

SHAREPOINT

PRACTICAL IT STRATEGIES FOR ENTERPRISE COLLABORATION /// MAY 2009

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MORE THAN EVER, organizations are asking their IT shops to defend projects that require any sort of investment. You know that you need a SharePoint governance document, but how do you justify allocating time and resources to it when both are in short supply?

It may not be easy, but it's necessary. Get some valuable pointers from Microsoft MVP Brien M. Posey on how to build top-level support for SharePoint governance in "[Quantifying the Success of Your SharePoint Governance Policy](#)."

Have you considered making Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007 your primary document management system? If so, what will you do with your old system? You could migrate all of the content from it, or you could leave that system in place and integrate its content into your new SharePoint environment.

SharePoint MVP Agnes Molnar walks you through some options in "[Integrating Document Management Systems Into MOSS 2007](#)."

As SharePoint becomes a critical component within your enterprise, you'll need to keep tabs on it to make sure that it's meeting its potential. The biggest mistake that SharePoint administrators make is monitoring only SharePoint. They forget that SharePoint has a lot of moving parts. So keeping an eye on SharePoint means checking all of its components—such as Active Directory and SQL Server. Read "[How to Monitor Your SharePoint Environment](#)" by SharePoint guru Shawn Shell for tips on developing a multidimensional strategy that will keep SharePoint alive and well.

How is your installation going? Got any SharePoint tips to share? Send me an email at ccasatelli@techtarget.com. ■



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Quantifying the Success of Your SharePoint Governance Policy

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Quantifying the Success of Your SharePoint Governance Policy



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MORE ORGANIZATIONS are starting to realize the importance of having a solid SharePoint governance policy in place. As such, it is becoming more common for them to invest a significant amount of time and resources into making sure that their SharePoint governance documents thoroughly address their organizations' needs.

But whenever you put a lot of time and money into a project, it becomes just a matter of time before someone asks whether or not the project was worth the investment.

Quantifying the success of your SharePoint governance policy is not an easy task, but it has an important purpose. Even before the current economic downturn, many organizations thought of their IT departments as an expense rather than an asset.

With companies laying off employees in record numbers, it's a bad thing when any employee is not considered

to be an asset. Although you may not be able to completely shed this unfair image of IT, you definitely don't want to draw attention to the department by making bad business decisions. When someone from top manage-

Quantifying the success of your SharePoint governance policy is not an easy task, but it has an important purpose.

ment asks you why 200 man-hours and \$5,000 in legal costs went into producing a SharePoint governance document, you had better have a good answer.

So how do you justify the resources

that went into producing your SharePoint governance document? And how can you quantify your governance policy's success? There are no easy answers, but there are several angles that you may be able to use with senior management.

Regulatory compliance. If your organization is subject to any of the various federal regulations pertaining to information management, then defending your SharePoint governance plan is easy. Just make sure that the document addresses regulatory issues. You can use the argument that you did what was required by

law. Enough said.

Legal protection. SharePoint governance plans often include an acceptable use policy. Having such a policy in place may offer your company a degree of legal protection if an employee were to upload something illegal to a document library. You may be able to make the argument that the fines and legal fees associated with getting caught with illegal material would far outweigh the cost of creating a governance document.

Fewer help desk calls. If your goal is to be able to quantify the success

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It's the Law

Here are some of the many regulations that cover SharePoint usage:

- **Sarbanes-Oxley Act** applies to accounting information in spreadsheets.
- **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act** applies to protected health information related to treatment, payment and operations activities.
- **North American Electric Reliability Corporation Cyber Security Standards** applies to critical cyber assets, such as network topologies and operational procedures.
- **Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act** applies to financial information that commonly occurs in customer databases and spreadsheets.
- **The Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards** applies to credit card data stored, processed or accessed in any way through the SharePoint system. —SEARCHWINIT.COM

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of your governance plan by comparing the cost of producing a SharePoint governance document against the return on investment, then the best place to start may be at your organization's help desk.

A governance policy typically dictates the acceptable use of SharePoint resources, and it usually requires employees to use document libraries in a uniform, specified manner. Once employees begin to interact with SharePoint in a uniform manner that is proven to work, you may see a decrease in help desk calls.

Various research firms have produced estimates as to how much each help desk call ultimately costs an organization in terms of resources used, lost productivity and things like

hasn't offset the cost of the governance document, you may be able to show evidence of substantial savings over the long term.

Better use of resources. A SharePoint governance policy typically states what the SharePoint servers can and cannot be used for. Because a server has a finite amount of disk space and CPU power, such a policy can help ensure that the server is being used in the intended manner. This can save an organization money in the long run because using server resources responsibly adds time to its useful life and keeps you from having to upgrade or replace the server as soon.

