

Intranet Design Annual

The 10 Best Intranets of 2006

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<http://www.nngroup.com/reports/10-best-intranets-2006/>

Even though this report was published in 2006, we believe it continues to be valuable for many intranet designers: since these were *award-winning* intranets, many companies can still benefit from learning from these case studies.

Contents

Executive Summary	4
Overview of the Winners.....	11
Common Themes among the Winners	13
Allianz Australia Insurance Ltd.	15
ALTANA Pharma AG	33
Bank of Ireland Group.....	75
Capital One	103
IBM Corporation	126
Merrill Lynch	158
METRO Group.....	176
O2 (UK) Limited.....	196
Staples	217
Vodafone Group plc.....	250
Recommendations for the Intranet Design Process.....	281
Intranets Not Selected: Common Issues	283
Selection Criteria and Process.....	284
About the Authors.....	287
Acknowledgements	288

Executive Summary

The ten best-designed intranets for 2006 are:

- Allianz Australia Insurance, Australia
- ALTANA Pharma AG, Germany
- Bank of Ireland Group, Ireland
- Capital One, USA
- IBM, USA
- Merrill Lynch, USA
- METRO Group, Germany
- O₂, UK
- Staples, USA
- Vodafone Group, UK

This is the first year in which a majority of the winners hail from outside the United States, underlining the continued growth of good intranet design around the world. In fact, the globalization of good intranet design is actually greater than what this simple list implies; many of the winning companies are highly multinational, with team members operating in multiple countries. At Vodafone Group, for example, intranet technology is managed from Germany, with development efforts occurring in California, Spain, Italy, and Egypt.

This year's winners are all large companies, with an average size of 80,000 employees. In previous years, we've always had winners with only a few hundred employees, but this year the smallest company has 3,000 employees. It might be that large companies are finally making intranet quality a high priority, and thus their more substantial resources make it harder for smaller companies to compete. One year's results, however, are insufficient to confirm such a trend.

In any case, while smaller organizations might not have the time or resources to implement as many features, they can apply many of the lessons learned from large companies' design efforts.

One trend from earlier years that persists is the strong showing for financial companies. This year, financial companies represent 40% of the winners, while manufacturing companies continue to be underrepresented. The possible reason for this is that financial companies have a tradition of emphasizing usability and white-collar productivity, while manufacturing companies have historically focused on physical concerns and thus have less experience in creating good screen-based designs.

CONTINUING TRENDS

One notable trend from past competitions—to enforce a consistent look and feel across the intranet—is even more prominent this year. Almost all winners have active programs in place to evangelize templates and design standards.

Several winning intranets have special training activities for content contributors, teaching them how to use design templates correctly and how to produce optimal

intranet pages. Templates, after all, give users some leeway in applying styles and layouts. Authors therefore need training to employ templates correctly and thus maintain a consistent intranet design.

To further this goal, Bank of Ireland, for one, offers an extensive, searchable knowledge base with tips for intranet publishers. Such training support is necessary to achieve a unified intranet design. It's not enough to simply publish rules and design standards; you must teach them as well.

Another continuing trend we saw was the use of task-based information architectures, rather than IAs based on a company's business units.

Navigation systems have become very complete, with good global and local navigation. Companies typically present navigation in the left column of a page, running utility features across the top of the page. Many of the winning intranets also make excellent use of breadcrumbs to further help users orient themselves in the large information spaces found on today's intranets.

Another earlier trend that continues to hold for many of this year's winners is the use of kiosks to allow intranet access for employees who don't work in offices. Staples even has kiosks in its stores that let employees show shoppers a special intranet version limited to information that helps facilitate sales. Conversely, the Bank of Ireland intranet contains selected Web content for branch personnel who don't have access to the public Internet from their work terminals.

TECHNOLOGY DIVERSITY

As in previous years, the technology used to implement intranets shows astounding diversity. Across the ten winning companies, the teams used a total of fifty-four different products. Clearly, we're far from a consolidated market in which one or two dominant providers offer everything you need. Instead, intranet teams must stitch together their own solutions with multiple parts from multiple vendors. In fact, 40% of the winners had to custom build their own content management systems (CMSs).

This year's most-used products were Apache, Autonomy, BEA Portal, EMC Documentum, IBM WebSphere, J2EE, Lotus Domino and Lotus Notes, Lucene search engine, Microsoft SQL, Oracle database, Verity, and various versions of Windows servers.

MULTIMEDIA

Most of this year's winners make significant use of video on their intranets, taking advantage of the high bandwidths usually found on corporate networks. Vodafone probably has the most extensive integration of video, with a special Vodafone TV area featuring video from a global team of correspondents.

Poorly used, intranet videos can substantially reduce productivity. It's important, for example, to correctly set users' expectations so that they only click through to videos they actually want to see. Merrill Lynch links to videos through a highly effective gateway page that offers a concise summary of the video's event, along with information about the featured speakers. The time required to write such pages is nothing compared to the time it can save thousands of employees.

Multimedia doesn't have to entail video; simpler media types also have their place. For example, IBM's employee directory includes audio files with the pronunciation of people's names—a particularly useful feature in a multinational company.

WEB TRENDS ON INTRANETS

In addition to increased video use, we see many other general Web trends migrating to the intranet realm. This makes sense, since most employees use websites for business or in their private lives. Thus, they often come to expect or even demand specific features or design approaches commonly found on the Web.

A striking example of this is ALTANA's system for ordering supplies. The system uses a full-fledged e-commerce metaphor, complete with shopping cart. People are accustomed to picking products in a certain way—why not leverage this knowledge by designing a feature they already know how to use?

Another good example is the IBM intranet's extensive use of weblogs, including a powerful dashboard interface that lets users monitor other blogs, as well as follow-ups to their own postings and comments. Despite considerable Web hype, however, we're not seeing much business blogging in most companies.

More targeted, task-related tools tend to work better. Staples, for example, offers a blog-like feature where store managers inform each other about their progress in preparing for advertised sales offers. But, rather than offer this feature in a separate community area, Staples has a simple notepad-like annotation field in the intranet area where managers view the advertising circulars. These are just-in-time, just-in-place notes—just for this one crucial task.

Finally, we spotted a contra-trend: the first good use of overlay graphics (where an image appears on top of the content). On the Web, this is one of the most annoying and repellant advertising techniques. Nonetheless, Allianz Australia effectively uses overlays to highlight and explain useful new intranet features. Of course, we usually caution against using techniques associated with hated Web design approaches. Do so only with extreme care and only when you're sure that the intranet's special circumstances allow the technique to add value.

MOBILE ACCESS

Although mobile intranet is not yet widespread, several of this year's winners support mobile features. O₂ has a special mobile edition of its intranet that's optimized for the BlackBerry and strips the homepage down to a few of its most useful links. O₂ also nicely integrates the employee directory with mobile features, for example by allowing users to send an SMS with someone's contact information from the directory to their cell phone.

Vodafone—the other telecommunications carrier among this year's winners—also offers extensive mobile access to its intranet, with simplified pages for smartphones. Its mobile intranet scales back content services, using fewer headlines so users can scan news listings on a smaller screen. Important applications, including the employee directory, have special user interfaces optimized for mobile access.

These mobile-oriented screens drive home the fact that mobile devices and networks have evolved to the point where they can be extremely useful for business people when they're away from the office. Mobile devices are no longer just phones; they're also intranet extensions—at least when the intranet has features designed for smaller screens. This trend toward offering intranet access from mobile devices will surely continue as an understanding of the concept's value extends beyond the telecommunications companies that are currently leading the way (because of their early aptitudes and interest in mobile technologies).

TRAINING AND E-LEARNING

Another trend this year was an increased use of training areas on intranets. The best designs often locate traditional training options and e-learning in one area. After all, from a user's perspective, what's important is learning—regardless of whether it takes place online or in a classroom. Many intranets also offer special training areas to help new employees learn about their new companies.

The METRO Group has a particularly extensive set of e-learning features to educate its more than 250,000 employees about the ever-changing retail industry. Many tutorials are presented as interactive Flash animations, with a single interface integrating text, images, and moving images, plus simple controls to pace the presentation.

Enhancing e-learning user interface controls in this manner is important: people often feel disoriented or frustrated when tutorials take over their screens and don't allow them the freedoms normally inherent in the Web (and intranet) user experiences.

A notable example of a unique e-learning feature is METRO Group's *Knowledge Quest* game, which teaches employees advanced retailing concepts. While games are not common on intranets, they do have their place in e-learning, since they can increase learners' motivation by adding an element of fun.

On the topic of fun, it's worth mentioning the *O₂ Fun Zone*, which lets employees download ringtones—one of O₂'s most important products. While not an e-learning feature per se, it does encourage employees to gain more first-hand experience with ringtone use. The *O₂ Fun Zone* also lets employees send each other company-branded e-cards—featuring such things as holiday, birthday, and get-well wishes—which enhances a sense of community.

ROI AND EXPECTED USE

IBM dubbed its employee directory *BluePages* in reference to the company's "Big Blue" nickname. *BluePages* is one of the most impressive staff directories we've ever seen. The design team estimates that the redesign of this killer app saves employees 72 minutes per month. Likewise, IBM's redesign of its managers' area is estimated to save each manager 42 minutes per month—a particularly important accomplishment given the higher salaries for this user group.

Given IBM's size, the productivity gains from improving the intranet's design translate into huge amounts of money. *BluePages* alone is estimated to save IBM \$194 million per year. Of course, smaller companies wouldn't realize quite such large savings, but it's certainly realistic to save an hour or more per employee per month when an intranet is redesigned for usability. At typical, fully loaded hourly rates, this often results in approximate savings of \$1,000 per year for each employee—a cool million for a mid-sized company with a thousand employees.

In general, too few intranets perform careful studies of productivity improvements, and thus rarely have hard ROI numbers. This was true for most of this year's winners. It's more common to measure an intranet's increased use and then say, "If people use it more, it must be better."

On that front, across all winners this year, intranet page views increased an average of 106% after redesign. These are obviously winning designs; in general, it's more realistic to expect intranet use to increase by slightly less than 100% after a redesign for increased usability.

Even so, you can realize even greater usage increases with more specialized applications simply by making them easier to access. For example, Staples has a “profit improvement culture” program for employees to contribute suggestions for making the company more profitable by cutting costs, improving processes, and so on. When the company placed this submission process on the intranet, the number of employee suggestions tripled. Staples estimates it has saved \$200 million based on the ideas generated through this program.

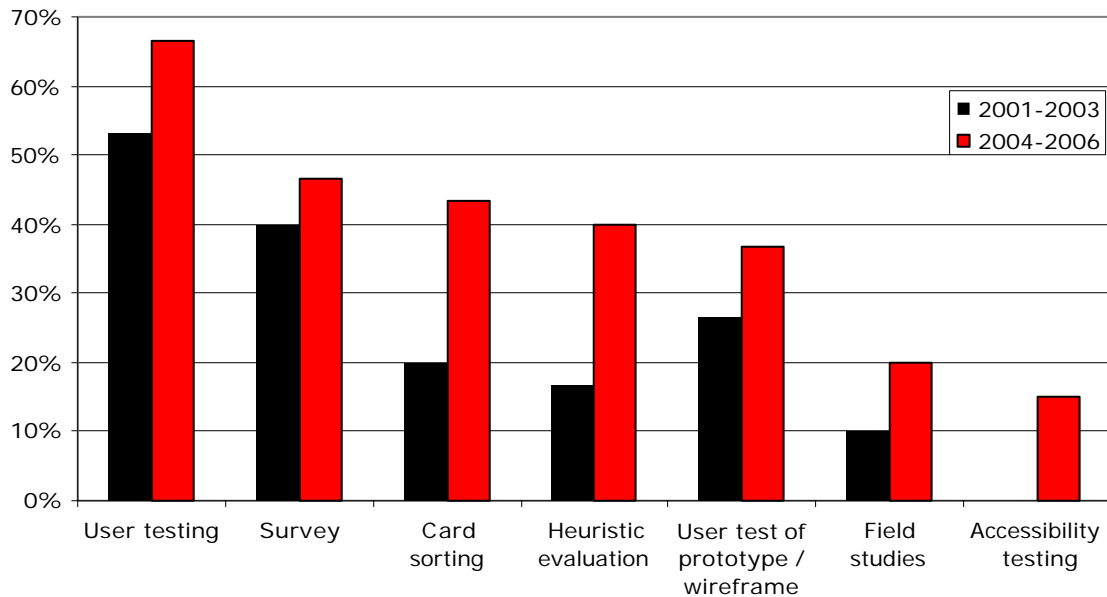
Another way of looking at an intranet’s success is to measure the proportion of employees who use the intranet. Among the winners, employee use of the intranet ranges from 75% to 99%. Obviously, the exact percentage of employees who use an intranet will depend on the types of jobs they perform. Office staff and knowledge workers tend to use intranet features more frequently than people who work on a factory floor or process transactions. In general, though, you should aim for at least 75% use overall. If less than half of your office-based employees use the intranet, then you probably have a usability disaster on your hands.

USABILITY METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN PROCESS

Approaches to intranet design are stabilizing: new designs stay usable longer. On average, this year’s winners let thirty-three months pass between intranet redesigns, up from twenty-nine months for last year’s winners. The redesign projects for this year’s winners took an average of ten months, which is fairly speedy.

Despite such rapid design processes, redesign teams are nevertheless finding time for more user research. In looking across six years of design annuals, usability activities are clearly increasing. The following figure shows a comparison between the first three years and the last three years in terms of how often intranet projects employed usability methods:

Usability Methods Employed on Intranets



Pictured: More usability -- The proportion of winning intranet projects employing usability methods has increased over the past six years.

All methods show increased use, though heuristic evaluation has especially grown. This makes sense, because this method relies on evaluating a user interface relative to a known set of usability principles (the “heuristics”). In the early years of intranets, there were no documented intranet usability findings, which made it difficult to use this method. Now, however, intranet designers have access to well-documented user research and systematized knowledge about intranet usability, and they can apply this knowledge to judge their own designs.

Accessibility is still not a major concern for most intranets. This year, however, we saw many intranet designs that consider users with disabilities and include some accessibility features. Although very few projects went so far as to conduct actual accessibility testing with disabled users, several projects follow basic accessibility guidelines, such as avoiding frozen font sizes.

This increased attention to accessibility might be related to the larger size, on average, of this year’s winning companies. The larger the company, the more employees with disabilities, and thus the greater the payoff from making the intranet accessible. Larger companies are also likely to have more older employees, who often need usability accommodations as well.

