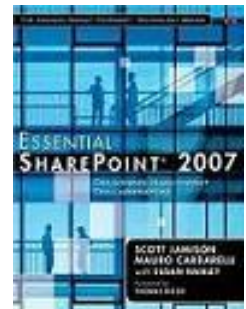


Supporting Notes: Secrets of Successful Portal Implementations

KMWorld 2008
& Intranets 8



September 23, 2008
Susan Hanley
President, Susan Hanley LLC
sue@susanhanley.com
www.susanhanley.com

Blog: www.networkworld.com/community/?q=sharepoint

SUPPORTING NOTES FOR KM WORLD 2008 PRESENTATION

Portals provide a convenient and often personalized way for your entire organization to find the information and tools each individual needs to be more productive. Practical experience indicates that technology has only a small impact on the success of portal solutions; organizational and political (process and people) strategies have a much greater impact and as a result, a comprehensive portal strategy is vital for success. Join our portal expert for an entertaining and informative discussion about how to define optimal, workable collaboration strategies, build portal and collaboration solutions people want to use, create a framework for measuring the value of your portal investment, and achieve a balance between culture, process, and technology to successfully implement your portal or collaboration solution.

The notes below provide some supplemental information for selected slides in the presentation.

Most examples are from SharePoint solutions – but that doesn't mean that they don't apply to other platform technologies. But, let's face it, with around 100 million licenses of the product sold, if you haven't already deployed it, someone in your organization is thinking about it.

As one of my very anti-Microsoft clients told his team after he previewed Office 2007 with MOSS 2007, "If we don't pick SharePoint as our enterprise tool for collaboration, in about 3 years, we're going to look like f*%\$ idiots."

SLIDE 5: IDENTIFY THE KEY STAKEHOLDERS

One way to ensure that your portal project will fail is to have IT build the solution without engaging a broad spectrum of potential users. Early portal and collaboration projects were primarily driven by IT organizations. Many of these early initiatives failed to gain acceptance by users because they were essentially IT projects. Since the success of portal solutions is critically dependent on business user adoption, it is imperative that business stakeholders take an active role in portal design and governance planning.

It is critical to understand who your stakeholders are. They may not even be part of your organization. They may be your trusted partners, but it's also possible that they may be your customers.

Today, more and more portal and collaboration projects are driven (and funded) by business users. Many intranet projects are sponsored by the corporate department responsible for internal communications. One or more business units may fund and drive an external or customer portal initiative. As a result, it is critically important for IT to work with the sponsoring business unit as well as all key stakeholders to ensure that the inevitable decision trade-offs that will be made during the solution design and development are made in favor of the business stakeholders as often as possible. Portal projects provide an important opportunity for IT and business owners to collaborate. IT managers who fail to take advantage of this opportunity put their project and potentially their career at risk.

SLIDE 7: EXAMPLES OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders depend on the solution audience. For an intranet, customers are not a target audience, but that doesn't mean that you won't be including trusted partners. Think about the nature of your business. What is the impact of outsourcing? How might that affect your intranet stakeholders?

SLIDES 9-10: EXAMPLES OF BUSINESS OBJECTIVES

Use the business objectives to help guide your decisions about which features should go in each release. Ask portal owners/stakeholders to prioritize their business objectives so that you optimally understand how to make trade-offs between alternative design approaches. Users often have a very difficult time articulating requirements for portal solutions. This is because it is virtually impossible to envision how the solution will help solve business problems until users see the solution with "real" data. When users do express requirements, they may express their requirements in a very specific way, which may require a significant amount of custom coding. However, if you understand the objectives or outcomes they are trying to achieve, you may be able to accomplish the objective using "out of the box" functionality. You really can't gather user requirements for portal and collaboration solutions like you do for a traditional software development project. Instead, you should solicit and try to understand business objectives. You can then, as an IT design team, derive requirements based on the business objectives and outcomes. When a user learns that a requirement will cost \$250K to implement, the requirement is often no longer "required." Therefore, it's important to ensure that you understand the strategic objectives for the company, the business objectives for collaboration in general, and the specific outcome objectives for each aspect of the implementation.

SLIDE 12: UNDERSTAND HOW YOUR SOLUTION FITS IN A WEB 2.0 WORLD

Should organizations care about social technologies? Sure, in most organizations, the bulk or at least the most current information assets are stored in peoples' heads. Social networking provides a platform and structure in which these assets can be discovered, and thus leveraged.

