Why You're Losing Money on SharePoint
And What You Can Do About It

"It's good to learn from your mistakes, but it's a lot cheaper to learn from someone else's"

With a list of value-adding features a mile long, SharePoint is the go-to "Swiss Army knife" platform for just about anything related to optimizing internal information management and communications. In fact, Microsoft boasts that SharePoint is installed in two-thirds of all enterprise organizations around the globe. With such widespread adoption, companies should be jumping for joy over all the time and money they're saving, right?

In theory, yes. But, having the software and actively using it are two different things. A point of contention in the SharePoint community, the lack of usage has failed to impress. And, since adoption gives life to a SharePoint environment, it's critical to its success. SharePoint as a technology platform usually isn't problematic; the implementation of SharePoint is often where the problem lies.

SharePoint is an efficient money-making platform for organizations and it does this by solving people's problems. If you're not solving problems, you're losing money folks!

The following white paper will explain in detail how SharePoint saves your company money, the reason your SharePoint deployment has failed, and most importantly, what you can do about it.

SharePoint, the one-stop-shop for money savings

We live in a society of convenience and getting the most bang for our buck. When was the last time you went to one store for eggs, another for meat and still another for produce? While there might be a great sale to be had, the time and money in extra gas most likely wasn't justifiable.

On average an employee has to deal with 5+ enterprise applications to perform his or her daily work. And with that comes multiple usernames and passwords to remember, systems to learn, and not to mention a hefty software licensing bill. Streamlining processes is the name of the game these days. Wouldn't it be nice to have a "one-stop-shop" that incorporates the ability of multiple systems from project management to business processes, content creation, social and more? What if SharePoint can provide a solution?

The promise of an enterprise software platform like SharePoint lies in time savings, enhanced business processes, revenue gains, increased efficiency, more effective teamwork, greater access to analytics, better client and partner collaboration, and more.

Consider these additional ways that SharePoint can save your organization time and money:

Top 5 tips to improve SharePoint adoption to save money, increase productivity

- SharePoint keeps your business organized. Keeping your business organized is highly important. Businesses that are not organized quickly find themselves losing money. This is due to documents being lost and even payments being mishandled.
- SharePoint can help simplify processes to save money. Companies lose money when processes aren't optimized. For example, a company spends large sums of money on reimbursing customers who complain. With a SharePoint team site, a system is put in place to manage complaints and respond accordingly. As a result, the company saved millions of dollars by no longer reimbursing every customer regardless. Issues could now be investigated and responsibility assigned. And by keeping track of all complaints in one database they could analyze where internal processes could be improved.
- SharePoint can help manage a portfolio of projects that boost performance. When your company is not performing well, the first thing to do is to analyze what is working, what is not and strategize how to improve processes. Managing the task of those projects can easily be facilitated with SharePoint.
- SharePoint solutions can easily be re-used. When budgets are low, companies can re-use existing solutions instead of allowing different departments to create their own solutions. If you have a process facilitated by SharePoint, and you want to re-use it for a different business or team you can generally make a template out of the list, library or site as a starting point for the other business.
- SharePoint reduces man hours by making it easy to find information. Search in SharePoint 2013 enables users to find relevant information more quickly and easily than ever before and makes it easy for Search administrators to customize the search experience.
- SharePoint saves money in printing fees by increasing the use of electronic forms.
- SharePoint saves money by reducing licensing costs and development work for third party business systems.
- SharePoint reduces the total cost of ownership of your IT infrastructure as well as reduces training costs.
- SharePoint reduces website costs because it can be utilized as both an intranet and website.
- SharePoint saves time and money in travel with social and mobile features. No matter if your employees are on the opposite ends of the earth, SharePoint allows easy communication with communities, forums, discussion boards as well as Web conferencing and instant messaging.

No company pain, no SharePoint gain

According to SandHill Group and Neochange, 70 percent of companies consider effective user adoption as the most important factor for realizing value in terms of enterprise software. But, nearly two-thirds of buyers report that enterprise software user levels at their organizations are below 50 percent. That is a huge disconnect.

So, why aren't employees using SharePoint?

