

Migrating content to Sharepoint?

Five steps to achieving effective governance for complex projects

Introduction

Microsoft SharePoint is achieving meteoric success in the enterprise arena. Its robust content management and enterprise search make it extremely attractive to enterprises as they strive to support collaboration and information-sharing across departments and geographies. However, SharePoint governance must be treated seriously if enterprises are to reap the rewards.

Research from AIIM reveals that 59% of enterprises have no real plan for SharePoint's use – and this is extremely risky. As with migration to any new content management system, SharePoint migration is a thorny issue: duplicated files, ineffective taxonomies and content sitting outside the corporate information architecture can cause a major headache. If left untreated, migration will simply deposit this bad content into the SharePoint repository. Enterprises are also unsure who is in control of existing SharePoint deployments. These are often at a departmental level, and IT is not always initially involved. However, over 30% of those surveyed by AIIM believed SharePoint to be the full responsibility of IT, while a worrying 12% said that no-one was responsible at all, and that SharePoint was completely out of control.

The fact is, content must be formally indexed, classified and filed, ideally during SharePoint implementation. And governance must be maintained for SharePoint to deliver value immediately and into the long term. Without this, content may become harder to find and user confidence in SharePoint can be adversely affected. At best, SharePoint becomes a costly content store – at worst a shared drive replacement mechanism – neither of which adds any enterprise value.

But with millions of content items in the average enterprise scale deployment, the question is: what is the fastest and most cost-effective way to do it?

This paper describes five steps to achieving and maintaining effective governance of complex SharePoint projects. Through Vamosa's unique approach, you'll discover how you can help your whole business achieve true Enterprise Content Governance, for enhanced productivity, improved collaboration, lower costs and better compliance.

* <http://www.aiim.org/Research/State-of-the-Market-Microsoft-SharePoint.aspx>

The five steps explained

Whether you're new to SharePoint or you've been using it for some time, optimizing its content for findability is critical.

Vamosa recommends all organizations follow a five-step SharePoint governance plan of action. This is designed to optimize findability and the value of your content, from content analysis pre-migration, through to content cleansing, all the way to ongoing maintenance. By following these five steps, you can ensure new and existing SharePoint deployments offer the greatest value to your business.

Step 1: Analyze

In the ever-burgeoning enterprise content environment, it can seem an impossible task to grasp the volume of content a business actually has, where it is stored and how often it is accessed. But to make the most of any SharePoint implementation, this 'content discovery' is a vital step to ensure SharePoint isn't simply used as a content landfill site.

The difficulty is that large-scale SharePoint migration projects typically feature a vast array of source systems containing many hundreds of thousands of content items. The time required for a manual analysis is therefore far too great and cost-prohibitive ever to be feasible.

That's why the answer is to use technology that will automatically discover and analyze this content on your behalf. Vamosa Content Analyzer, for example, is purpose-built to analyze content from a range of source systems, including content management systems, older versions of SharePoint and Microsoft Content Management Server, as well as content not currently housed in a content management system.

Through this analysis, project teams implementing a new SharePoint system can get a handle on the amount of content that is worth moving to the new system and which can actually be deleted altogether. In fact, from experience of migrating over 100 organizations from one Content Management System to another, Vamosa has found that as much as 50% of an organization's content is typically redundant – meaning a 50% reduction in storage and associated costs.

Step 2: Enhance

Once you know what content you have you can take steps to enhance it, removing content duplicates, re-aligning templates and categorizing content appropriately by ensuring content metadata is correct and up to date.

When faced with literally thousands of Web pages and documents, doing this manually is not practicable – much like content analysis. Moreover, it's unrealistic to expect content publishers to do this, as their area of expertise is generating content and publishing it – not checking metadata, HTML code standards, search engine optimization or anything like it.

Vamosa has a policy-based content enhancement engine that is core to its content quality solutions. Vamosa Content Quality Builder sits in the middle of both Vamosa Content Migrator and Vamosa Content Cleanser, helping you to solve this problem rapidly. Designed for both the Web and documents, it uses Vamosa's policy engine to make an accurate, automated assessment of metadata quality and corrects it accordingly, as well as performing de-duplication, template re-alignment and other enhancement activities to rapidly boost content quality.

Step 3: Standardize

When consolidating content from multiple repositories – for example, different SharePoint workgroups in different departments of the enterprise – it's likely that each department will have its own taxonomies, tagging and classification schemes for content. But enterprises must find a way to standardize these attributes for the sake of findability. This will allow SharePoint to support information sharing across departments, while ensuring all content can be made available for legal purposes in the event of legal challenges such as eDiscovery.

The problem, however, is trying to impose a single set of standards across the business. Each individual is used to his or her own way of working, so expecting them to classify or search for content using unfamiliar criteria will be frustrating, and (not surprisingly) prone to error.

The answer is to avoid this problem entirely with products such as MetaPoint. This intelligently relates different departmental taxonomies to the enterprise's standard content quality guidelines – thereby avoiding the problem entirely. Through MetaPoint, users can create and find documents in SharePoint without the burden of issues such as tagging, classification, or interpreting the meaning of other taxonomies.

Step 4: Migrate

When it comes to the physical act of moving content across to a brand new SharePoint system, the challenges of the process are often underestimated. According to AIIM, 20% of enterprises admitted that they underestimated the effort to distill and migrate content into a new document management system.

Again, the challenge is the vast volume of content that needs to be moved. Web pages and documents can extend into their hundreds of thousands, meaning that a manual quality-focused content migration can take even a large team of individuals many weeks or months.

With enterprise-strength solutions such as Vamosa Content Migrator, however, SharePoint migration can be reduced to a matter of hours. Content Migrator can load up to 10,000 Web pages or 100,000 documents per hour into SharePoint, its built-in rules engine simultaneously enhancing each and every item of content according to the organization's pre-defined content quality standards.

Step 5: Monitor and maintain

For enterprises to reap the full rewards of their SharePoint deployment, content quality must be checked and maintained on an ongoing basis. Content will be created and changed within SharePoint's virtual walls every day, so it's critical that rules are enforced to ensure content remains findable for collaboration and compliance purposes.

Importantly, this is not something that individuals within the enterprise have the time or expertise to do themselves. That's why so many enterprises are turning to Vamosa Check and Fix for Web site and intranet monitoring. This unique product automatically assesses and 'fixes' content according to the enterprise's content quality standards, helping to make the most of the content within SharePoint and achieve effective SharePoint governance.

Similarly, MetaPoint provides document authors with a simple MS Office-based solution that speeds up and standardizes the process of building correct standards into documents in the form of metadata and corporate classification requirements.

Conclusion

Effective governance of enterprise SharePoint deployments is vital to ensure it offers the greatest value to your business. But it can seem too labor-intensive to be worthwhile, or even feasible.

That's why automation is fundamental. With Vamosa's solutions for Enterprise Content Governance, you can establish, implement and maintain content quality and effective SharePoint governance across the enterprise in an automated way rapidly. In this way, your business can get the greatest value from its SharePoint investment into the long term.

Find out more

To find out how your business can achieve SharePoint governance with Vamosa, call **+44 (0)141 574 2500** (EMEA) or **1-888-4-VAMOS** (US). Alternatively, visit **www.vamosa.com**.