

What makes Document Solutions get adopted by their Users?

The document solutions that we are talking about are ones that streamline or automate the generation of emails in Outlook and documents in Microsoft Office (specifically Word, Excel and PowerPoint) and also solutions that manage such electronic documents and emails. All too often these new document solutions, especially ones that utilise Microsoft SharePoint, fail to be adopted by their intended users.

What are the characteristics of document solutions that lead to good levels of user adoption? Do the document solutions in your organization have these characteristics? In this paper we take a look at seven document solutions for which user adoption has been successful and identify the key elements that made it work.

Energy Company – Enhanced DM Experience in Microsoft Office, Not Just in Outlook

The great bulk of organizations have never invested in a traditional DM system, but they are looking to step up from using Outlook folders to store emails and file shares to store other type of documents. With its in-built document management capabilities, Microsoft SharePoint appeals as a cost-effective way to make that next step. In many cases the cost effectiveness is increased because the organization already owns SharePoint licenses.

However there are also many reports of how the attempted move to SharePoint for managing documents and emails was not successful – typically because users found the new SharePoint approach non-intuitive, inconvenient and generally quite non-user-friendly.

Exceleerate Energy L.P. is an organization where the move to SharePoint as the new way of managing documents and emails has been a real success in terms of user adoption.

Exceleerate is the pioneer and market leader in innovative floating LNG solutions. Headquartered in Houston, Texas, Exceleerate has a presence in Buenos Aires, London, Rio de Janeiro, and Singapore. Operating in a regulated industry, Exceleerate had a strong need to improve the way it was managing both documents and emails.

Charlie Price, Exceleerate IT Manager, explains:

“Based on our research we were well aware that the user experience provided by SharePoint out of the box was not good – users cannot even drag and drop to save emails the way they can in Outlook itself. We found a bunch of add-ons that would let you drag and drop and generally improve the experience of using SharePoint from Outlook. But in the end we went with MacroView DMF because it also enhances the experience for users working in Word, Excel and PowerPoint and in Windows as well.”

User adoption at Exceleerate has been excellent. Feedback from users is that it is important to be able to interact easily with the SharePoint document store while you continue to work in familiar Office applications and also that the interaction experience is consistent across those applications. Exceleerate users particularly like the way MacroView DMF lets them search for documents in SharePoint based on their content and / or metadata, without needing to leave their Office application and jump out to the web browser. They also like using the MacroView DMF Explorer application in Windows, which provides the SharePoint alternative to using Windows Explorer for file shares.

Charlie Price again:

“By providing a great user experience, MacroView has really helped us to take advantage of the document management capabilities of SharePoint.”

Insurance Company – Tailored Document Search

AEGIS offers a full range of sophisticated insurance and risk management products and services to gas and electric utilities, oil and gas exploration and production companies, water utilities and transmission and distribution companies. AEGIS is headquartered in Rutherford NJ and has an international presence including a Lloyds syndicate in London.

AEGIS saw the potential for substantial operational cost savings associated with moving their document management from Documentum to a SharePoint-based solution. From a user adoption standpoint, this move presented a major challenge, because AEGIS users were familiar with a range of Documentum features.

