



KnowledgeLake Customer Solution Case Study



Customer: Pella Corporation
Web Site: www.pella.com
Customer Size: 8,600 employees
Country or Region: United States
Industry: Manufacturing

Customer Profile

Pella Corporation is a leading manufacturer of high quality windows and doors used in residential and commercial construction. The company is based in Pella, Iowa.

Partner Profile

KnowledgeLake
(888) 898-0555
www.knowledgelake.com
KnowledgeLake develops document imaging, document capture, and workflow products and solutions for Microsoft SharePoint. KnowledgeLake extends the Electronic Content Management (ECM) capabilities of SharePoint so businesses can reduce mailing costs, streamline operations, and achieve regulatory compliance.

Software and Services

KnowledgeLake Imaging for SharePoint
KnowledgeLake Capture
KnowledgeLake Connect
Microsoft SharePoint technologies

Window Company Gets Better View of Information with Enterprise Content

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Paul Van Beek, Senior Web Technical Analyst, Pella Corporation

Pella Corporation is a leader in making doors and windows, but the company's growing operations were sometimes slowed by paper documents and related manual processes. To serve its customers better, the company deployed a KnowledgeLake solution to efficiently capture and share documents. The solution enabled Pella to leverage its existing IT infrastructure to improve essential business processes. Now employees can be more productive serving customers, and the company can make better use of valuable office space that was formerly taken up by paper documents.

Business Needs

Pella Corporation is one of the best-known names in the home and commercial building construction industries, creating high-quality windows and doors used in new construction, remodeling, and window and door replacements. The privately-held company was founded in 1925 and remains headquartered in Pella, Iowa.

Pella employs about 8,600 people, manufactures products in nine states, and distributes products across North America and in select countries overseas. Because of the company's broad reach it generates

enormous numbers of documents, from sales and invoicing materials to product specification documents. For years, Pella utilized many different manual processes for handling these documents.

“A number of manual processes were consuming more time, paper, and storage space than desired,” says Paul Van Beek, Senior Web Technical Analyst for Pella.

“We wanted to find a way to do things more efficiently to help drive standardized processes and maximize information, sales, and customer satisfaction opportunities. We sought to take time and waste out of

our systems while adding to overall quality.”

Pella decided to look for an efficient, cost-effective enterprise content management (ECM) solution that could help the company capture information electronically. This would help reduce the need for printed paper documents, allow employees to work more effectively, and free up valuable floor space used to store paper files.

Solution

During its evaluation for possible solutions, Pella focused on technologies that could integrate seamlessly with the many Microsoft products that Pella uses, including the Microsoft Office suite, Microsoft SharePoint technologies, Windows Server 2003, and Microsoft SQL Server database software. It considered a number of different options but decided on a KnowledgeLake ECM solution. “It was a natural fit for Pella because it allowed us to address additional business issues by expanding on the investments we made in Microsoft products,” says Van Beek.

Pella installed several KnowledgeLake products, including:

- **KnowledgeLake Imaging for SharePoint**, which enables easy batch scanning of paper documents and provides employees with tools like flexible searching of images from inside a web browser.
- **KnowledgeLake Connect**, which lets Pella employees scan, upload, index, and search through documents in SharePoint from within their daily business software, including Microsoft Office programs.
- **KnowledgeLake Capture**, which is used with Canon DR-3080CII high-speed color scanners to rapidly convert high volumes

of paper documents into electronic format.

Pella also uses AgilePoint Workflow, a business-process management tool that helps ensure that documents captured by the KnowledgeLake solution are routed to the proper locations on the company’s SharePoint intranet.

Pella conducted a phased approach to rolling out the KnowledgeLake solution. Each department held sessions based on the Japanese “kaizen” method of continuous and incremental business process improvement, during which employees mapped out their current processes and developed the metadata needed to manage documents and their associated workflows.

Benefits

By deploying a KnowledgeLake enterprise content management solution based on Microsoft technologies, Pella was able to dramatically improve its business processes with employee productivity gains and a reduction in consumables and office space. And it was able to make these improvements with a cost-effective investment in new technology.

Greater Productivity

Putting vital corporate documents on an enterprise intranet has driven consistent productivity gains across Pella departments. “Teams like Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, Quoting, and Order Entry have realized significant productivity gains by establishing consistent, streamlined, and repeatable processes for managing incoming requests for their services,” says Van Beek. “Plus, we’ve seen additional productivity benefits that have resulted from having an easy,

secure method for retrieving information needed to handle customer requests. Storing our documents electronically on the SharePoint intranet makes it easier for employees to easily access that information from any location within the Pella system.”

More Office Space, Reduced Consumables

The KnowledgeLake ECM solution has helped Pella recover office space previously occupied by storage for paper documents, including file cabinets and boxes, and has allowed the environmentally-friendly company to reduce waste on consumables. “We’ve been able to create a more sustainable process that reduced expenses by cutting back on paper, toner, and other consumables, and reclaimed physical storage space that used to be dedicated to paper documents,” says Van Beek. “Several departments no longer store paper for their processes. If they receive paper documents, the documents are immediately scanned into the system and processed electronically.”

Extending Existing IT Investment

By deploying a KnowledgeLake ECM solution, Pella was able to take advantage of existing investments in its information technology, including the SharePoint intranet. “The systems and processes put in place were built largely on our existing investments in technology, like SharePoint and SQL Server,” says Van Beek. “By using the KnowledgeLake products, and by employing software and expertise we already possessed, we were able to enhance our business processes with minimal investment in new technology.”