



Case Study

Improving employee engagement and communication for Downing LLP

The Result

The redesign of Downing's intranet within SharePoint was well received, with staff throughout the organisation voicing approval.

"The intranet acts as a great channel for firmwide communication. It simplifies the process of sharing key materials and information, and enables everyone to stay up to date with the latest company news."

"The site is really useful. It's a one-stop shop for all our press coverage, company news, a useful jargon buster and staff directory."

"The intranet is an excellent resource. It mixes perfectly essential business processes with engaging content."

Following completion of the project, Downing maintained Wanstor's engagement with feature requests aimed at extending functionality on the new intranet site.

Wanstor's SharePoint specialists were also able to provide ongoing training to Downing LLP employees working with the site.

This covered SharePoint basics, along with best practice policies around information maintenance.

"Our new intranet site built by Wanstor has been a real success story. Staff have commented on how it makes their lives easier by providing access to the information they need when they need it."

Key Outcomes

- + Extensive scoping to identify specific requirements for a new intranet SharePoint site
- + User experience journey mapping to be applied across the intranet
- + Defined area design including landing zones, department pages, a staff directory, document library, news page and interactive notice board
- + Extensive solution testing prior to launch covering all areas of UAT
- + Training and documentation for all staff accessing the intranet

Background

Downing LLP recognised that as a growing Financial Services firm, it had to keep staff better informed about events within the company and provide quick access to relevant news and press coverage.

Further to this it was recognised that internal documentation needed to be easier to locate and access, and a staff directory including job titles, contact numbers and email addresses was required in order to improve business agility.

An overview of different departments within the business and their respective functions was also identified as a relevant requirement.

After an internal scoping exercise the IT and marketing teams at Downing decided the best way to achieve these engagement and communication objectives was to develop and build an intranet site, scaffolded on Microsoft SharePoint.

With significant experience in designing and deploying SharePoint content, and as a Solutions Partner for Microsoft, Wanstor was identified as an ideal candidate for the work.

The Challenge

Initial meetings helped to detail both the process and methodology required for successful design, deployment and in-life management of an intranet site built on SharePoint.

Wanstor worked alongside Downing to discover and document relevant requirements for the build. With this initial specification outlined, teams moved on to agree timescales, resourcing, process governance and project costings.

With the overall scope, timelines, work deliverables and costing formalised, the project moved into design. Wanstor's SharePoint experts met with Downing to discuss site content requirements, the user experience, and specific requests from individual business units.

Once the design had been developed, tested and approved, Wanstor's project management team scheduled communications to keep the customer updated through build, accelerating the delivery process with Wanstor engineers able to gain insights from Downing into existing IT infrastructure allowing them to iterate changes to work in development before deployment.

The Solution

As with any project of this nature, there were hurdles to overcome. These included detailing the upload of existing staff database content into Downing's new intranet.

Wanstor chose Active Directory as the solution to populating Downing's new database.

With a large part of the information out of date and requiring revision, a decision was taken to use SharePoint lists as the primary storage repository. This allowed marketing and HR to update the database without delegating the task to IT.

With data on file updated and deployed to SharePoint, Wanstor were able to supplement individual staff profiles with work anniversary dates, birthday information and other relevant corporate and personal data.

Once these challenges to data management were addressed, the project was able to move into testing.

This contingency period allowed for correction of any bugs or usability issues impacting on the user experience.

With UAT complete, the new intranet was deployed to a production location ready for Downing LLP to begin using.

“

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Dara Reynolds

Digital Marketing, Downing LLP