INTRANET BRANDING

It’s an eternal question: Should you give your intranet a special brand name? Among our earlier winners, opinions have been almost evenly split: 59% of intranets were branded, and 41% were simply called “the intranet.” This year, however, branding took a major upswing: 80% of the winners use it.

This year's intranet names include: **insite**, My One Place, On Demand Workplace (ODW), WorldNet, Networking, vitalO2, Staples@work, and vista.

One year is hardly a trend, particularly since only 50% of last year's winners were branded. Also, a great design with no name will beat a crummy intranet with a snazzy name anytime. Consistency in design and page layout does more to brand the intranet than any name.

Finally, there's no need to overdo the branding: intranets are for internal use, and you're not competing against fifty other intranets. We've seen many intranets that overflow with advertising for different business units, or even for the intranet itself. Such heavy promotions backfire. In the best case, users simply ignore them; in the worst case, they drastically reduce user productivity.

Overview of the Winners

The top ten intranets are from five different countries: the US (4), the UK (2), Germany (2), Australia (1), and Ireland (1).

The winning designs are from companies in various industries, including financial services, high technology, insurance, mobile telephony, pharmaceuticals, and retail.

One interesting commonality—which we haven’t seen in previous competitions—is the sheer size of the winning organizations. In past years, several winners had around 100 employees or less. This year, the smallest winner has 8,200 employees. The average across this year’s top ten is 100,400 employees; the median is 62,500.

Beyond staff size, however, winners share no obvious similarities. For example, in-house intranet teams created four of the ten winners. The other six designs were created either exclusively by an outside firm or through a joint effort between in-house employees and outside firms.

Intranet team sizes ranged from one person to almost forty people.

As in years past, all winning designers did share one trait: their intranet-development experiences produced valuable insights that other companies can use to improve their intranet redesign process. See the **Lessons Learned** section at the end of each intranet’s profile for these insights.

THE TEN WINNERS LISTED IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

Allianz Australia Insurance Ltd (Australia)	Ensuring more than 3,000 employees dispersed throughout Australia and New Zealand receive a consistent corporate message could be difficult. Designers at Allianz Australia Insurance, however, tackled the problem by making their intranet the vehicle of choice for corporate communications and strategy, employing clear design and writing, and adopting a trick or two from Web advertising practices.
ALTANA Pharma AG (Germany)	Like many pharmaceutical companies, ALTANA Pharma's future depends on research and development, not to mention sharing knowledge. So ALTANA Pharma articulated and delivered on a clear intranet design goal: to provide an overview of the organization so transparent that using it is intuitive not only for employees, but also for new hires.
Bank of Ireland (Ireland)	While the Bank of Ireland's intranet might swap the serious navy pinstripes for bursts of orange and blue, don't be fooled by the light-hearted aesthetics: this bank's intranet means business. A variety of business and personal features are packaged clearly and gracefully, continually drawing employees back to the intranet as part of their daily work routine.
Capital One (US)	Who needs "features," "wizards," or other obtuse catch phrases? Not Capital One, whose intranet is a model of design ingenuity and aesthetic mastery. Designers concentrated on users' tasks, giving them exactly what they need, when they need it, all clearly labeled.
IBM Corporation (US)	How does the world's largest information technology company provide a single, useful intranet for its 329,000 employees? Designers took an aggressive yet realistic approach, creating and enforcing meticulous intranet design standards to maintain a consistent design, and using personalization to ensure the right information reaches the right people.
Merrill Lynch (US)	The designers of Merrill Lynch's intranet employed an iterative design methodology, including card-sorting exercises. Given this groundwork—the significant time the design team spent researching employees' needs and designing ways to meet them—this intranet's success is no surprise. Even so, designers also deftly balanced employees' needs with a range of business needs.
METRO Group (Germany)	METRO Group's intranet delivers a seamless user experience—despite multiple backend applications—plus a design and structure that serves twenty different METRO Group companies in thirty countries. The intranet also showcases how a little design freedom can deliver big innovations. Witness a successful interactive game for training employees about various aspects of the business.
O₂ (UK) Limited (UK)	O ₂ 's intranet truly ties the company together, keeping employees informed, trained and motivated, via different intranet sub-sites designed for specific user groups, all easily accessible from the intranet homepage. That's despite having thirty-five offices, five call centers, over 250 retail shops, and 10,000 employees.
Staples Inc. (US)	The designers of the Staples portal researched the needs of their employees, then delivered appropriate tools, while consolidating on a single portal. A clear design, which mirrors the corporate branding and color scheme, ties it all together, including an array of useful features, from virtual message boards for store managers to a restricted version of the intranet for stores' customer-facing kiosks.
Vodafone Group plc (UK)	For Vodafone's intranet, designers not only applied their own skills, but also channeled the organization's collective mobile-device proficiency. The resulting intranet boosts collaboration and productivity, and reinforces the corporate culture and goals—both on desktops and mobile devices—for about 70,000 employees worldwide.

Common Themes among the Winners

ACCESS TO THE PUBLIC WEBSITE'S CONTENT

Some employees simply don't think to look for information on their company's public-facing website. It's therefore a good idea to include an intranet link to the public site or repurpose public information for internal consumption. For example, Allianz rewrites its public site's advertising campaigns for internal readers and runs them on the intranet. Capital One also employs this approach. The ALTANA intranet homepage links to press releases on the company's public site; the Bank of Ireland intranet homepage includes *Press Cuttings*.

TRAINING FOR EDITORS/CONTENT PROVIDERS

More and more companies, including Bank of Ireland, not only encourage content contributors, but also make it incredibly easy for employees to post content. To facilitate this, companies often provide content training for new contributors, ongoing instruction, and also just simple interfaces, so users can post and edit with minimal training.

INTRANET DESIGN STANDARDS

Many intranet teams assign design responsibilities for different intranet sections to specific business units. Yet to encourage a consistent look and feel, people must have design standards and templates to follow. Winners such as IBM, Merrill Lynch, METRO Group, and Staples all offer intranet sections that house guidelines for designers.

SECTIONS FOR NEW EMPLOYEES

Most companies recognize that one of an intranet's most important functions is to quickly get new employees set up, oriented, confident, and productive. Indeed, seven out of the ten winning intranets (Allianz, Bank of Ireland, Capital One, Merrill Lynch, O₂ UK, Staples, and Vodafone) offer a section specifically designed to meet new employees' needs.

ONE-STOP SERVICES PAGE

Most employees have several different administrative tasks. When these tasks are dispersed around the interface, employees have to work to find the links, features, or forms they need. To address this, savvy designers at Capital One and O₂ UK created *Services* and *WorkPlace* sections, respectively, so users have one place to go for all of their administrative needs.

ADVERTISING INTRANET FEATURES

The best, easiest, and most effective way to make users aware of an intranet feature is to ensure the feature has a simple, seamless design. Even so, users typically don't just browse around an intranet to see what they're missing. So, no matter how well your intranet is designed, you have to help users find new features.

One solution to this problem: employ some creative advertising.

For example, on the Allianz intranet, a *Did You Know?* bubble sometimes appears to highlight important features, such as the redesigned search tool. Users can click the bubble to read more about the features.

Or, take ALTANA Pharma AG, which offers a section on the homepage called *Latest Intranet Content*. This area showcases new features and content, giving users a quick way to keep abreast of changes.

If you do choose the advertising route, however, beware: It's easy to implement incorrectly. Intranet advertising campaigns can have an especially negative effect on usability if they distract or annoy users, or if they over-direct users to features they don't want or need. Test advertising features before you introduce them.

INTRANET "FAVORITES"

More and more intranets, including those at Allianz and ALTANA, are letting users save their favorite content pages or tools to a "favorites" location, which is often a persistent part of the user interface. We don't typically advocate replicating free Web browser features on intranets. However, having "favorites" is especially helpful for users who access the intranet from remote locations with scarce bandwidth: it lets them quickly jump to the relevant intranet pages they need to do their tasks. And—regardless of where they are—once users log in to the intranet, their favorites are with them.

MOBILITY

Intranets must keep up with their users and the times. Hence, with many employees using mobile devices, winners such as O₂ UK and Vodafone ensure their intranets work on mobile devices. Designers rework and reformat news and other features for mobile displays and interfaces, emphasizing SMS and the employee phone book.

STOCK QUOTES

A few years ago, it was common to find stock quotes on intranet homepages. Although this feature disappeared as companies' stock prices plummeted, they might be staging a comeback. Still, it's difficult to comment decisively about this trend because the winning intranets that offer stock quotes—Bank of Ireland and Capital One—are themselves financial institutions.

HOMEPAGE POLLS

More and more designers are spicing up their intranet's homepage with user polls. Among our winners, Bank Ireland, Capital One, and ALTANA all do this. Polls can be a fun way to foster a sense of community and get people involved. Showing a summary of other employees' answers also helps users learn a bit about their colleagues' perspectives on current topics and events.

Allianz Australia Insurance Ltd.

Using the Intranet:

Founded more than ninety years ago, Allianz Australia, headquartered in Sydney, is one of Australia's largest general insurers, offering a range of insurance and risk management products and services—from home, car, and boat insurance, to premium funding, injury management, and prevention services. Allianz Australia is a member of the Allianz Group, one of the leading global providers of insurance, banking, and asset management services. The Allianz Group's worldwide staff of more than 173,000 serves 60 million customers from offices in over seventy countries.

Design Team:

In-house, webqem, The Hiser Group

Members:

Allianz Australia: Dan Tully, e-business group manager; Julie Kerrigan, intranet manager; Marcin Szczepanski, senior Web developer

webqem: Steve Whistler, creative director

The Hiser Group: Alinta Thornton, senior consultant

SUMMARY

Just one look at the Allianz Australia homepage gives employees a quick yet thorough overview of what's happening at the organization. The designers elected to include only snapshots of news and management announcements on the homepage. While short descriptions are also generally helpful, at Allianz, a good editor ensures that news headlines are clear and meaningful, which makes them sufficient on their own. Users can easily browse to the longer news items, as well as the news archive.

News headlines change daily, with content contributed from a variety of sources: the communications team promulgates internal news relating to leadership values or company culture; the managing director's office often handles financial results; the IT team details outages, as well as desktop patches and security upgrades; human resources (HR) highlights such things as new employee benefits and career development opportunities; and the compliance team keeps the company informed of best practices and policies relating to regulations.

Current news is crucial, but news archives are equally important. Surprisingly, many intranets fail to clearly indicate how to find their news archives. Here, Allianz succeeds by including a link just below the news headlines, so users can easily navigate past current news and into the archive.

By and large, a company's intranet—and, specifically, its intranet homepage—is becoming the vehicle of choice for company executives to communicate their vision and corporate strategies to employees. Indeed, fewer and fewer companies today spend money to generate printed newsletters or memos. Beyond monetary considerations, there are also cross-cultural concerns: as companies become more global, managers must ensure that all employees, regardless of location, understand a company's unified vision and strategy.

Allianz Australia has more than 3,000 employees geographically located throughout Australia and New Zealand. Ensuring all employees receive a consistent corporate message is obviously important. As with many organizations, email and the intranet are key mediums at Allianz for ensuring that employees have easy access to the company vision and news. Allianz Australia nonetheless retains a strong commitment to face-to-face communications between executives and employees. The intranet does not replace the human touch.

On the left side of Allianz Australia's intranet homepage, an interactive tool promotes a specific corporate agenda, and different business units book this space for their own needs. The intranet team then massages the content.

Allianz Australia
Intranet Australia

Wednesday, 17 August, 2005
Welcome Julie

Search intranet GO ? Search staff GO
Demo Advanced Advanced

Home | Help | Have your say

Contact Tools Policies & Procedures Forms & Templates Staff & Pay Office Admin Customers & Sales News & Community Business Units Compliance & Fraud

The Big Picture

Want to find out more about Allianz' strategy for achieving sustainable, profitable growth?

Allianz
Your trusted insurer.

Program Promise

Leader in sales and distribution Positive customer experience

3 - ONE

1. Operational profitability
2. Reducing complexity
3. Capital management

Sustainable and profitable growth, via
• Best Practice Sustainability
• Customer Focus Initiative
• Leadership Values
• Building our Brands

Working together every day.

Click on the diagram to put yourself in the picture »

Performance Review Process
Give your feedback here

Allianz Australia News

16/08/2005 | **BPA Committee Update**
15/08/2005 | Cashing Out of Annual and Long Service Leave
15/08/2005 | BPA Committee Election - List of Candidates
12/08/2005 | Allianz Q2 results: letter to employees from Michael Diekmann
12/08/2005 | Allianz rating outlook revised to positive

ARCHIVE

Working at Allianz

- » me@allianz
- » HR Library
- » Phone Basics
- » Staff Noticeboard (21 items)
- » Allianz Share Price

Your Career

- » Current opportunities (12 jobs available)
- » eCampus

Allianz Quickstart

CHANGE

- » eCampus
- » HR Library
- » Intranet Demonstration
- » me@allianz
- » Out of Office
- » Phone Basics
- » Public Holidays
- » Security Incident Reporting
- » White Pages

My links


- » Intranet stats
- » eBusiness home
- + Add page to My links...
- + Add custom link...
- Manage My links...

Content owner is eBusiness.

Pictured: The Allianz homepage provides staff with access to the latest corporate news and communications, a corporate directory and keyword search box, and career-related information. Employees also have links to the self-service HR portal (*Me@Allianz*) and a staff notice board. Meanwhile, *Quickstart* gives individual business units easy access to especially relevant content anywhere in the site. The left side of the page is reserved for internal promotions.

The page's left-side content stays fresh: it changes at least twice a week, featuring either one large or two small promotions. One recent homepage promotion was *The Big Picture*, which explained how the company's strategy and values fit together. Other recent promotions included a 30-second tip on how to use intranet search, a listing of top salespeople for the third quarter, occupational health and safety procedure reminders, winners of a leadership values competition, updated employee benefits information, and a preview of a new Allianz Australia television commercial.

In general, the HR, compliance, sales, training, and e-business teams also tend to run promotions here. Sometimes there are so many promotions booked that the space appears to change every time an employee revisits the homepage.



Allianz
Intranet Australia

Thursday, 4 August, 2005
Welcome Dan Tully

Search intranet ? Search staff

Demo Advanced Advanced

Contact Tools

Policies & Procedures

Forms & Templates

Staff & Pay

Office Admin

Customers & Sales

News & Community

Business Units


Compliance & Fraud

Did you know... COVER STORY

We let customer's choose their own repairer at no extra cost? Not every insurer does.

