# Alfresco® Case Study

## Saks Fifth Avenue

Sets Trends Online with Alfresco WCM

**Customer**
Saks Fifth Avenue

**Industry**
Retail

**Solution**
Web Content Services
Document Management

**Products**
Alfresco
Blue Martini / RedPrairie
Commerce Suite
Oracle Endeca

### Results

- Delivers content as a service to online and mobile sites
- Site content can be updated within minutes
- Business users are now empowered to publish their content to production
- Web services integrates content with other systems
- Streamlines business workflow, adding business approvers and reducing IT involvement
- Content can be edited directly on the preproduction server

### Challenge

Saks Fifth Avenue, one of the world's preeminent specialty retailers, is known for its designer collections, handbags, shoes and fashion expertise. While Saks operates 45 stores across the US, its online store, www.saks.com, brings high fashion to customers anytime, anywhere.

The company's online store was built using Web content management and ecommerce software from RedPrairie (formerly known as Blue Martini). For Saks, the software had been great for integrating ecommerce into the company's inventory management system. However, the system's content management capabilities did not align to Saks' needs in terms of flexibility and speed. For example, marketing teams experienced difficultly updating and managing marketing content such as promotions and banners. The process of updating content on Saks.com could take hours or even a full day and, as a result, they could not immediately update / remove online promotions from the site after items sold out. This meant online shoppers were potentially clicking on promotions that were no longer available.

> "With Web services and Alfresco we can instantly serve up marketing content in many different places and formats such as online and mobile. This has allowed us to easily execute on our mobile strategy without requiring additional systems or development. Alfresco is also easy to use for our business users. We now have one rule –any content put into Alfresco has to be managed by business teams who know the content best. This has freed up our time to focus on other IT projects."
>
> — Aaron Heath, Principle Application Developer, Saks Fifth Avenue

## Solution

The Saks IT team researched Web content management systems and selected Alfresco because it worked on a Linux technology stack and would be easy to implement into Saks' existing environment. Alfresco's support for open standards and Web services was key to its selection. With Web services, Saks knew the Alfresco platform could quickly serve up content to its online and mobile sites as well as future mobile applications.

Saks rolled out Alfresco methodically to ensure that it would not disrupt its ecommerce operations. Saks initially used Alfresco to create and store video content for the site and later expanded it to include other marketing content such as banners, images and promotions. Saks first created custom content types and forms to capture all the metadata required to identify a document name, description, thumbnail image, and URL text. Metadata is also used to associate content types with other related site / product content in order to provide shoppers with additional product suggestions. Custom page types with one-to-one mapping of pages to actual content types were created to identify which pages a video / banner would appear on.

Content is created in and stored using Alfresco Share. Custom forms were built in Share to help manage the creation of content. When new content is loaded into Alfresco, rules are applied and it is transformed into a specific content type with start and end dates. A content owner from the merchandizing team goes into Alfresco and adds metadata and assigns it to Web pages. The content then is added to the staging site. Using a custom built tool, the content owner can edit the content directly in the preproduction / authoring environment. Any changes made on the site are automatically saved in Alfresco using Web services. Once content is approved it can be moved to the production site immediately or scheduled for a specific time. As a result, banners or videos are frequently swapped out in minutes when items sell out.



Saks developed a web service that calls Blue Martini and is able to associate Alfresco content with Blue Martini content in order to present the timely information to online shoppers. For example, below each video are thumbnail images of the products and links to information stored in Blue Martini. Using the same Web services, Alfresco also integrates with Endeca, Saks' ecommerce search solution. The Saks.com site can pull content from Alfresco and display it in pages generated by Endeca. This easy integration between Alfresco, Blue Martini and Endeca ensure that the company can display content in many different ways for an improved shopping experience.

Saks also uses Alfresco to create an online fashion magazine called The Edit. The marketing and merchandizing team manage the magazine content completely in Alfresco and publish it on Saks.com. Online advertising in the magazine has provided for a new revenue stream for Saks' ecommerce site.
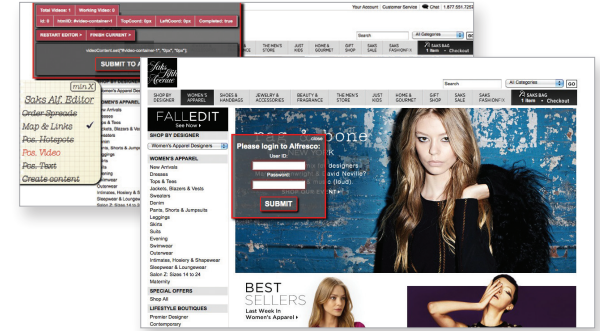
Using Web services, Saks is also able to serve Alfresco content to its iPad and iPhone mobile apps and its mobile website. Saks added a new content type allowing videos, banners, etc. to be viewed on mobile devices. Alfresco also manages the Saks' store finder pages and allows individual store managers to create event pages. This information can be easily deployed across all of Saks mobile channels.

## Conclusion

- Alfresco empowers Saks to deliver marketing content as a service to multiple online and mobile channels ensuring a consistent message is delivered to Saks' customers across all channels

- Web services enable Alfresco to integrate with Saks' ecommerce and search solutions.

- The Saks IT team has handed off the management of content to the marketing and merchandising teams allowing them to focus on other projects.

- Marketing and merchandising teams have improved management and control of content though its lifecycle.

- Over 50 internal users and 45 store managers use Alfresco on a regular basis and they now have over 40 GB worth of data stored in the Alfresco repository.