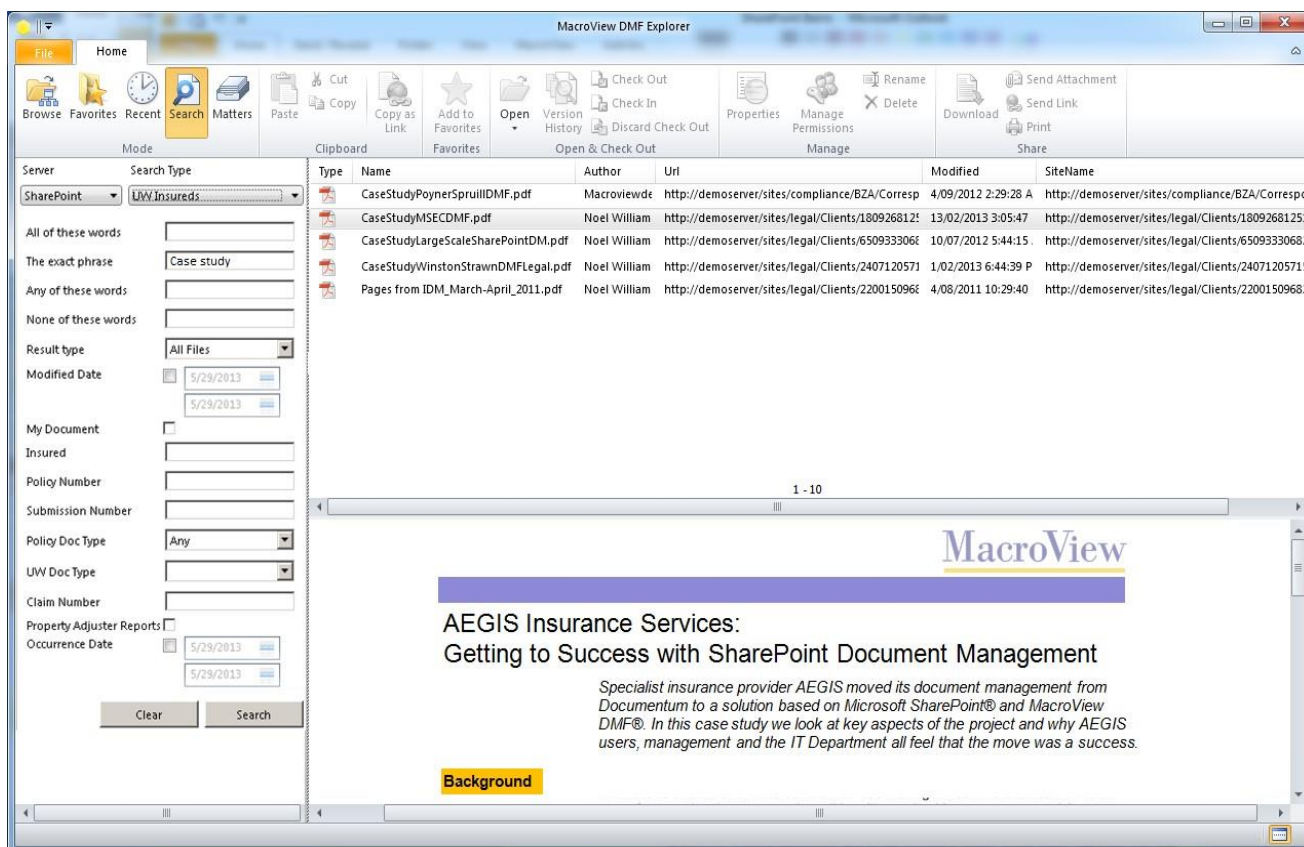
The new SharePoint-based DM solution at AEGIS has proven successful. The project was led by Himanshu Pandya (Senior Manager, Office of the CIO), who notes:

“By combining SharePoint with MacroView DMF and our own integrations we were able to provide our users with a number of additional features compared to Documentum.”

Features that were important in terms of gaining user adoption included excellent support for drag and drop, intuitive navigation, rich right-click menus, support for saving PDFs direct from Adobe Reader and the ability to automatically create quick-access favorites relevant to the policies and claims that a user was working on.

Documentum’s capability in relation to searching for documents is well established, so somewhat surprisingly, search was an aspect of the new SharePoint + MacroView solution that users regarded as being better than the previous Documentum solution. Specifically the users liked the way MacroView had been configured to provide various search panels, each tailored to the needs of a particular group of users.

The screen shot below shows the *Underwriting Search* panel, which facilitates searching for documents and emails using key word content and metadata attributes relevant to the Underwriting department.



Outsourced Service Provider – Minimizing Profiling Fatigue

One way to gain an understanding of what makes users adopt a new document solution is to ask them what they dislike about the previous solution. When we ask users of document management solutions, an answer that comes back every time is the pain of profiling, i.e. of capturing metadata for documents as they are saved and updated.

As they implemented a new SharePoint-based document management solution Mountain States Employers Council took an interesting approach to this issue of profiling fatigue. They knew that they needed to capture metadata in order to enable more flexible searching and generally better management of their documents. So they decided to make the effort of profiling as productive as possible.

MSEC is a case-based business. As each document is saved, the user needs to select the Customer Case to which the document pertains. Those Customer Cases are managed in a line-of-business system, which also handles billing. Each year MSEC processes a large number of Customer Cases, so frequently the document being saved is the first one for a new Customer Case.

As a user saves a document, the profiling dialog displays in order to enable the capture of metadata. The dialog includes a control that allows the user to pick the relevant Customer Case. MSEC had this profiling dialog customized so that if the required Customer Case did not already exist in the LOB system, the user could add it as a new record in the LOB system without leaving the profiling dialog.

Feedback from MSEC users was very positive. Thanks to the new profiling dialog they no longer needed to suspend the saving of a document, go into the LOB system to add a new Customer Case, then restart the save and pick the newly added Customer Case. Instead the new Customer Case could be created and selected as part of profiling the first document for that Customer Case – without any wasted keystrokes.