Integration is really key – while MySites are catching on, people are generally more passionate about their personal spaces. The fact that SharePoint has a tight integration with some existing systems helps make their social networks more useful. Business can't necessarily rely on users to feed a baseline of data into MySites the way they do in the consumer space so it's key to integrate with Exchange and/or HR systems as well.

Don't try to turn SharePoint into your "internal Facebook". On an architectural level, Microsoft did not engineer it with Facebook style social networking in mind. My Sites look positively antiquated by comparison to social networking sites. Microsoft had quite an Office oriented document collaboration approach. Nothing wrong with that, but to try and bend SharePoint to a Facebook style platform is going to take custom development work – or an add on tool. Moreover, it's not clear that the social aspects of

Facebook will play in the corporate environment. It's more the expertise and information discovery that is critical, not the "find my friends and what are they doing" function.

"The opportunity becomes clearer when you strip away some of the frivolity of social networking and just look at it from an information management perspective," says Brian Kotlyar of the Yankee Group. "Then you see that there are some really valuable mechanisms for sharing content, finding experts and working collaboratively already in place and they just need to be adapted to the workplace."

CIO: http://www.cio.com/article/344167/Adoption_of_Corporate_Social_Networks_Remains_Sluggish_/1

SLIDES 16: EXAMPLE METRIC (SEE SAMPLE AT END OF DOCUMENT FOR MORE DETAIL)

- Qualitative metrics can be "discovered" from user feedback during quality assurance testing and initial training and on an ongoing basis. Seek out "stories" or anecdotes where users can describe how using the portal and/or collaboration tools (finding a person with an unknown skill, rapidly accessing previously difficult to find information, etc.), helped contribute to increased revenue or profitability, increased client satisfaction, or other metrics that are already reflected in the key performance measures for the organization.
- Leverage the portal tool's usage tracking capabilities to track usage including visit counts and navigation patterns on the site. Reports can be developed to track usage month over month and quarter over quarter.
- Consistent usage is a proxy for value. Additional research is required when usage drops or spikes after the portal has been operational for a while.
- Track the number of enhancement requests received on individual areas. A high number of enhancement requests from diverse users is a good indication of adoption.
- Determine a number of key activities or processes that are being targeted for improvement and analyze cost savings due to improvements in these key metrics.
- Establish baseline metrics before the portal is rolled out.
- Quantitative metrics can often be obtained from usage analysis reports and while these metrics may not be a direct measure of value, certain measures can be used as a proxy for value.
- Business executives will respond most favorably to your metrics when you can combine both quantitative measures with "real world" stories that describe how the solution added value to the business.

SLIDE 21: COMPONENTS OF A GOVERNANCE PLAN

Creating a Governance Plan is not so easy to do. It's often even harder to enforce. But, thinking about the governance plan is the single most important activity you will do when you plan your solution. Even simple decisions can have enormous organizational impact and it's critically important to think about them in advance.

Any portal or collaboration solution is only as good as the value of its underlying content. As a result, it is essential that a strong Governance Framework exist to ensure that the portal delivers worthwhile content to its users in an effective way.

A Governance Framework refers to the processes and roles that do this. The Governance Framework should include the development of a Statement of Governance for the organization.

The following provides a sample outline for a portal Governance Plan:

1. Purpose - describes the objectives of a Governance Plan, which includes the definition of policies and procedures for defining what content belongs in SharePoint (versus other applications); how content is contributed and managed over time; how design and functionality changes are identified and implemented; and the roles and responsibilities of site owners and users.
2. Vision - high level assertions about what you want to achieve with the document management/portal initiative.
3. Guiding Principles – express corporate preferences that support the vision statements. For example:
 - “We will use a federated model of content management wherever possible.” (Corporate provides guidelines and optimal standards, but individual businesses may vary from the corporate guidelines if absolutely necessary from a business perspective.)
 - “Department-level decisions will be vetted by other departments. However, no single unit will have a veto over decisions.”
4. Roles and Responsibilities - define how each member of the firm is responsible for ensuring the success of the intranet portal solution. Some examples of specific roles that will be addressed include:
 - Executive Sponsor
 - Governance Board
 - Business Owner

