



Overview

Country: Malaysia

Industry: Media

Customer Profile

Kumpulan Karangraf is a leading Malaysian publisher. It produces 29 titles, covering women, fashion, entertainment and current affairs. Many of the titles are market leaders.

Business Situation

Vital information that could improve business decision making was often kept within departments. Key staff, who make vital business decisions often did not have access to this information.

Solution

The company implemented Microsoft® Office SharePoint™ Portal Server, integrating it with Microsoft Office Professional Edition 2003. This resulted in an information sharing and collaborative working environment across the company.

Benefits

- Knowledge sharing
- Collaborative working
- Centralised structured data repository
- 25 per cent reduced total cost
- Anywhere, anytime accessibility

Publisher Introduces Vital Information Sharing

“The main effect of SharePoint Portal Server on our business will be improved decision making and in turn this will have a very positive impact on the way we operate, business growth, and market position.”

Syamil Fahim bin Mohamed Fahim, Executive Director, Kumpulan Karangraf

Kumpulan Karangraf, a leading Malaysian publisher, wanted to break down the communication barriers between its different departments. Vital information that could improve operations and result in more informed business decision making was effectively locked away in departments. But, by turning to Microsoft® Office SharePoint™ Portal Server the isolated communication islands are being bridged, collaborative working has become the norm, Information Technology staff are freed up to concentrate on their core tasks and vital information is flowing through the company, significantly improving its capabilities and galvanising its market position.



Situation

Kumpulan Karang kraf is one of Malaysia's leading publishers. It produces 29 titles and has virtually cornered the market in women's magazines as well as teenager, children, parenting, health and fashion publications. It also publishes a number of respected titles covering IT, economics, social and political issues.

Its 250 staff and eight departments regularly generate an enormous amount of content. The company management realised that if some of this information was shared among different departments it could drive the business forward by improving the decision making processes.

A small amount of select information was being exchanged by e-mail, or even by disk, but was not reaching all the people who would benefit from it. For example, reports detailing market activity and reader demographics from the research and development department are sent to each department head. But other key staff, such as editors, would not receive it.

Syamil Fahim bin Mohamed Fahim, Executive Director, Kumpulan Karang kraf, says: "Important business information, which could radically improve business decision making, was not being received by everyone who could make use of it. Information that was generated within a department often did not go beyond that department."

The existing document sharing process was not very effective. Kumpulan Karang kraf's Information Technology (IT) team of ten people, uploaded documents onto a centralised folder on the company intranet. Each magazine also had its own folder and all articles were uploaded into the folder.

Mohamed Fahim says: "The problem is that it was a file based system that holds thousands

of documents. There is no automatic search facility, which means that a user had to browse through this mass of documents to find what they are looking for, which can take a long time."

This process was also eating up IT resources. Each document had to be converted into HTML before it was put on the intranet which took a lot of time and distracted the IT team from core tasks. A further effect was that the intranet had effectively become a technology owned by the IT department and the documents that were uploaded onto the intranet tended to be only used by those who had placed them there.

Mohamed Fahim says: "The situation reflected the nature of publishing. Interaction between departments is minimal and establishing a collaborative working environment in a publishing house is notoriously difficult. All the departments effectively operate as islands.

"Building a central resource where all company information is available to everyone will make a large difference. Research figures generated by the marketing department will help the editorial team plan content, sales department proposals for clients who advertise could help the marketing team, and editorial content could be useful to both sales and marketing."

Solution

Kumpulan Karang kraf began a consultation with its technology partner atQuest Solution. Following a business evaluation, atQuest pointed out that to improve collaboration between departments, and relieve the burden on the IT team, ownership of the intranet had to be put back into the business, rather than the IT team.

Mohamed Fahim says: "We already used key Microsoft technologies and atQuest suggested that if we introduced Microsoft Office SharePoint Portal Server 2003 an information sharing and knowledge management culture would soon be established."

A 30 day pilot was implemented in June 2004 and SharePoint Portal Server 2003 was integrated with existing key Microsoft technologies, Microsoft Exchange Server 2003, Microsoft SQL Server™ 2000 and Microsoft Office 2003 Professional.

Three departments took part in the pilot: human resources, marketing, and four magazines from the editorial department.

Human resources provided online access to company news, guidebooks, memos, and online holiday and sickness forms. The marketing department posted research and demographic information, and sales department posted advertising rates and client trends while the editorial department posted future features lists and content guides.

"Users accessed the portal through a single sign-on and used a number of keywords to search for information such as the title of their magazine, the market sector and demographic information," says Mohamed Fahim.

Each department began interacting with each other through the portal and it soon became established as an important business tool. Mohamed Fahim says: "SharePoint Portal Server 2003 enables us to seamlessly connect the departments by integrating information from various systems. The portal facilitates collaboration and knowledge management by enabling the aggregation and organisation of data and providing search capabilities for users."

Following the trial, the decision was taken to roll out SharePoint Portal Server 2003 to the entire company and its five other departments: printing, corporate communications, accounts, research and development, and circulation. The remaining 25 editorial teams would also begin using the portal by the end of 2004.

Mohamed Fahim says: "Each department and editorial team will create their own team site where they will upload their information and users will be able to access other department's documents. In some cases, access will be restricted to key staff such as editors and directors."

Kumpulan Karang kraf decided to sign up to an Enterprise Agreement licensing program with Microsoft. Mohamed Fahim says: "This provides us with several key benefits. Previously it was quite difficult to track licenses, but the Enterprise Agreement consolidated our licenses and gave us a series of discounts.