If one of our customers has an accident, they can choose who they want to repair their car. Or they can leave it to us and use one of our Network Repairers.

Read more about our "Choice of Repairer" & "Network Repairer" schemes.



TELL YOUR FR

Allianz Australia News

2/08/2005 | **New General Insurance Code of Practice will deliver better service**

26/07/2005 | Allianz gives customers "choice of repairer" at no extra cost!

22/07/2005 | 'Promoters' help net us lucrative new business

18/07/2005 | Records tumble as choice issue drives customers to Allianz

8/07/2005 | Sustainability starts to pay off for Australia

Working at Allianz

- > me@allianz
- > HR Library
- > Phone Basics
- > Staff Noticeboard (18 items)
- > Allianz Share Price

Your Career

- > Current opportunities (12 jobs available)
- > eCampus

Allianz Quickstart

- > eCampus
- > HR Library
- > Intranet Demonstration
- > me@allianz
- > Out of Office
- > Phone Basics
- > Public Holidays
- > Security Incident Reporting
- > White Pages

My links

- > GIN
- > SPF
- > SmartSalary
- > allianz.com.au
- + Add page to My links...
- + Add custom link...
- + Manage My links...

Content owner is eBusiness.
Contact is Dan Tully, (02) 8258-5439.
Last updated by Greg Lounder on 29/07/2005 3:32:01 PM

Pictured: Promotions on the left side of the homepage change at least twice a week. This promotion highlights a television advertising campaign for customers.

Allianz Intranet Australia

Wednesday, 17 August, 2005
Welcome Julie


Search intranet GO ? Search staff GO

Home | Help | Have your say

Dem Advanced Advanced

Contact Tools Policies & Procedures Forms & Templates Staff & Pay Office Admin Customer & Sales Compliance and Aud

The Big Picture
Want to find out more about Allianz' strategy for achieving sustainable, profitable growth?

Allianz 
Your trusted insurer.

Program Promise

Leader in sales and distribution

Positive customer experience


1 • ONE

1. Operational excellence
2. Reducing complexity
3. Capital management

Sustainable and profitable growth, via
• Best Practice Sustainability
• Customer Focus Initiative
• Leadership Values
• Building our Brands

Working together every day.

Click on the diagram to put yourself in the picture »

 Performance Review Process
Give your feedback here

Allianz Australia News

16/08/2005 | **BPA Committee Update**

15/08/2005 | Cashing Out of Annual and Long Service Leave


15/08/2005 | BPA Committee Election - List of Candidates

12/08/2005 | Allianz Q2 results: letter to employees from Michael Diekmann

12/08/2005 | Allianz rating outlook revised to positive


[ARCHIVE](#)

Working at Allianz

- » me@allianz
- » HR Library
- » Phone Basics
- » Staff Noticeboard (21 items)
- » Allianz Share Price 

Your Career

- » Current opportunities (12 jobs available)
- » eCampus

Did you know? Close 

You can use the Intranet Search Engine to find information on your Intranet?

[Tell me more »](#)

QUICK START

- » eCampus
- » HR Library
- » Intranet Demonstration
- » me@allianz
- » Out of Office
- » Phone Basics
- » Public Holidays
- » Security Incident Reporting
- » White Pages

My links

- » Intranet stats
- » eBusiness home
- + Add page to My links...
- + Add custom link...
- + Manage My links...

Content owner is eBusiness.
Contact: eBusiness, Tel: (02) 9950 5400

Pictured: Other campaigns highlight new intranet features, such as how to use the redesigned intranet's improved search capabilities.

From the homepage, users have a dedicated search box for finding employee information. The results page returns a variety of useful data, including not only the target employee's contact information, but his or her direct reports and place in the management chain.

Corporate Directory

Julie [redacted] (02) [redacted]

Title: Manager Intranet

Tel number: (02) [redacted]

Fax number: (02) [redacted]

Location: [redacted]

Group: Personal Services

Sub-Group: [redacted]

Cost Centre Name: [redacted]

Cost Centre: [redacted]

Cost Centre Mgr: Dan Tully

Employment Details: [Employment Details](#)

Internet Email: [Julie.Kempster@allianz.com.au](#)

Management Chain

Terry [redacted]
Managing Director

Jonathan [redacted]
CGM Fin Institutions & Directs

Dan [redacted]
Group Manager
EBusiness

Julie [redacted]
Manager Intranet

Assistant / Alternative

Name: Niro [redacted]

Title: Manager EBusiness Support

Tel: (02) [redacted]

Fax: (02) [redacted]

Note: to update your details, access your Profile within the [Corporate Phone List](#) in Lotus Notes.

Direct Reports

Surname	First name	Tel No	Sub-Group	Title	Avail.
[redacted]	Niro	(02) [redacted]	eBusiness	Manager EBusiness Support	✓

Pictured: The Allianz Australia address book includes a range of information about employees, including their direct reports and their place in the management chain.

URL AND ACCESS

The Allianz Australia intranet’s URL is <http://allianzintranet>. The intranet homepage is the default browser start page for all employees. It’s also bookmarked in all browsers. When away from the corporate LAN, the sales force can access the intranet using EVDO wireless broadband technology.

CONTENT MANAGEMENT

Technology and Features

Allianz Australia uses a Lotus-Domino-based CMS that was built in-house. “It was more cost effective and a better fit to the business requirements to custom build the CMS, rather than using an off-the-shelf solution,” says Marcin Szczepanski, a senior Web developer at Allianz Australia. “Building the system ourselves meant that it could be tailored to our processes, rather than having to adjust our processes to match an off-the-shelf tool. Having the knowledge and application code in-house also allows us to more rapidly respond to bugs and feature requests, compared to dealing with an external vendor.”

The CMS provides content owners with a variety of tools, including a workflow system to automatically route pages from content author, through sign-off, to publishing. CMS features include: page-expiration-date scheduling, page approval processes, and metadata for categorizing page content. Furthermore, role-based access controls restrict CMS access to content owners and determine which parts of the site those content owners can alter.

Content Editors and Workflow

While the workflow technology is set to route content automatically, there are several “soft” processes in place, too. For example, all content editors undergo training before helping maintain their business section’s content. Tools and permissions limit the pages they can edit.

Allianz decided to use distributed content authors because “we wanted to utilize the skills of the business and give them authority and responsibility for supporting their own internal customers,” says Julie Kerrigan, the intranet manager at Allianz Australia. “By making them visually accountable, they also receive direct feedback that can be used to improve their content.” And Allianz puts its money where its mouth is: content owners have explicit authority “to prepare and publish content on behalf of their business.”

The decentralized CMS technologically supports this approach, letting content owners “create and edit their pages within their site areas, without any IT intervention,” says Szczepanski. Furthermore, “there is a ‘preview’ function that allows the content owner to see their changed content in a staging area.”

The intranet team ensures design consistency via pre-designed templates. Choices available to content owners vary by business unit and are restricted via roles-based access controls. When the CMS publishes the page, it invokes the designated template.

After content editors click a “submit” button, a change request is automatically routed to the intranet team, along with a link to see the changed content in the CMS. “The intranet team representative will use *Approve* or *Reject* buttons, with the workflow sending an automatic email to the content editor advising them of the action taken, and the change being published to the intranet,” says Dan Tully, the e-business group manager at Allianz Australia.

Other site sections instead utilize specialty workflows, he says. “For example, the finance team has an additional step in their workflow to include an internal finance reviewer.” Employees with permission to update news items have a different specialized workflow that publishes content directly to the intranet, avoiding the sign-off loop.

The CMS maintains an audit trail for every intranet page. “This includes all actions performed on that page—check out, approve, reject, go live, and so on,” says Szczepanski. “Also, whenever a new version of a page is made live, the previous version is retained in case it is later required.”

Metadata

To improve the relevance of intranet pages in search results, content editors use metadata to describe every page. The content editor determines which metadata terms to use after initial training and guidance from the intranet team. As Tully puts it, content editors “have the best understanding of their content and possible terms that users will use.”

All pages now use metadata, though the functionality was originally introduced in staged rollouts while the intranet team learned how best to apply it. “When implementing metadata, we first focused on our top-used pages, then on our top search terms and their results, and then on individual business unit top-used pages,” he says.

The accepted best practices for employing metadata aren’t static. Every month, the intranet team reviews search results for top keywords, then recommends appropriate changes to content owners.

TECHNOLOGY

Basic Hardware and Software

Three Windows 2000 servers running Lotus Domino 6.5 power the intranet. A separate Verity Ultraseek v5.2 server provides search. The intranet team heavily customized all page templates so they’d fit into the intranet’s look and feel. Webtrends 7 provides site usage statistics. “We also have some management and reporting scripts that are written using Python,” says Szczepanski.

An external design company creates most of the site’s graphics. Intranet team members also contribute smaller work when possible, using Adobe Photoshop and Jasc Paint Shop Pro.

For developing page templates, the intranet team used relatively simple tools. “The HTML, style sheets, and JavaScript code required for the templates were developed with a simple syntax-highlighting text editor—no visual development tools were used,” says Szczepanski. “Most of the HTML and JavaScript is fairly standard. However, we started using AJAX when developing the *Quickstart* functionality and we foresee greater use of this technology for future applications—if we feel an intranet application’s usability will benefit from its use.”

Using AJAX for Quickstart Functionality

Quickstart lets users maintain a shortlist of their most useful intranet tools or content areas. According to Szczepanski, the development team used AJAX to develop *Quickstart* so that the individualized application contents “did not have to be embedded into the page while the page was being built, server-side.” Instead, the page gets built then a JavaScript file included on the page uses an XMLHttpRequest to retrieve that user’s *Quickstart* data.

This approach permits much faster page loads, since the server doesn’t have to first build in the *Quickstart* data. Furthermore, he says, “you can make persistent changes to your *Quickstart* without reloading the rest of the page.”

This approach works well for the Allianz intranet because it’s a controlled, single-browser environment. “If this was an Internet site—where we can’t guarantee a particular browser, or even that a user has JavaScript enabled—then we probably would not have used AJAX,” he says. To use AJAX in such an environment, he says, would require fallback mechanisms to support users regardless of their technology, which would inevitably increase development time and maintenance requirements.

GOALS AND CONSTRAINTS

Goals:

- Provide a clear, task-focused design.

- Make information, including policies and processes, quick to find, reducing searching time.
- Make the site intuitive and easy to learn.
- Reduce content depth (levels).
- Provide templates tailored to specific user groups, such as policy operations, the workers' compensation division, and claims.
- Improve knowledge management by providing a single repository for documentation and information.
- Promote corporate culture and values.
- Upgrade the intranet platform from Lotus Domino 5 to Domino 6.

BASIC INTRANET FEATURES

The Allianz Australia intranet supports a wide variety of employee tasks. For example, staff members have easy access to corporate news, internal career opportunities, and executive communications. A staff notice board also allows employees to post notices.

Employees can search the corporate directory as well as the whole intranet. In the latter case, the search results sometimes include “best bets” to make navigating results easier.

For collaborating with business partners, employees can share documents and run Web conferences.

The intranet also includes many intranet-based, self-service applications. *Me@Allianz* lets employees view salary, personal, and holiday information. The e-learning section, *eCampus*, promotes intranet-based compliance and product training.

For content owners, the intranet provides a style guide, which is consistent for the Club Marine, Hunter, Recovre, and Allianz New Zealand subsidiaries.

Overall, the site is focused on communities of practice—common tasks users must perform—rather than departments. All users also have the personalized *Quickstart* feature on every page.

The CMS automatically routes content changes to the appropriate person for sign-off when necessary, maintains an audit trail of changes, and expires outdated content.

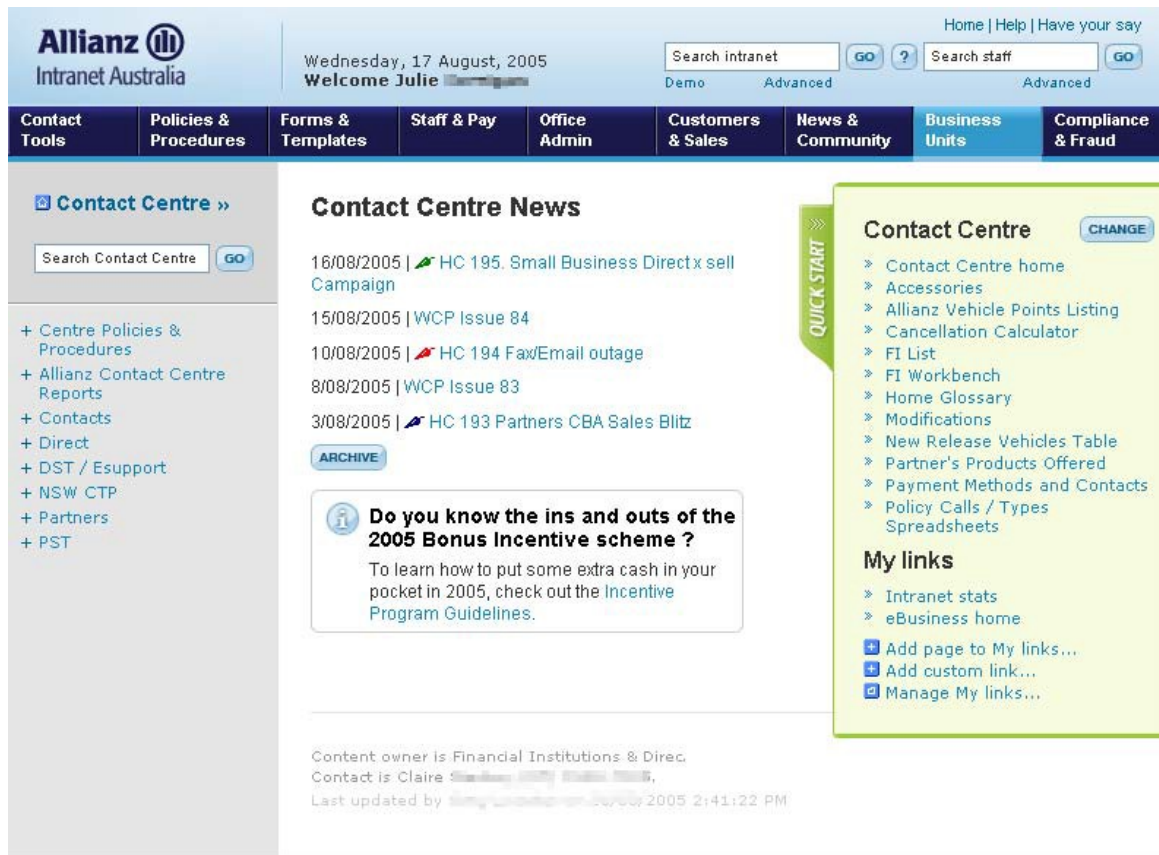
At Allianz, the intranet provides employees with an internal communications channel. Business teams can use it to expose internal employees to external campaigns. The communications team also designs in-house campaigns, for example touting how to use intranet search, or using the intranet to highlight salespeople with the highest monthly sales.

