

SHAREPOINT

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Overcome the obstacles to create a solid SharePoint ECM strategy that contributes to business growth. BY PAUL WEST

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Use policy modification reports in SharePoint to monitor permission assignments granted by Site Administration delegates.
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ELECTRONIC CONTENT MANAGEMENT is one of SharePoint's most popular features. In a recent TechTarget survey of Windows IT managers, more than 70% of 485 respondents said that document/content management was their primary use for SharePoint.

How can enterprises make SharePoint's ECM capabilities part of an effective business strategy? One way is to design a user-friendly interface so that employees will actually like to work with SharePoint. Giving them control over their environment is a first step in helping them create effective business processes. SharePoint expert Paul West offers more practical advice in "[Content Is King: Tips and Tricks for Electronic Content Management](#)."

It's only a matter of time before you'll need help managing your installation. SharePoint makes it easy to delegate administrative roles to other users, but you need a formal approach for keeping tabs on your delegates' activities. In "[Giving Away the Keys, Not the Kingdom](#)," Microsoft MVP Brien M. Posey describes how to create a policy modification report that gives you a summary of any changes you should know about.

Thinking about moving to SharePoint 2010? One of the biggest changes in the new version is the introduction of Service Applications, which is a more basic approach to creating a shared service. Read "[What Do SharePoint 2010 Service Applications Mean to Administrators?](#)" by Shawn Shell to learn how to give your organization some flexibility in its deployment of critical services.

How are you using SharePoint ECM as part of your business strategy? Send me an email at ccasatelli@techtarget.com, and let me know. ■



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Content is King: Tips and Tricks for Electronic Content Management

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INCREASINGLY, EASY ACCESS to critical documents, email and records is absolutely vital to business growth. In a world where all information appears to be at our fingertips, companies are beginning to require their employees to have access to a range of enterprise content.

This means that IT shops not only manage all types of content but also deliver it in a personalized way. When you implement an electronic content management (ECM) vision and strategy, here are some tips to bear in mind to make it effective:

1. Align content strategy to business strategy: ECM benefits can be difficult to quantify, but they are critical to understanding long-term business survival and strategy. What is the

value of a report or metric that provides important insight to initiate a strategic decision? It depends.

How can you measure the ability to deliver the right information at the right time for the many decisions made as a result of ECM and the resulting bottom-line profits? There are tactics you can use to get a pulse on success. More often than not the value of ECM can be best understood by imagining the risks of doing business without it.

2. Define success: Establish before and after metrics for what a successful implementation looks like. Perform a baseline analysis and quantify results when possible. How does faster access to information help your
(Continued on page 5)



Planning a SharePoint ECM System

KNOWING WHAT TO expect from SharePoint electronic content management (ECM) features means that you understand the platform's full functionality.

DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT: The type of content people think about first is a Microsoft Word document. Besides managing the documents, SharePoint puts a lot of other tools in the hands of end users and administrators. Here are some general questions that need to be answered to achieve your ECM goals with SharePoint:

- What metadata do these documents have? How can they be organized?
- What versioning settings do we need?
- What business processes will we implement?

WEB CONTENT MANAGEMENT: Today's Web content is at least as important as the internal business content, so Web content management (WCM) is essential. The following are SharePoint's WCM capabilities:

- Publishing features
- Document converters
- Content deployment
- Page layouts
- Approval workflow
- Translation libraries

The editing phase is followed by some approval steps, and finally the content is published to the Internet. In order to have a reliable WCM system, answer these questions:

- What types of Web content do we have?
- What page layouts do we want for the content?
- What approval processes can we define for each Web content type?

