
Why is M-Files a better solution for document management than SharePoint

Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2013 and SharePoint Foundation 2013 as well as the older versions of SharePoint offer light basic properties for document management. M-Files is an overall solution specifically designed for document management.

Key differences between the properties of M-Files and SharePoint Document Library are specified below. For document management, M-Files gives you significant benefits that you cannot achieve with SharePoint.

M-Files is compatible with all applications

- SharePoint is truly compatible with MS Office products only.
- M-Files is fully compatible with all Windows applications (also non-Microsoft products, such as Adobe applications).
- M-Files integrates well with, e.g., special functionality of AutoCAD products (such as XREF images).

Navigation in M-Files is truly metadata-driven

- Users can add metadata to documents in SharePoint but in addition they need to store the files in traditional hierarchy of site collections, sites, pages and document libraries. This means that SharePoint does not really eliminate the key issues of traditional folder-based systems: it is not possible to conveniently view the same document in multiple sites.
- The classification of documents in M-Files is all about specifying metadata property values. The documents are listed in all relevant views in the system based on metadata and without the need to duplicate files to multiple repositories

M-Files offers native Windows Client for faster and more convenient data access

- Both M-Files and SharePoint can be used via browser
- Additionally, M-Files offers a native Windows Client that makes daily work with documents more convenient. The user experience of M-Files is similar to using your local C drive. Recently opened files can be quickly reopened from cache and certain operations can be performed on the client side in order to offload server load.
- Full integration of M-Files into Windows ensures compatibility with all Windows applications.

M-Files supports metadata-driven permissions

- Specifying and especially maintaining access control policies in SharePoint can be cumbersome. There is no way to enforce permission policies based on the content properties (i.e. metadata).
- M-Files offers rich features to enforce faceted permissions based on metadata. Documents access control settings can be based on the metadata value, or combination of two or more values. Hence it is easy to implement a policies that allow viewing employees own HR documentation only. The permissions can be inherited from parent metadata objects too so that adding a new person to project properties can add permissions to all related documents automatically.

M-Files supports scanning

- M-Files offers automatic text recognition (OCR).
- M-Files offers zone recognition (Zone OCR) functions and barcode identification. The identified data can be automatically stored as the document metadata (for example, the invoice number or customer information).
- Documents can be scanned directly into M-Files with a desktop scanner or network scanner.

M-Files offers rich compliance features

- M-Files supports electronic and digital signatures.
- M-Files offers FDA 21 CFR Part 11 – compliant time-stamped full audit trail.
- M-Files supports PDF/A-1b document conversions out-of-the-box for compliant long-term archiving purposes.
- M-Files can offer compliance statement for FDA 21 CFR Part 11, GMP EU Annex 11, ISO 9001:2008, HIPAA, and more.

M-Files provides a versatile, expandable metadata structure without requiring any programming

- M-Files gives you the opportunity to specify automatic metadata (for example, naming of proposals according to the desired standard method).
- M-Files enables smooth processing of even large value lists (with millions of values).
- In M-Files, different metadata can be interdependent (for example, filtering contact persons according to the customer company specified).
- The functionality of the metadata can be expanded with diverse scripting capabilities.

M-Files offers full-fledged replication features

M-Files supports replication of all or select content of a vault to another M-Files repository in the cloud or behind your firewall. Replication is metadata-driven enabling specification of dynamic replication rules, such as replication of all approved price lists to the publishing vault.

Use cases:

- Replication of data between two or more sites, such as a corporate entity and its subsidiaries, or a business with distributed sales offices or retail outlets.
- Publishing of select content from a corporate on-premise repository to a cloud-based project vault accessible by external partners, vendors or clients.
- Moving content and information from an active repository to an archive repository for long-term retention.
- Collecting information from multiple distributed repositories to one centralised enterprise repository.

M-Files is integrated seamlessly with SharePoint

- Documents in M-Files can be directly linked to SharePoint with either M-Files URLs or the M-Files for SharePoint add-on.
- Via the application programming interface for M-Files, it is easy to make your own SharePoint Web parts.