- Solution Administrator (Technology)
 - Site Owner
 - Users (Content Contributor, Content Reader)
 - Technology Support Team
5. Policies – specific guidelines reflecting firm decisions the organization has made. Examples of policies include documentation of what type of site to create for which purpose, policies for publishing content on existing or new pages, content approval policies, content review policies, file size or format restrictions, naming conventions, image policies, etc.
 6. Procedures – define how to do specific operations such as creating or uploading content, migrating existing content to SharePoint, etc. Since the first draft of the governance plan will be completed before the solution design has been implemented, the initial governance plan will identify which procedures need to be documented but will not necessarily include specific documentation for each procedure. Detailed procedural documentation is completed in the “Build and Test” phase of solution development.

SLIDE 22: EXAMPLE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

See example at end of document.

If you need some ideas on how to make the paradigm shift from folders to metadata, please visit my web site where I've posted a PPT presentation that has helped me in my client work.

SLIDE 26: EXAMPLES OF KEY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Executive Sponsor:

Provides executive level sponsorship for the portal. The primary responsibility of the Executive Sponsor is strategic, positioning the portal as a critical mechanism for achieving business value and helping to communicate the value of the portal to the management levels of the organization.

Portal Governance Board:

Serves as a governance body with ultimate responsibility for meeting the goals of the portal. This Board is typically comprised of representatives of each of the major businesses represented in the portal, including Corporate Communications and IT.

Portal Owner (Business):

Manages the overall design and functionality integrity of the portal from a business perspective. This person is usually a representative from a business stakeholder but may be filled by two people, one representing the business and one representing the technology department. The Portal Owner does not have to be an IT expert but their job function typically includes responsibility for internal communications.

Portal Administrator (Technology):

Manages the overall design and functionality integrity of the portal from a technology perspective. Works in partnership with the Portal Owner.

Site Owner:

Serves as the centralized, primary role for ensuring that content for a particular page/site is properly collected, reviewed, published, and maintained over time. The Site or Page Owner is an expert in the content that is showcased on the site or page. The Site/Page Owner will likely need to learn about SharePoint, but their primary expertise is business focused. The Site Owner may designate a Page Contact who will provide the primary interface between their business and the users of the page or site.

Users:

Uses the portal to access and share information. Also, owns and maintains the content they publish on it. Users can play the role of either Member (users with contribution permissions), Visitor (users with read permissions), or both, depending on the specific site or page in the portal.

Technology Support Team:

Ensures the technical integrity of the solution. Makes regular backups of the portal and its content. Also, usually sets up and maintains the security model, at least the components in Active Directory. Develops new web parts and provides support to Site Owners seeking enhancements to their pages or new uses of the portal.

SLIDE 28: PLAN ROLL OUT AND LAUNCH

Communications – Use new and existing vehicles such as corporate newsletters, “town hall” meetings, and break room posters to communicate to the user community about the portal. This provides a way to overcome cultural barriers and ensure users receive the maximum value from the new solution. Communications should be persistent.

Training – Ensure that users know how to use the portal effectively. Don’t necessarily try to train all at once. Build support from Power Users. Consider weekly reinforcement sessions for the first several months after launch.

Launch and Content Conversion – Define strategies for converting content for initial solution deployment and the initial launch of the solution.

User Support – Ensure that there is an ongoing plan to support all levels of portal users.

- Make sure there is a Page Contact identified for every page and that users can easily find out who that is.
- Consider getting Site Designers together on a weekly basis for the first few weeks (or months) after the portal is launched so that they can compare feedback and support each other.
- Create an online collaborative team site for all Site Owners/Designers to share and exchange ideas on an ongoing basis.
- Even though many of the portal pages are independent, a good idea from one user group may also be relevant for another. In addition, any major changes to taxonomy or page layout can be reviewed and discussed by the whole group before it is brought to the Portal Governance Board for final approval.
- Make sure that the Help Desk is prepared to support the portal.

Incentives and Rewards – Ensure that organizationally appropriate incentives are established for KM portal users and that contributing to and using the new solution is incorporated into daily work routines of everyone in the organization. This might include incorporating content management responsibilities into individual performance goals or publicly recognizing key content contributors or portal success stories.

Measurement – Implement the metrics plan to measure the business value benefits of the portal to provide feedback to the communications and implementation plans.