RECORDS MANAGEMENT: This function provides a set of features that identify and assign the final disposition of high-value documents. It also requires a lot of planning before implementing. Here are some important questions to ask:

- What content types have to be recorded?
- What routings and record libraries do we have to create?
- What kinds of policies can we identify? —SEARCHWINIT.COM

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company? Respond to customers with better information? Respond in a more timely fashion? Does it drive revenue for you?

clear policies and procedures for governance of content management systems. These may include:

- Systems operating procedures
- Security and access procedures
- Operational procedures
- Disaster recovery procedures

3. Establish effective policies and procedures up front: Regulatory compliance cannot be met with technology alone. It requires effective policies and procedures to ensure compliance. It is a recommended best practice to establish and communicate

4. Train users: In order to increase adoption, be sure to train employees—and not only on how to use the tools and access data but also on the

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Make SharePoint Training Successful

WITHOUT PROPER TRAINING, large numbers of end users unfamiliar with SharePoint may reject it completely. Lack of proper training slows productivity while end users are struggling to learn how to use it. Here are some strategies to help with SharePoint training:

- Identify a pilot group that needs to share information or that has a need for better document management.
- Design a SharePoint structure that will help them perform those business tasks better, and show them how to use it.
- Based on their feedback, show them how to refine SharePoint.
- Hand over ownership of SharePoint to them.

With this approach, the training is a dialog between the users and the trainer, who is configuring SharePoint to meet their specific business needs and showing them how it should be used. This is a crucial step because SharePoint is a user-driven tool, not one that is centrally designed and rolled out like a compiled application. It is designed to be constantly updated and modified to meet user requirements by the users themselves. Therefore, SharePoint has to be business process driven because it puts SharePoint into a realistic context that users will understand. —SEARCHWINIT.COM

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tangible benefits of SharePoint. A platform like SharePoint presents easy-to-use information directly to people where they work, collaborate and make decisions. The tools can shift the way that people work—for the better—but the culture change that occurs can be cumbersome if you do not train employees properly beforehand.

Choose a professional services vendor who can bring a broader view and show the overall architecture necessary for total employee empowerment. That's what it's really all about.

7. Obtain stakeholder support: Make the new way of accessing information worthwhile for all levels of users. Reward the team for adoption, and measure the outcome. In addition, having management buy-in is key to corporate culture change. Simple managerial acknowledgement goes a long way toward rewarding the collaborative effort. Management needs to care. It needs to want to participate in the portal.

A sound ECM strategy is becoming necessary in corporations around the world. Integrated platforms such as SharePoint provide information workers with secure access to data as well as information integration so that companies can have a single point of access throughout the enterprise and beyond. ■

5. Design intuitively: The more intuitive the user interface is, the easier it is to use. And the better your user interface, the more your users will like using it. That will increase their satisfaction with the work that you have done. The more your employees feel that they can control their environment, and that the things they do are actually working, the happier they are.

6. Assemble the project team and choose the right adviser: Off-the-shelf solutions do not exist—for all practical purposes—and having a trusted adviser is a valuable resource.

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Paul West is a co-owner and co-founder of SharePoint360 LLC, a SharePoint consulting and hosting provider. West has extensive experience with SharePoint architecture and implementations. He has been working with SharePoint technologies since the Microsoft SharePoint release in 2001.

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SHAREPOINT MAKES IT easy to delegate administrative roles to other users, but you need a way to account for your delegate's activities. One way of keeping tabs on your delegates is to monitor policy modifications. Although SharePoint doesn't give you a great deal of granularity, you can view a summary of recent administrative actions that led to a policy modification. It's an easy process that can yield big results.

Before you begin auditing policy modifications or generating reports, you have to configure SharePoint to log site statistics. Begin the process by opening the Central Administration console and clicking on the Operations link. Next, go to the Logging and Reporting section and click on the Usage Analysis Processing link. At this point, you must select the Enable Logging check box and the Enable Usage Analysis Processing

check box, as shown in **FIGURE A** (page 9), and click OK.

