



Organizations Leverage SharePoint to Build and Manage Critical Business Applications

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Research by Mainstay Partners



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About The Study

An independent study by Mainstay Partners evaluated the implementation of the Microsoft® SharePoint® platform at three companies with the goal of understanding how they use the SharePoint technology to build and manage critical business applications. This report summarizes Mainstay’s assessment, which is based on interviews with executives and senior managers at the following organizations:

- Analog Devices Inc. (U.S.)
- Equiniti (U.K.)
- Spaarne Ziekenhuis Hospital (Netherlands)

About Mainstay Partners

Mainstay Partners is a leading provider of independent value assessment and IT strategy services to industry leaders worldwide. For more information, go to www.mainstaypartners.net. Information contained in the publication has been obtained from sources considered reliable, but is not warranted by Mainstay Partners.

About SharePoint Server

SharePoint Server is Microsoft’s offering of an integrated suite of server capabilities that improves organizational effectiveness by providing comprehensive content management and enterprise search, accelerating shared business processes, and facilitating information-sharing across boundaries for better business insight. Additionally, this collaboration and content management server provides IT professionals and developers with the platform and tools they need for server administration, application extensibility, and interoperability.



Executive Summary

For a long time now, companies have been caught in an upward spiral: year after year, the costs and complexities of running critical business applications have been growing apace. New, must-have applications are released each year, forcing businesses to integrate new software into IT environments that are increasingly fragmented and difficult to manage.

Business websites – many of them integrated with applications that run critical internal and customer-facing functions – have been increasing in number and in complexity. But keeping the sites updated and synched creates headaches for IT (and helpdesks) and drives up overhead. In some cases, the delays inherent in these environments can become a competitive disadvantage. Meanwhile, many best-of-breed business applications often fall short of expectations because they can't readily exploit the content and work processes residing in other systems across the business.

This suboptimal situation has sparked a strong trend away from complexity and fragmentation – and toward the central deployment and management of business applications using a single, standards-based platform. In a recent assessment, Mainstay Partners examined Microsoft SharePoint Server (both the 2007 and 2010 release versions), exploring how three organizations deployed SharePoint capabilities to develop and manage essential business applications.

The organizations studied were Analog Devices Inc. (U.S.), Equiniti (U.K.), and Spaarne Ziekenhuis Hospital (Netherlands), representing high technology, share-registrar services, and healthcare industries respectively. While the deployments involved unique applications and content, each sought to achieve similar business goals – namely, to simplify and streamline IT environments, to increase business and IT flexibility and scalability, and add new capabilities to improve service levels and control costs.

Speedy Deployments

One of the most important advantages of SharePoint, organizations reported, was the wealth of built-in functionality that helps jumpstart deployments by minimizing development efforts. Global semiconductor manufacturer ADI, for example, said that it could build user interfaces for its new online HR portal in about 20-25% less time because SharePoint came with 20-30% of the interfaces it needed right out of the box.

Equiniti, the largest share registration service in the U.K., deployed a new version of its customer-facing website in just four weeks, in large part because of SharePoint's automated site-building tools, which shrank development and testing time. Other time-saving tools, including pre-built page templates and designs, helped the company launch sites for new clients in one-third the time it used to take.

Flexible, Scalable Applications

SharePoint's scalability as an application platform gave chipmaker ADI the power to pull together HR information and forms scattered on multiple systems and create a one-stop employee portal, planned to serve offices in 26 countries in multiple languages. Document tracking features let employees complete most HR forms online, saving paperwork and boosting productivity.



Spaarne Ziekenhuis Hospital in Holland gained similar scale advantages by deploying SharePoint as the central management platform supporting more than 100 internal clinical and business applications. The SharePoint-driven efficiencies enabled the hospital to support a 40% expansion in computer workstations while the size of its IT staff stayed the same.

Unleashing New Capabilities

In our review of these deployments, the impact of SharePoint as an application development and management platform typically extended beyond internal efficiency improvements. In many cases, companies said the new platform and tools opened up new business potential and led to unexpected additional benefits.

For instance, Spaarne Ziekenhuis Hospital, has avoided significant costs by consolidating systems on SharePoint, discovering that it no longer needs to pay for numerous niche applications. Moreover, by using SharePoint to centrally manage multiple websites, it's been able to improve navigability, prompting patients to download more information and saving the hospital about €25,000 per year on printing and mailing costs.

Finally, Equiniti's SharePoint-powered website has experienced a surge in logins by serving up more personalized content. At the same time, these more user friendly and informative sites have helped reduce service-center phone traffic by about 100,000 calls per year and cut costs by switching more customers to online statements.