The MSEC example highlights how by using innovative design, the profiling dialog in a document management solution can be an asset rather than a liability in relation to user adoption.

Global Law Firm – Balancing Global and Local Control

Baker & McKenzie is a major international law firm, with approximately 10,000 lawyers and support staff in 77 offices in 47 countries. Across Baker & McKenzie documents are prepared in more than 30 different languages, including double-byte languages such as Chinese and right-to-left languages such as Arabic. Some Baker & McKenzie offices prepare documents in multiple languages, indeed multiple languages within the one document. Paper size also varies between US Letter and A4 between regions.

Across the globe all Baker & McKenzie offices use OpenText eDocs to store and manage their documents, but depending on the office, there are other systems which are relevant to the preparation of documents. They include Active Directory, Outlook Contacts, InterAction client relationship management, comparison and metadata systems, as well as code control and deployment systems.

In 2012 Baker & McKenzie introduced a new solution for generating key Word, Excel and PowerPoint documents. This document solution is now operating successfully in all Baker's offices. The implementation in the most recently opened office (Jeddah, Saudia Arabia) was completed in a matter of hours.

Baker & McKenzie offices report high levels of user adoption of and satisfaction with the new solution. They acknowledge that a critical success factor in achieving this successful adoption is that each office can configure the solution to reflect a wide range of local usage preferences.

The project was managed Stuart Kay, Director, Global Projects. He notes:
“The global templates system had to have a very flexible design that enabled core components to be standardized at a central level, while permitting easy updating of variable components at both central and local levels. Easy to say, but wickedly difficult in practice!”

Local usage preferences including translations, logos, brand elements, legal disclaimers, etc. are captured in a user-friendly Excel document. Sophisticated .Net NET code automatically configures the runtime operation of a single set of Microsoft Office templates. The Office ribbon and user interface dialogs are constructed dynamically by the .NET code. A specially developed MSI handles the installation of the templates and associated code components so that minimal input is required from local system administrators.

The Bakers solution is an excellent example of how by careful system design you can achieve global economies of scale while at the same time respecting local language, preferences and usage in order to promote user adoption. From the distance of a corporate head office some of these differences may appear non-essential or even trivial. But if the document system does not satisfy these local needs, the effect will be non-adoption by staff in that location.

Stuart Kay writes in Legal Technology News (28 June 2013):
“Not only has our global templates system saved the firm money, and increased productivity, it has helped us respond agilely to the changing face of our world market.”

Re-Insurance Company – Fixing the Annoying Little Things

Sometimes it's the little things that make a difference...little things like automatically removing illegal characters from file names, rather than displaying an error message to the user who is attempting to save an attachment to a document management solution.

Third Point Re is a successful re-insurance company operating in Bermuda, with a worldwide customer base. For compliance reasons it is essential that all documents and emails relating to re-insurance policies and claims be retained and managed.

Third Point Re had opted to use document management solution that was based on Microsoft SharePoint, with the MacroView DMF software providing the 'front-end' user interface. Third Point liked the way MacroView DMF let them drag and drop to save emails and attachments to SharePoint, especially how the attributes of an email (e.g. *To, From, Subject*, etc.) were automatically recorded as metadata, without any prompting of the user.

However there was one aspect of using SharePoint that Third Point Re users found annoying – which was the way SharePoint rejected file names that contained a range of illegal characters – such as tilde (~), number sign (#), percent (%), ampersand (&), colon (:), slash (/), etc. While illegal in SharePoint file names, these characters occurred frequently in the names of attachments that Third Point Re was receiving and wanting to store and manage in SharePoint.

Third Point Re commissioned MacroView to customize the MacroView DMF add-on in Outlook so that as the user saved an email attachment, any illegal characters were removed automatically. In addition, the original unstripped file name was recorded automatically in an additional metadata column in SharePoint. Subsequently, when the document was retrieved from SharePoint and inserted as an attachment in a new outgoing email, the original file name was re-instated. The external party receiving the attachment is unaware that the file name had been stripped of its illegal characters as part of Third Point Re saving it to SharePoint.

This relatively small customization led to a real improvement in user satisfaction levels. A frequent task was made less awkward and time consuming, while at the same time ensuring that 'no-surprises' service was provided to external parties.

Local Government Area – Making it Easy to Re-use Standard, Approved Content

Something that local government areas around the world have in common is that they generate large numbers of documents. Warringah Shire Council which administers a local government area centred on the Northern Beaches of Sydney, Australia is no exception.