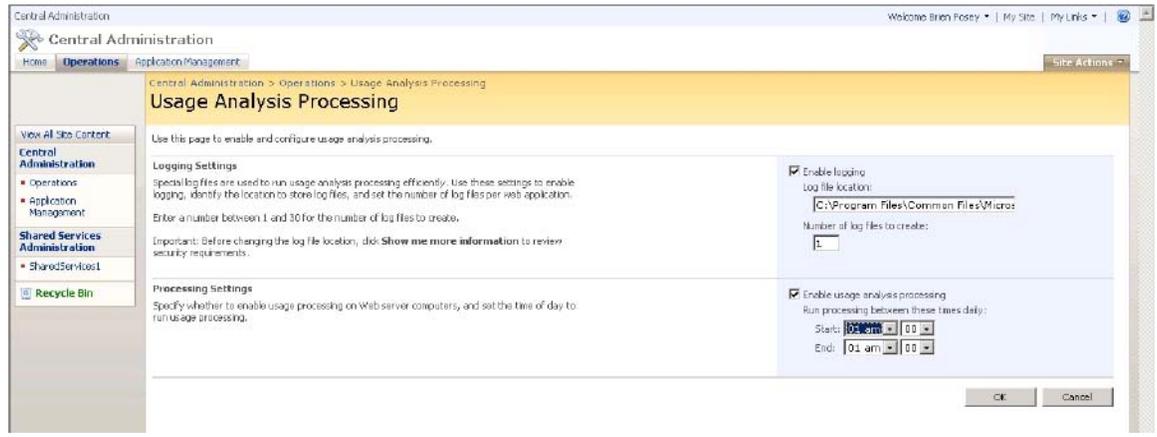
ENABLING PORTAL USAGE REPORTING

After logging is enabled, portal usage reporting is next. Start by going to the quick launch bar located on the left side of the Central Administration console and clicking on the Shared Services Provider that is listed in the Shared Services Administration section. You will now be taken to the home page for the Shared Services Provider.

Go to the Portal Usage Reporting section and click on the Usage Reporting link. Windows will now display the Configure Advanced Usage Analysis Processing page. Go to the Processing Settings section and click the Enable Advanced Usage Analysis Processing check box and the Enable

FIGURE A

Configure SharePoint to enable the logging of site statistics.



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Search Query Logging check box, as shown in **FIGURE B**. Click OK when you are done.

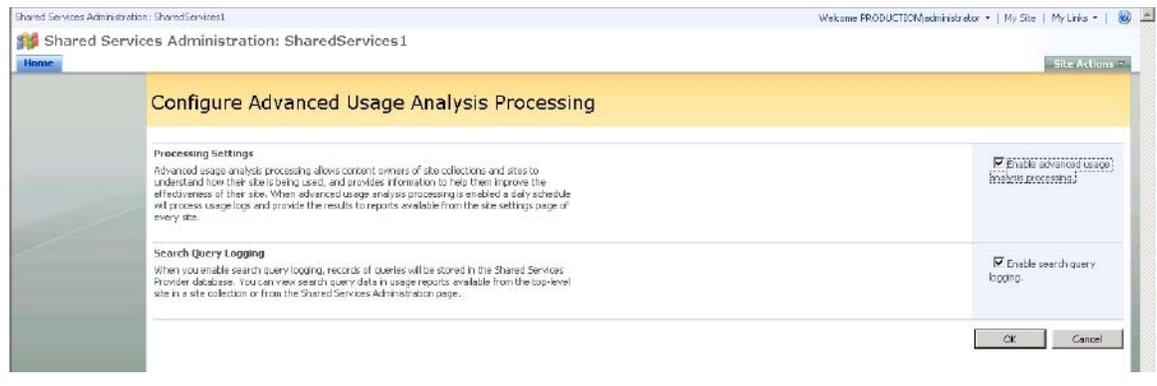
The next step is to activate pool usage reporting. Before that, though, you need to reset IIS. To do so, just

enter the IISRESET command at the server's Run prompt.

Once the IIS reset is completed, activate the reporting feature for your site collections. To do that, switch to your SharePoint site and then go to

FIGURE B

Enable Advanced Usage Analysis Processing.



the Site Settings page. From there, click on the Site Collection Features link, located in the Site Collection Administration column. When the Site Collection Features page appears, click the Activate button next to the Reporting feature.

create a site collection policy. Begin by going to the Site Settings page and clicking the Site Collection Policies link, located in the Site Collection Administration section. When Windows displays the Site Collection Policies page, click the Create button. You will be taken to the Edit Policy screen, where you can begin creating your site collection policy.