Following are brief case studies of each company, detailing the business challenges they faced and the benefits realized by deploying the SharePoint solution as a platform for developing and managing critical applications.



Global Semiconductor Company Revamps HR Administration

Analog Devices, Inc.

Key Benefits

Simplified HR. New employee portal eliminates the need for employees to search for HR-related information and forms on various sites.

Greater Scalability. Progressive consolidation of local HR servicing, eventually to serve employees in 26 countries with a single site for all HR related materials and forms.

Time Savings. Building the portal on SharePoint allowed the customer to use out-of-box functionality for approximately half of the requirements, avoiding the need for a fully custom-built site and saving 20-25% in time needed to develop the site.

Enhanced IT Productivity. By consolidating HR administration from multiple sites onto one location, the IT effort required to maintain and build HR-related sites is significantly reduced.

Analog Devices, Inc. (ADI) is a semiconductor company specializing in the design, manufacture and marketing of high performance analog, mixed signal, and digital signal processing integrated circuits, or ICs. The company's signal processing products play a fundamental role in converting, conditioning, and processing real-world phenomena such as light, sound, temperature, motion, and pressure into electrical signals for use in a wide array of electronic equipment.

ADI prides itself on being synonymous with high performance among electronics manufacturers, delivering the clearest image, crispest sound, and optimum interface, size, and performance in thousands of industrial, medical, communications, automotive, consumer, and other applications. ADI also prides itself on its people behind these innovations, described as "our greatest asset" on the company's website. This strong employee focus underpins a major overhaul of the company's HR system, including a new HR employee portal—based on Microsoft SharePoint Server 2010—that has already been deployed in North America and the Philippines, with global rollout scheduled to be completed by the end of 2011.

True to its values, ADI took a user-centric approach to this ambitious, enterprise-wide initiative known as "Connections." It held focus groups with employees to gather feedback, continuously refine project goals and design, and ultimately build a system that would be of maximum value to the company as a whole. Rather than simply push out a new site to users, the company took the time to understand what employees wanted from the new portal.

ADI started by assessing its current HR situation. As a site-based organization, HR was not positioned for the scalability required of today's global organizations. There was a mix of internal and third-party providers for departmental functions, along with various platforms for different sites. The organization had to support 26 different countries in multiple languages. This fragmentation presented an opportunity for improvement. With the implementation of workflow capabilities, electronic self service, and a central HR resource, ADI could alleviate the need for employees to search multiple locations for HR-related materials and forms, improving productivity.

As the first step in its global initiative, the company deployed a new HR employee portal for North America that aggregated all HR and employee-related information, forms, and links. With the help of partner Yash Technologies, ADI's IT group was able to leverage out-of-box SharePoint functionality (for example, organization browser, search, and employee profile) for approximately 25% of the system requirements. This saved 20-25% in development time as compared to a fully custom-built solution, in addition to driving lower cost of ownership. The company recently implemented a similar portal in the Philippines, and will rollout the site globally in the coming months.

Careful planning, coupled with effective marketing to the employee base, has resulted in impressive success to date. User adoption of the portal is close to 100%, with improved user experience, through a more intuitive front end interface using SharePoint, being one of the key factors. The user interface not only yields immediate benefits, but also opens up opportunities for ADI to add more processes onto the new front end and create a more integrated process for the end user. Moreover, the need for time-consuming manual data



“This has been a big breakthrough from an IT perspective, not only in terms of what we can do for the business but also from the standpoint of cost savings. Without a good user interface, we would have had to do all custom development within .NET. Instead, we can take advantage of SharePoint as a great starting place, giving us 20-30% out of the box in creating the user interface. That’s a big plus for us.”

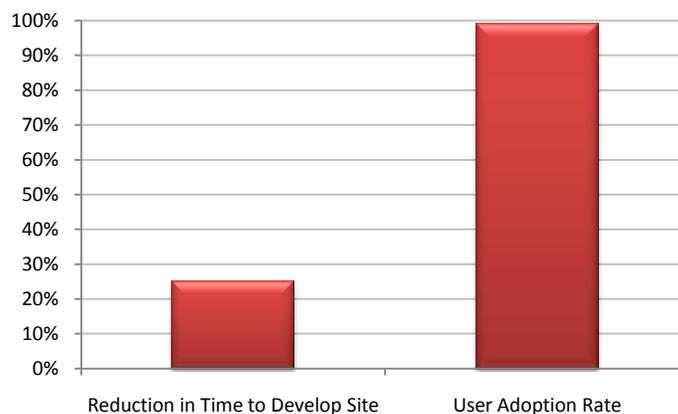
Duane Guenard
 Manager
 Employee Applications
 Analog Devices

entry has been minimized, as employees take advantage of ASP.NET forms and dynamic PDFs to complete forms electronically. Thanks to the workflow foundation tool in SharePoint, documents can now be routed, tracked, and approved online, reducing paper forms and email/manual handoffs. Site content can be changed by HR in the new system, thus requiring less IT intervention; the addition of enhancements like single sign-on is also straightforward.