Continuity of business. Although most medium-sized and large businesses have a disaster recovery policy that addresses continuity of business, SharePoint-specific disaster recovery procedures can and should be documented as well. SharePoint document libraries often contain critical data, and there is a cost associated with losing that data or with the server being down for an extended period of time. You may be able to justify the costs of creating a governance document by explaining that the document creation process forced the IT department to develop detailed contingency plans that will save the company money if a disaster ever strikes.

Once employees begin to interact with SharePoint in a uniform manner that is proven to work, you may see a decrease in help desk calls.

that. You may be able to use these figures to justify the costs that went into producing the SharePoint governance document. Even if the reduction in the number of help desk calls

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In a lot of ways, the justification for a governance document is a lot like the justification behind implementing SharePoint in the first place. If your organization is using SharePoint, you must have had some good reasons for employing it. If those rationales worked before, they will probably work now.

Maybe your organization needed a good content management tool, or maybe it needed individual departments to be able to create websites on the fly. Whatever the reason, somebody used it as a justification for implementing SharePoint.

You may be able to use similar reasoning to justify your SharePoint governance document.

For instance, you might be able to say that the organization invested a lot of money in a SharePoint deployment in order to accomplish a specific goal. Your governance document ensures that you remain focused on that goal, and it will prevent your SharePoint resources from being squan-

dered on unimportant projects.

A SharePoint governance document probably will not contribute directly to a company's bottom line, so try to

The justification for a governance document is a lot like the justification behind implementing SharePoint in the first place.

focus on areas in which having the document helps to save costs. You may also be able to focus on ways the document may be able to insulate the organization from the fallout from various legal situations. Ultimately, it can be really tough to quantify the results of your SharePoint governance policy, so you may have to get creative. In the end, it will be worth the effort. ■

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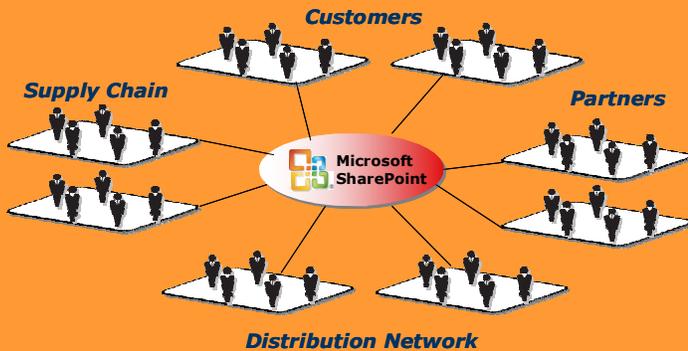
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Brien M. Posey has received Microsoft's Most Valuable Professional award five times for his work with Windows Server, IIS, file systems/storage, and Exchange Server. He has served as CIO for a nationwide chain of hospitals and healthcare facilities and was once a network administrator for Fort Knox.

Is Your SharePoint Deployment Ready for Extranet Use?



Over 70% of enterprise businesses plan to extend SharePoint to extranet users, yet few are prepared to support it*

* Source: 2008 Epok survey

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How to Monitor Your SharePoint Environment

SharePoint's services are tightly integrated, so creating a multidimensional monitoring strategy is a must to ensure the entire system's availability. BY SHAWN SHELL

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How to Monitor Your SharePoint Environment



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AS SHAREPOINT BECOMES a more critical component of your infrastructure, it also becomes a service that needs to be more closely monitored to ensure its availability. But many organizations mistakenly try to treat SharePoint like other application servers, such as SQL Server. The reality is that SharePoint can be incredibly more complicated.

The most common misconception is that it's SharePoint that you have to monitor. This false belief will lead most operations personnel to overlook the fact that SharePoint is really a combination of services that act together. Because these services are tightly integrated, your monitoring strategy needs to be multidimensional.

So what do you monitor? Start with SharePoint's core dependencies.

SharePoint is dependent on services that provide different functions to the core SharePoint services. If any of

these core dependencies fails, it will cause SharePoint to cease working and seriously degrade your SharePoint farm's ability to service clients. Above all, you need to ensure that all of the following services are available and that SharePoint is able to leverage them:

1. Windows: Without Windows, SharePoint wouldn't work at all. So that means you must be vigilant and monitor all event logs to ensure that the OS is performing as expected. Event logs can be a great indicator that patches haven't been applied because errors in the event log will often point to issues with your SharePoint infrastructure.

2. Active Directory: Whether you use forms-based authentication or Active Directory for authenticating users, Active Directory is a require-

ment for server-to-server communication. SharePoint uses several service accounts and needs to communicate with AD to validate the credentials it uses for those accounts. The critical accounts include the SharePoint service account and the search account. SharePoint applications may also have unique accounts.

If SharePoint is unable to authenticate these accounts, the farm will

come screeching to a halt pretty quickly. If you use AD for your authentication provider, it also becomes a critical source of profile data and will leverage the search account to periodically gather that data, adding it to SharePoint's profile store.