The intranet gives Allianz's customer service teams—who are available to customers fourteen hours a day—the tools they need to support both direct customers and business partner customers.

“The majority of customers require immediate assistance,” says Kerrigan. To help, information is available via the intranet within various customer service teams' specialty homepages. To help content owners keep content on those pages as fresh as possible, “the pages use the same intranet format and can be updated within minutes by the business content editor whenever necessary.”

The sales force can access Cognos software via the intranet to run reports on the corporate data warehouse and compare sales plans with actual sales. Underwriters have similar tools to analyze insurance portfolio performance, and cost center managers can access and manage financial data online.

The intranet itself is also a part of the company's information-backup plan. "The intranet is used as a business continuity planning tool for the Customer Contact Center. In other words, when the point-of-sale system is unavailable, new-business templates are available on the intranet," says Kerrigan. The intranet itself is an extremely high-availability platform, and is included in disaster planning efforts so the business can ensure critical data is not only backed up, but can be quickly restored.



Pictured: If the mainframe goes down, the intranet's *Contact Center* provides that business unit's employees with a trusted, high-availability information source, including access to all needed forms.

USERS

The Allianz Australia intranet has over 3,000 users throughout Australia and New Zealand.

USER TASKS

- Search the staff directory
- Conduct keyword searches to find information

- Read the latest Allianz Australia news
- Peruse career options (job vacancies and opportunities are published twice a week)
- Access HR policies and procedures
- Use *Me@Allianz* to access personal information, including salary details and vacation time
- Use the *eCampus* e-learning tool to receive compliance and product training
- Access online claim forms and policies and procedures, including information about products Allianz Australia offers
- Read the staff notice board

BACKGROUND

Forming an E-business Team

Allianz Australia's e-business team was established in July 2000 to develop and implement a corporate e-business strategy. There were three priorities for the group:

1. Establish an employee intranet to improve knowledge management
2. Create a secure extranet portal to facilitate communication and online insurance transactions with business partners
3. Build an e-commerce website (allianz.com.au) to sell insurance directly to customers

"To ensure group synergies were achieved, the team had responsibility for the strategic development of all Web channels: intranet, extranet, and Internet," says Tully. Thus, the group oversees the design of the customer experience, maintains Web style guides for content creators, and helps ensure Web asset reusability.

Intranet: Founded in 2001

Allianz Australia launched its initial intranet on January 10, 2001. "The driver to starting the intranet was to improve knowledge management," says Tully. There was a wealth of information inside Allianz, yet employees had a difficult time finding it, let alone accessing it.


The main knowledge-sharing problem was that "there was no common link between Lotus Notes database structures," he says. "If a database was not already open on your Lotus desktop workspace, how would you know information even existed? Access to information was just not intuitive."

Furthermore, the only corporate communications channel was Lotus Notes email, which resulted in large amounts of information flooding into in-boxes. The goal, then, was to make the browser the only tool an employee would need to access corporate information, "without having to worry about replicating Notes databases, accessing shared drives, and so on," says Tully.

Staff Search: Surname or full name ... or use Directory

How do I? Select from 'quick find' list

Search: Keywords ... or use Advanced

Allianz  **Intranet Australia**

Program Promise | Internet Links | Help | Feedback

Tuesday, 7 September, 2004

Contact Tools

Sales & Distribution

Business Units

Support & Services


Forms & Templates


HR Services

Compliance


Manuals

News & Community

 Find out more Click here

Allianz  **Australia eCampus**

The fast track to your career.

 Go to eCampus

Find It Fast

Top 5 searches last week...

1. Contact Centre Database
2. Frequently Used links
3. Staff Noticeboard
4. Career Opportunities Online
5. Corporate Directory

Contact Tools

- Corporate Directory
- Key Contacts
- Customer Service Contacts
- White Pages
- Yellow Pages
- WhereIS
- More...

Sales & Distribution

- Sales Incentive Scheme
- Sales Tools & Templates
- Training & Development
- Key Contacts
- Recruitment & Selection
- Have your say
- More...

Business Units

- Broker & Agent Distribution
- Corporate Services
- Financial Institutions & Direct
- Hunter
- Information & Technology
- Personal Injury
- Recovre
- Technical and Operations
- More...

Support & Services

- Corporate Communications
- Corporate Legal
- Data Warehouse Reporting
- eBusiness
- Finance Tools
- IT Support Services
- Procurement & Property
- Projects
- Voice Comms
- More...

Forms & Templates

- Frequently Used
- HR
- Voice Comms
- Personal Injury
- More...

HR Services

- HR Policies and Procedures
- My Training & Career Development
- Working @ Allianz Australia
- Occupational Health & Safety
- Employee Benefits Program
- More...

Compliance

- Risk & Compliance

In Touch @ Allianz

6/9/2004
Allianz Australia acquires 5 per cent of Australian Finance Group Limited for \$7.5million

6/9/2004
Country commitment

3/9/2004
Updated Fraud Policies and Procedures

1/9/2004
Qantas Club Membership and Preferred Hotels

Archived News

Corporate Security

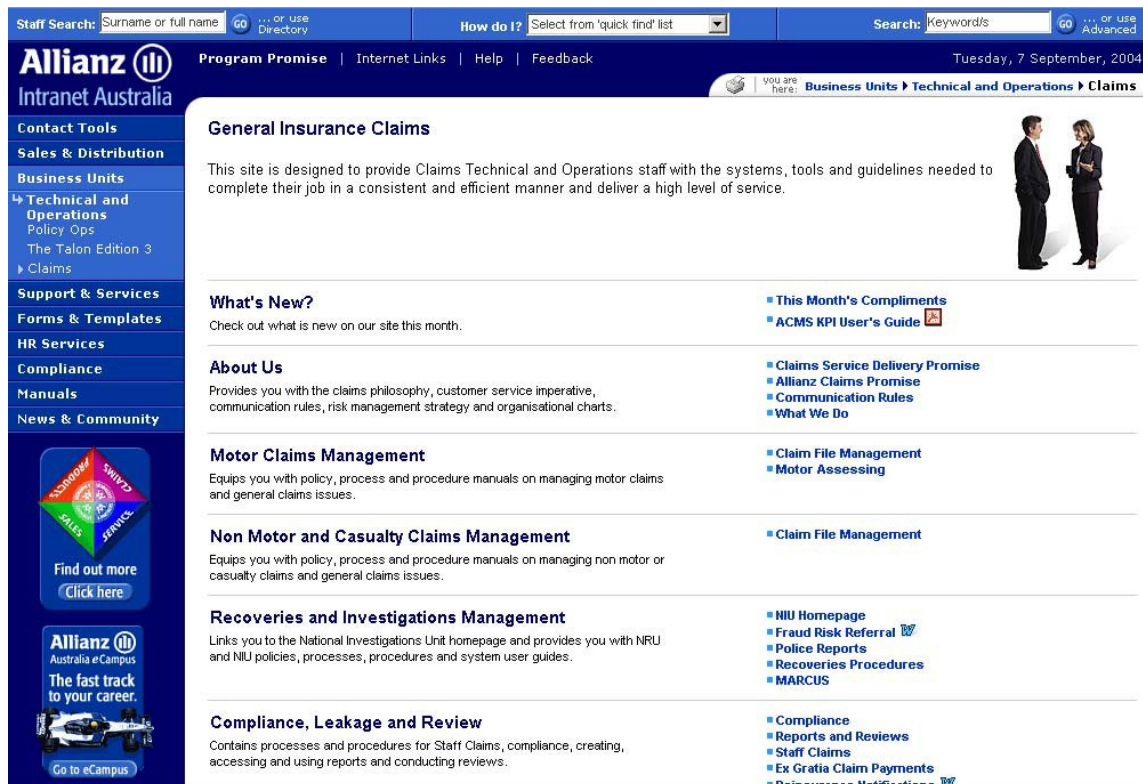
- New Reporting System for Security Incidents
- Security Incident Reporting
- Security Procedures
- Security of our people and our assets
- Security and Asset Protection Policy
- Applying for access cards in Market Street

Careers Online

"It's your move..." the latest internal **Career Opportunities Online.** (11 jobs currently available)

Allianz AG

Pictured: The original Allianz intranet, developed in 2001, was launched to improve information sharing by moving away from Lotus Notes databases. The site's information architecture was largely based on a department-centric view of the organization, rather than being arranged to meet users' actual needs.



Pictured: A department-level page from the initial version of the Allianz intranet, developed in 2001. Rather than being a business-critical tool, the intranet was generally regarded as a nice place to store information.

DESIGN PROCESS AND USABILITY ACTIVITIES

Planning Size of Redesign

Allianz Australia needed to redesign its intranet to better suit how employees do their jobs, since the original intranet—produced in a time of multiple mergers—simply offered “‘brochureware’ content and HR information,” says Kerrigan. “To support the company’s ‘customer-centric’ approach, we looked for ways in which the intranet channel could meet the staff’s need for quick access to information, tools, and general communication.”

The intranet team approached the question of intranet improvement from several perspectives. Team members conducted workplace studies with users, watching how they completed predetermined tasks. They also interviewed ten key internal stakeholders about what they needed help doing. Such stakeholders included the heads of marketing, HR, claims, the IT department, and sales and distribution. In addition, the intranet team conducted field studies and card-sorting exercises with 100 different employees from all over the organization, sitting with them and watching how they used the intranet, “to understand day-to-day usage and tasks not currently intranet related,” she says. The team followed up each visit with an online survey (conducted through the company’s online survey tool) to better understand how the intranet did or didn’t help employees.

Based on that research, “our findings indicated that a complete redesign, rather than small changes, was needed to meet employees’ requirements,” says Kerrigan.

Launching the Redesign

For redesign advice, “our starting point was a review of the Nielsen Norman Group *Intranet Design Annual* top ten to benchmark Allianz Australia against peers. This enabled us to perform a simple, high-level gap analysis,” says Kerrigan.

To get the redesign moving quickly, the intranet team hosted a three-day workshop. Participants included the intranet team, the IT intranet team, and a business representative from the Contact Center—the company’s largest user community. “It was important to include the IT intranet team in the design process as they had many ideas on how technology could support business goals,” says Tully, adding that they included the business representative “to ensure we maintained business focus.”

The team turned to outside experts as well. “We wanted to bring external industry best practice to the table, and also someone who would challenge our business assumptions,” says Tully. So the intranet team invited a usability consultant from an external usability company, the Hiser Group, plus Web designers from an external Web design agency, webqem.

“In the workshop we—as a joint team—agreed on intranet goals and objectives. Then each team member worked on aspects of the intranet’s design to meet the agreed-upon intranet goals and objectives. Every couple of hours we reconvened to present our designs to the full team, selecting the best design elements and then moving to further refine the design,” says Tully. “At the end of the three-day workshop, we had two wireframe designs to test with users.” The wireframes offered users a new information architecture, plus a range of new functionality.

The team also articulated the intranet redesign success criteria. “The business needs have developed from staff requiring occasional, generic information, to staff being dependant on an interactive, singular reference source that supports business practices,” says Tully.

As a result, he says, “the key focus of the redesign was to provide a clear task-focused design that is intuitive and easy to learn, making information and tools quick to find, thereby providing a better experience for staff and ultimately our end customers.”

Testing with Paper Prototypes

Using paper prototypes, the intranet team conducted usability tests with twenty users. They asked the users to perform several tasks, including finding a phone number, starting an approved online training course, finding the latest company news, determining which employee benefits they could use for Christmas, and ordering photocopy paper.

Overall, “users enjoyed being involved and being able to provide feedback and recommendations that affected and identified the final design,” notes Kerrigan.

Usability testers also gathered more subjective data, including user feedback on intranet functionality and suggestions for intranet improvements. The testers also asked users about the top five pages they regularly used, how often they used the current intranet, whether or not it helped them do their jobs, and so on.

With usability results in hand, the intranet team began to build the redesigned intranet in earnest, continuing to user test along the way.

TIMELINE

- July 2000: Allianz Australia's e-business team (which includes the intranet group) decided to develop, then implement, the company's e-business strategy.
- 2001: Launched first intranet, primarily to create a centralized knowledge management store.
- March 2004: Began usability testing and surveyed 100 employees about their views on the existing intranet.
- April 2004: Interviewed key business stakeholders to understand their aims, goals, and needs.
- April 2004: Held a three-day workshop to generate designs for new intranet.
- May 2004: Tested proposed designs with users.
- May–June 2004: Used wireframe design results to hone the redesigned intranet's business requirements.
- June 2004: Planned intranet-related IT efforts.
- July 2004: Presented senior management team with a business case for redesigning the intranet.
- August 2004: Started building new CMS, plus new intranet templates and designs.
- September 2004: IT built new intranet technology; intranet redesign team began migrating business content to new intranet.
- October 2004: Finished IT portion of intranet; began testing functionality and migrated content.
- November 2004: Trained content editors on new intranet and conducted additional user testing.
- November 29, 2004: Launched redesigned intranet.

RESULTS

The redesigned Allianz Australia intranet was launched in November 2004. Employees rapidly embraced the intranet's improved usability, design, and employee focus.

Post-redesign, many organizations expect page views to increase, both because the intranet is easier to use and because it's a useful metric for demonstrating to senior management that months of work have a discernable payoff.

Even so, Allianz Australia expected page views to initially decline following the redesign. "The new design was aimed at making information easier to find and not as deep," notes Tully. "Hence, less clicks were required to access content."

Nonetheless, page views quickly increased, with logs quickly showing page views growing annually by 100%.

Anecdotal employee feedback highlights the intranet's increased usability. For example, a Contact Center consultant lauded the new intranet as being "easy to navigate." Similarly, a business development manager called the intranet

"wonderful," noting how "it is a lot easier to find what you are looking for, and see what is available to you."

In short, "today the intranet has developed into a tool that is business-critical and used daily by Allianz staff," says Tully.