ADI employees are already reaping the benefits of the new portal. They can find key HR information—cost center, employee number, tuition reimbursement guidelines, leave of absence policies, frequently asked questions, and more—quickly and easily. At the same time, managers have ready access to a more comprehensive view of their employees, including job history, salary history, performance history, education, planned time off, and vacation balances. Greater self-service capabilities already serve to enhance the productivity of both employees and HR, and additional forms and workflows will be rolled out over the coming years using SharePoint’s integration capabilities via webservices with ADI’s core HR system.

Much progress has been made, but there’s still work to do. ADI continues to refine features such as the workflow foundation tool and electronic forms. The planned global rollout will doubtless uncover additional opportunities to enhance the system—and with the help of SharePoint, ADI employees, will continue to be well served in the HR space.

Key Benefits from new HR Portal Developed on Microsoft SharePoint





Equiniti

Key Benefits

Streamlined Process. By moving content management from IT to a decentralized business process, the time required to update Shareview content has gone from days to minutes.

Fewer Calls. More relevant content, FAQs, and links on Shareview have reduced the number of call center contacts by around 100,000 a year.

More Hits. As call center traffic has dropped, website traffic (measured by user logins) has gone up by 30%.

Greener Business. Greater use of e-communications for annual statements—by as much as 50% for some clients—reduces the cost and carbon footprint of sending paper statements.

“If we wanted content changed on our previous site, it required an IT development, testing and deployment cycle, and took more than a day of effort for a single change. But with the move to SharePoint, business managers take charge of content and implement changes in minutes without involving IT at all.”

Mike Jolliffe
Chief Technology Officer
Equiniti

Leading UK Share Registrar Builds Superior Website

UK-based Equiniti delivers commercial solutions in share registration, employee benefits, investment services, and outsourced specialist tasks. Share registration services represent the company’s core offering, and Equiniti’s face to the world in this part of its business is its Shareview website. Built on the Microsoft SharePoint Server platform, Shareview delivers timely and relevant share information to 800-900 corporate clients (including more than 55% of the FTSE 100) and, through them, to millions of shareholders and employees.

A quick tour of Shareview (www.shareview.co.uk) clearly demonstrates the value of the site. Users can buy and sell financial instruments, vote and manage their shares, research employee share plans, obtain current market information, track economic trends, switch from paper to electronic statements, and check out new products.

Shareview wasn’t always such a star performer; in fact, before moving to the SharePoint platform, the website was highly inflexible and required the services of IT to update content. Given the time needed for development, test, and approvals, the process could take days or even weeks; as a result, the information posted was often out of date, and therefore of limited relevance. And there was a corollary issue: Because Shareview failed to offer timely content and effective self-service capabilities, customers often bypassed the website entirely in favor of the company’s call center. Call center traffic was increasing exponentially.

Equiniti began researching new technologies that would aid in content management and also improve time to market for new products. By comparing key business requirements to possible platform features and offerings, management decided to build on the Microsoft SharePoint Server platform. The product offered powerful content management capabilities, and it was deemed an excellent platform for Shareview. Equiniti contracted with Conchango, a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner, to implement SharePoint.

Several complementary Microsoft technologies made up the final solution, with SharePoint at the core. For the graphic content, Conchango used Microsoft Office SharePoint Designer and .NET code within Microsoft Visual Studio Team Edition for Software Developers. Source code resides in Microsoft Visual Studio Team Foundation Server. Rules and caching in Microsoft Internet Security and Acceleration Server provide website security, in conjunction with the security features contained in SharePoint.

The effect was immediate and dramatic: business managers could now update content in a matter of minutes, without any IT involvement. Relevant content could be pushed out to clients, employees, and shareholders in a timely and effective manner. Equiniti could quickly customize Shareview websites for corporate clients using a set of predefined templates and options, greatly enhancing the customer experience.

