

SWOT Assessment: Liferay Digital Experience Platform v7.1

Analyzing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats

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Sue Clarke



Summary

Catalyst

Web content management (WCM) vendors have adopted headless architectures where the content is separated from the presentation. APIs are used to connect applications with the content, meaning that content can be reused wherever it is required. This enables content to be requested by applications that create experiences for delivery through new channels, and it also future-proofs the technology as additional channels are created. This makes integration a key component of a modern WEM platform. Liferay Digital Experience Platform (DXP) is a WCM platform that started as a portal solution, which means that integration and interoperability are at the core of its design and implementation.

Key messages

- Liferay DXP web services can be exposed in several formats: SOAP, JSON, XML, and REST.
- Liferay's full-featured WCM system includes SEO-friendly URL support, sitemaps, keywords, metadata, multi-language support, multitenancy, faceted search, templating, geolocation support, and an authoring experience.
- A unified document repository stores documents, video, audio, images, and other media types in one place.
- Out-of-the-box integration with multiple repositories is provided through content management interoperability services (CMIS)-compliant products including enterprise content management (ECM) vendors such as Alfresco, Nuxeo, and FileNet, as well as proprietary connectors to Microsoft SharePoint and OpenText Documentum.

Ovum view

Liferay DXP started as a portal solution, which puts it at an advantage over other WCM vendors because integration and interoperability were already important elements of its platform. With WCM vendors adopting headless and/or de-coupled architectures, the ability to easily integrate with a wide array of applications is becoming increasingly important. Liferay is one of several open source vendors in the WCM space, which puts it at an advantage at a time when governments around the world are encouraging government departments and public-sector bodies to adopt open source systems wherever possible. Government is one of the areas in which Liferay has been particularly successful along with the financial sector and healthcare. Liferay has three products: DXP, which is standalone, Analytics Cloud, which is not yet a standalone product, and commerce, which requires a DXP license to use. DXP is available both on-premises and via platform-as-a-service (PaaS) (Liferay DXP Cloud), and it can also be deployed in the cloud through partners.

Recommendations for enterprises

Why consider Liferay DXP?

Liferay DXP will appeal to a wide range of enterprises because it has been designed to allow organizations to build portals, intranets, and websites and can be used in a variety of ways. It can build complete digital experiences for customer-facing websites, B2B portals for suppliers, B2C portals for customer self-service, and intranets. There are a wide range of integrations available. It provides a full-featured WCM with capabilities that will satisfy the requirements of marketers, sales teams, developers, and IT. It includes a tool to consume and provide seamless integration, the ability to create marketing pages, and multi-language support.

SWOT analysis

Strengths

Liferay DXP includes a full-featured WCM system

Liferay DXP includes URL support, sitemaps, keywords, metadata (tagging, folksonomy, and taxonomy), multi-language support, related content, multitenancy, faceted search, templating, geolocation support, and an authoring experience. It is SEO-friendly and supports branching and versioning of sites.

Users can preview their changes

A review system is included where multiple authors can individually preview their changes to sites, and the changes are then merged together. Users are also able to view staged versions of the site that are scheduled for publication at a future date. Roles-based workflow and user-definable custom workflow are available, using pluggable engines with Kaleo provided out-of-the-box.

Marketers are well catered for

Marketing pages such as landing pages can be easily created using drag-and-drop functionality, which uses page “fragments” built by an enterprise’s developers. A single repository for documents, video, audio and other assets uses versioning and check-in and check-out library services. Embedded metadata associated with each file is automatically extracted and displayed, and custom metadata fields can be applied.

Out-of-the-box integration is provided

Liferay DXP uses CMIS to provide out-of-the-box integration with multiple repositories from ECM vendors such as Alfresco, Nuxeo, FileNet, and OpenText, as well as providing proprietary connectors to SharePoint and Documentum. Liferay Sync displays and synchronizes content and documents to mobile and tablet devices as well as desktop environments when users are offline.

Weaknesses

Liferay has a relatively low market profile

Liferay does not have the market profile of some of its competitors in the WCM space, and there will therefore be enterprises for which this will be an ideal solution that do not know of its existence.

Liferay needs to work on raising its market profile.

Opportunities

Its open source credentials provide Liferay with opportunities to extend its market share

Liferay DXP is an open source product, which has been developed in collaboration with its users through its active and mature user community. Its users come from a broad range of industries, implementations, and organizational roles that allow them to contribute different perspectives to the development of the product. Each Liferay DXP subscription comes with a perpetual license, and Liferay offers value-added services through enterprise subscriptions that provide support, software access to enterprise features, and updates. Many governments are currently recommending that public sector bodies implement open source products where feasible, and this should help Liferay to grow its market share in government and the public sector.

Enterprises using legacy portals provide an opportunity for Liferay

Some enterprises are using legacy portal use cases, which they are attempting to use for customer engagement. Because these solutions were not designed to support the digital engagements of today, many organizations are having to deploy point solutions to provide some of the capabilities required. Liferay believes it has an opportunity to provide these enterprises with a rationalized and well-integrated platform that can support the entire customer lifecycle.

The cloud will provide Liferay with additional opportunities to extend its reach

Liferay DXP Cloud is a full-fledged enterprise platform-as-a-service (PaaS) that includes support for autoscaling, application monitoring and management, and permissioning. Although it is initially only offered in the Americas, Liferay plans to offer it in Europe and Asia-Pacific in 2019.

Threats

There are many vendors offering WCM platforms

Liferay faces stiff competition from a large number of WCM vendors that include high-profile ECM vendors with WCM platforms, and specialist vendors. WCM is also well served by open source vendors.

There are still enterprises using legacy WCM systems

While digital transformation is driving enterprises to adopt modern WCM architectures, there are still many organizations that are running legacy platforms that support mobile-first initiatives, but not headless architectures that enable the software to support new and emerging digital channels. Vendors such as Liferay need to convince enterprises of the need to adopt up-to-date WCM platforms that will help with digital transformation initiatives.

Data sheet

Key facts about the solution

Table 1: Data sheet: Liferay

Product name	Liferay Digital Experience Platform	Product classification	Content management
Version number	7.1	Release date	July 2018
Industries covered	All, but a particular focus on: financial services, government/public sector, healthcare and insurance companies.	Geographies covered	Global
Relevant company sizes	Any, but target is companies with revenues of at least 250 million USD	Platforms supported	CentOS 7, Oracle Solaris 11, Red Hat Enterprise Linux 7, SUSE Enterprise Linux 12, Ubuntu LTS 16.04, Windows Server 2016, Oracle Linux 6, Oracle Linux 7, IBM AIX 7.1, Debian 9
Languages supported	Catalan, Chinese (Simplified), Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Hebrew, Hungarian, Japanese, Portuguese, Spanish.	Licensing options	Perpetual
Deployment options	On-premises and on-premises with managed hosting. Liferay DXP Cloud allows for cloud deployment options.	Routes to market	Direct and channel sales
URL	www.liferay.com	Company headquarters	Diamond Bar, CA, US
European headquarters	Eschborn, Germany	Asia-Pacific headquarters	Tokyo, Japan

Source: Ovum

Appendix

Methodology

Ovum SWOT Assessments are independent reviews carried out using Ovum's evaluation model for the relevant technology area, supported by conversations with vendors, users, and service providers of the solution concerned, and in-depth secondary research.

Author

Sue Clarke, Senior Analyst, Software – Information Management

sue.clarke@ovum.com

Ovum Consulting

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ovum.informa.com

askananalyst@ovum.com

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