- Lack of vision or plan. Many companies buy in to the fact that if they buy it, put it on the server than people will start using it. This couldn't be further from the truth. SharePoint is a platform that has multiple functions that provide value. However, if an organization thinks they can just install SharePoint without a plan, or they don't attempt to tailor it for their needs, it's not going to bring very much business value. And any system that doesn't provide business value probably isn't going to get used.
- Lack of user buy in or change management plan. Using SharePoint to handle document management and business processes, for example, can be extremely beneficial in streamlining processes and increasing productivity in the long run. However, it does require a substantial change in the way people process information and perform their day-to-day tasks. Users need to be included in the project all along the way. There should be a clear understanding of why these changes are happening, and how it will ultimately benefit them.
- Inadequate user training. In order for any software to be successful, it's pertinent that users know how to operate the system. You can't just install SharePoint, walk away and expect that people will start using it. There are a number of learning methods that have been proven to be effective, including instructor-led hands-on training, videos, documented instructions and books. However, experts agree that if an organization is only able to offer one type of training, they should choose hands-on training because adults learn best by doing.

BONUS: Add ShareKnowledge Connector for added SharePoint value

ShareKnowledge, a learning management system built for SharePoint, is the perfect solution when your current system doesn't quite meet all your needs or you just need your SharePoint to 'work better.'

It goes without saying that not all systems will have every feature available. While your current SharePoint system may perform well for 80 percent of your needs, there will be times when your organization could benefit from that last 10 percent of functionality. This is where adding ShareKnowledge Connector can help fill in the blanks – whether your needs require additional tracking and reporting or better compliance capabilities for example.

ShareKnowledge Connector compliments a wide variety of needs and can easily integrate with ERP solutions and most other systems. Its unique PowerSync™ feature provides an integration solution that seamlessly "talks" to other systems and can utilize your organizational data, HRIS and Active Directory. For example, an organization can take advantage of ShareKnowledge Connector for specialized tracking and reporting and then easily push that data back to their LMS – hassle free.

With highly flexible permissions and control, ShareKnowledge Connector can be the LMS extension your organization is looking for – from automating the team onboarding process to meeting team level development objectives. All of this and more can be achieved without interfering with your existing LMS permissions and control.

Regardless if you have SharePoint or plan on getting SharePoint in the near future, it is never too late to set a plan for success. Here are the top five tips to succeed:

- **Clearly define the vision and involve key business units.** What is your company's vision for the future and expected outcomes? How will each department benefit from using SharePoint and which company goal will each be working toward?

- **Understand SharePoint's capabilities.** Do you really know what SharePoint can do and how it will be beneficial to your business? Don't proceed blindly, take time to review all the features that SharePoint provides and come up with a list of how you can utilize them to enhance productivity and collaboration.

- **Communicate, communicate, communicate.** As mentioned previously, a major contributor to failed SharePoint deployments is resistance from employees. By leaving them out of decision-making processes, it often causes them to resist change and ultimately delay adoption rates. It's very important to communicate as much as possible about the project and encourage an open dialogue to discuss the benefits to employees and allow plenty of time for questions and concerns

- **Provide adequate training.** Ideal training and awareness programs are based upon an informed learning-centric approach. A comprehensive and effective training strategy would include generating awareness, conducting a capability assessment, identify learning objectives, offer curriculum and environment-based training, identify measurable outcomes and deliver ongoing training.

- **Encourage use of social features for ultimate engagement.** SharePoint offers powerful social tools – employees are able to engage in discussions, share information and collaborate within the platform. Encouraging participation in these features will lead to faster adoption rates and successful SharePoint implementation.

Given the sheer size of the enterprise content management market, as evidenced by the fact that more than 100 million SharePoint licenses have been purchased, it seems that modern organizations should be collaborating, analyzing and teaming better than ever before. In some case, they are. But far too often, they're not.

SharePoint offers a plethora of ways that save organizations in time and money as well as increase productivity. Nobody wants to lose money, most of all businesses. This white paper gives clarity to some of the more common reasons that SharePoint deployments fail as well as crucial steps to take in order to get back on track.

We hope you enjoyed this eBook and found the information we provided helpful. If you would like to learn more about ShareKnowledge, please click on the link at the bottom of this page.