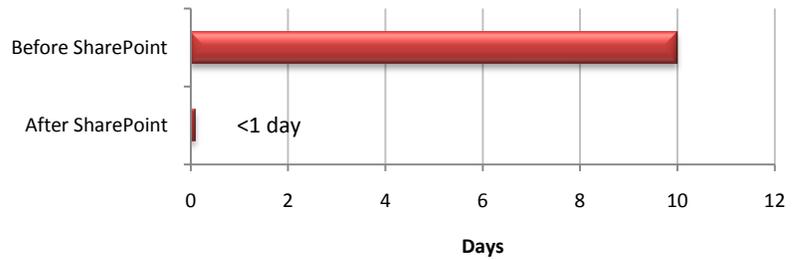
The success of Shareview is evident from the statistics: Call center volume has dropped by around 100,000 calls per year (with associated cost savings), while user logins have increased by some 30%. In the future, enhanced features such as dynamic transactional pages will add further value.

In a highly competitive marketplace where company success depends on delivering outstanding service, Equiniti’s Shareview website provides customers with easy access to

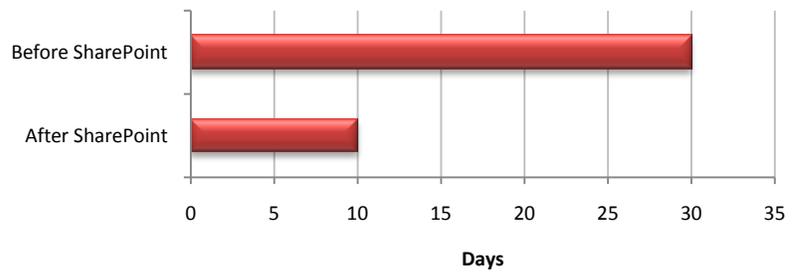


up-to-the-minute information. Equiniti has created a flexible, scalable system that adds value to the business, streamlines operations, and improves customer service—and SharePoint Server is the heart of the system.

Avg. Time Required to Make Content Change



Avg. Time to Create New Client Site





Dutch Hospital Streamlines Operations, Enhances Patient Care

Spaarne Ziekenhuis (Hospital)

Key Benefits

Simplified Content Management.

Spaarne has moved its multiple internal and external websites onto a single SharePoint platform to simplify content management and IT support.

Website Enhancement. External websites now enable patients to find information more easily, while reducing the hospital's need to print and distribute paper brochures.

Cost Avoidance. Spaarne will save money because it no longer needs to purchase separate systems to support various applications at the hospital.

Greater Collaboration. Forums, file sharing, and workspaces on SharePoint promote more effective communication and teamwork among hospital employees.

Spaarne Ziekenhuis is a modern hospital headquartered in Hoofddorp, southwest of Amsterdam in the Netherlands. The hospital is dedicated to providing superior and continuously improved patient care—a function of its expert physicians, nurses, and medical specialists—and also to driving high operational efficiency across the organization. Spaarne's use of Microsoft SharePoint Server 2010 as a development platform for building rich collaborative Web applications supports both of these goals.

Before implementing SharePoint, the hospital's main website was more than 10 years old. Information was hard to find, the site was difficult to navigate, and there was no reliable search function. In the absence of an effective online presence, Spaarne had to print and distribute paper brochures in order to communicate vital information, a process that was expensive, cumbersome, and time-consuming. The hospital's Web presence did not adequately represent Spaarne as one of the most modern, progressive hospitals in the country.

Furthermore, it was an IT nightmare. Different customer groups were served by multiple sites; there were also numerous internal websites. The sites were run on various platforms, and each platform required a discrete IT skill set. The communications department developed the content, but IT help was needed with management and publishing. The same content had to be posted separately to multiple sites rather than to a single, universally accessible location.

With SharePoint, the situation has completely reversed itself. Spaarne has moved its external and internal websites onto a single, standardized platform, greatly simplifying and streamlining the content management process. An improved search function, complemented by enhanced website organization, makes it easier for patients to find information. Spaarne has implemented SharePoint for more than 100 different internal applications, including patient discharges, medical complications from surgery, contract management, medical trial protocols, literature distribution, paramedic contact information, plastic surgery schedules, and personalization of the intranet start page.

In addition to better supporting patients and staff—thus contributing to continuous improvement in patient care—the new system has benefited the business as a whole, and IT in particular. Cost avoidance and outright savings have been realized by using SharePoint as the core platform for multiple websites and applications. For example, Spaarne estimates savings of €25,000 in printing and shipping costs, and the hospital is also avoiding extra software licensing fees. Even in the face of robust business growth, IT has not had to expand; SharePoint enables IT to support 40% more workstations at the same staff levels. Additionally, less involvement in content management has saved IT approximately 0.75 FTE. Content can now be reused across different sites, ensuring consistency and reducing effort.

