

viaContext™ overview

viaContext™ is a completely web-based portal and information management solution, which does not only provide a secure and structured management for your content, but also presents this content in a professional manner - just a few mouse clicks advance your content to a powerful internet portal - and you decide, who can view which content, who contributes new content or modifies existing content and how your content will be presented - turnkey and ready to use, individually designed, or both.

With viaContext™, you count on

- ⇒ A task-oriented access control system for users and groups for a reconciled definition of roles for all user groups
- ⇒ Highest data security through encrypted data transfer (SSL) and hosting in one of the most advanced data centres in Europe with 99.97% annual availability
- ⇒ Compact, completely web-based and fast user interface, compatible with all current browsers
- ⇒ Straightforward and flexible page layout with the integrated online WYSIWYG-editor
- ⇒ Minimal administration through simple user registration and access codes
- ⇒ Flexible metadata management through standardized XML and client-specific extensions
- ⇒ Online discussion forums and comments for folders and single media items or documents
- ⇒ Fast full-text search on document contents, page contents, comments and metadata
- ⇒ XML based interfaces for connecting external systems (web services)
- ⇒ Future-proof through latest software architecture, based on Java 6, Oracle 10g and mature open source components (Apache Webserver, Apache Xerces, Apache Tomcat, Enhydra Server, et al.)
- ⇒ Full cost control through internet based application service or attractive conditions for running viaContext™ on one of your servers

[More Information about viaContext™ is available in the viaContext™ Infocenter ...](#)

Information Management with viaContext™

According to a survey conducted by Gartner [<http://www.gartner.com>], 90 percent of companies believe they suffer from information overload and that their competitiveness is negatively impacted as a result. Although investments on information management systems, knowledge management systems, document management systems and content management systems are constantly increasing for this reason, survey respondents ranked informal information sources, such as personal networks (e.g. friends and close colleagues) and e-mails more beneficial to their business decision making than information stored electronically.

But using informal information resources and electronically stored information is not necessarily mutual exclusive. Ergonomic and easily accessible technologies are adopted faster and can form a meaningful complement to informal information resources.

viaContext™ can help you to achieve this: viaContext™ is a completely web-based information management solution with outstanding features for the efficient and compact presentation of the managed information.

Documents and content from existing archives can be combined with personal content and comments. Knowledge and valuable information, regardless whether published internally or for the general public, can be explored cooperatively. Digital archives turn from unnecessarily complex into systematically structured information pools.

[What is viaContext™ not ?](#)

Context

More and more knowledge and information is being delivered digitally in these days. The number of digital documents and media increases continuously and systems for managing digital resources are increasingly facing the challenge to store these resources in a way that allows for convenient retrieval.

A simple singular structure for the storage of these resources does not suffice anymore - knowledge and information are changing continuously, various demands put our knowledge into new contexts again and again, single resources may occur in different contexts and different users often have different viewpoints.

viaContext™ takes information management and knowledge management literally: viaContext™ enables the mapping of new contexts, just with a few mouse clicks ...

[More about Workspace, Archives, Metadata, Comments and Search ...](#)

Access Control Management

The management of user privileges is directly oriented on the features available in viaContext™. Roles can be defined in a flexible manner through the adequate choice of access control options.

Whether roles are defined for administrators, editors or content consumers, in either case the roles can be defined individually and attached to any group of archives or folders.

Security

Your documents are being stored on our servers following the most current security standards in one of the most up-to-date data centres in Germany. If you prefer to run viaContext™ on one of your own servers, we can provide you with qualified consultancy for an equivalent security strategy.

For the completely web-based access to your documents you can choose between unencrypted (HTTP) and encrypted (HTTPS, SSL 256 Bit) connections. This means, that you can choose yourself if you want to use the unencrypted, but usually faster connection, or, if the privacy of your documents demand for a secure connection (We strongly discourage the mixture of both connection methods for a single account. For the work with highly confidential documents only the secure connection should be used. Of course, you can restrict access to your account for all account members to SSL).