One of the intranet's most immediately recognizable new features is *Quickstart*, which gives employees faster and easier access to frequently used pages. "*Quickstart* is available in its full view from the intranet homepage and business unit homepages, and via a small tab on all other intranet pages—only a click away, without needing to wait for a page to refresh," says Kerrigan. While content owners customize the *Quickstart* pages and links for employees based on their business unit, "staff can also self-manage and add their own additional links to the business unit list for pages."

New employees can take Allianz Australia's new-employee orientation session using *eCampus*, the new in-house e-learning platform. Orientation information includes an online, guided tour of Allianz Australia, information about the company and its history, the various things the company offers, plus video introductions of the senior management team and of the different business units by a unit staff member.

The intranet team emphasizes not only usability, but also high availability. As a result, employees have learned to trust the intranet as a backup should other primary systems fail. "The intranet is now a business-critical application, used as a backup and alternate business process should the mainframe systems be out of action," notes Tully. That's especially important for "the Contact Center, fulfillment teams, claims operations, and personal injury division, which require a single source of information for their users that is centrally controlled and maintained."

The redesign also improved the intranet's information architecture. "A big focus for the team was to bring the content closer to staff," says Kerrigan. "With the old intranet, staff in customer support areas may have needed to drill down six or seven levels to access content." By contrast, the new design gives them *Quickstart*, with one-click access to their designated content. Furthermore, the redesigned information architecture places information four levels down at very most.

The redesigned intranet also better supports HR efforts, providing new, browser-based access to a variety of needed forms. In addition, "the HR manual has been converted from Lotus Notes to an online format," says Tully. Together, these new features "promote awareness and usage of the intranet."

Wednesday, 17 August, 2005

Welcome Julie

Search intranet ?

Demo Advanced Advanced

Home | Help | Have your say

Contact Tools

Policies & Procedures

Forms & Templates

Staff & Pay

Office Admin

Customers & Sales

News & Community

Business Units

Compliance & Fraud

Employee Benefits Program »

Salary Packaging »

+ Employee Insurance Scheme

+ Health & Lifestyle Program

Household & Lifestyle Goods »

Qantas Club Membership »

+ Travel Services

Financial Services »

Computers & accessories »

Printing Services »

Mobile Phones »

Have Your Say »

Salary Packaging

Allianz has nominated **SmartSalary** to provide salary packaging administration services, effective from May 2003.

Salary packaging provides the option of including a wide range of benefits that offer both convenience and the ability to use your income more effectively. Salary packaging allows you to restructure your salary by choosing a combination of cash and approved benefits that are paid from your pre-tax salary.

Who is eligible?

- Staff – defined as full time and part time permanent staff of Allianz Australia – **are** eligible.
- Casual, temporary, agency or contract staff **are not** eligible.

Packaging Limitations

- Employees with a TRB greater than \$55,000 per annum can access all benefits (refer to table below)
- After applying all packaged items, including additional superannuation deductions, the employee's **Taxable Salary** must not fall below \$35,000 per annum.

What benefits can be packaged?

BENEFIT NAME	FBT STATUS	ELIGIBILITY	EXISTING OR NEW
1. Laptop Computer	FBT Exempt	All staff	New

Pictured: The HR area features material previously restricted to Lotus Notes databases. Offering browser-based access to needed forms and information helps bring users back to the intranet.

The redesigned intranet includes a new information architecture: “The new intranet is task-based, meaning that staff can now find information by task, rather than the previous design of sorting through information by company structure,” says Kerrigan.

Furthermore, employees can customize their own quick links—available from every page. To help find information in such a large site, users can also localize their searches to specific communities.

To continue improving the intranet, the intranet team listens to users and follows up to ensure that any problems are solved.

Allianz
Intranet Australia

you are here:
Intranet Home
Surveys

Surveys
Property Services Customer Satisfaction: Section 2 of 5
Intranet Home

All questions marked with an asterisk (*) are required.

Customer Service	Importance / Performance					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
	1	2	3	4	5	
3. We respond quickly to property service requests *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. We complete actions promptly *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. We follow up any problems raised by you effectively *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. We are sensitive to your particular needs and priorities *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. We keep you informed of progress *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Our staff are courteous and professional in their dealings with you *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. We demonstrate technical/professional competence in our dealings with you *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. We offer the full range of services you need *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Please tell us what we should do to improve the quality of service we provide to you or your business unit:	<input type="text"/>					

CANCEL
PREVIOUS
NEXT

Pictured: The intranet team has an intranet-based survey tool that Allianz business units can use to gather feedback.

The redesign highlights how the intranet's raison d'être has expanded over time. "The initial intranet focus was getting our business units to use the intranet, and gaining users' acceptance of the intranet as a core communications channel," says Tully. As a result, the intranet team's primary focus was ensuring that new content was published on the intranet.

Today, however, Tully says the team is "focused on delivering value to the business" by continuing to refine the intranet's design and usability. To help, the team frequently runs content seminars, educating content owners about how to more effectively write for the Web and improve the overall user experience. The intranet team always reminds content owners to focus on the staff's specific tasks and then "isolate how intranet content can make these tasks faster and more efficient."

Even as the intranet has grown, Allianz Australia hasn't had to hire any additional intranet staff. What's its secret? "Leveraging the efficiency of a group-wide style guide, using distributed content management tools, defined content templates, and automatically expiring content," says Tully.

LESSONS LEARNED

Insights from Dan Tully:

Get and maintain buy-in. "Get stakeholder and user buy-in from the beginning and maintain communication, good or bad, with them throughout the redesign process."

Always listen to users. “Talk to your users and find out what they do in their jobs, to understand how you—and, of course, the intranet—can better assist them.”

Test with prototypes. “Test paper prototypes with users. This enabled us to see what users would use and easily learn, and to resist influences to the contrary. For example, what management would like to see on the intranet isn’t always what users would use. Testing gave us needed data for articulating that.”

ALTANA Pharma AG

Using the Intranet:

ALTANA Pharma AG is the pharmaceutical division of ALTANA AG, and is headquartered in Konstanz, Germany. ALTANA Pharma is an international pharmaceutical group concentrating on innovative pharmaceutical products in therapeutics, imaging (contrast media), and OTC medication. Therapeutics, its most important business area, focuses on prescription drugs for gastrointestinal and respiratory diseases. ALTANA Pharma has more than 8,200 employees and thirty subsidiaries in Europe, North and South America, Asia, South Africa, and Australia. In 2004, the company achieved sales of about €2.1 billion, up 7% from 2003.

Design Team:

namics AG

Members:

namics:

Bernd Schopp, senior consultant; Thomas Link, designer and site architect; Michael Pertek, consultant; Harry Preis, senior software engineer; Ernst Ammann, senior developer

ALTANA Pharma AG:

Nicola Winterstein, project manager; Matthias Rohrbach, IT project manager

SUMMARY

Sharing knowledge is a critical aptitude for ALTANA Pharma AG. Like many pharmaceutical companies, ALTANA Pharma's future depends on research and development (R&D), and the company invests about 20% of all corporate revenues in that area. Research, however, cannot occur in a vacuum. The company's success depends on maintaining a close relationship between R&D and marketing and various other groups, from sales to HR and beyond.

As a company focused on research, discovery, and knowledge sharing, ALTANA Pharma encourages intense communication and teamwork. Because of that, the company has given its intranet a well-defined goal: to provide an overview of the organization that's so transparent that using it is intuitive not only for employees, but also for new hires. The intranet delivers on this goal, supporting users with its well-executed design and myriad features.

Homepage

The ALTANA intranet homepage houses a significant number of features in a relatively compact space. Many of these features lead users to content they want or need. Along the way, the design also attempts to educate them about other intranet features they might not know about.



Pictured: The ALTANA intranet's homepage offers myriad features, from news to a list of most commonly emailed pages. (For confidentiality reasons, we've altered information displayed in this and many subsequent images.)

The *Inside the Intranet* section houses a clickable *Guided Tour* of the intranet. The tour consists of ten slides and typically takes five to ten minutes to view. For more information about the intranet, users can also explore the *List of Key Features* area.

The intranet offers a *Mail this page* link in the upper-right part of each page. This permits—and reminds—colleagues to share knowledge. Behind the scenes, software automatically tracks which pages are emailed, then lists the most popular ones as *Most E-Mailed Articles* on the homepage. This list, a social filter for all intranet content, captures content users find interesting and also provides visibility into content stored in locations that users might not have discovered yet.

You are here: Home → Configuration & General Information → Mail this page

MAIL THIS PAGE Recommend Pages of Special Interest

This tool provides you with a service, which enables you to send a page of your choice to colleagues and recommend it to them. IMPORTANT: this is an internal functionality of myALPHA, there is no external access to the intranet by third parties.

Momentarily, the email adress has to be put in manually (max.mustermann@altanapharma.com). A connection to the Lotus Notes Address Database is currently not available.

* Required Fields

Mail

Mail Address:

Subject:

Comment:

Most E-Mailed Articles

- Be Informed
- Umzüge
- Weiterbildung
- Respiratory
- HR-News

Pictured: ALTANA Pharma employees can email most intranet pages to other employees. Behind the scenes, software automatically tracks the most popular pages, then runs a shortlist on the intranet homepage.

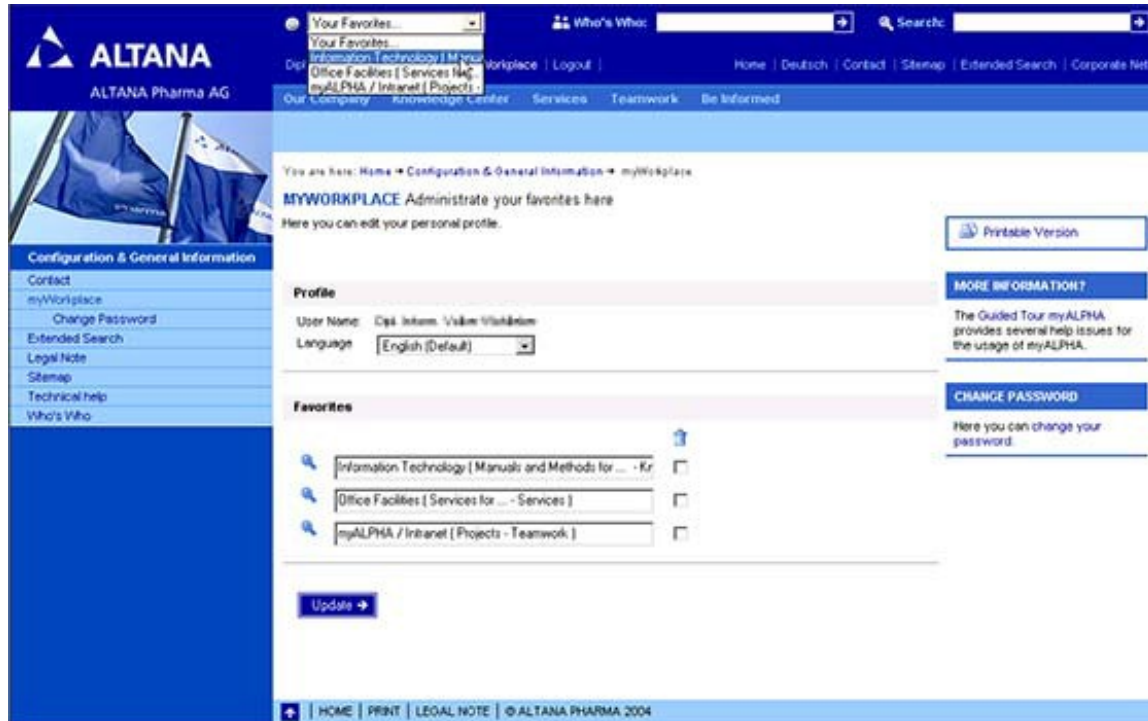
Not surprisingly, news headlines are the most prominent homepage element. Headlines are dated and lead to full articles and corporate press releases. The latter is especially notable, since linking to corporate press releases can be a tremendous eye-opener for employees. Many employees don't track their own company's press releases, and so miss out on the company's external-facing persona. If anyone should stay knowledgeable about the most recent corporate messages, it's the employees themselves.

Personalization

Users can personalize the intranet and select a preferred language in the *My Workplace* area. While ALTANA Pharma promotes English as the company's sole scientific language, it also offers more local, bilingual intranet content. This is useful given the company's highly distributed operations and the number of employees who have a different primary language.

Users can also set specific search preferences, access a site map, or reset their intranet password. Further, they can add favorites to the "*Your Favorites ...*" drop-down list, which appears in the upper-left part of the homepage and on all subsequent pages. These favorites help users easily and quickly jump to the pages they want. This feature is also very easy to use: just click the *Add page to favorites*

link in the upper-right part of any page. Thanks to single sign-on, users don't have to re-authenticate every time they access these features.



Pictured: The *My Workplace* area lets users personalize the ALTANA Pharma intranet by adding or removing favorites, defining a preferred language, setting individual options, and more. Users can also reset their own passwords here.

Navigation and Search

Above all other intranet features, traversing an intranet should be easy to ensure a good user experience and boost employees' productivity. At an organization such as ALTANA Pharma, however, the importance of knowledge sharing coupled with the regular influx of new employees requires that navigation be seamless. One excellent technique for ensuring usability that scales with the organization: Design an information architecture and search capabilities that help users through common tasks and typical situations.

Again, ALTANA Pharma delivers on this need. For starters, the company *Who's Who* search and the overall intranet search are both clearly labeled and use open fields. They're also well located in the upper-right part of all pages, including the homepage. Placing the two fields close to each other is important: it lets users see both fields at once, while labels ensure that they can quickly differentiate between the two search types.

The intranet also offers more advanced search features, such as *Extended Search*. Most pages feature a *Search similar pages* link on the upper-right part of the page. Users can also search by document type, including .pdf, .doc, or .xls.

The main navigation bar is located horizontally across the top of pages. Different colors are assigned to the page borders for each of the sections: *Our Company* (cyan), *Knowledge Center* (lime green), *Services* (honey yellow), *Teamwork*

(orange), and *Be Informed* (maraschino red). A breadcrumb trail also displays a page's full intranet location.



Pictured: "Snips" of four different navigation bars in the ALTANA Pharma intranet. Each intranet section features a top-level navigation bar in a different color to help users determine where they are in the intranet. Breadcrumb trails add additional context.

The colors help users quickly determine which section they're in. Vertical navigation on the left side of the page changes depending on which of the top-level navigation choices users select. The left-hand navigation space displays the current page, parent page, and all child pages.

