What is the future of RecFind?

The product road map

First a little history. We began in 1984 with our first document management application called DocFind marketed by the then Burroughs Corporation (now called Unisys). In June 1986 we sold the first version of RecFind, a fully-featured electronic records management system and a vast improvement on the DocFind product. Then we progressively added document imaging then electronic document management and workflow and then with RecFind 6 a brand new paradigm and an amalgam of all previous functionality; an Information management system able to run multiple applications concurrently with a complete set of enterprise content management functionality. RecFind 6 is the eighth completely new iteration of the iconic RecFind brand.

For a full history of our product development since 1984 please see this link:

RecFind 6 was and is unique in our industry because it was designed to be what was previously called a Rapid Application Development system (RAD) but unlike previous examples, we provided the high level toolset so new applications could be inexpensively 'configured' (by using the DRM) not expensively programmed and new application tables and fields easily populated using Xchange. It immediately provided every customer with the ability to change almost anything they needed changed without needing to deal with the vendor (us). Each customer had the same tools we used to configure multiple applications within a single copy of RecFind 6. RecFind 6 was the first ECM product to truly empower the customer and to release them from the expensive and time consuming process of having to negotiate with the vendor to "make changes and get things done."

In essence, the future of the RecFind brand can be summarised as more of the same but as an even easier to use and more powerful product. Architecturally, we are moving away from the fat-client model (in our case based on the .NET smart-client paradigm) to the zero-footprint, 'web-client' or web services model to reduce installation and maintenance costs and to support far more operating system platforms than just Microsoft Windows. The latest version 2.10 web-client for instance happily runs on my iPad within the Safari browser and provides me with all the information I need on my customers when I travel or work from home (we use RecFind 6 as our Customer Relationship Management system or CRM). I no longer need a PC at home and nor do I need to carry a heavy laptop through airports.

One of my ongoing goals for the remainder of 2020 and beyond is to convince my customer base to move to the RecFind 6 web-client from the standard .NET smart-client. This is because the web-client provides tangible, measurable cost benefits and will be the basis for a host of new features as we gradually deprecate the .NET smart-client and expand the functionality of the web-client. We do not believe there is a future for the fat/smart-client paradigm; it has seen its day. Customers are

rightfully demanding a zero footprint and the support of an extensive range of operating environments and devices including mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets. Our web-client provides the functionality, mobile device support and convenience they are demanding.

Of course the back-end of the product, the image and data repository, also comes in for major upgrades and improvements. We are sticking with MS SQL Server as our database but will incorporate a host of new features and improvements to better facilitate the handling of 'big data'. We will continue to research and make improvements to the way we capture, store and retrieve data and because our customer's databases are now so large (measured in hundreds of Gigabytes or in some cases Terabytes)), we are making it easier and faster to both backup and audit the repository. The objectives as always are scalability, speed, security and robustness. One recent improvement was a new product called RecFind 6 eDocArchiving. This is a very clever add-on that makes it easy to move electronic documents and images to second-level storage while still making them accessible from the normal client. The size of the backup is greatly reduced but no functionality is lost.

The RecFind 6 Knowledge Hub – Now MyConsole for RF6-Cloud

After developing prototype functionality for the RecFind 6 Hub we soon realized that we had developed a whole new paradigm for running applications in the Cloud. The HUB became MyConsole and we created a new website to support this new model at RF6Cloud.com. We preconfigured two new Cloud based Apps called RF6-RM (Physical Records Management) and RF6-EDRMS (Electronic Document & Records Management) and automated all the consultancy, training and data conversion processes such that the user could do everything from his/her RF6Cloud MyConsole. We dynamically provision each App as customers sign up at one of many IBM Cloud data centres around the world (we became an IBM partner for this new business model). End users work through the new web client and the administrator manages the App via MyConsole. MyConsole automates and improves all of the previously difficult and expensive processes involved in rolling out a RMS or EDRMS. Most importantly, we completely changed the model for the selection, configuration, consultancy, training and rollout of an application. We have removed the need for expensive and time-consuming data conversions, consultancy and training and completely taken away the need for expensive computer servers and operating system and database software.

On the add-in product front we will continue to invest in our add-in products such as the Button, the MINI API, the SDK, GEM, RecCapture, the High Speed Scanning Module, the SharePoint Integration Module and the new eDocArchiving Module. Even though the base product RecFind 6 has a full complement of enterprise content management functionality, these add-on products provide options requested by our customers. They are generally a way to do things faster and more automatically and to handle very high volumes much more easily.

We will continue to provide two approaches for document management; the end-user paradigm (RecFind 6 plus the Button) and the fully automatic capture and classification paradigm (RecFind 6 plus GEM and RecCapture). As has been the case, we also fully expect a lot of our customers to combine both paradigms in a hybrid solution.

We did deliver a new version of our automatic, rules-driven email management product GEM in early 2016 that simplified connectivity to any email system including Office 365 and Gmail. We will continue to invest in and improve this product.

The major architectural change is away from the .NET smart-client (fat-client) paradigm to the browser-based web-client paradigm. We see this as the future for all application software, unconstrained by the strictures of proprietary operating systems like Microsoft Windows.

As always, our approach, our credo, is that we do all the hard work so you don't have to. We provide the feature rich, scalable and robust image and data repository and we also provide all of the high level tools so you can configure your applications that access our repository. We also continue to invest in supporting and enhancing all of our products making sure that they have the feature set you require and run in the operating environments you require them to. We invest in the ongoing development of our products to protect your investment in our products. This is our responsibility and our contribution to our ongoing partnership.

Our overriding objective is to increase ease-of-use and productivity. Our fully-automatic and rules driven products plus the new RF6-Cloud website will provide major improvements in both areas. RF6-Cloud in particular, is a revolutionary approach to the running of applications in the Cloud and one we firmly believe is the future of all application software.

The future will see us continuing to develop this new Cloud paradigm by adding new functionality to the RF6Cloud Console and new applications (all based on RecFind 6) to the RF6Cloud website.

Our future will be built upon the Cloud and innovative Apps.

Our major area of research and development from 2020 onwards?

AI-driven automatic capture and classification of documents

We released our very first, rules-driven automatic capture and classification product in 1994. It was our email management product GEM version 1.1.0.

Since that time, we have continued to redesign and rewrite GEM to take advantage of the latest technologies and tools. We also released a sister 'rules-driven' product to automatically capture and classify electronic documents on shared drives called RecCapture in 2006. RecCapture has also been redesigned and rewritten to take advantage of latest technologies and tools.

Both GEM version 2.10 and RecCapture version 2.10 are very clever and very efficient but still essentially rules-driven. The next generation will be AI-driven. The project has started, and we plan to have new AI-driven versions of both products plus AI-Driven functionality for automatic classification embedded in our RecFind 6 clients and the RecFind 6 Button in the near future.