

SWOT Assessment: PleaseTech, PleaseReview v6.1

Analyzing the strengths, weaknesses,
opportunities, and threats

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Sue Clarke



Summary

Catalyst

Document review is typically a difficult process for the document author, particularly if multiple reviewers are involved. Many organizations rely on "track changes" to mark up documents being reviewed, resulting in document authors receiving documents that have been marked up by multiple reviewers, with the same passages changed several times. This makes it difficult to understand just what changes have been suggested and by whom. Document review products have found a ready market in organizations that want simpler solutions to co-author and review documents.

PleaseReview from PleaseTech is a document review, co-authoring, and redaction software solution that allows teams to work collaboratively to create and deliver documents.

Key messages

- PleaseReview includes a responsive interface that provides support for all mobile devices. Documents can be loaded incrementally, so as the reviewer scrolls down the page, the next page is loaded, which makes it easier to view documents on mobile devices.
- PleaseReview is designed to be used as either a standalone or as an integrated review solution and supports Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint; PDF; source code; text; and images.
- "Round tripping" of documents, especially Word documents, means that the author does not need to copy and paste the accepted changes into a master document, which saves time as there may be hundreds or even thousands of changes.
- All comments and changes are listed at the side of the page, with general comments displayed at the top of the document, making it easy to view which parts of the document that changes and comments relate to.

Ovum view

Document review is an area that is often overlooked by organizations that rely on the tools that are supplied with their content-authoring applications, most typically Microsoft Word, or their document collaboration tools. These are fine if a single person is reviewing a document, but readability becomes difficult once multiple reviewers are involved in the process. Document review products are a useful addition for organizations that need to create and review large numbers of documents, which can be hundreds or thousands of pages long; yet the technology and the vendors that provide these products have a low market profile. PleaseTech is a well-established vendor; its product, PleaseReview, which is now at version 6.1, complements enterprise content management (ECM) platforms, document collaboration tools, and file sync and share products, providing controlled review with an audit trail of all changes that have been made to a document. This will appeal to organizations in highly regulated industries. In addition, its redaction facility ensures that people do not see content within a document they are not authorized to view. However, as document review sits between document collaboration (often sold as part of an ECM portfolio) and file sync and share products, it is seen as a niche area and it is difficult for vendors to establish a high profile and large market share.

Recommendations for enterprises

Why consider PleaseReview?

PleaseReview maintains an audit log of all co-authoring and review activities on documents. Its granular access rights and permissions ensure that users can only edit parts of a document that they have the rights to work on. Redaction capabilities allow users to propose and review redactions. This allows for collaborative redaction of a document, and the document can be downloaded with all redactions applied, with all redaction activity captured in a detailed report. This will appeal to organizations in highly regulated industries that have complex and extensive document creation, redaction, and review processes, where maintenance of a detailed audit trail of all activities is required.

SWOT analysis

Strengths

PleaseReview maintains previous reviews to maintain a complete audit trail

One of the requirements of many regulations is the retention of the entire lifecycle of documents, including all versions of document reviews. PleaseReview maintains copies of all changes made to all content within a document. Many documents undergo several review processes during their lifecycle and these can be linked, allowing users to easily view the entire review history of a document.

Document review process easy to set up and use

Content authors, who have control over who can do what with their documents, are provided with a five-step wizard to set up reviews. Authors select the documents they want to be reviewed by dragging and dropping the file into the review environment or typing its name into a box; participants are then invited to review the documents and they are assigned rights dictating what they are allowed to do. All reviewers mark up the same document, and can see all suggested changes and comments made previously (unless they are prevented from seeing the reviews of other people). General comments appear at the beginning of the document; suggested additions appear in the document in a different color for each reviewer and deletions are depicted as crossed-out text, which has a similar appearance to "track changes," a familiar feature for users of Microsoft Office. Comments about specific sections of the document appear at the side of the text to which they relate. Only the author can make changes to the document by accepting or rejecting the changes. Accepted changes are automatically round-tripped into Word documents, so that the author does not need to copy and paste the accepted changes into a master document.

PleaseReview supports redaction

Users are able to collaboratively redact content, which is a useful feature where an organization needs to produce a redacted set of documents for publication, e.g. the redaction of personal private data or commercially confidential content. The redaction feature is available for PDF review. Users select the area of the document they want to redact, and with a single click the highlighted section is redacted. Other users can reply to and discuss the redactions prior to their acceptance by an author or document owner.

Weaknesses

Document review is a relatively small market, comprising niche vendors

It can be very difficult to establish a high market profile with a product that does not fit neatly into any technology area – document review sits between document collaboration within ECM and file sync and share. PleaseTech needs to build its market profile by persuading potential customers of the value of a product that provides new features to the already crowded markets for document collaboration and file sync and share.

Opportunities

PleaseReview is complementary to collaboration, ECM, and file sync and share products

PleaseTech can build on and extend its partnerships with ECM, document collaboration, and file sync and share vendors. These products all provide document collaboration capabilities, but often rely on review features within the document-authoring environments they support, where suggested changes can be difficult to follow when multiple people review a single document. Integrating with more of these products would provide additional sales opportunities, as document review is complementary to all of these collaboration products.

Growing popularity of cloud offers additional opportunities

PleaseReview is available as an on-premise software solution and a cloud service. With increasing numbers of organizations demonstrating interest in testing the cloud with nonsensitive content, PleaseTech has the opportunity to increase the use of the product by promoting its cloud options as a secure method of reviewing, co-authoring, and working collaboratively to create and deliver documents.

Threats

Competition from established document collaboration vendors is stiff

The document collaboration market is well established with a high number of specialist vendors as well as ECM vendors with document collaboration features. Many organizations will already be using one of these products. PleaseTech needs to convince organizations that its value proposition is as a complementary product and not a replacement for ECM document collaboration.

File sync and share is a growing market

A large number of file sync and share vendors provide document review features. A handful of these currently dominate the market, making it difficult for new entrants to build a large market share. PleaseTech must emphasize the uniqueness of its product if it is to be seen as a complementary solution for large embedded file sync and share products.

Data sheet

Key facts about the solution

Table 1: Data sheet: PleaseTech

Product name	PleaseReview	Product classification	Content management
Version number	6.1	Release date	March 2017
Industries covered	All	Geographies covered	Global
Relevant company sizes	Midsized to large enterprises	Platforms supported	Browser-based and supports IE11 and the latest Chrome, Firefox, and Safari browsers
Languages supported	English, language packs available for French, Spanish, Chinese, and Japanese	Licensing options	Perpetual, term
Deployment options	On-premise, cloud	Routes to market	Direct, technology partners, strategic partners
URL	www.pleasetech.com	Company headquarters	Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, UK
European headquarters	n/a	North America headquarters	n/a
Asia-Pacific headquarters	n/a		

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.

Further reading

2017 Trends to Watch: Enterprise Content Management, IT0014-003165 (December 2016)

Author

Sue Clarke, Senior Analyst, Information Management

sue.clarke@ovum.com

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