3. SQL Server: Everything in SharePoint is stored in a SQL database. As

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SQL Server maintenance is key to peak SharePoint performance

Contrary to popular belief, SQL Server is not a self-healing system. Proper and regular database maintenance is essential to keeping it running at peak performance. SQL Server 2005 and SQL Server 2008 have an easy-to-use GUI that can be used to set up your database maintenance plans with no coding required.

In order to create your SharePoint maintenance plan, connect to the SQL Server using the SQL Server Management Studio and bring up the object explorer. Under the Management Folder you will see Maintenance Plans. Right-clicking on Maintenance Plans and selecting New Maintenance Plan will bring up the editor.

When setting up a basic maintenance plan, two objects will give you the most bang for the buck: the Reorganize Index Task and Update Statistics Task. Add those into your SharePoint maintenance plan and set up the Reorganize Index Task to run first by dragging the green arrow from that object to the Update Statistics Task object. Fix the settings within the objects to your server and instance, as well as your SharePoint database or databases. It's easier to simply select All User Databases and schedule the maintenance plan to run weekly or monthly as you see fit. —SEARCHWINIT.COM

a result, if SQL Server ceases to function, SharePoint will quickly follow. So you must ensure that SQL Server is not only functional but that the SharePoint Web Front End can communicate with it as well. Make sure the service accounts that SharePoint uses have the appropriate access to the various databases—primarily the SharePoint_Config database and secondarily the content databases associated with each Web application.

their status and response to requests will be key to ensuring SharePoint is available to your end users.

Beyond dependent services, there are a number of direct SharePoint components that are worth monitoring. Like dependent services, all of the following are more or less required for SharePoint's operation:

SharePoint's Timer Service. The "automatic" things that SharePoint does really aren't all that automatic. In fact, many of the processes that occur in a SharePoint environment are the result of the Timer Service and the related timer jobs defined in central administration.

The Timer Service is a true Windows service that is responsible for initiating this job. It generally runs

4. Internet Information Server

(IIS): SharePoint is a Web-based application server. It relies on the IIS configuration and on the service being fully operational. Depending on the complexity of your SharePoint environment, IIS will be configured with one or more application pools and one or more IIS websites.

There may not be a one-to-one relationship between an application pool and website, but central administration and the Shared Services Provider will probably have dedicated application pools—or at least they should in a production environment. Other Web applications, like your main portal site or your My Sites application, may or may not have dedicated application pools. This is especially true if you have "extended" Web applications.

Take care to map out the relationships and the corresponding application pool identities. Keeping tabs on

SharePoint is a Web-based application server. It relies on the IIS configuration and on the service being fully operational.

every five minutes, but it could shut down or become inoperable for a few different reasons. Most often it's the result of some authentication problem with the identity it uses.

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This is a service that you should monitor. If it's not running, it's not likely to be noticed immediately, but when users don't get their alerts, you'll get calls.

SharePoint Search. Even with WSS, SharePoint has a search service run-

Even with WSS, SharePoint has a search service running. The WSS search and the add-on MOSS search are used for indexing content as well as importing profile data.

ning. The WSS search and the add-on MOSS search are used for indexing content as well as importing profile data. If these services are inoperable or inconsistently available, you'll

almost immediately begin seeing issues with your farm, ranging from event log entries to inoperable search to your profile imports failing.

If you want to keep your users happy and SharePoint humming along, create a program for monitoring the items identified here. What hasn't been addressed are applications built on SharePoint or key add-on tools like backup and recovery programs. All of these elements should also be monitored. Talk to your vendors to understand how these components can be included in your monitoring program.

SharePoint Content Databases. There's a known performance limit for SharePoint's content databases. In general, you shouldn't let these databases exceed 100 GB. Your site won't come crashing to a halt if you exceed that limit, but you will begin to notice performance degradation. Content databases are associated with an application, and you can have multiple data. ■

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Shawn Shell is the founder of Consejo Inc., a consultancy based in Chicago that specializes in Web-based applications, employees and partner portals, as well as enterprise content management. He has spent more than 20 years in IT, with the last 10 focused on content technologies. Shell is a co-author of *Microsoft Content Management Server 2002: A Complete Guide* (Addison-Wesley) and the lead analyst/author on the CMSWatch SharePoint Report 2009.

Integrating Document Management Systems Into MOSS 2007

Make SharePoint 2007 your primary document management system and keep your existing content. Learn three approaches for document management systems integration. **BY AGNES MOLNAR**

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Integrating Document Management Systems Into MOSS 2007

IF YOU USE SharePoint, you're probably familiar with its document management functions—opening, creating and uploading documents, version and permission management, content types and so on. Because of its document management capabilities, many administrators are looking to make Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007 (MOSS 2007) their primary document management system (DMS).