Technology

With viaContext™ you count on a system based on the most recent software components and technologies. The system is completely implemented in Java 6 and uses Oracle 10g for managing your data. The Java-applet based systems management console uses web services to communicate with the viaContext™ server, thus being completely web-based as well.

The metadata attached to your documents is stored in XML following the Dublin Core standard, a widely adapted standard for document management. For the presentation of the metadata in the user-interface, XSLT-stylesheets are used. If you have special requirements for the metadata attached to your documents, we can also integrate customized XML dialects and XSLT-stylesheets into your metadata. Ask us for an offer.

System Requirements

viaContext™ supports all popular, javascript-enabled browsers. There is no browser-dependent functionality in viaContext™. However, the following minimum requirement concerning the version of the browser should be met (for all browsers we recommend the most current version): Internet Explorer 5.5 (SP2+), Netscape 6.2.2, Mozilla 1.3, Firefox 1.0, Safari 1.2.

The systems management console (for group management in the group account and business account) requires the java plugin, version 1.5 (Java Runtime Environment 1.5.0) or higher. If the java plugin is not already installed on your computer, you will be asked to download the java plugin when you start the systems management console for the first time.

When you already have installed an older version of the java plugin on your computer, you must start the installation of the current version directly over the Java homepage (<http://java.com>). In addition, you need a Pentium III or IV with 500 MHz or faster and 100 MB free disc space and at least 64 MB RAM. More information about system requirements for the java plugin is available at <http://java.com>.

Free Account

Sounds interesting? Use the chance of looking at the system with a free account! Create a free account and test web-based information management with viaContext™ for free.

To simplify your start, we have created some examples for you. With access code MWVIEW (you will find this function after registration) you can get access to an archive of pictures of a Munich artist. This sample also shows you how you can give your resources with workspace folders a new context. If you do not want to see the resources you gained access for any longer, you can easily hide or remove them using the functions provided in your personal profile.

Please contact our support-team, if you have questions or problems concerning your account.

Convinced? Let us convince you of our prices as well!

You are committed to the features of viaContext™ and want to benefit from professional, web-based information management in the future, too? You can convert your free account to a full-featured account for teamwork with extended system resources at any time!

[viaContext™ Prices](#) 

What is viaContext™ not ?

The market for software and business services for working groups and document management gets increasingly complex. Although the differentiation between the various offers is far from being easy, we will try to help you understanding what you can expect from viaContext™ by considering a few popular keywords in this area.

