



Implementing SharePoint in R&D

The Right Way to
Implement It



MATT BARAN

Contents

Implementing SharePoint in R&D.....	1
Closing.....	3

Implementing SharePoint in R&D

Remember the days when memos were the primary form of communication? Then this email thing came along and it changed the way we worked. It was great...but not so great now. According to a study conducted by Inc. Magazine, “Half of the average employee's time is spent on e-mail and other necessary, yet unproductive tasks”. The study concluded that “workers spend more than a third of their time (36 percent) trying to contact customers, partners or colleagues; find information, etc.” It also suggested that “if unified communication services can recover two hours a day in productivity, for salaries ranging from \$40,000 to \$110,000, that the savings would be \$950,000 annually for a company of 50 people.” This is astounding information.

Enter the world of web 2.0 and collaboration. In our personal lives almost everyone uses Facebook, Twitter, etc.; the growth has been unbelievable. It took radio 38 years to reach 50 million listeners and terrestrial TV 13 years to reach 50 million users. How long did it take Facebook to add 100 million users? Nine months!

From a personal standpoint we “get” social networking and collaboration, but at work, not so much. Many organizations are saying we need SharePoint, which is by far the most popular collaboration platform in the life sciences industry today. But what does that mean? Why do people want SharePoint? What problems are they solving? The challenge is that collaboration tools are not easy to understand from a technical perspective, but way more important is how to apply SharePoint in meeting their business needs. Companies often say “we need SharePoint” without really knowing what they need it for and understanding how it will benefit in providing a productive and collaborative business environment. Even more challenging is when an organization has SharePoint, they not only struggle understanding how to use it as a tool, but misunderstand how to structure SharePoint properly...and I don't mean from a technical perspective. Enter the world of SharePoint Governance.

Effective governance is important for any enterprise capability. Whether you are a biotech company of 50 people or a top 10 pharmaceutical company of 75,000 employees, it is still a critical factor for successfully achieving business optimization. For small companies, governance is much “lighter” or simpler in terms of the number of people involved, what they do, and how they make their decisions. The fundamental elements of governance still hold true, but before we describe what governance is, let's describe what would happen if there was no governance for SharePoint.

Meet Mary, Jane, and Bob who work at Pharmaceutical “ABC”. Let's assume Mary is a study manager and she would like a SharePoint site to manage team documents, metrics, communication, meetings, etc. She has a strategy on how to lead her team to work more effectively leveraging SharePoint. She goes to a site to request a new site and it's provided...no questions asked. Now, let's say Jane is the project manager and has an idea of how to better collaborate with their development partner using SharePoint. Jane requests a new site and receives it with no questions asked. Bob is the director of Clinical Operations and has had numerous challenges with his organization storing documents locally and keeping multiple versions on local storage and email. Bob would like a SharePoint site to store study documents for all clinical studies so there is an authoritative source for study documents.

The aforementioned scenario is a common problem when implementing SharePoint where there is site sprawl with no controls, help, consultation, and guidance on:

1. Who receives or should receive a site
2. The business purpose for the sites
3. Whether or not a similar site already exists in the organization
4. Multiple versions of documents
5. The intersection of content between the organizations (divisions, functions, etc.) and the pipeline (programs, projects, studies, etc.)
6. How to use information taxonomy for optimizing search capabilities
7. Whether access to content should be made through the extranet to better collaborate with partners and remote workers
8. Creating standards for sites
9. Determining if SharePoint is to be used as an out of the box collaboration platform and/or will be used as an application development platform
10. How to improve employee adoption for using the SharePoint sites. What should be done for training, change management, etc.?

In 2007, a top 10 pharmaceutical company presented at the Pharmica SharePoint Conference describing the story above. Five years later they are still struggling to fully solve the problem of site sprawl. This problem is complicated and should have been done correctly from the beginning.

A large part of implementing SharePoint from the beginning is setting up the proper governance structure. This is an organization that will help to manage the points described above.

From a people perspective, a governance organization should consist of:

1. A Steering Committee (VP level) consisting of the business and informatics
2. A centralized collaboration group
3. Decentralized collaboration members who represent their division or function, including someone from project management who can represent the pipeline

These groups should be a decision making body for addressing issues such as prioritizing work, creating standards, growing collaboration, etc. Also this group will play a major role in change management. The steering committee should be actively promoting collaboration and its benefits to their colleagues, who can help to influence their organizational divisions and functions. The decentralized collaboration members should be the key point of contact for their organization. They should help to develop other super users in their organizational division or function and share best practices. The central collaboration group should be a key point of contact for the decentralized collaboration members providing guidance for more challenging sites.

From a process perspective, one of the main elements of governance is a provisioning process. This is the process where site requestors are asked “why do you want a site? What is the purpose of the site? Will content be hosted on the extranet?” The provisioning process can be structured in many different ways. It could consist of a site requestor completing a form asking important questions about the site for the

decentralized collaboration member in that division to review. Site approval is then decided by the decentralized collaboration member in conjunction with the centralized collaboration member. The provisioning process does the following:

- Avoids site duplication
- Avoids content duplication
- Allows the decentralized collaboration member to manage their SharePoint architecture
- Allows the decentralized collaboration member to know where their divisional/functional SharePoint implementation is and allows them to discuss where their SharePoint vision should grow to.

The organizational and process components described above are just a few elements of SharePoint governance, but it provides a simple explanation for why it's needed. The hard part is executing on creating a durable governance structure. People often associate governance as bureaucratic, so focusing on the benefits and obtaining quick wins is critical. Even after success, the governance group will need to continue to provide benefits, sell the concept internally, and change as collaboration evolves.

Closing

In closing, I will share with you a frequent question I am asked about governance. "When is the best time to implement governance?" My answer, always, is now. If you are just starting your implementation with SharePoint then great...do it the right way and do it now. If you are several years post SharePoint implementation, then now is the best time to start the process in establishing the governance for managing your SharePoint site. Bottom line, governance for SharePoint is a necessity, not something nice to have.

For more information, please contact:

Matt Baran

Sr. Consultant

PHARMICA Consulting

matt.baran@pharmicaconsulting.com www.pharmicaconsulting.com

610-585-4386