

SANLAM SKY SOLUTIONS

BOOSTS PRODUCTIVITY AND COLLABORATION WITH MICROSOFT SHAREPOINT

Sanlam Sky Solutions, in partnership with Intervate, has transformed internal communications with SkyView – a collaborative hub enabled by Microsoft SharePoint.

Customer:
Sanlam Sky Solutions
Website:
www.sanlam.co.za

Country or Region:
South Africa
Industry:
Financial

Software and Services:
Microsoft SharePoint

Partner:
Intervate
Website:
www.intervate.com

BACKGROUND

Sanlam Sky Solutions is a division of Sanlam Personal Finance, which makes it part of the Sanlam Personal Finance retail cluster. Sanlam Sky Solutions offers a wide range of simple and affordable financial solutions to meet the needs of South Africa's entry level market. To ensure these solutions effectively reach the different market segments, they have developed robust distribution channels for Sanlam Sky Solutions. They conduct business through approximately:

- 5 broker regional offices and 9 satellite offices servicing over 450 independent brokers;
- 54 sales branches servicing over 2800 tied agents;
- 70 client service centres;
- 65 Ubuntu points; and
- A permanent staff compliment of 685.

SharePoint Case Study

CHALLENGE

Efficient and streamlined internal communication is important to the success of any business. Sanlam Sky Solutions had an outdated intranet which only a handful of staff were making regular use of. Many were simply unaware that this platform existed or perceived it to be too complex for practical use.

Usage testing indicated that the majority of employees simply regarded the intranet as a click through location to business applications such as human resources management

SOLUTION

In late 2012, Sanlam Sky Solutions began searching for a more user friendly alternative to its existing intranet solution.

After a thorough investigation of the South African Microsoft partner environment, Sanlam Sky Solutions selected Microsoft Gold Certified Partner – Intervate, to assist them on their enterprise content management journey utilizing Microsoft SharePoint.

Intervate were selected based on their breadth of experience within financial services and specifically the Sanlam Group, allied with their business focus and results driven approach to the project.

Through an initial workshop, Intervate guided Sanlam Sky Solutions towards identifying the key business drivers that would be considered the visions of success and which would provide a business focused direction and objective.

To ensure employee buy-in, the communications department, assisted by Intervate, conducted workshops and circulated a questionnaire aimed at refining key objectives and obtaining buy-in.

The following requirements were identified:

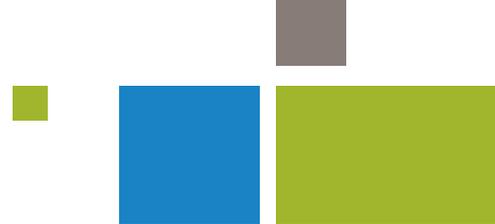
- Improve workforce productivity by helping staff locate and view information much faster and to use applications that are relevant to their roles and responsibilities.
- Improve the communication interface at Sanlam Sky Solutions.
- Easier access to information for staff around the country.
- Create channels such as forums, blogs and live chat for staff. Enhance collaboration by facilitating access to information.

Reduce the amount of emails sent internally by providing a communication platform.

Intervate were then tasked with designing an internal communications platform based on Microsoft SharePoint 2010 technology. Microsoft SharePoint is an enterprise content management solution that offers users access to business enhancing functionality.

Accessed via a web browser on any device, this solution enables efficient document sharing, shared workspaces, organisation wide communication, content management and social interaction.

In June 2012, every department head was contacted to nominate two key members for the project. These two project members were asked to join an Intranet Community of Practice (ICoP) to help qualify further the initial needs and wants of the different departments. Intervate then carried out a series of interviews and workshops with these key business personnel.



In January 2013 Intervate entered its development cycle, focusing heavily on AGILE methodology that would empower stakeholders to monitor progress and make alterations along the way.

During this process the ICoP members were informed that this community will in time form an integral part of the operations of SkyView. Training was planned as an important factor to support this community. Most of the members that opted into the project were booked into training on SharePoint 2010 (End-user and Power-user).

A few months later, in July 2013, Sanlam Sky Solutions moved several internal processes over to its newly developed Microsoft SharePoint 2010 collaborative hub – SkyView.

BENEFITS

To date, Sanlam Sky Solutions has enjoyed several benefits associated with the implementation of SkyView. The most important benefit has been a more streamlined and effective internal communication practice says Hayley Kuhn, Head of Marketing and Communication at Sanlam Sky Solutions.

“It’s still early days for us, but we have seen a significant change in the way Sanlam Sky employees have used SkyView to communicate and collaborate. Now that people are aware that the platform exists and that it is more user-friendly and inclusive than our previous offering, business divisions are beginning to make active use of its functionality”.

Internal productivity has also increased and this is largely due to improved capacity for document search and retrieval within the organisation adds Kuhn.

“Productivity has certainly increased. This could be attributed to the search functionality incorporated into SkyView, which allows staff to access and download information quicker without getting bogged down by process or ineffective cataloguing”.

ABOUT SANLAM SKY SOLUTIONS

Sanlam Sky Solutions falls under the Sanlam Personal Finance within the Sanlam Group. It provides a wide range of simple and affordable financial solutions to the South African entry-level market. Sanlam Sky Solutions’ products include funeral cover, retirement annuities, savings for education, life cover and personal accident plans.