Start the process by entering a name and a description for the policy. Now, select the Auditing check box.

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FIGURE C

Control the types of auditing that will be used.

Edit Policy:

Name and Administrative Description
The name and administrative description are shown to list managers when configuring policies on a list or content type.

Policy Statement
The policy statement is displayed to end users when they open items subject to this policy. The policy statement can explain which policies apply to the content or indicate any special handling or information that users need to be aware of.

Labels
You can add a label to a document to ensure that important information about the document is included when it is printed. To specify the label, type the text you want to use in the "Label format" box. You can use any combination of fixed text or document properties, except calculated or built-in properties such as GUID or CreatedBy. To start a new line, use the \n character sequence.

Auditing
Specify the events that should be audited for documents and items subject to this policy.

Expiration
Schedule content disposition by specifying its retention period and the action to take when it reaches its expiration date.

Barcodes
Assigns a barcode to each document or item. Optionally, Microsoft Office applications can require users to insert these barcodes into documents.

Policy Configuration:

- Name: Policy to Audit Changes to Permissions
- Administrative Description: This policy audits changes to permissions.
- Policy Statement:
- Enable Labels
- Enable Auditing
- Specify the events to audit:
 - Opening or downloading documents, viewing items in lists, or viewing item properties
 - Editing items
 - Checking out or checking in items
 - Moving or copying items to another location in the site
 - Deleting or restoring items
- Enable Expiration
- Enable Barcodes

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Upon doing so, Windows will display several check boxes beneath the Enable Auditing check box that you can use to control the types of auditing that will be used. Go ahead and select all of the necessary check boxes shown in **FIGURE C** (page 10) and click OK.

The next step is to apply the policy that you have just created. For the sake of demonstration, we will apply the policy to a document library. To get started, go to your document library and select the Document Library Settings command from the

Settings menu. Windows will display the Customize Documents page. Now, locate the Permissions and Management section and click on the Information Management Policy Settings link.

Next, you must click on your content type link—usually Document—and you will be taken to the Information Management Policy Settings page. Choose the Use Site Collection Policy option, and then select the policy that you created earlier, as shown in **FIGURE D**. Click OK to complete the process.

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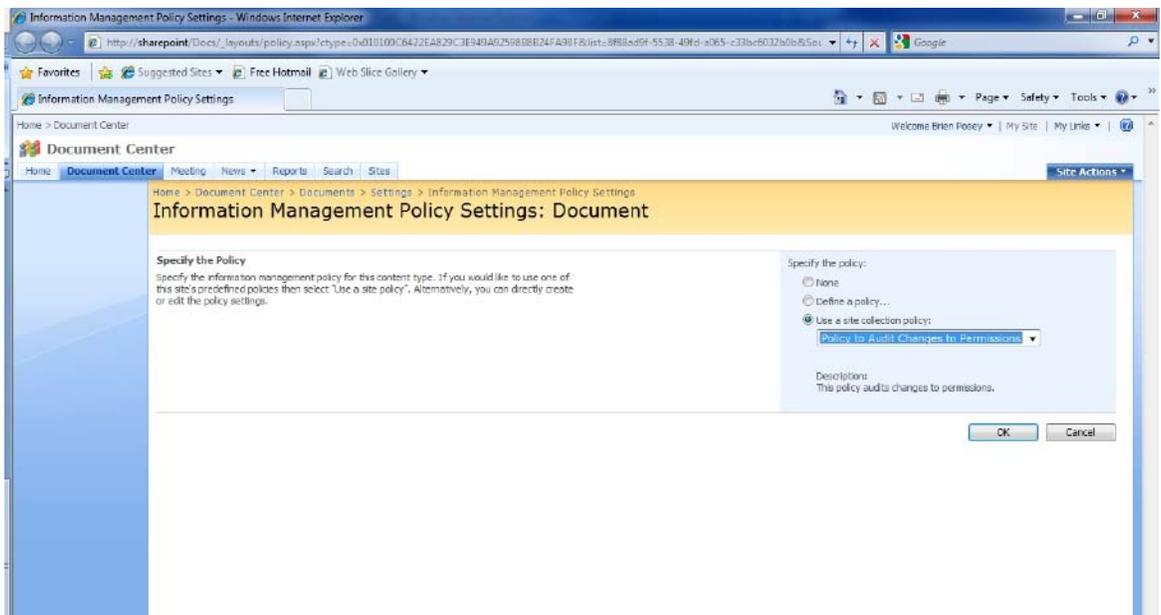
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FIGURE D