If you are one of them, be sure to conduct a business system analysis before you deploy a MOSS 2007 document library. The analysis will tell you what to do with your previous document management system. Perhaps you should migrate all of its content, or perhaps you want to leave the old system in place and integrate its content in the new SharePoint environment.

Although migration is a valid

option, consider an integrated option. When choosing integration, first ask yourself what you'll need to integrate. Documents are more than simple files. Their file format—such as .docx,

Because of its document management capabilities, many administrators are looking to make MOSS 2007 their primary document management system.

.txt or .pdf—content and metadata are also important. Decent DMS software handles those parts and makes them available to end users.

Also determine what type of inte-

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gration will best meet your business needs. Document management systems integration methods fall into one of the three following categories:

- 1 Documents and metadata are stored in the external system, and you just need a way to present them within the SharePoint interface.
- 2 External documents come from different places—for example, from file sharing or an external database—and its metadata is stored in SharePoint lists.
- 3 Documents are stored in SharePoint libraries, but there's an external database for metadata.

Using the frame integration method. Sometimes you just need a simple way to present your Web-based document management system within MOSS 2007. If that's the case, use the frame integration method.

To do so, insert a Page Viewer Web Part that has an iFrame and have the source point to your old integrated Web-based document management system. Using frame integration allows you to integrate systems without any custom development. Nevertheless be careful because in this case you have to maintain at least two systems simultaneously—Share-

Point and the external DMS—and you may encounter some issues with, for instance, permission management.

Integrating external documents with metadata stored in SharePoint lists. There are many document management systems, but all of them are built on several types of document storage: file system and custom database, among others. These types of

If you need much stronger integration between the documents and their metadata, third-party SharePoint products can help.

storage are responsible for storing and organizing the documents and making them available to the DMS systems.

If you decide to keep your external document management system in place, use its external document storage and connect it to SharePoint list items that contain the metadata. Documents and metadata in SharePoint lists are linked to its external data source.

The simplest way to connect documents to an external data source is to choose the Hyperlink column in the

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metadata list that links to the related documents. But if you need much stronger integration between the documents and their metadata, third-party SharePoint products can help.

document management capabilities, many IT departments use it as a full document management system. But, if you need complex data connections, try installing a relational database and integrating it into the document libraries.

This approach is much easier than using lookup fields and other Share-

Integrating SharePoint document libraries with external metadata.

Because MOSS 2007 has strong

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What Is the Frame Integration Method?

This type of SharePoint integration is not a “real” official methodology but rather a generic way of presenting an existing Web-based application within the SharePoint interface using the Page Viewer Web Part. This approach, under the covers, inserts an iFrame—hence the name—into a Web Part page with the source pointing to your “integrated” Web application.

WHERE IT WORKS

- in applications that don't offer radically different interfaces from the SharePoint interface that wraps it.
- when you want to present a portion of some application that can operate independently.
- with simple menu interfaces that launch other Web interfaces. It makes SharePoint the launch point but doesn't restrict the user to operating inside of the SharePoint interface.

WHERE IT DOESN'T WORK

- in applications that are incompatible with iFrame elements.
- with complicated multi-interface Web applications.
- in applications that don't have a Web interface.

This approach works well for stop-gap measures to drive traffic to SharePoint and when only a simple integration is necessary or possible. More complicated interfaces don't generally work. —SEARCHWINIT.COM

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Point tricks for integrating. To connect documents with their external metadata, try using Business Data Catalog columns to integrate. You can also apply some custom code, such as custom fields or Web Parts, if needed.

The more SharePoint-based products you deploy, the more benefits you'll receive. Whatever integration

method you choose, know this: There is no silver bullet, and no one knows the right answer to all DMS integration issues. The three methods outlined here can work in several business environments and meet different business needs. Conducting a thorough business analysis will show you which method to use. ■

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Choosing Document Libraries

When it comes to document management systems, the document libraries are much stronger than external tools for the following reasons:

- When using content types, you can differentiate your documents from each other and make your system easy to extend.
- SharePoint's out-of-the-box version management capabilities provide an easy way to manage every minor and major item.
- The built-in Document Information Panel lets you manage document properties in Office applications such as Word or Excel. You can also customize the information to fit special requirements. You can, for example, divide the fields into separated groups or insert a company logo into the panel.
- SharePoint's workflow capabilities let you implement even complex business processes related to the stored documents.

With document libraries, SharePoint's built-in permission management capability enables you to administer all content accessibility.



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Agnes Molnar is a Microsoft Office SharePoint Server MVP and has been working with Microsoft technologies and SharePoint since 2001. She founded L&M Solutions, her own SharePoint consultant company in Hungary. She's been working as senior consultant and solutions architect and has led numerous SharePoint implementations for Central European companies.

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