

Case Study

Integrated Platform for managing enterprise content using SharePoint



THE CUSTOMER

An “e-distributor” of fine, specialty and semi-commodity chemicals. They used several best of breed products to manage their business processes, including Microsoft Dynamic Great Plains, Onyx CRM, Yantra Inventory Management Software, and Interworld e-Commerce Platform.

THEIR NEED

The customer’s existing public-facing corporate site was around 6 years old and had been created using older web technologies like ASP. It was difficult to update and made use of a paid subscription service to provide news and events-related information to the Chemical industry. Due to its fixed design, it was not possible to change or alter the look and feel of the site from time to time without re-designing all the pages.

To address these pain points the customer wanted their corporate website to be built using a content management system. They envisioned the site to be a single platform to manage intranet and internet applications across the enterprise. The site was to be created using SharePoint 2007 (MOSS) as the customer’s entire IT ecosystem was on Microsoft.

OUR DEED

Aspire built the customer’s corporate website using SharePoint 2007 (MOSS), simplifying design changes and content management of the site. The website was also made interoperable with internal LoB (Line of Business) systems, allowing users to aggregate and consume information from different data sources and application platforms. It also allowed for enterprise search from databases and back-end server applications.

The website leveraged the powerful ASP.NET technology features in SharePoint for cataloging, and used BizTalk 2006 for integration with other internal systems.

Integrated Web Platform

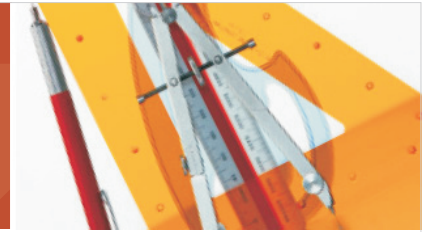
Some of the considerations taken into account to develop the integrated web platform were:

- Make use of the web content management feature of SharePoint for content authoring and maintenance
- Leverage out-of-the-box features of SharePoint to keep development effort to a

*Aspire developed a corporate website using SharePoint 2007, which **simplified content management and maintenance**. Integration of the site with internal LoB systems allows **data flow between different applications** and provides **enterprise search abilities**.*



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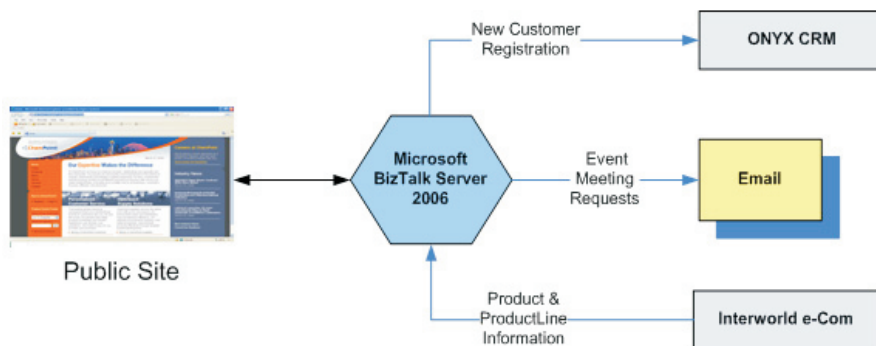
minimum. This also reduces time taken for testing and deployment, and keeps development costs to a minimum

- ✍ Provide the ability for anyone in the organization to update the site at any time using the content management features, and allow for moderators to review and approve the content before publishing
- ✍ Keep the public site search engine friendly
- ✍ Achieve simplicity over complexity
- ✍ Develop the site in US English (locale) only
- ✍ There should be no impact to the existing workflow

*Out-of-the-box features of SharePoint ensured that the **development time was minimal** and offered **faster release times** for the public website.*

Integration with LoB Systems

The public website needed to be integrated with internal LoB systems for new customer registrations, contact and event meeting requests and to display product catalogs. This was done using Microsoft BizTalk Server 2006 which is an Enterprise Application integration platform.