Choose the Use Site Collection Policy option, and then select the policy that you created earlier.



VIEWING YOUR AUDIT REPORTS

You have now performed all of the necessary configuration work, and it's time to view the auditing reports that you created. Go to SharePoint's All Site Settings page and click on the Audit Log Reports link, which is located in the Site Collection Administration column. When you do, you will be taken to the View Auditing Reports page.

In **FIGURE E**, you will notice that

there are numerous audit reporting options and that you also have the ability to create your own custom audit reports. If you are interested in viewing policy changes put in place by delegates, then click on the Policy Modifications link located in the Information Management Policy Reports section.

If any policy modifications have occurred, they will be presented in an

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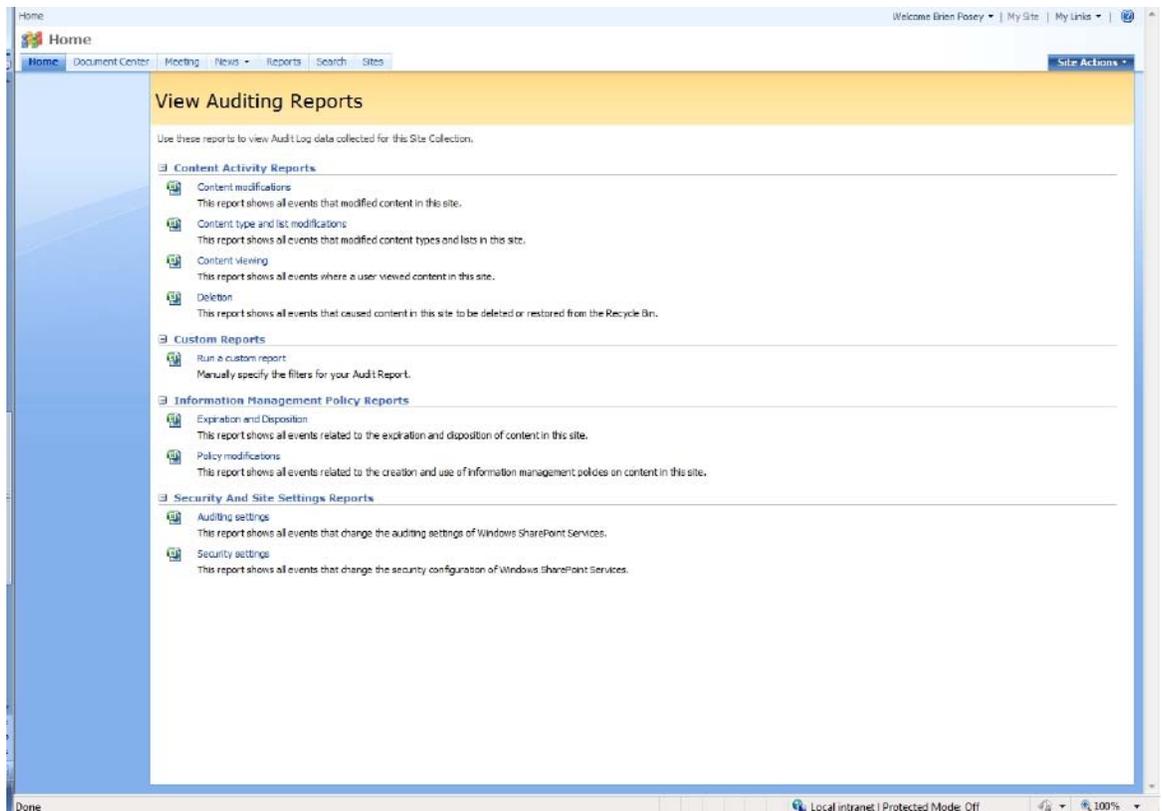
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FIGURE E