As part of moving to a new version to Microsoft Office, Warringah identified some 160 Word templates that needed to be upgraded. Careful analysis revealed that there were really only four base templates, with many variations in content.

Rather than upgrade all 160 templates, Warringah opted to use a product called MacroView ClauseBank, which makes it easy for users to find and retrieve standard, approved text and graphics content and have that content inserted in the Word document that they are working on. Available content items are arranged into a tree structure that the user can browse. The user can also search for content items that contain particular words and phrases.

ClauseBank displays fully formatted previews so that the user can confirm that they have found the correct content item. Selected content items are inserted into the user's document at the current cursor position, with all styles and formatting maintained. Content items can also be retrieved into PowerPoint presentations and Outlook emails.

Behind the scenes, ClauseBank content items are stored in a SharePoint site. Each content item (also known as *clause*) is a mini-document. Saving a new content item is a matter of saving a new document to a SharePoint library. The loading of a new clause document is made even easier by the way ClauseBank lets users right-click selected content in a Word document and choose *Create New Clause*.

Warringah users readily adopted the new ClauseBank solution. They found it far more flexible and empowering than the previous template-based solution. With ClauseBank a user could add as many content items to their document as were appropriate – ClauseBank ensured that no out-of-date items were selected and the inserted content was formatted correctly, without any additional effort (or Word skills) required by the user.

It was much easier for authorised business users at Warringah to add and maintain the content in ClauseBank than it had been to maintain the same content embedded in Word templates. The content approval mechanism of SharePoint could be used to ensure that any new or revised content items were approved before they were available to other users.

The ClauseBank solution led to improved user adoption of Warringah's new document generation solution. It is a good example of how combining Microsoft SharePoint with Microsoft Office can pay real dividends.

US Law Firm – Moving from Traditional DM to Integrated Content Management

Since 2009, Poyner Spruill LLP have been successfully managing their documents and emails using a combination of SharePoint and MacroView DMF Professional for Law Firms. They migrated to this solution from their previous DocsOpen solution.

Poyner Spruill's vision was to use SharePoint to create an enterprise-wide content management solution – appropriately called 'p.s. empire'. Prior to implementing MacroView DMF, Poyner Spruill was already using SharePoint to handle the client extranets (p.s. portal), the firm's intranet (p.s.net) and public web site (p.s.web). The missing piece was using SharePoint as the DM store (p.s.hub) – holding client and matter-related documents.

CIO Ellen Kinsinger, notes:

“At the time, the prevailing chatter was that SharePoint was not ready for Document Management. Then we found MacroView DMF, which layers on top of SharePoint to fill gaps in DM functionality. MacroView DMF was in line with Poyner’s preferred approach, which was to leverage the native capabilities of SharePoint and Microsoft Office and thereby avoid the constraints of traditional proprietary DM systems.”

MacroView DMF provided an intuitive tree-view display of the structure of the SharePoint document store, which was structured along Client Matter lines. The MacroView tree-view display respected SharePoint permissions and enabled intuitive browsing and navigation. MacroView respected the native versioning, check-in / check-out and metadata capabilities of SharePoint and enhanced the OOB experience by enabling drag and drop saving and searching direct from Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook.

The Professional Legal Pack modules played a key role in ensuring that the new SharePoint-based solution was a viable alternative to the previous DocsOpen solution. One of these modules was MacroView UDN, which arranges for documents to be numbered sequentially across the whole document store (rather than within each site collection) and also for Document ID and Version number to be automatically displayed in the footers of Word documents that are opened from SharePoint. The overall effect was a document numbering experience very similar to that provided by the previous DocsOpen solution.

Another Professional Legal Pack module enabled non-administrator users to easily make a document *My Eyes Only*, and to assign specific access permissions to selected other users and groups. Again the result matched the document level security facilities in the previous DocsOpen solution.

While the MacroView add-ons did much to provide an attractive user experience with a number of familiar elements, it was still the case that SharePoint does things differently from a traditional DM system, such as DocsOpen. Poyner Spruill took that view that it was better to train and support users as they grew accustomed to the new SharePoint ways of doing things, rather than to attempt to reproduce exactly the user interface experience provided by the previous DocsOpen system.

The Poyner Spruill was an early adopter of a SharePoint-based DM solution that today is implemented in numerous other organizations, including some that are significantly larger. This solution is proving to be not just a viable alternative to traditional DM solutions, but indeed an attractive alternative.

More Information

For more information on any of these solutions, or for assistance with creating document solutions that will be adopted by your users, contact solutions@macroview.com.au.

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