabilities. **"It is definitely a better experience,"** Bell reported. **"The OpenText content services platform has improved functionality and offers users a better experience and more options in terms of how they use the system."**

"With Core Share you can see when external people viewed documents and what they have done. It gives you much better visibility on who is using your information and how."

Joanne Bell
Information Management Team Leader
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Data-informed decisions

With the intuitive flexibility of Content Suite, WRC employees now easily search, find and share information. Templates configured using OpenText™ Connected Workspaces empower staff to quickly create customized areas to bring together the information, team members and workflows needed for a specific process or project. Behind the scenes, records management practices are embedded to automatically and transparently govern the content. WRC employees can freely collaborate and exchange critical business information, while ensuring the content is being effectively governed. Connected Workspaces will drive productivity as teams maintain a focus on what is important in each phase of a project. **“They will just press buttons and go,”** Bell explained.

The convenience drives enthusiastic adoption, serves as a useful avenue for updates, and reduces the introduction of other, less secure methods of collaboration. **“Providing improved access and searching aligns with the goal of being a data and information-led organization,”** Bell said. **“We have the right information at the right time to make the right decision.”**

More than 600 professionals at WRC access up-to-date information with increased visibility via Content Suite and will soon use OpenText™ Extended ECM for Microsoft® Office 365™. All users, especially professionals specializing in science and policy areas, maintain consistent access to large documents and spreadsheets through co-authoring functionality that enables concurrent online editing for meeting same-day deadlines.

Serving as one source of truth integrated with core council systems, Content Suite enables WRC to demonstrate compliance so requirements and questions can be met with security and audit trails. **“We are confident in OpenText’s commitment to security and compliance. Content Suite allows us to meet requirements in applying our retention and disposal across the organization,”** explained Bell.

Secure digital collaboration and mobility

To fully embrace a digital future, WRC recognized the need to embed secure digital capabilities and extend them through external partnerships and service providers. **“Security is really important in these environments. Core Share and Content Suite allow us to apply our retention and disposal requirements across the organization’s information, making sure information is managed how it should be,”** Bell noted.

Also designed for intuitive use, Core Share is a SaaS application to collaborate on projects inside and outside an organization with enterprise level security. It provides WRC with a secure, compliant way to manage and share content with contractors.

“The ability to share information directly from Content Suite with the contractors has been really valuable. They are all looking at the same document without the back-and-forth of email or giving full access to our systems,” Bell said. **“With Core Share you can see when external people viewed documents and what they have done. It gives you much better visibility on who is using your information and how.”**



Among other projects, WRC used Core Share to streamline RFP evaluations with external members and to facilitate policy development with external contractors; everyone has secure, reliable access to the latest project files. It also makes sharing and editing files a much faster process, enabling staff to work more efficiently.

OpenText™ Content Server Mobile features will support staff doing fieldwork and others who conduct frequent site visits. WRC is taking confident steps into the future, according to Bell, especially as the organization prepares to move to a new building which is being designed with flexible workspaces for tomorrow's mobile workforce. ***"Being able to provide better support for our mobile workers so they can access and take action on documents in the field will be a big bonus,"*** she predicted.

WRC continues to work with OpenText Professional Services, setting additional redaction, markup and PDF conversion capabilities to support several business processes. It is also establishing groundwork for a shift to OpenText Cloud. ***"We find them just to be really strong in technical knowledge but also really good at keeping us in the loop,"*** Bell said.

OpenText solutions support WRC's embrace of a digital future for working effectively. Sustainable use of resources is at the heart of what the council stands for.



About OpenText

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