Click on the Policy Modifications link to see what administrative delegates have been doing.



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Excel spreadsheet similar to the one shown in **Figure F**. Otherwise, you will see a message telling you that the report contains no data.

As you can see, the policy modification report isn't very granular. It gives you a summary of the changes that have been made, but it doesn't tell you who made the changes.

Adding more information can be done only by creating a custom report. You will notice, though, that the report does tell you what type of event has occurred and which library the event occurred within. Given this information, it shouldn't be too hard to keep tabs on any suspicious SharePoint behavior. ■

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FIGURE F

Any policy modifications will be presented in an Excel spreadsheet.

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Site Id	(All)			
2					
3	Count of Occurred	Event			
4	Document Location	Custom	Grand Total		
5	Docs/Documents		3	3	
6			3	3	
7	Grand Total		6	6	
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18					



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Brien M. Posey has received Microsoft's Most Valuable Professional award six 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.

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What Do SharePoint 2010 Service Applications Mean to Administrators?

ONE OF THE BIGGEST changes in SharePoint 2010 is the introduction of Service Applications. Like the functions bound up in the SharePoint 2007 concept of Shared Services, Service Applications provide cross-farm functionality and give organizations flexibility in their deployments of critical services. But, unlike SharePoint 2007, you can deploy Service Applications in a range of configurations, and they are a whole lot more numerous than their predecessors.

SharePoint 2007's Shared Services represented a modification in the way SharePoint farms were managed. Certain key functionality, like search, was separated from the base server and deployed in a manner that allowed it to be shared across more than one farm. In SharePoint 2010, Microsoft created the idea of Service Applications and Service Proxies. A Service Application is a more basic approach

to creating a shared service.

There are separate Service Applications for each of the historical components of the Shared Services Provider, also called SSP. These include profiles, search, Excel services and logging. In addition, there are a lot of new applications for the [new services provided by SharePoint 2010](#). Here's a partial list:

- Search Service
- User Profile Service
- Business Connectivity Services
- PerformancePoint Services
- Metadata Management Services
- Secure Store Service
- State Service
- Usage and Health Data Collection Service
- Web Analytics Service
- PowerPoint Service
- Visio Graphics Service (for Workflow)

Although there are many more services in SharePoint 2010 than in 2007, Microsoft has significantly changed the management of these services. With the dissolution of the SSP concept, so too was the administration site dissolved. All services are now managed directly through Central Administration.

PUBLISHING AND CONSUMING

When the SSP concept was eliminated, so was the singular point of entry for consuming those Shared Services. In its place, Microsoft created the concept of a Service Proxy, which is an abstraction of the Service Application. A Service Proxy enables communication between a SharePoint farm in need of a particular service and the Service Application that's providing that service.

In this way, SharePoint administrators can publish a proxy for a specific Service Application, like search, to a farm. When that farm needs the search service, it simply makes a request through the proxy. Now, the trick is that the Service Application itself can be hosted virtually anywhere, and because the proxy is the consuming farm's entry point, it does not specifically need to know that the search service is hosted on an entirely different farm.

In terms of management, this approach is both liberating and challenging. It's liberating in the sense that SharePoint administrators can now create whole farms dedicated to hosting service applications. This eliminates bottlenecks, allows farms to be optimized for more background processing and somewhat simplifies business continuity scenarios because the proxies can be pointed anywhere and reconfigured as needed. But the complexity manifests itself in

A DATABASE FOR EVERYONE

Flexibility was one of Microsoft's primary design goals for the new Service Application architecture. As such, the historical monolithic database that housed what was an SSP had to change. With the slew of Service Applications also comes a database for every one of them.