Email, Calendars and Task Lists

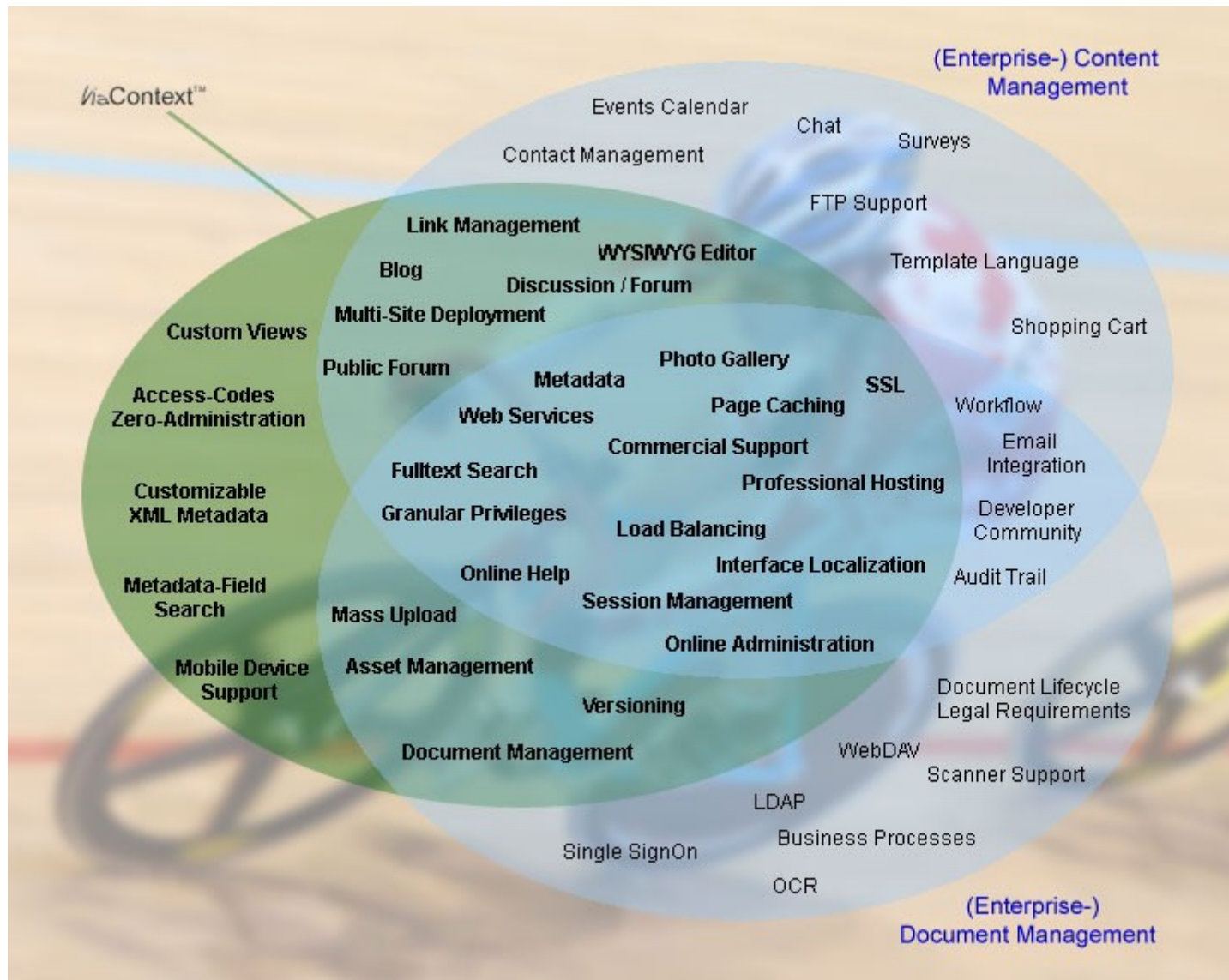
The market offers quite a few software systems for the electronic communication of group members (groupware) through email, shared calendars and tasks lists (Outlook/Exchange, Lotus Notes, etc.). viaContext™ can complement these systems through its capabilities in the structured management of shared documents and media. viaContext™ thus does not provide its own email, calendar or task list management.

Business Processes and Workflow

Most systems offered under the term (Enterprise-) Document Management (or Content Management) no longer have their focus on the structured management of documents, but on the electronic mapping of business processes.

Due to the mapping of complex business processes (workflow) and technical support for the complete lifecycle of a document (scanner support, electronic fax recording, revision-proof archival, etc.), these systems usually come at a high cost and an inflexible, since location based, architecture. For many organisations, these systems are too costly and inflexible.

viaContext™ does not support workflow management and components, which depend on technology attached to a certain place. The gain in flexibility through a completely web-based system thus enables access to knowledge particularly with a medium-term or long-term application context beyond the boundaries of localized systems.



viaContext™ combines selected features of (Enterprise-) DMS and CMS systems

Workspace, Archives, Metadata, Comments and Search ...

The distinction between context and physical storage of the documents is always reflected in the user interface of viaContext™: in the archives, the place documents are stored physically, you can upload and replace version-controlled documents (alternatively, you can store links to external resources). In addition, metadata for documents and media is maintained here.

In your workspace, a work folder corresponds to a context. The work folders are not the place of physical storage for the documents, but contain links to the original document in an archive. Whenever the original document is updated, this is reflected in your work folder instantly.