For the new ALTANA Pharma intranet, the design team transitioned from an information architecture based on business units to one focused on users' tasks. This progression can be a challenge.

Should all companies move from a business unit information architecture to a task-focused one? Well, the business unit model can work, but there are two requirements. First, a company must be very small (less than 200 people). The second requirement: every employee must know what every business unit does, and in most organizations—even very small ones—the latter is simply not true. While this might seem counterintuitive, few employees really understand what everyone else in their organization does.

The ALTANA Pharma intranet illustrates why a task-focused information architecture is typically much more elegant than a business-unit one. For example, rather than forcing users to differentiate between HR, travel, and accounts payable tabs—not unusual tabs to find on an intranet—the ALTANA Pharma intranet instead offers a

simple *Services* tab. This is a one-stop-shop for items such as the help desk, room resources, obtaining supplies, booking travel, accessing management tools, or referring to new-employee services. The site's straightforward approach to links continues on the *Services* page itself, even though it houses a variety of diverse services.



Pictured: The *Services* tab has a simple name that precisely describes what the page offers. The two-level directory also gives users an easy way to skip between pages, while supplemental navigation allows them to further browse services or products alphabetically. (So far, the supplemental navigation is available only for content managers. Site-wide rollout is forthcoming.)

Of course, navigation is not just about menus, tabs, and site maps. It's also about the way the pages themselves are laid out. The ALTANA intranet has a distinct look and feel, and a defined structure for page sections. In other words, pages look quite similar, but the content stands out. Consistent design and navigation help users quickly master how the intranet works, then apply this knowledge to any intranet page. It takes only a few simple, consistent items to engender this: bookmarks and page-level items in boxes in the right margin, breadcrumbs at the top of every page, and navigation in the left, vertical column. The page title appears at the top, in bold text, and a short summary follows. Content follows from there, complete with subtle, colored-bar accents.



Pictured: Consistency counts: the *Knowledge* index page is very similar to the *Services* index page (above), which helps users quickly and intuitively learn to browse the intranet.



Pictured: A department page designed using the basic page template.



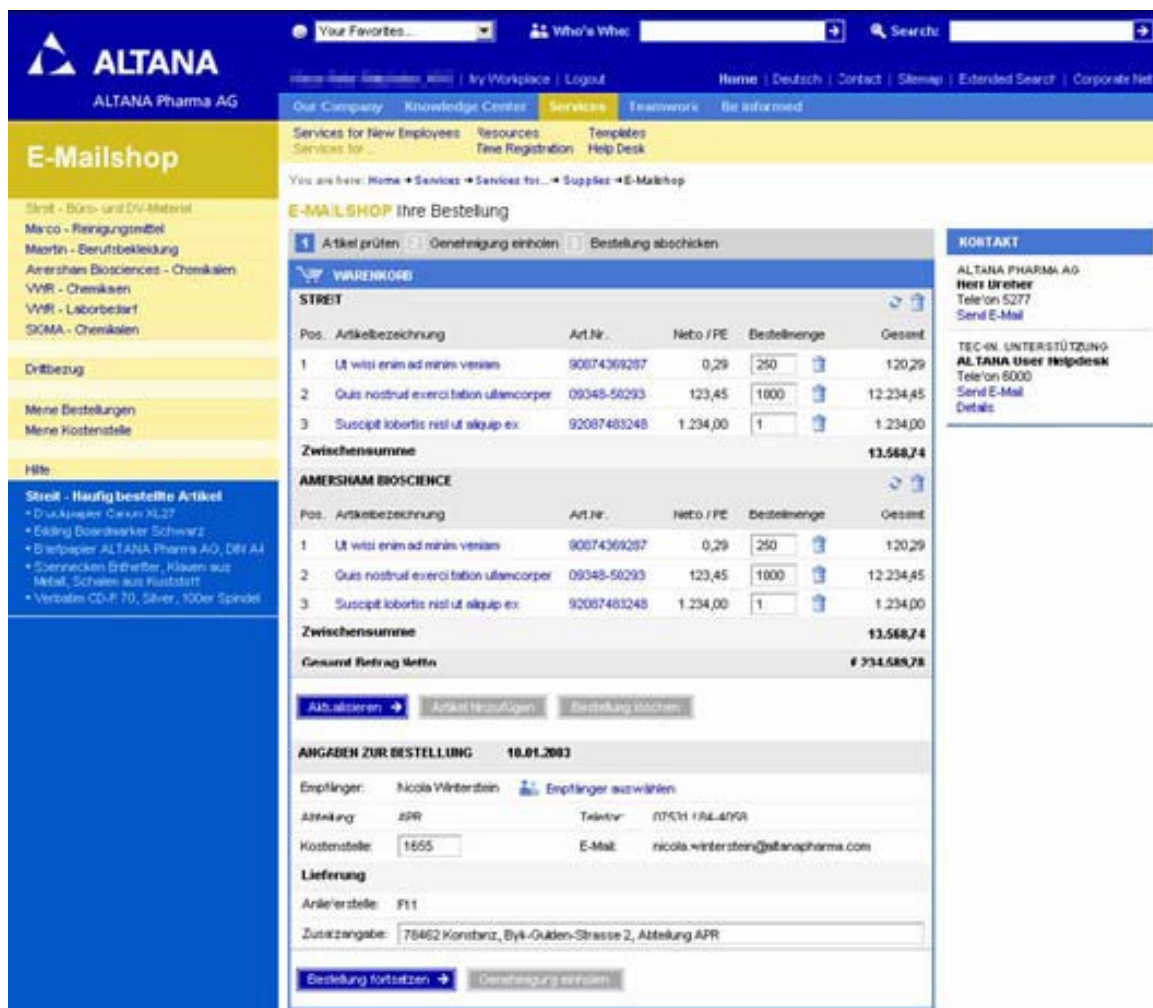
Pictured: A content page built with the basic page template.

Procurement

When you think of an intranet that provides critical business services and that all employees rely upon, one feature might not come to mind: shopping. In the pharmaceutical arena, however, employees need innumerable items to run lab experiments—never mind ordering ever-necessary office products.

To let employees order needed supplies, this intranet uses a tried and true e-commerce metaphor: the online catalog, complete with shopping cart. Users can search, read descriptions, add items to their cart, and then check out. A *Deputy* function even allows people to order products for colleagues.

Employing well-known Web metaphors such as the shopping cart on an intranet is always a sage approach.



Pictured: Pharmaceutical companies rely on a variety of supplies, and the ALTANA Pharma *E-Mail Shop* shopping cart system lets employees get what they need. The online catalog and cart integrate items from various catalogs, without forcing users to browse from catalog to catalog to find what they're looking for.

Throughout the intranet, designers encourage collaboration in strong yet subtle ways. That's not a surprise: Given the research-intensive environment, all pharmaceutical companies must count knowledge sharing and collaboration as core competencies.

ALTANA Pharma is no exception. Its intranet is a critical tool for enabling the company's success by supporting its business requirements with straightforward navigation and effortless collaboration features.

URL AND ACCESS

The intranet's URL is <http://myALPHA.ap.ALTANA>. It's the default start page for all users, and is bookmarked in their browsers. Users can access the intranet via a VPN when away from the corporate LAN.

ALTANA also offers some users intranet access via kiosks. "The kiosks are located at specific and well-frequented places, such as the central entrance of the main buildings, or the entrance area of the cantinas," says Michael Pertek, a namics ag consultant. (The namics ag consulting firm, based in St. Gallen, Switzerland, led design efforts for the new ALTANA Pharma intranet.)



Pictured: An ALTANA Pharma kiosk. In general, kiosks are placed in well-frequented areas.



Pictured: Using an ALTANA Pharma kiosk

CONTENT MANAGEMENT

ALTANA uses Opentext Livelink WCM Server 9.2.1 for its CMS, though an upgrade to version 9.5 is underway. WCM is running on Microsoft IIS 6 on Windows Server 2003, and also relies on an Oracle Database Server. While WCM is off-the-shelf software, namics customized many of the related templates and intranet functionality, though not the generic CMS features.

ALTANA Pharma takes various approaches to content ownership. For example, each department owns its own part in the site's *Our Company* section. Although corporate communications runs the *Be Informed* section, many other departments—especially marketing and HR—also contribute. Content owners for *Knowledge Center* and *Services* are drawn from throughout the organization, especially the marketing, HR, and corporate library services groups. Finally, for individual *Teamwork* sections, the content owner is the project or workgroup manager who oversees the team.

To maintain a consistent-looking intranet, ALTANA Pharma employs a style guide. The guide was originally developed while the intranet was still being planned; it was then used to develop all the intranet's applications and its content templates, which are now built into the CMS.

Today, "all editors are trained and educated to use the rules out of the style guide," says Pertek. The guide, along with additional training information and a CMS technical guide, is readily available to any employee in the intranet's *Knowledge Center*.

Even with templates and style guides, however, maintaining a consistent intranet look and feel can be difficult. "Templates still allow users to apply layouts and styles slightly differently," notes Pertek. "Therefore, supervisor and author training has focused on how to best apply templates." Even so, content creators frequently rely on the intranet team for additional design guidance.

Beyond the style guide, page templates help further maintain a consistent-looking site. "The most common design elements relating to content are simple content sections, which might have a combination of text and imagery, and separate sidebars or boxes, which often contain links or information summaries," says Pertek. "Other elements include navigation areas, lists, and tables."

Even so, "due to ongoing developments, not all ALTANA intranet functionality is finalized. Some functions are still developed but not rolled out until end of 2005. Other concepts are just in the pipeline and awaiting implementation," says Ernst Ammann, a senior developer at namics.



Pictured: At ALTANA, content managers can build pages using a variety of pre-made pieces, including simple content sections (A), which might include text and images; and separate sidebars (B), which often contain links or summaries. Additional elements include navigation areas (C), lists (D), and tables (E).

In general, the style guide advocates using these different elements in discrete ways. Here's a relevant excerpt from the style guide itself:

- **To present and communicate content**, always choose content sections of type (A) and the layout options they offer. Content sections can be combined very effectively with tables (E).
- **To refer to other pages**, choose a separate sidebar/box format (B). In the case of different page types, e.g. News and Events, you can create a separate box for each one.
- **To present Lotus Notes database content** in the easiest possible way, choose the list format (D).
- **To refer to related links**, choose a sidebar (B) in the right-hand column of the content area.

TECHNOLOGY

Beyond the CMS software, namics used a variety of tools to plan and create the intranet's design, according to Bernd Schopp, a senior consultant at namics. "We use Microsoft Excel for content gathering and building the top-level information architecture, and PowerPoint as a companion to create wireframes for the page

structure. Adobe Illustrator is the best tool to transform the wireframes into a first design—and of course to make a precise grid system. Final design mock-ups of all templates are done with Adobe Photoshop,” Schopp says.

Intranet search is handled by Autonomy software. Search was implemented in two steps. First, users got simple search capabilities. Later, namics added more complex search capabilities. Now users can search the entire site, in various categories, or for specific document types, including Microsoft Word and Excel files, PDFs, or even HTML pages.

GOALS AND CONSTRAINTS

Goals:

- Move from multiple Lotus Notes intranets to one CMS-driven intranet with a consistent, corporate design.
- Maintain a consistent intranet design using content templates.
- Designate one department to manage the overall intranet.
- Move from multiple, department-focused information architectures to a single, user-friendly information architecture, while continuing to draw content from relevant business units.
- Provide a common start page for all employees, filled with relevant content.
- Provide one search tool capable of indexing the entire intranet.
- Offer content in both German and English.
- Introduce quick and efficient knowledge-sharing tools.
- Make the organization’s structure and offerings look transparent to new employees.
- Create a service center for employees focused not on corporate offerings, but on meeting employees’ objectives.

Constraints:

- Common restrictions: budget and time limits.
- Enticing users to transition from their organically developed intranets and document collection systems to a centralized intranet and new CMS.
- Minimal transition time from old to new intranet, despite the radically different new design.

BASIC INTRANET FEATURES

One of the main intranet redesign goals was to create navigation that let users find relevant information on the intranet without having specific knowledge about ALTANA Pharma’s organizational structures or workflows. So, the ALTANA Pharma intranet offers users an objective-oriented—rather than department-based—intranet. In other words, employees get a task-oriented, situation-focused information architecture.

From the homepage, employees can easily read or search both industry and company-specific news.

As a pharmaceuticals company, ALTANA Pharma's success relies heavily on knowledge sharing. To that end, a document library lets employees easily upload, maintain, share, and retrieve any documents or guidelines.

Behind the scenes, enterprise content management software gives content owners an easy way to contribute and maintain content, and gives content editors an easy way to ensure content quality.

The intranet also offers users several new capabilities. Employees can search the entire site from a single search box available at the top of every intranet page. From the search results page, employees can also click a link to see similar pages. Each content section lets employees limit searches to that section. For all searches, employees can also restrict searches to a specific document type.

Another type of search, *Who's Who*, lets employees search for people by organizational and competence criteria. Results include multiple contact options, such as phone, fax, and email.

ALTANA Pharma AG

Close X

You are here: Home → Configuration & General Information → Who's Who → Search → Results Quick Search Who's Who

RESULTS QUICK SEARCH WHO'S WHO Internal Employees

Quick Search Who's Who Internal Employees:

Müller

→

Name	Department	Location	Telephone	Email
Bodenmüller, Ilona Sachbearbeiter / -in	RR/IA Fax: +49 07531 84-90711	F10/22-04	Tel: +49 07531 84-3711 Tel2:	
Mangge-Müller, Ulrike Sachbearbeiter / -in	OPS/MB Fax: +49 07531 84-90822	W30/3.37	Tel: +49 07531 84-3282 Tel2: 3407	
Müller, Angela Sachbearbeiter / -in	RPD/HB Fax: +49 048 684 22-889	H10/24	Tel: +49 7281 482 Tel2: 040789422-800	
Müller, Bernd, Dr. Abteilungsleiter / -in	RPD/CP Fax: +49 07531 84-91306	W12/318	Tel: +49 07531 84-1308 Tel2: 1320 Fr. Scheller	
Müller, Bernhard Sachbearbeiter / -in	HIS/BA Fax: +49 07531 84-90482	M11/108	Tel: +49 07531 84-3482 Tel2:	
Müller, Bernhard Sachbearbeiter / -in	FAG/CA Fax: +49 07531 84-90266	M16/323	Tel: +49 07531 84-6266 Tel2:	
Müller, Bernhard Sachbearbeiter / -in	OPS/QA Fax: +49 07531 84-90812	W30/4.13	Tel: +49 07531 84-3012 Tel2:	
Müller, Carsten, Dr. Sachbearbeiter / -in	ACB Fax: +49 07531 84-90490	F26/6.30	Tel: +49 07531 84-3498 Tel2:	
Müller, Dietrich, Dr. Group Leader	D2 Fax: +49 07531 84-90710	AD/Essen/Bottrop/Recklinghausen	Tel: +49 0503 3420661 Tel2: 0203420170	
Müller, Gabriele Sachbearbeiter / -in	RCD/DA Fax: +49 07531 84-90822	F23/5.13	Tel: +49 07531 84-3923 Tel2:	

1 | 2 | 3

3 Pages

↑

PRINT

© ALTANA PHARMA 2004

Pictured: Results from a *Who's Who* search include multiple contact options.