As you deploy each Service Application, a database is created to support it. This allows SharePoint administrators to separate and segment Service Applications from one farm to another. Unfortunately, it also introduces a much more complicated management and business continuity solution.

Business continuity planning for SharePoint was already complex. By adding more moving parts, it becomes even more complicated. But the multiple databases also reduce the possibility that a single database corruption or failure will wipe out more than just a single Service Application.

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more management overhead associated with various communications between farms and with the associated “permissioning” and authorization that needs to occur for sharing across domain boundaries.

ically within the context of the SSP. This is not the case with SharePoint 2010 Service Applications.

In a bid to allow developers to really expand SharePoint’s capabilities, Microsoft created patterns to develop custom Service Applications. Although many enterprises will welcome the ability to extend existing services or create entirely new services, SharePoint administrators will need to get a hold of these applications quickly because they will inevitably add more complexity to their SharePoint environments. Further, because they cross all boundaries, including farm boundaries, a misbehaved Service Application could have serious consequences in the enterprise.

Much like the trouble caused by

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NEW LEVELS OF CUSTOMIZATION

As any SharePoint administrator knows, custom solutions can be difficult. In SharePoint 2007, Shared Services Providers were a generally blissful respite from the variety of custom solutions often deployed in enterprises. Unlike Web parts or features and solution files—though accessed through an SSP—not a whole lot of custom development occurred specif-

SharePoint 2010 introduces Business Connectivity Services

SHAREPOINT 2010'S NEW Business Connectivity Services (BCS) is one of the big changes in SharePoint 2010. Built as a Service Application, it replaces the read-only Business Data Catalog in SharePoint 2007. With BCS, organizations can now read and write data across multiple systems, and, unlike the SharePoint 2007 version, developers and administrators no longer have to hand-code XML or buy third-party tools. Microsoft expanded the functionality in SharePoint Designer to enable the creation of application definitions for BCS. Further, line-of-business data can be surfaced as a standard SharePoint list, which you can update directly in SharePoint. The resulting changes can immediately be seen reflected in the underlying business data.

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errant Web parts or features, custom Service Applications have the potential to be far more time consuming because they're now effectively global in scope and could span more than one farm. As a result, SharePoint administrators should make sure developers create the appropriate management mechanisms and logging. This will allow proper troubleshooting in the event of bugs or other issues.

AVOIDING SERVER SPRAWL

SharePoint administrators should be wary of an increase in server sprawl. Like some of their SharePoint 2007 predecessors, SharePoint 2010 Service Applications can generally be load balanced.

That's a huge advantage for services that might span multiple farms and will likely be true for others like Business Connectivity Services (formally the Business Data Catalog), Visio Graphics Service or Metadata Management Services because these could prove popular and processor intensive. In a load-balanced configuration, administrators have the ability

to ensure appropriate performance levels and redundancy.

But this ability may cause organizations to increase the size of their SharePoint farms. It is certainly true of enterprises already using SharePoint 2007, which discovered that their employees depend on the portal and cannot afford downtime. It's also true of organizations that realize that the additional new services will increase load beyond a simple small farm or even a medium farm in larger companies. Because of this, there will be a push to add more servers to improve farm performance or to create a pure services farm where a single medium farm may have sufficed.

In the end, SharePoint 2010 represents a significant step forward in the evolution of this popular portal product. But, as companies incorporate advances in the platform, there will be additional changes in how administrators manage these farms.

Some of the changes will place extra burdens on staff, while others will improve management capabilities. Either way, be prepared for them by getting to know Service Applications better. ■



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Shawn Shell is the founder of Web-based applications, employee and partner portals as well as enterprise content management solutions. 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 he is the lead analyst/author on the CMSWatch SharePoint Report.

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