



Coop Gets Corporation-Wide Information Sharing

Overview

Country or Region: Switzerland

Industry: Retail

Customer Profile

Coop is Switzerland's second-largest retailer, with 1,500 stores nationwide and a workforce of 45,000.

Business Situation

Information-sharing across different departments and subsidiaries and structured access to over seven million documents posed a major challenge for the corporation.

Solution

In early 2008 Coop rolled out Microsoft® Office SharePoint® Server 2007 as a central document management solution. The standard search function helps provide rapid and secure access to information.

Benefits

- Creates cross-departmental and cross-organizational transparency
- Allows employees to rapidly and reliably locate desired information in multiple languages
- Facilitates information sharing
- Reduces IT administration and maintenance

“Office SharePoint Server 2007 provides rapid and accurate access to information.”

Kurt Uhlmann, Director, Strategy/Architecture Informatics, Coop

Coop's decentralized organizational structure with over 1,500 separate locations creates major challenges in terms of transparent document management. Coop implemented Microsoft® Office SharePoint® Server 2007 as a solution with integrated search functionality. By migrating from Microsoft Office SharePoint Portal Server 2003 to Office SharePoint Server 2007, staff members enjoy quicker access to the entire body of information available corporation-wide, with user access privileges defined on the individual document level. Office SharePoint Server 2007 fulfills the company's advanced information-sharing requirements and lowers administrative IT expenses, fulfilling the vision of having a standardized workstation for all users.

“Our goal is to provide users with a standardized workstation that helps them perform their day-to-day tasks efficiently.”

Kurt Uhlmann, Director, Strategy/ Architecture Informatics, Coop

Situation

Coop is Switzerland's second-largest retailing corporation. Organized into five sales territories to stay close to customers, Coop maintains more than 1,500 stores and a workforce of over 45,000 employees. The company manufactures many of the products in its assortment itself. Coop is the clear market leader in ecological and fair trade products. With approximately 15.6 billion francs (U.S.\$15.33 billion) in revenues, Coop holds approximately 15.5 percent market share in Swiss retail.

Organized de-centrally, Coop has many different locations, group companies, and corporate departments. Achieving transparency across organizational lines is key for the success of the firm. A need for improvement was perceived in the area of intergroup information-sharing in the interest of further growth and better integration. The IT Strategy/Architecture department developed an integrated, standardized communication and collaboration strategy to ensure the efficient transfer of knowledge and information within the corporation. “Creating transparency is key if we are to benefit from interdepartmental and group synergies,” said Kurt Uhlmann, Director, Strategy/Architecture Informatics, Coop, describing the objectives behind implementation of the new document management system.

This was a challenge in view of the large volume of existing data. Over the years, some four terabytes of data had accumulated in the form of Word documents, presentations, tables, and so on—over seven million documents in all. Performing information searches took up a lot of time for employees, and searches were often fruitless, so information was being reproduced instead of reused. Efficient and effective searching was thus a key requirement for the new document management system.

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Solution

Together with Microsoft, in the summer of 2007 Coop began migration to Microsoft® Office SharePoint® Server 2007. With this new document management solution, employees save all documents on a centralized platform. Versioning ensures that the latest version of a document is always shown. And the Check-in/Check-out function also makes sure that documents cannot be edited by different individuals at the same time.

Benefits

Surefire Hits

Office SharePoint Server 2007 provides a standard search solution with both full-text search and index service. It delivers relevant search results corporation-wide, applying any security or user privilege restrictions. One big plus is that user privileges can be defined on a document as well as library level, and unlike the Office SharePoint Portal Server 2003, confidential data is also transmitted over the server.

Rapid Access

The entire contents structure of Office SharePoint Server 2007 is mapped in the local File Explorer of every employee via a WebDAV interface. Users can access documents via either the SharePoint platform or File Explorer. The Ontolica Wildcard add-on allows wildcard searching for greater flexibility. Searches may also be limited to specific formats, languages, and so on.

“Office SharePoint Server 2007 provides rapid and accurate access to information,” says Uhlmann.

Automated Indexing

Content is continuously indexed. Authors can attach meta-information to documents, however, for precision searching. Coop rolled out Office SharePoint Server 2007 as a scalable document management solution that promotes transparency and cooperation both internally and with partners, and as an effective IT response to the need for greater flexibility and quicker reaction. Rapid access to information increases work and decision-making quality.

Finding Resources and Sharing Knowledge

Office SharePoint Server 2007 paves the way for employees to find the right document. Content can be reused, saving work and creating time for new ideas. Users can always be sure that work is based on the latest updated documents. Existing knowledge can be made use of while redundancies are avoided. Because of its systematic orientation around existing work structures and methods, the new solution achieved a high degree of acceptance among all users within a short period of time. Rollout time was thus reduced to a minimum.

Standardized Workstation Creates Space for New Things

Office SharePoint Server 2007 supports Coop IT in creating a standardized workstation for every single employee. This cuts operational and maintenance costs while creating space for flexibly adapting the infrastructure to business requirements. Administrative expense for collaboration and document management are reduced. "This allows IT to refocus on its function as 'business enabler,' creating added value corporation-wide," said Uhlmann.

Next Generation Infrastructure

The scalable design of Office SharePoint Server 2007 means Coop will continue to enjoy support and optimization of its

business processes in the future as Coop takes advantage of the integration of Office SharePoint Server 2007 and the 2007 Microsoft® Office system.

For More Information

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For more information about Coop products and services, call 061-336-66-66 or visit the Web site at: www.coop.ch

Microsoft Office System

The Microsoft Office system is the business world's chosen environment for information work, providing the programs, servers, and services that help you succeed by transforming information into impact.

For more information about the Microsoft Office system, go to: www.microsoft.com/office

Software and Services

- Microsoft Server Product Portfolio
 - Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007
 - Microsoft SQL Server® 2005
- Ontolica Add-on for Wildcard

Hardware

- HP ProLiant Server
- HP SAN with 6 TB