

CASE STUDY

Overview

Country or Region: UK

Industry: Health

Customer Profile

NHS Wandsworth is a primary care trust, it is one of the largest trusts of its type and supports many other organisations.

Business Situation

The trust needed to create a more manageable web platform for its many sites. The sites needed to achieve AA accessibility compliance as well as provide a range of document and user features.

Solution

NHS Wandsworth decided to use SharePoint 2007 to develop the sites, due to the good document management capabilities and potential for integration with other Microsoft technologies. The site was developed using elements from the Accessibility Kit for SharePoint (AKS) version 2.0 as well as custom web parts.

Benefits

The trust now has a standard website 'engine' that can be used to develop and deploy many web sites for different purposes, at no additional cost per site. Content development uses a common and efficient page publishing interface across all the sites. The solution has proved to be flexible, allows attractive and interactive sites to be developed. The hosting solution has proved robust.

Background

NHS Wandsworth (Wandsworth Teaching Primary Care Trust commissioning and provider arms) is one of the largest PCTs in the country. The trust is responsible for improving the health of 292,313 people who live in Wandsworth and a further 33,893 people who are registered with Wandsworth GP practices but live outside the borough, a combined total of 326,196 people.

The trust is responsible for over a dozen websites which are actively used to deliver information and services to the public. Creation and management of these sites is currently the sole responsibility of the web manager, creating bottlenecks from time to time and limiting the involvement of staff in the maintenance and enhancement of sites.

The problem

With so many existing websites and a steady demand for new ones the trust needed to move away from the traditional 'Dreamweaver' approach to site creation. While this provides complete control for the web developer it does not enforce design control and authoring of content cannot be pushed to the content owners. Advanced facilities for loading and displaying documents are limited.

The trust needed a more efficient approach that would make page creation simple and fast and so free up time for the web team. In addition the trust had growing concerns about complying with Accessibility regulations across the portfolio of sites, with the current sites failing to reach single 'A' rating.

The Solution

A content management system had been identified as the desired approach. The trust had a substantial investment in its internal SharePoint based intranet as well as a developing CRM system. The vision was to use CRM to drive content on the website and to use the in-house SharePoint skills, so Cloud2 were approached to

develop a solution using SharePoint 2007 For Internet Sites (FIS).

Requirements

- Flexible sites template to allow multiple, brandable sites to be created from the base solution, with no additional cost per site
- 'AA' compliance
- Easy to use, familiar editing controls
- Sophisticated document display features, allowing documents to be linked to from pages depending on tags
- Facilities for advanced features such as interactive GP surgery search



"In Cloud2 we have found a partner who have an in-depth knowledge of SharePoint and Microsoft technologies coupled with an excellent understanding of how the NHS works"
Allan Ruan, Web Manager

SharePoint 2007 was used to provide the core content management interface. However the SharePoint 'front end' almost completely failed to meet AA Accessibility standards. To ensure this requirement could be met, elements from the Accessibility Kit for SharePoint (AKS) version 2.0 were integrated

into the core solution. These were further modified to make them fit for purpose and further custom web parts were developed to deliver the full solution.

Particular attention was paid to the document library system. Each document is tagged with keywords and areas of the site that they related



www.wandsworth.nhs.uk



www.southwestlondon.nhs.uk



www.swlondon.nhs.org



www.queenmarysroehampton.nhs.uk

About Cloud2

Cloud2 are a specialised IT solutions provider operating in the health sector. We are known for our high quality SharePoint based solutions, our frank and supportive project style and our ability to deliver successful projects rapidly. We have much to offer, including:

- NHS Intranet, Extranet and Internet solutions
- NHS Document Management
- Rich search solutions
- Agile workflows
- eForms, including an HR pack
- Programme and Project Management
- BI & Performance Management
- Length of Stay reduction

What Next?

If you would like any further information on our SharePoint solutions or any other services Cloud2 offer please get in touch.

to. A related pages custom web part then automatically displays any relevant documents without them needing to be loaded into the page; document and page updates are partially automated as a consequence. This web part complements the 'Related Links' & 'Related Pages' web part

Visual design is an important part of any website, yet SharePoint has always been intrinsically weak in this area, with a limited number of unexciting themes and a lack of flexibility in page layouts. The home pages of the sites, in particular, needed attention to create their personality and reflect both the organisation brand and provide richer user features than SharePoint natively offers. This constraint needed addressing and this was achieved through use of SharePoint Designer 2007. The trust team have good traditional web design and development skills, as noted, so Cloud2 invested in putting their web manager on a 5 days SharePoint designer course.

This unlocked both the capability to heavily customise the home pages and introduced the skills necessary to add further custom designs and features to pages within the site, such as inclusion of javascript and rich UI components for, for example, the Find-a-doctor GP Practice locator.

The trust also engaged Cloud2 to provide a hosting solution at a realistic cost. This was provided using a single virtualised server (trading the lack of resiliency against budget constraints) which has, to date, proved adequately performant and entirely robust (100% uptime during year 1). Poor N3 to internet performance was an initial limitation, however, until the trust installed an ADSL line to support the web team.

Challenges

SharePoint is an excellent platform for this in many respects, with the potential for integration with the Microsoft Dynamics CRM solution being especially attractive. However the choice of SharePoint was not without it's challenges. SharePoint FIS does not provide additional

features for web content management compared with SharePoint 2007 as used for

document management and intranets. In particular it provides built-in no support for Accessibility compliance and most web parts,

which form the basis for page design and features do not achieve any degree of compliance.

Furthermore the visual design facilities in SharePoint are very limited. Although the sites are intended for access by members of the public, the trust is connected to the internet via the N3 network, the gateway to the internet is heavily congested especially at peak hours. Real time content editing over this connection can be frustratingly slow as a consequence.

Benefits

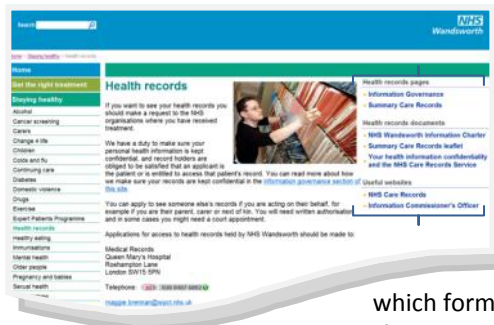
NHS Wandsworth has, so far, deployed 4 sites using the platform provided by Cloud2, each with its own design, at no extra cost per site. The speed with which content can now be created and

updated has helped the web team keep the content fresh, while the ability to deploy documents in multiple places, automatically, throughout each site has been a boon.

Conclusions

The decision to use SharePoint for web development should not be taken lightly. It is a difficult platform to develop in, with design, accessibility and performance implications; other powerful commercial CMS systems are often less limited.

However these limitations can be addressed and SharePoint FIS licenses can be very cost effective where multiple sites are to be deployed. The rich document handling, Microsoft technology integration, integrated search and other advanced features can make it compelling, however.



"We planned to have a simple CMS, what we have is a much richer tool. The old site had over 2500, largely disjointed, pages; with this solution we are able to connect relevant content easily ensuring we get the information to the right audience."
Allan Ruan, Web Manager

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