On each page, users have access to a variety of useful functions, including *Mail this page* and a list of the most-emailed pages. "Generating a printable version of a page is a very commonly used function," notes Pertek. These features help employees

promote content, and benefit from other employees' view of what's important on the site.



Pictured: *My Workplace* tools let employees easily share, print, or add pages to their lists of favorites.

To further alert users to new, potentially relevant information, the *Latest Intranet Content* page lists the most recent changes by section.

ALTANA
ALTANA Pharma AG

My Favorites... Who's Who: Search:

Home | Deutsch | Contact | Sitemap | Extended Search | Corporate Net

Our Company | Knowledge Center | Services | Teamwork | Be Informed

MYALPHA Welcome to your digital workplace.

alpha flash issue 14/2005

Open House in Constance on September 24th
Click here to read the latest issue of ALTANA Pharma's digital employees' newspaper.

12.10.2005 ALTANA R&D Day 2005 (Press) ... more
05.10.2005 Hausmittelung 25 / 30.09.2005 (HR) ... more
04.10.2005 ALTANA Chemie closed the acquisition of the ECKART group (Press) ... more

All news | All Press Releases

LATEST INTRANET CONTENT

OUR COMPANY	Chemical Production (API Production): Glossary Chemical Production (API Production): Safety at the Chemical Production Our Company: Sites and Facility Management
KNOWLEDGE CENTER	Organizational Rules: Datenschutz RDRIT Service: Firmenpräsentationen RDRIT Service: Frequently Asked Questions
SERVICES	MultiProject Management: Training Sport: Health Coaching Services for Departments: Teamkalender
TEAMWORK	e-Collaboration: Teamkalender myALPHA / Intranet: Project Responsibility and Objectives e-Collaboration: Online Meetings (WebEx)
BE INFORMED	Marktplatz: Sonstiges Marktplatz: Verkäufe Marktplatz: Gesuche

ALPHA CONFUSION?
DO NOT GET LOST IN ALPHA TOPICS:
alpha: the international employees' newspaper, more
alpha - die Broschüre für neue Mitarbeiter, more
alphaflash: the new digital employees' newspaper, more
alphanet: common IT infrastructure, more
myALPHA: the Intranet of APAG, more

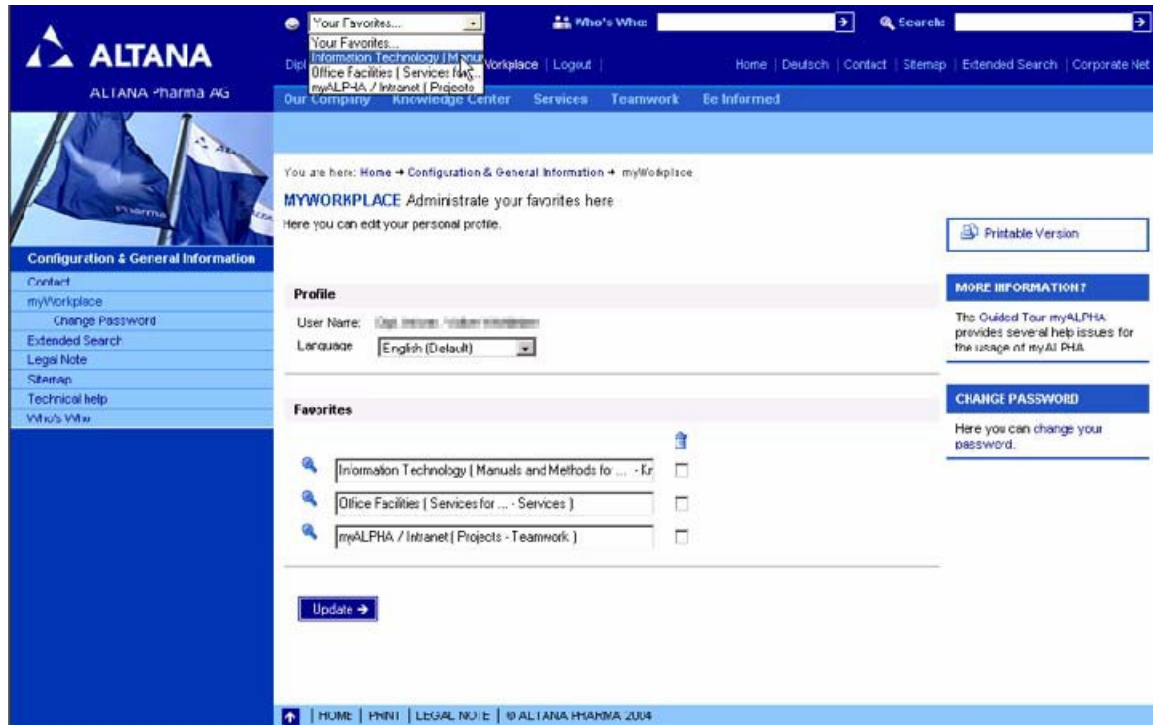
NOW AVAILABLE
delta the living data tool.
PROVIDING
- Sales and Call Data (MSICAM)
- Gastro and Respiratory Markets for LOCs and HQ. more

E-RECRUITMENT
PILOTSTART FÜR DIE NEUE ONLINE BEWERBUNG AUF OFFENE STELLEN
Erfahren Sie mehr im Karriere Bereich

HOME | PRINT | LEGAL NOTE

Pictured: This page gathers the most recent changes to each section, to help users quickly pinpoint new information of potential interest.

Users can customize the intranet via *My Workplace*, which lets them adjust language and “favorites” settings.



Pictured: *My Workplace* allows users to personalize the intranet through such things as adding or removing favorites, defining a preferred language, and changing passwords.

Another important intranet requirement was to promote collaboration through such things as team rooms and project places, which are organized around document libraries and offer employees closed user groups and dedicated document sharing. The process of implementing team-room technology is underway; not all collaboration features are currently available, and more user groups are being created.

Using the library function, however, a user can sort team room and project place contents by date, topic, or category. “From the start, the library functionality was developed to make content—documents and information—accessible by virtue of their individual properties and metadata, instead of by using predefined structures. This approach enables users to have multiple and different ways of accessing documents and information,” says Thomas Link, namics designer and site architect.

ALTANA Pharma AG

Legal | Impressum | Kontakt | Produktinformation | myWorkplace | Logout | Home | Deutsch | Contact | Sitemap | Extended Search | Corporate Net

Our Company | Knowledge Center | Services | Teamwork | Be Informed

Pharmaceutical Industry | Business Areas | Scientific Information | Manuals and Methods for ... | Organizational Rules

You are here: Home → Knowledge Center → Business Areas → Gastroenterology → Market Research → Document Library

DOCUMENT LIBRARY Gastroenterology

Products | Indication | Primary Market Research | Secondary Market Research

- GERD
- NSAIDs + GI
- Hepatitis
- Others
- IBD / IBS

Search in Document Library

Title	Date / Author	Type	Size
GERD Epidemiology 2003 - 2013 (DR8)	05.08.2005 / [Author]	exe	59 KB
ALTANA Pharma Patient Questionnaire Study (Dec. 2004)	13.04.2005 / [Author]	ppt,pot	2 MB
GERD Patients Research (2004)	13.04.2005 / [Author]	ppt,pot	795 KB
Online Study NSAIDs	08.04.2005 / [Author]	ppt,pot	776 KB
PPI and H2 Antagonists i.v. Q4/2004	24.03.2005 / [Author]	xls	165 KB
PPI and H2 Antagonists i.v. Q4/2004	24.03.2005 / [Author]	ppt,pot	1.2 MB
Introduction of generic Fluoxetine	17.03.2005 / [Author]	ppt,pot	453 KB
OTC Market EU5 (1998-2002)	17.03.2005 / [Author]	ppt,pot	197 KB
PPI RX by Diagnoses, 1999-2003	17.03.2005 / [Author]	xls	2 MB
GI-Disorders	03.12.2004 / [Author]	doc,dot	4.4 MB

1 | 2 | 3

CONTACT

For further information please contact [Name]

HOME | PRINT | LEGAL NOTE | © ALTANA PHARMA 2004

Pictured: A document library. Users can sort content by date, topic, or category.

ALTANA Pharma AG

Legal | Impressum | Kontakt | Produktinformation | myWorkplace | Logout | Home | Deutsch | Contact | Sitemap | Extended Search | Corporate Net

Our Company | Knowledge Center | Services | Teamwork | Be Informed

Pharmaceutical Industry | Business Areas | Scientific Information | Manuals and Methods for ... | Organizational Rules

You are here: Home → Knowledge Center → Business Areas → Gastroenterology → Market Research → Document Library

ALTANA PHARMA PATIENT QUESTIONNAIRE STUDY (DEC. 2004)

Created by [Author] 13.04.2005

Evaluation of ALTANA Pharma patient questionnaire which addresses the identification and tracking of gastrointestinal symptoms. In-depths face-to-face interviews with physicians and patients in UK and Canada (Dec. 2004).

ALTANA Pharma Patient Questionnaire Study (Dec. 2004) (ppt,pot, 2 MB)

ZUGEWIESENE KATEGORIEN

Navigation Categories	To the Documents
Products	Pantoprazole oral, Pantoprazole i.v., PPI Market
Indication	GERD
Primary Market Research	Positioning

CONTACT

For further information please contact Market Research

HOME | PRINT | LEGAL NOTE | © ALTANA PHARMA 2004

Pictured: Accessing a document in the document library.

USERS

ALTANA Pharma employs more than 8,200 people and has more than thirty subsidiaries and affiliates in Europe, North and Latin America, South Africa, Australia, and Asia.

USER TASKS

- Find people in the corporation, perhaps by competency
- Access intranet-based tools
- Read research information and product documentation
- Use project websites
- Read about company events, access corporate press releases, and read internal news
- Locate and use internal services such as travel management, reordering supplies, planning meetings, ordering catering, and accessing scientific information
- For new employees: learn to use the intranet
- Read industry news

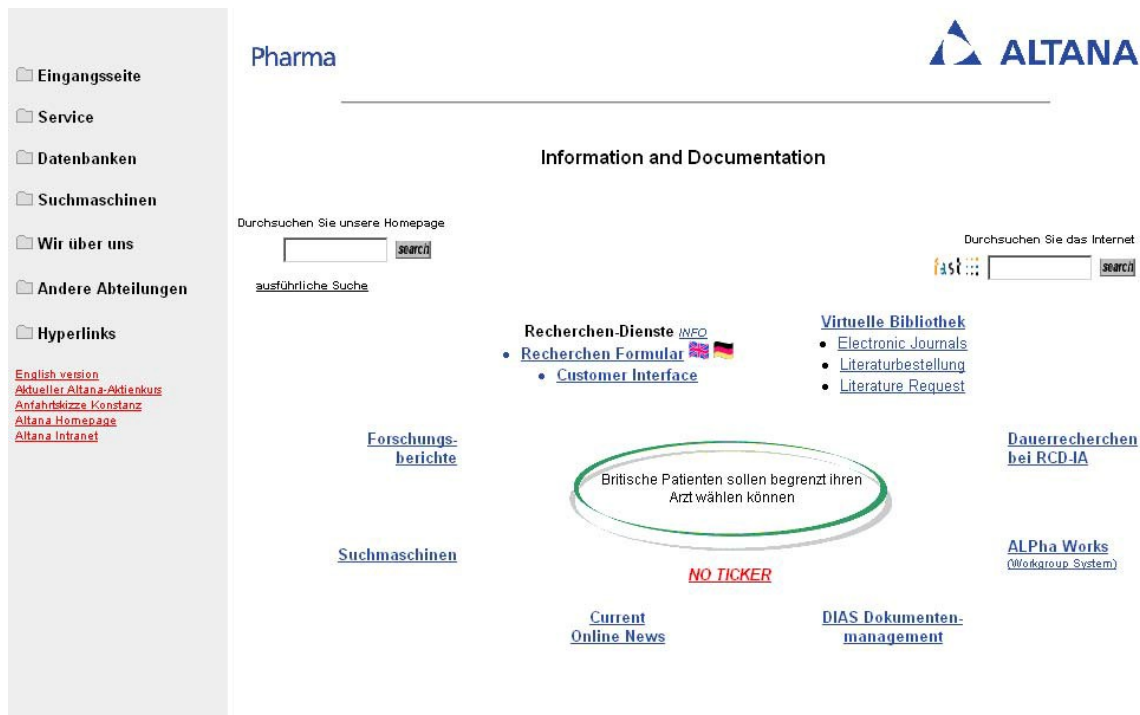
BACKGROUND

During the 1990s, multiple standalone intranets—built out of static HTML or located in Lotus Notes—began appearing around ALTANA Pharma, especially in the research departments. Soon, many different departments created their own intranets, focused on department-level document sharing.

Eventually, ALTANA had about fifteen different intranets and numerous different Lotus Notes environments. Nonetheless, much of the company's valuable information—documents, services, or scientific information—was largely inaccessible because it was hidden in multiple databases and on multiple departments' unconnected intranet pages. "Imagine a corporation that is based on science, that does not have the ability to search for knowledge," says Schopp. That was ALTANA Pharma's problem.

Each department's intranet also varied—sometimes radically—in its design, information architecture, and technology. Furthermore, no search tools bridged the different departmental intranets, and no processes were in place for information sharing. Thus, content and intranet applications on one department's intranet were created and maintained solely for that department. In short, the lack of a centralized approach to maintaining content and applications made for a lot of duplicated effort.