Metadata and Comments

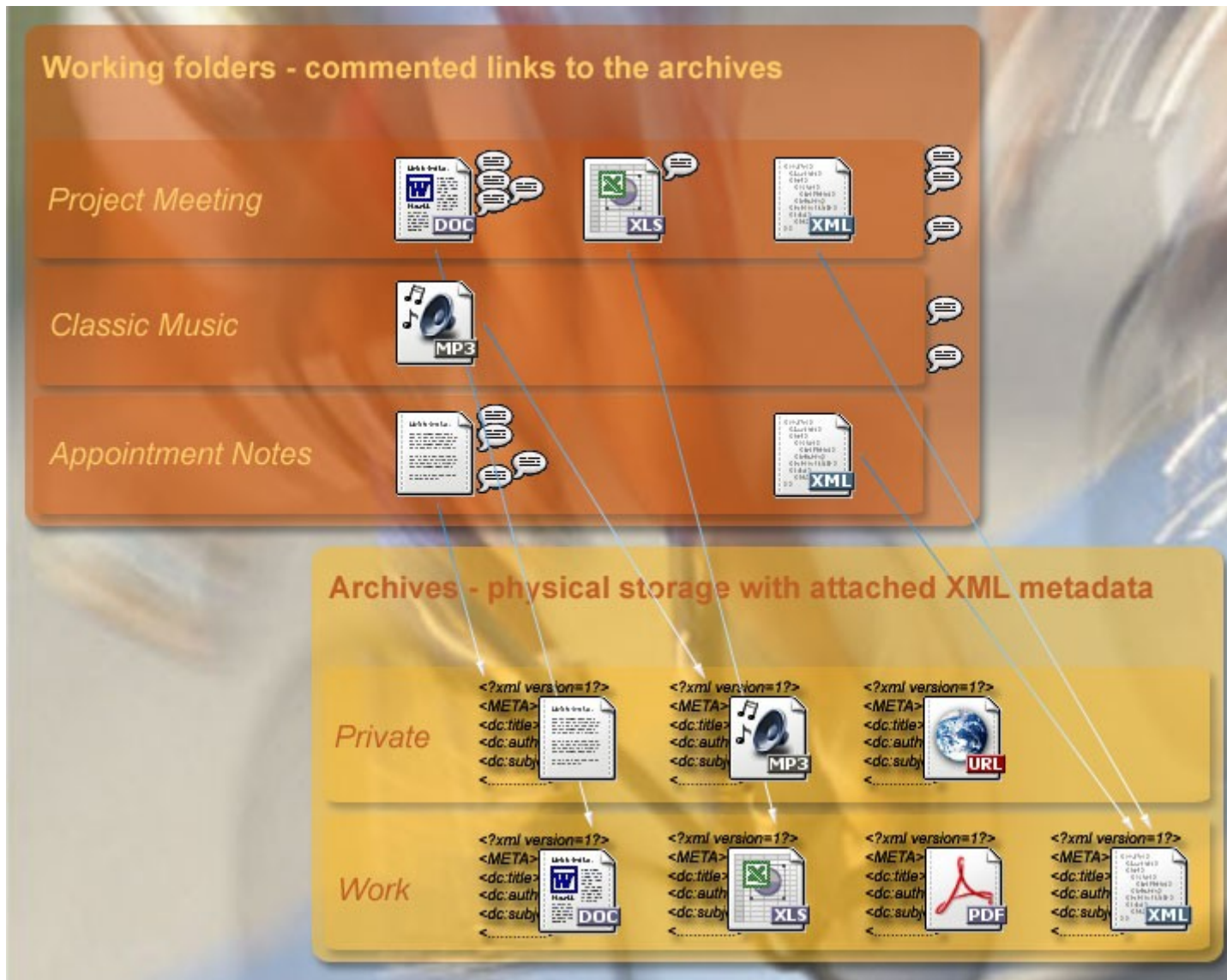
viaContext™ supports the structured storage of documents and media with attached metadata and comments. The distinction between archives and working folders requires a non-ambiguous assignment of this additional information either to the original (in the archive) or to the link (in the working folder).

Metadata is assigned to the original and describes the document without respect to any context.

Comments depend on the context and describe the usage or interpretation of the document in a particular context. The diagram on the next page clarifies the structures and actions upon objects in viaContext™.

