

Re-homing Domino applications

Once upon a time, business email was a two-horse race between Microsoft (Outlook / Exchange) and IBM Lotus (Notes / Domino).

Notes, although a powerful piece of software, was — and is — somewhat clunky by comparison with its peers. That derives both from its venerable age, and from the fact that it was always intended to be a general-purpose tool: it did a lot more than just email.

Fast-forward to 2017, and many organisations have moved their email to Microsoft or Google: the mechanisms for doing that are reliable and well-established.

What's been less clear, though, is how those organisations then treat the other things for which they used Notes / Domino, and that is often a major challenge. Those "other things" are the custom applications that have usually been created in-house by long-since-departed software developers. LDC Via offers the solution to that conundrum.

Picking up the pieces

The initial driver for moving is sometimes personal preference (Notes has always divided opinion), and there are more concrete reasons too:

- ❑ Having migrated the email, you are left with a relatively expensive platform to own and maintain.
- ❑ Specialist skills are required to keep it running optimally, and staff costs are hard to justify.
- ❑ Users may still need to run the Notes client to do their jobs.
- ❑ As the Notes / Domino market share declines, so too does the available pool of skills to maintain the platform and applications.
- ❑ The tools that Notes / Domino software developers must use are obscure and cumbersome.
- ❑ The risk is that the applications become out-dated, no longer match business needs, and users circumvent them using email and spreadsheets: a retrograde step.

But there are also challenges:

- ❑ The organisation possibly doesn't have a clear idea of how many applications they have, who uses them, and which are still active.
- ❑ The document-centric Notes / Domino data-store doesn't map readily onto relational databases like SQL Server and Oracle.
- ❑ Remodelling and cleaning the data for a migration to SharePoint (or another relational environment) can burn through a shocking amount of project budget.



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So where does LDC Via come in?

LDC Via re-homes Notes / Domino data with very little effort, into a like-for-like data store. Here at LDC Via we have set out to build the best possible replacement for the IBM Domino server as a data and application platform. We're not offering an email server — that's already catered-for admirably — but what's been lacking until now is a good home for the data and applications.

Primarily we offer a "platform as a service". For a simple monthly fee we provide an always-up, always-backed-up data environment. We can supply it on-premises too for organisations that are unable or unwilling to put their data into "the cloud". Our platform is fast and scalable: Domino always started struggling when document counts reached into the hundreds of thousands, but with LDC Via there are no such worries.

Once an organisation has settled on their preferred platform options, two important questions remain: (1) what is the best mechanism for transferring the Domino data, and; (2) what should be done with their data once it has been brought into LDC Via?

We provide web-based and installer-based migration utilities, which are very easy to use. Pick up the metaphorical data bucket with 'Domino' written on it and pour it into the bucket with 'LDC Via' written on it. A few configuration choices, and press "Go": it really is that simple.

If the data is old — required for reference only — it can be left at that: our online data browser means it can be explored, sorted, searched, filtered, and exported to PDF or Excel.

For those wishing to take things a little further, **LDC Via Lens** allows the point-and-click creation of simple forms and document views (lists), together with the ability to edit and augment the data. This all functions seamlessly on both mobile and desktop devices.

For the standard Notes applications (e.g. Document Library, Discussion, TeamRoom), we provide templates so that they will continue to function (create, read, update, etc) effortlessly.

And finally, for applications that require a future, your developers — no matter what their preference is for development tools — can work with our Application Programming Interface (API). They can also make use of our extensive code samples and training videos to create applications, to integrate migrated data with other applications and portals, and to build brand-new applications.

The LDC Via platform is built on top of respected and widely-used tools like Amazon Web Services and MongoDB. And our APIs are all REST-based, which in non-technical terms means that any developer worth his or her salt will be up and running without needing to learn a whole raft of specialist skills.



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This all sounds rather splendid...

You might be thinking now that this all sounds too good to be true. In which case we would encourage you to register for a free account and try LDC Via — and naturally we will assist with any initial queries or concerns you may have.

If the prospect of migrating umpteen years-worth of applications seems too daunting, we can work with you to identify the quick wins and plan the overall migration. And, of course, if in-house developers are already busy, we can provide the development skills to build applications against the LDC Via platform.

What next?

If you want to “kick the tyres”, sign up for a free account and have a go. There are plenty of resources — help and examples — online to help you.

Full pricing details are available on our website at <http://ldcvia.com/prices.html>

Consulting service packages are also available: <http://ldcvia.com/services.html>

Code samples are open-sourced at <http://github.com/ldcvia>

Alternatively, if you would like to migrate, but don't know where to start, we can help you plan and execute that process.

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About LDC Via

LDC Via was founded in reaction to the clear need for a high-quality and simple mechanism to move data out of legacy IBM Lotus Notes / Domino systems and into a modern platform.

LDC Via grew out of the "London Developer Co-op", which itself was founded in 2008 as a small group of technologists with deep and lengthy experience in IBM Lotus Notes and Domino development, as well as other technologies including Java, .NET, node.js, PHP (Zend, Wordpress, etc.), AngularJS, Google Apps Script, Javascript, and more.

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