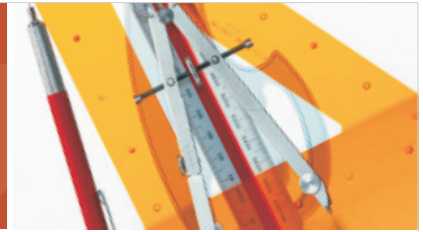


New customers could register themselves using the customer registration page on the SharePoint website. On submission of this information, the site posts this information to a BizTalk 2006 Orchestration server which then routes this information to the CRM system – ONYX.

Requests to meet company representatives during Industry events are also emailed to the configured representatives via BizTalk 2006.

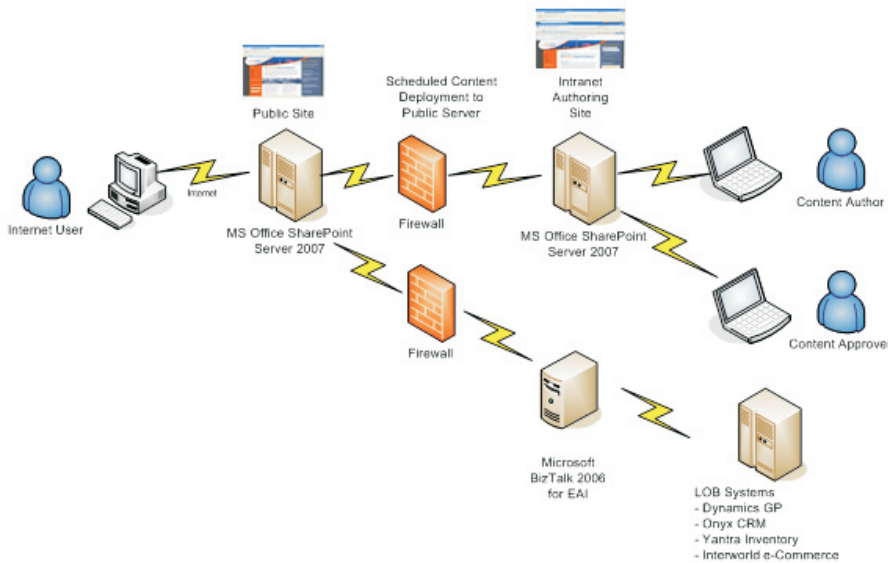
Likewise, the customer's products catalog is maintained in SharePoint lists on the website. Any changes made to the products information in their internal InterWorld e-Commerce system is updated to the SharePoint lists via BizTalk.

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Site Deployment

The website has a 2-level deployment as shown below -



The integrated web platform developed provided a **better user experience, integrated site search and quick information flow** between the public site and internal LoB

As it is a SharePoint site, it allows anonymous access and is hosted directly on the internet. It does not support direct authoring of the contents. Content authoring, review and approval are performed in the company intranet which hosts another copy of the website. Content authors, reviewers and approvers carry out the content management activities on this website.

Fresh content authored on the intranet site is deployed to the public site via SharePoint content deployment job schedules.

Key benefits to the customer

Integration of the website with internal LoB systems allowed for better user experience and efficient enterprise search for end-users. Out-of-the-box features of SharePoint ensured that the development time was minimal and offered faster release times for the public website.

The new site provided a fresh image for the company and an enhanced user experience due to the advanced UI and navigation elements provided by SharePoint. The most notable content management feature of the site was the ability for users to edit page contents directly and publish them to the internet after an approval workflow run.

Additional features included the product catalog application that pulls information from LoB systems and presents it to website users, integrated site search, and pushing of information to internal systems for new customer registrations, enquiries and event meeting requests.



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ABOUT ASPIRE SYSTEMS

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Aspire provides complete product lifecycle services, ranging from new product development and product advancement to product migration, re-engineering, sustenance and support. Our product development teams are spread between our Global Innovation Center in Chennai, India and offices in the United States.

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