Sample Content for a Metrics Plan

Objective	Possible Measure	Capture	Issues and Challenges	Target
Maximize the reuse of best practices across the enterprise, enabling the organization to replicate successful business practices in all geographies	Quantitative: Number of downloads of best practice or re-usable assets Qualitative: Usage anecdotes where users can describe in quantitative terms how an asset on the KM Portal that they re-used contributed to business objectives.	Monthly	Frequent downloads are a proxy for content value, indicating that the content is delivering value to users. Gathering anecdotes is a labor intensive process and may require some creativity to obtain. You may want to consider a success story contest (with prizes) to get KM Portal users to share high quality success stories.	Look for an upward trend in the number of downloads for new content or new portals. Look for steady state activity in more mature environments. Targets should be set based on the maturity of the solution and the strategic importance of the content. Targets for success stories might be based on total "value" represented in the stories collected and/or based on the number of stories documented.
Improve time to market for proposals and contracts	Quantitative: Average proposal or contract development time	Ideally captured for each item and compiled on a semi-annual or annual basis.	This measure will be easiest to capture if it is already a key performance measure for the enterprise.	Trend downward from baseline. Target might also be a specific percentage of time reduction.
Reduce training costs for enterprise applications	Quantitative: Total training costs for enterprise applications	Annual	Some organizations justify their KM Portal investment solely on the reduction in training costs.	Percentage or absolute reduction in training expenses for enterprise applications.
Provide an organized "one stop shop" for information for KM Portal users that helps users reduce information overload.	Qualitative: Usage anecdotes where users can describe in quantitative terms how using the KM Portal has improved their productivity.	Monthly	Gathering anecdotes is a labor intensive process and may require some creativity to obtain.	Targets for success stories might be based on total "value" represented in the stories collected or based on the number of stories documented.

Sample Governance Plan Guiding Principles

Guiding Principle	Implication
Standards and Policies	
The overall goal of portal governance policies is to maximize the collaborative value of the portal and encourage and support sharing of best practices across the firm.	To ensure that users can easily find content as they navigate from page to page in the portal, there will be some page template standards that all publishers will be expected to follow.
The implementation will provide a set of standard site templates and web parts that site owners may choose to apply as needed.	There will be a standard design for each page and site to ensure consistency and usability across the entire portal. However, site owners can choose to eliminate or add web parts from the standard template based on their specific business needs.
Corporate Communications will evaluate and prioritize the development of new web parts or templates in conjunction with the Portal Governance Board.	Suggested new web parts will be evaluated based on business need and cost and prioritized as with other technology applications.
Sites with a broad audience across the firm will generally have stricter guidelines for content and layout than sites that have a more restricted audience. Changes that impact a large audience will require a higher level of approval than changes for pages or sites that are used by only a small group of people (such as a workgroup team site).	Site owners will have more flexibility to customize their private team sites than they will on corporate-sponsored pages.
Users who are assigned privileges which enable them to modify the portal structure (pages, web parts, content types, etc.) must be trained and certified by Information Technology.	If it is determined that users outside Information Technology will have permission to make certain changes on pages or sites, these users will need to commit to participating in training and certification programs.
Security and Access	
The default access for all pages on the portal is “read only” to the enterprise. Site owners must expressly define any restrictions if they wish to restrict access to their pages.	This means that, as a general rule, any site is open to anyone in the firm. Users who want a private team space for a restricted set of people will need to explicitly “invite” users into the site.
Content and Records Management	
All content posted to a publishing page will be governed by a content management process that ensures published content is accurate, relevant, and current. Content owners (Site Owners) will be responsible and accountable for content quality and currency.	Site Owners are encouraged to review the content on their pages at least annually to ensure that all of the content is still valid.
Shared content should be published once, by the content owner, and linked to by other sites as needed.	When you publish content to the portal, you are making a commitment to maintain that content for its “lifetime.” If you (or your department) are not the primary creator the content, you should not publish the content yourself. Instead, you should ask the content owner to publish the content and, if appropriate, you can create a link to the content from your page on the portal. This will ensure that there is only one copy of a particular document or other type of content on the portal.

Guiding Principle	Implication
Content owners are responsible for ensuring their content is managed according to corporate records retention policies.	Content owners will still be responsible for identifying content that is a record and ensuring that the appropriate action is taken to ensure that records retention policies are followed.