Hospital staff has also seen significant benefits. Using SharePoint, an employee logging into the internal site can see a unique page, with content and agendas personalized by function, role, and department. Not surprisingly, 100% of IT uses SharePoint; perhaps more telling is the fact that 80-90% of doctors and nurses do the same. With the new intranet site built in 2010, Spaarne will look to deliver even more personalized content, particularly for doctors and nurses, on the start page.



“Before, when the communications department needed to change something on the Website, they had to wait for IT. Now they can do most of the changes themselves because SharePoint is easy. And when we add workflows to SharePoint, the process will go even faster.”

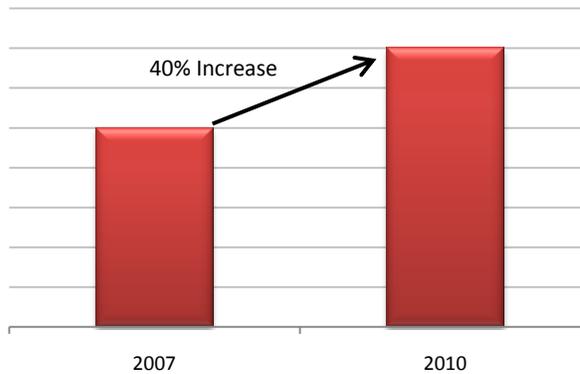
Pauline Schömbis
IT Manager
Spaarne Ziekenhuis

Contract management for IT exemplifies the value that SharePoint brings to hospital operations. Previously, contracts were kept on paper, and deadlines and expiration dates were managed manually and therefore frequently missed until a reminder from the vendor. At first, Spaarne considered using a third-party application to implement a contract management workflow system; however, when SharePoint was found to have all the necessary features to support the process, the hospital decided to use the Microsoft platform instead. Using SharePoint, Spaarne plans to scan all contracts and file them with due dates and alerts. This will allow more time to evaluate contracts before they expire and consider possible alternatives.

A system of open communications is key in the clinical environment. It helps ensure that all stakeholders in a patient’s care have ready access to timely and consistent information, and also that clinicians can share ideas and insights to foster continuous improvement in the quality of care. Non-clinical staff members also benefit from a collaborative work environment. For example, IT team members work in different locations and receive calls from multiple groups; with SharePoint, IT employees can post questions and communications on a shared site to help organize work and reduce redundancy. In addition to IT, 70-80% of hospital users are now facilitating discussions and teamwork by sharing documents on SharePoint and using Office Communications Server.

SharePoint is a real success story at Spaarne Ziekenhuis. It delivers tangible productivity benefits to clinical and non-clinical staff; it enhances operational efficiency, for example in contract management; and it enhances patient care quality by making vital information readily available and facilitating open communications. By creating a truly collaborative environment, SharePoint is helping Spaarne achieve its core goals and become an even more valuable resource to the people who depend on it.

Increase in Workstations Supported without an Increase in Size of IT





Conclusion

As organizations continue to grapple with the dual challenge of delivering critical business applications while containing costs, more of them have recognized the inherent value of server-based solutions that centralize and streamline the management of these applications. The advantages of using a richly functional platform such as SharePoint to deploy business applications and websites are no longer speculative. As this study showed, companies that leveraged SharePoint in this manner were rewarded with faster application deployments, substantially lower administrative costs, and a host of business benefits ranging from better team collaboration to greater customer satisfaction.

The diversity of SharePoint deployments is striking and illustrates the wide range of business purposes the solution can support. For some, SharePoint served as the engine for centrally developing and managing multiple internal and external websites – with huge impacts on costs and customer satisfaction. For another, SharePoint – and its flexible integration with .NET and other environments – provided a powerful, open platform for building a complex project management solution with vast scalability.

In every case, SharePoint offered a cost-effective, flexible foundation for managing increasingly complex IT application environments and satisfying business stakeholders who demand more capabilities and higher service levels even as the resource picture continues to tighten. For this reason, we see SharePoint as a versatile platform that will appeal to more businesses and organizations in the challenging years ahead.

Resources

- For more information about Microsoft SharePoint Server, visit <http://sharepoint.microsoft.com>
- For more information about Microsoft Application Development platforms, visit <http://www.microsoft.com/applicationplatform>