

PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY

A SHAREPOINT 2007 PORTAL STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT BOOSTS COLLABORATION AND PRODUCTIVITY—AND MUCH MORE

When the US subsidiary of an international pharmaceutical company wanted to upgrade its SharePoint platform, it called on the technical and industry expertise of West Monroe Partners. West Monroe developed a strategy articulation map for connecting people and information and then followed that up by implementing the portal and team sites, as well as several highly customized sites—establishing a platform that has produced sustained benefits.

THE CLIENT

The client is a wholly owned subsidiary of an international pharmaceutical company. Founded almost 15 years ago to accelerate the parent company's global expansion into the United States, it is one of the country's fastest-growing pharmaceutical companies.

IMPROVING COLLABORATION ACROSS A COMPLEX ENVIRONMENT

The client's existing SharePoint 2003 collaboration platform did not meet its management and collaboration needs. Lack of governance and defined processes for intranet and extranet sites caused inefficiencies and confusion:

- ◆ Users lost time and experienced frustration in finding information due to ineffective search capabilities
- ◆ Outdated and undefined information architecture led to unorganized content and inconsistent navigation
- ◆ Business users' inadequate SharePoint knowledge resulted in ineffective practices and increased IT support for basic tasks
- ◆ Users and teams were unable to share information from an intranet site with external vendors and suppliers

The client sought to upgrade its intranet and extranet environment to SharePoint 2007 to provide its personnel with more effective tools and capabilities. For assistance, it turned to West Monroe Partners, which demonstrated SharePoint expertise as well as a strong experience in the pharmaceutical industry. Over the course of two years, West Monroe Partners assisted the client with several phases of work, including developing:

- ◆ A strategy articulation map focused on changing the way the organization connects people and information, followed by phased implementation of an organization-wide portal
- ◆ More than ten customized SharePoint team sites to address specific collaboration needs
- ◆ A specialized collaboration site to facilitate clinical trials

PORTAL AND TEAM SITE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

West Monroe Partners gathered business requirements from multiple departments across the organization in order to design a solution—comprising both SharePoint 2007 functionality and custom features—that would support more than 600 team sites and thousands of sub-team sites.

Once it had completed the design, West Monroe Partners worked with the client to:

- ◆ Identify team site owners, archive or delete unused or redundant sites, and establish new site governance principles
- ◆ Redesign information architecture to organize the portal's content logically
- ◆ Define "push" and "pull" information flows used to communicate with users via the portal—including application of tools such as RSS feeds and automated alerts
- ◆ Implement SharePoint 2007's improved search capabilities, and several custom features including "Best Bets" to position relevant information at the top of search results
- ◆ Establish a new custom interface design for both the portal home page and all of its sub-pages and sites
- ◆ Create new features that provide a personalized user experience; for example, enabling users to select the internal links displayed on their home pages
- ◆ Conduct usability tests with a wide array of users and then employ their feedback to optimize usability of the portal's features and validate the information architecture
- ◆ Test and then execute the migration process, launching the new portal to the client's 5,500 users—none of whom experienced any downtime during regular business hours
- ◆ Conduct in-person training for more than 200 users and create on-line training for all employees



CUSTOMIZED TEAM SITES

During its initial discovery work, the project team identified many existing sites with “custom” design and/or functionality. Based on the information gathered by West Monroe Partners, the client chose to migrate these custom sites to the new platform with existing functionality but to implement stricter governance related to creation of custom sites in the future.

During implementation, West Monroe Partners worked with more than 10 client teams to migrate their sites to the new platform while retaining customized functionality and other business requirements. These custom sites included:

- ◆ A marketing site that disseminates brand information and marketing materials to field sales and marketing teams—utilizing a calendar, videos, and on-line newsletters to replace e-mail communications.
- ◆ A collaboration site for marketing operations that utilizes blogs, discussions, and other interactive features.
- ◆ A group site to connect the organization’s research and development teams utilizing calendars, articles, and news announcements that enable users to comment on and/or rate content.
- ◆ A global knowledge exchange that connects users to available speakers and resources on various topics.
- ◆ A medical affairs site that integrates with the company’s document management system to deliver opinions, peer literature, and resources on medical topics, as well as connects users with regulatory affairs and other functions.
- ◆ A president’s blog, managed by the corporate communications function, that enables everyone in the organization to share thoughts with and ask questions of leaders in a controlled environment.
- ◆ A supplier portal for sharing announcements with and facilitating quotes from external vendors.

A SPECIALIZED RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PORTAL

Because the client’s global research and development organization used disparate approaches for managing projects, its executive team and managers lacked a consolidated view of the status of all compounds, trials, and phases in progress. The function initiated an effort to develop standardized project plans, but the effort of updating plans and maintaining individual collaborative sites strained the very resources responsible for bringing compounds through the development process.

West Monroe Partners worked with the division to design and implement a set of customized SharePoint 2007 team sites and then integrate them with a proprietary SQL database, Project Server 2007, and two key third-party web parts. From this work, the client created program and trial sites for all active research and development projects in the pipeline. Each page collects project plan information and displays it in user-friendly charts—enabling the client to consolidate data across all active compounds, programs, and trials and reduce the time necessary to create reports. In addition, it provides the division’s executives with an aggregated view of data that enables more effective planning and decision making.

FROM COLLABORATION TO COST SAVINGS

Working with West Monroe Partners, the client has realized an array of benefits, both at the corporate and individual team levels:

- ◆ Improved collaboration and communication
- ◆ Improved productivity through easier access to information and resources
- ◆ Greater engagement
- ◆ Cost savings through standardized technology and processes and the ability to move some externally hosted sites

Just as important, the client has been able to manage and maintain the platform, as designed, over the ensuing two years.

West Monroe Partners is an international, full-service business and technology consulting firm focused on guiding organizations through projects that fundamentally transform their business. With the experience to create the most ambitious visions as well as the skills to implement the smallest details of our clients’ most critical projects, West Monroe Partners is a proven provider of growth and efficiency to large enterprises, as well as more nimble middle-market organizations. Our more than 300 consulting professionals drive better business results by harnessing our collective experience across a range of industries, serving clients out of offices across the United States and Canada.