Search

Categorizing documents with the help of working folders simplifies the search for documents significantly. However, performing a search for documents spanning the whole archive can sometimes be faster: all documents stored within viaContext™ can be searched for any keywords or combinations of keywords. Whenever you store a document in viaContext™, the document is checked if it contains text. First, we check if the document consists of plain text (.TXT, .HTML, .XML, etc.), but we also support complex formats like Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint, and also PDF and many more.



Particularly the management of substantial datasets benefits from the flexibility of the working folders

But that is not all! Probably, your documents are not only text-based. Images, videos, audio-files and presentations are becoming increasingly popular digital formats. These formats usually do not contain any textual information that could be scanned by a search engine. Thus, it is even more important to enrich these documents with metadata: the metadata is scanned from our search-engine and enables search even for documents that do not contain any textual information.

[Learn more about search ...](#)

Portals, Overview

The viaContext™ portal technology enables your content to be published under a unique Internet domain of your choice. To safely and easily distinguish between public and private content, viaContext™ offers an appropriate set of reliable tools.

The initial setup of a portal is straightforward and easy. When you register for an account with viaContext™, an initial portal is even created automatically with proper default settings to start with (provided, that the optional field for the domain name has been filled in correctly at registration. Of course, a later setup is possible and easy, too).

When a new portal is being created, a so-called 'public portal group' is also created and attached to the portal. Each visitor of the portal is now a 'virtual member' of this group and can access all content, which has been released to the public portal group.

To make your start with a viaContext™ portal even simpler, with the creation of your first portal, you will get an automatically generated start page as well, including the appropriate access rights for the public portal group and your visitors. This start page serves as an ideal start for building up your site hierarchy. Since subsequently created subfolders of your start page inherit the access rights of the start page, you can build up your site quickly without the need to look into access rights management in-depth.

To simplify the distinction between public and private content in viaContext™, public folders (i.e. folders released for access by some public portal group) are displayed in a different colour (green). Note that the distinction by colour is only active for account members being logged into the system. Since guests can only see public content anyway, a special colouring does not make sense for your visitors.

For the arrangement of your portal, viaContext™ offers a number of powerful but straightforward options. These options are based on the features of viaContext™ available to account members.

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying a portal page. The page is divided into three main sections: a heading frame at the top, a navigation frame on the left, and a content frame on the right. Annotations with arrows point to these sections:

- Easy navigation with automatically generated sitemap:** Points to the left navigation menu containing links like 'China', 'Gullin / Yangshou', 'Peking', 'Shanghai', 'Xian', and 'China Resources'.
- Stand-alone links for special content, i.e., contact, about us:** Points to the 'About Us / Contact' link in the navigation menu.
- Optional modules for improved usage and additional features:** Points to the 'SEARCH ARCHIVES' and 'LOGIN' sections in the navigation menu.
- Flexible layout of the heading frame for an individual look & feel:** Points to the top banner area with the title 'China'.
- Start page subject to free choice out of all available public pages in the portal:** Points to the main content area, which features a map of China and introductory text.
- Page customizable like any other page. All objects available in the integrated DMS can be used:** Points to the main content area.

An automatically created portal is presented to visitors with a page structure similar to the page structure of viaContext™ for account members after being logged into the system. The page is subdivided into three parts: the heading frame at the upper border of the page, the navigation frame at the left hand side of the page and the content frame, occupying the remaining space and also being the largest area of the page.

Although suiting the needs of most portal applications, this arrangement is not the only option. The heading frame and the navigation frame are optional elements and can be disabled or customized to the users needs.

One of the convincing advantages of portals powered by viaContext™ is the instant availability of the portal. The default configuration provides a proper presentation of the content released to the public, but the owner of the portal has many options to customize the portal step by step towards a fully custom presentation of its content: when the heading frame and the navigation frame are disabled, the site design is subject just to the design of the contained pages, with almost no limitations through the usage of the integrated WYSIWYG page editor.

However, abandoning the navigation frame also means that the site navigation must be integrated manually into the page design.

Incidentally note that a portal does not necessarily need to provide public content. A portal also makes much sense for various types of closed groups of users - from working teams to product portfolio presentations for selected customers you will certainly find many gainful use cases.

[Continue with the Options and Configuration of Portals](#)