"By taking advantage of this we can upgrade everyone within the company to Microsoft Office 2003 Professional at discounted rates and integrate it with SharePoint Portal Server, ensuring everyone has access to the portal.

"This also enables staff to create document work spaces and by using Microsoft Office Live Communications Server 2003, it enables authoring and collaboration of documents. For example, an editor can ask a writer to make changes to a document and keep track of the whole process rather than having to look up different versions of the document.

Kumpulan Karang kraf also took advantage of the out-of-the-box mobility and VPN (Virtual Private Network) functionality provided by Microsoft Office SharePoint Portal Server

2003 and Microsoft Windows Server 2003 for offsite access.

“Most of our journalists spend about only 30 per cent of their time in the office. The rest of the time they are in the field researching and sourcing stories, so the ability to remotely access the editorial department to file copy and also carry out research is extremely valuable.”

Benefits

Knowledge Sharing

The communication islands within Kumpulan Karangkraf have been completely broken down by SharePoint Portal Server and a knowledge sharing culture is being introduced into the company. Each department and editorial team publishes its documents onto team sites, accessed via a single sign-on portal, enabling access to important information.

Mohamed Fahim says: “This is a fantastic achievement within a publishing house where interaction between different departments is almost non-existent. Now, for example, corporate communications puts its press releases onto its team site and these can be accessed by anyone within the organisation. In the past, it might issue a press release about a particular magazine, which would remain on the executive’s desk top and editorial or sales staff on that title would not know anything about it.

“Important information is also being circulated to those who can make the best use of it. Editors are receiving information about circulation and reader demographics, marketing is receiving information about advertising sales, and accounts can access the information they need without having to ask for it.”

Collaborative Working

Editors at Kumpulan Karangkraf have a tremendous task in managing and editing copy that is received from journalists in the field. When they suggest changes to copy it is then sent back to the journalist who will rework it. This process is multiplied many times and can lead to confusion about which version of the document is the most up-to-date.

Mohamed Fahim says: “The combination of SharePoint Portal Server and Microsoft Office Professional Edition 2003 enables versioning. Editors and writers create a workspace for live documents so they do not lose track of the version. If they do not like the changes they just click on a versioning button and back track to other versions.

“Editors can also use Instant Messenger to communicate directly with the author or the graphic artist for corrections or changes. Once the changes have been made, the file is saved and is ready for layout into the magazine. Photographers can also use SharePoint Portal Server to upload pictures for the editor’s approval. If the work has not been approved it cannot mistakenly go onto the next stage.”

Virtual Private Network (VPN) links within SharePoint Portal Server also enable Kumpulan Karangkraf to provide access to the portal for journalists in the field. “Our journalists spend most of their time out of the office. The VPN link gives them access, from anywhere in the world, to the portal. As such it is an incredibly useful tool enabling them to collaborate online and access existing information for research.”

Centralised Structured Data Repository

Most departments hold documents within their own department often on disks or desktop PCs. SharePoint Portal Server has led to the creation of a team site for each

department to which all this information is uploaded.

Mohamed Fahim says: "Each department now creates its own document workspace on its team site and uploads its documents. Before this we had a centralised folder, but the problem was that because it was a file based system, you could not search for documents or introduce an approvals process that was not visible to others.

"The beauty of SharePoint Portal Server is that you can search for any document among thousands, finding it within seconds, and as long as the document has not been approved it is not visible to others."

Significantly Reduced Load on IT Resources

The responsibility of maintaining the intranet belonged to the Kumpulan Karang kraf IT team who had to convert documents into HTML before they were published on the intranet. This required dedicated resources given the large number of documents that had to be published.

"The IT team no longer has to do this which actually removes a very heavy workload. Thanks to SharePoint Portal Server there is no requirement to convert everything to HTML. Content is published through wizards, which means the load of the IT team has been significantly lightened and they can concentrate on their core tasks," says Mohamed Fahim.

Integration of 25 Line-of-businesses Applications onto Portal

The pilot took in three departments and four magazines in the editorial department. Five more departments and 25 magazines will all be integrated into SharePoint Portal Server by the end of 2004. "This is going to be a real boost to the business and we are going to see decision making based on facts and research that was previously locked away. We

know we will see far greater information sharing and collaboration too, which can only be very positive for the company," says Mohamed Fahim.

25 Per Cent Reduced Total Cost of Ownership

By taking out an Enterprise Agreement license program Kumpulan Karang kraf reduced its total cost of ownership by 25 per cent. It has also reduced the overhead normally associated with ongoing license tracking and administration because there is no need to track license usage or software versions during the agreement term.

Mohamed Fahim says: "Previously it was quite difficult to keep track of licenses but following the Enterprise Agreement we have been able to consolidate our licenses which led to a series of discounts and cost savings. The right to adopt the current version of Microsoft products we are using is built into the Enterprise Agreement and as a result we have reduced overall costs."

"The thing about SharePoint Portal Server is its impact on the business. While it's a great tool in itself the main effect will be improved decision making and in turn this will have a very positive impact on the way we operate, business growth, and market position."

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- Microsoft Windows XP Professional
- Microsoft Exchange Server 2003
- Microsoft Office SharePoint Portal Server 2003

- Microsoft Office Live Communications Server 2003
- Microsoft Windows Server 2003
- Microsoft SQL 2000 Server
- Microsoft Systems Management Server 2003
- Under Enterprise Agreement licensing program

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Document published August, 2004

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