Eventually, a design team was formed to remedy the problem. "The intranet project was started because interviews with users and a content analysis of existing intranets revealed that finding any information in each of the isolated intranets was almost impossible," notes Schopp. "This is mainly because the information architecture was based on the organizational structure, and not on users' tasks and users' needs."



Pictured: The former intranet homepage for ALTANA Pharma's Corporate Libraries Services. Previously, each department maintained its own intranet, resulting in about fifteen different intranets and numerous Lotus Notes environments. Their design, information architecture, underlying technology, and content often differed dramatically.

DESIGN PROCESS AND USABILITY ACTIVITIES

For the new intranet, corporate communications led the charge. The corporate IT department also assisted, especially with content-related issues and technological enhancements.

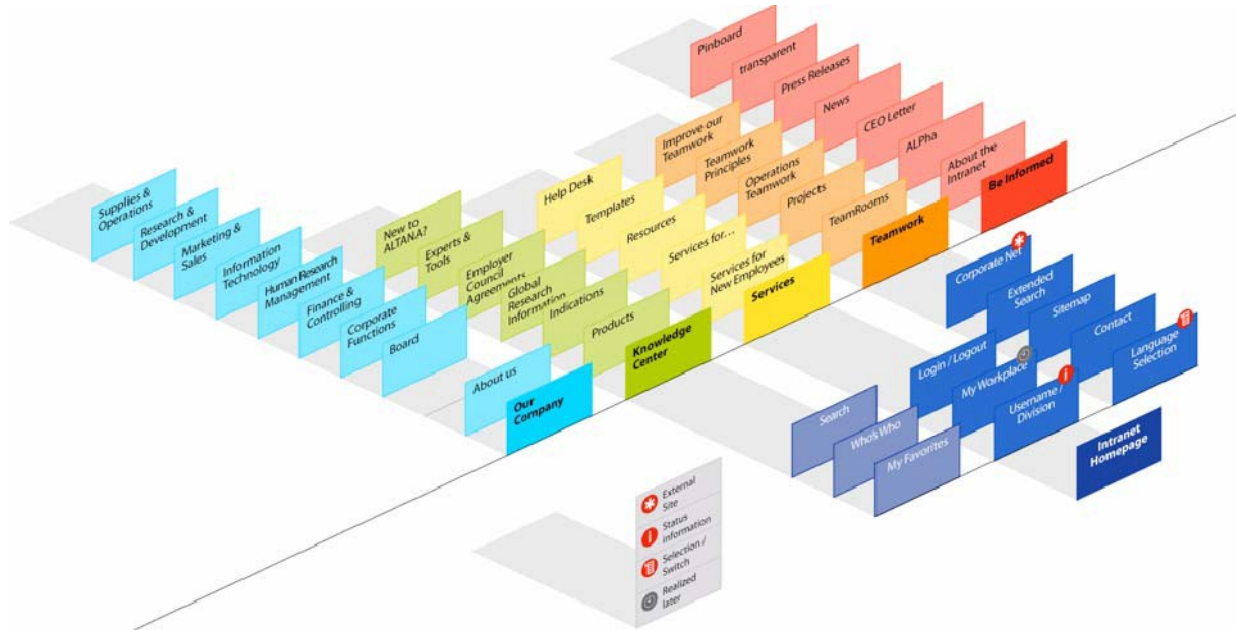
The main goals of the new intranet—which was technically not a redesign, since there was no existing, centralized intranet—were to consolidate the many existing, unstructured, and evolving ALTANA intranets based on Lotus Notes. “The main goal was to establish a homogenous corporate design, a single content management system, plus content templates, as well as a consistent information architecture and centralized search capabilities,” says Schopp.

A design team was assembled with roughly equal numbers of namics and ALTANA employees, and included not only interface experts, but also people proficient in other disciplines, including usability.

Ultimately, the design team opted to migrate the most important Lotus Notes environments and the most important intranets. For the pilot stage, it aimed to bring at least 50% of the relevant and most-used content into the new intranet.

To help guide the design, the development team first conducted interviews with ALTANA employees. “With the interviews, we analyzed the user tasks, asking people about their daily business tasks and usage of one of the various intranets,” says Link. “The interviews were held at the desk of each user, to investigate the actual behavior of people in their offices.”

These interviews gave designers multiple ideas for creating an information architecture, which they honed in subsequent workshops with employees by using “a very basic type of open-group card sorting,” says Link. “The goal of these card sorts was the definition and naming of the top-level information architecture, based on the mental models of users. It was an intense but essential phase to construct a usable information architecture.”



Pictured: The initial version of the new ALTANA information architecture, subsequently honed by conducting numerous card-sorting workshops with users.

These interviews took the place of surveys. “Instead of surveys, we found the initial interviews—one-on-one—much more efficient to find out about users’ thoughts, goals, and ways to accomplish tasks,” says Link.

Knowing which variables to include in the information architecture was largely the result of a substantial content inventory. “Several days were spent auditing the existing content,” says Link, though first “redundant and outdated information had to be eliminated.” The namics team then created a classification of content types.

While building the information architecture, namics identified the new intranet’s five main goals, which it then used to develop the site’s main sections:

TRANSLATING GOALS TO INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE	
INTRANET GOAL	RESULTING SECTION
Present users with a transparent overview of the fast-growing organization’s structure	<i>Our Company</i>
Provide access to the corporate knowledge base through a generic information architecture	<i>Knowledge Center</i>
Indicate relevant, location-specific internal services	<i>Services</i>
Support teamwork with collaboration technology	<i>Teamwork</i>
Communicate corporate values, plus current internal and external news	<i>Be Informed</i>

With the information architecture in hand, the design team began creating wireframes of pages and immediately “started to carry out expert reviews to refine and improve the interface,” says Link.

Personas

As a result of interviews with ALTANA employees, namics opted to create personas to help the whole intranet design team have “an idea of the people in front of the screen,” says Link.



Ursula Knödler

Alter	Breites Spektrum > 30
Geschlecht	Überwiegend weiblich
Herkunft	Nicht akademisch, ggf. höherer Ausländeranteil
Arbeitsumfeld	Keinen eigenen Computer, sondern zentrale Workstations, PC kein tägliches Arbeitsmittel
Sonstiges	Internet- und Sprach-Kenntnisse begrenzt
Informationsbedürfnis	Informationen aus dem Betriebsrat, Gehalt & Soziales, Mitarbeiter-Vorteile, Freizeitangebote



Dr. Wolfgang Klee

Alter	40
Geschlecht	Männlich, zunehmend auch Frauen
Herkunft	Universität, Promotion
Arbeitsumfeld	80% am PC, Anwendung spezieller Software
Sonstiges	Englisch-Kenntnisse immer vorhanden
Informationsbedürfnis	Informationen zu Produkten und Projekten, Datenbankanbindungen über den Infopoint von RDR/IT

ALTANA Pharma Intranet

Anwenderprofil Verwaltungsmitarbeiterin



Petra Kraus

Alter	33-38
Geschlecht	Weiblich/Männlich
Herkunft	Deutschland, akademischer Grad hoch - sehr hoch
Arbeitsumfeld	Intensive, tägliche Nutzung des PC, Querschnittsfunktion
Sonstiges	Sprachbegabt
Informationsbedürfnis	Tiefe Info aus Projektgruppen, Breiter Überblick über alle Inhalte, Das Intranet ist Arbeitsmittel

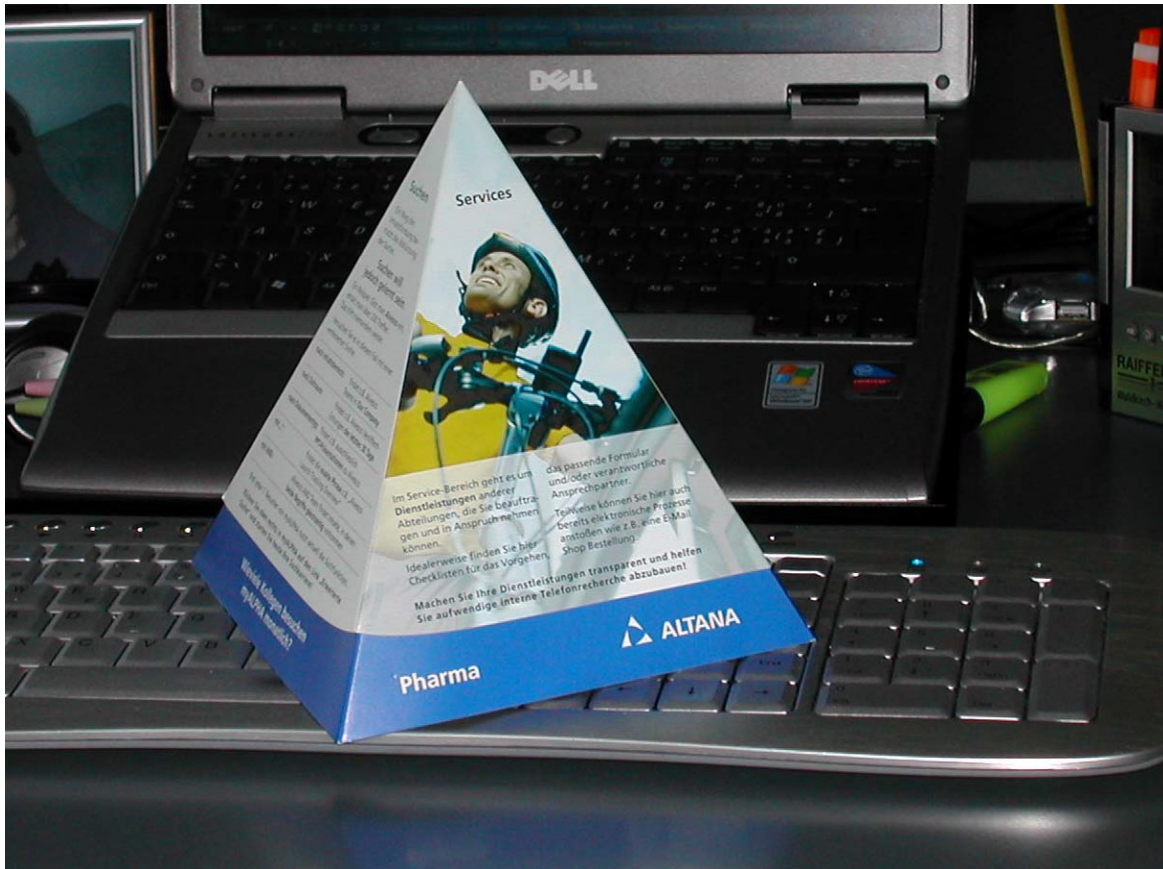
Pictured: The namics team created personas to help guide intranet designers.

When crafting personas, the design team was surprised to learn that not every employee has their own computer. “We found that a large number of employees share—or even have no access to—a computer,” notes Link. One eventual result of this finding: ALTANA Pharma began using existing intranet-connected kiosks in many locations.

As designers completed new sections, they began unveiling them, but in stages. “The intranet was launched with a pilot range of content focused on human resources and facilities management,” says Link. “Step by step, other content sections were added and new departments were required to use the intranet infrastructure.”

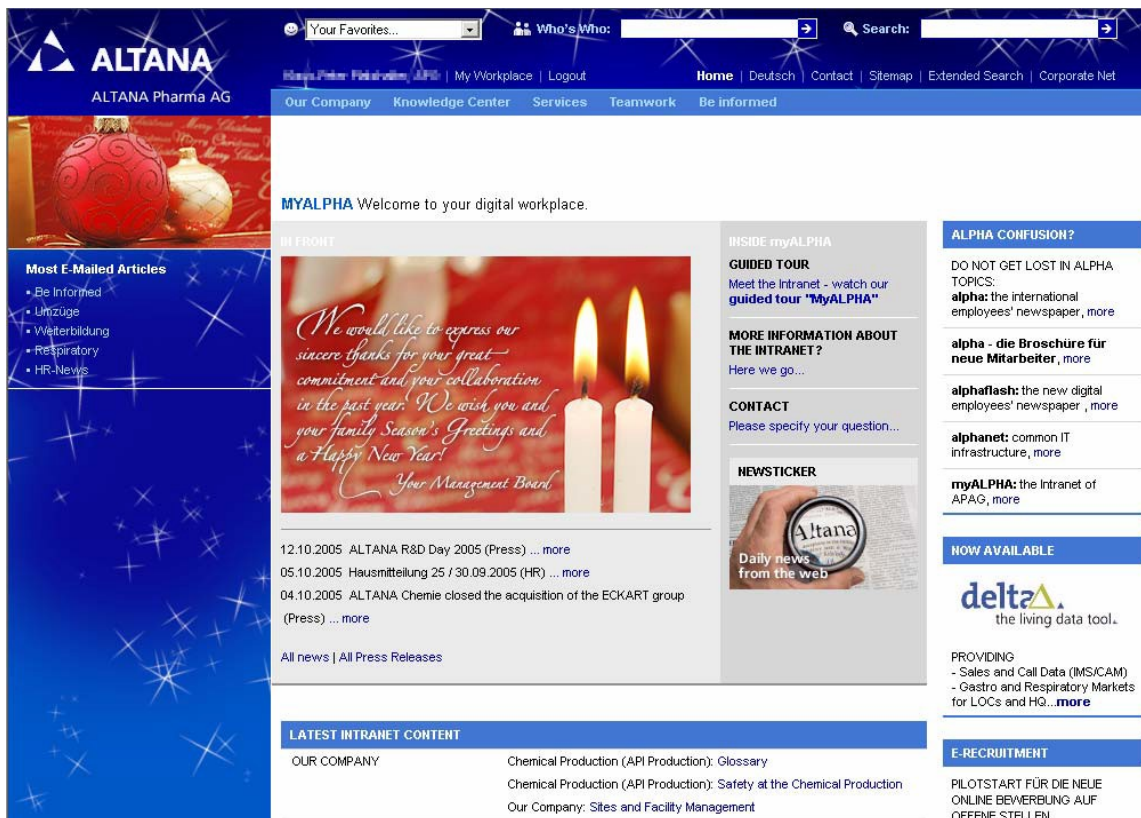
To promote intranet uptake, the corporate communication department launched a variety of related promotions, including internal advertisements, intranet games and quizzes, and hosted, informational events.

To promote the intranet’s content areas and new search functionality, the ALTANA Pharma project team worked with the namics team to create a fold-up pyramid to replace the existing intranet informational flyer. Simply put, the pyramid is something users can keep around that reminds them to use the intranet. All four sides of the pyramid explain the intranet’s main content areas, including pointers on intranet searching.

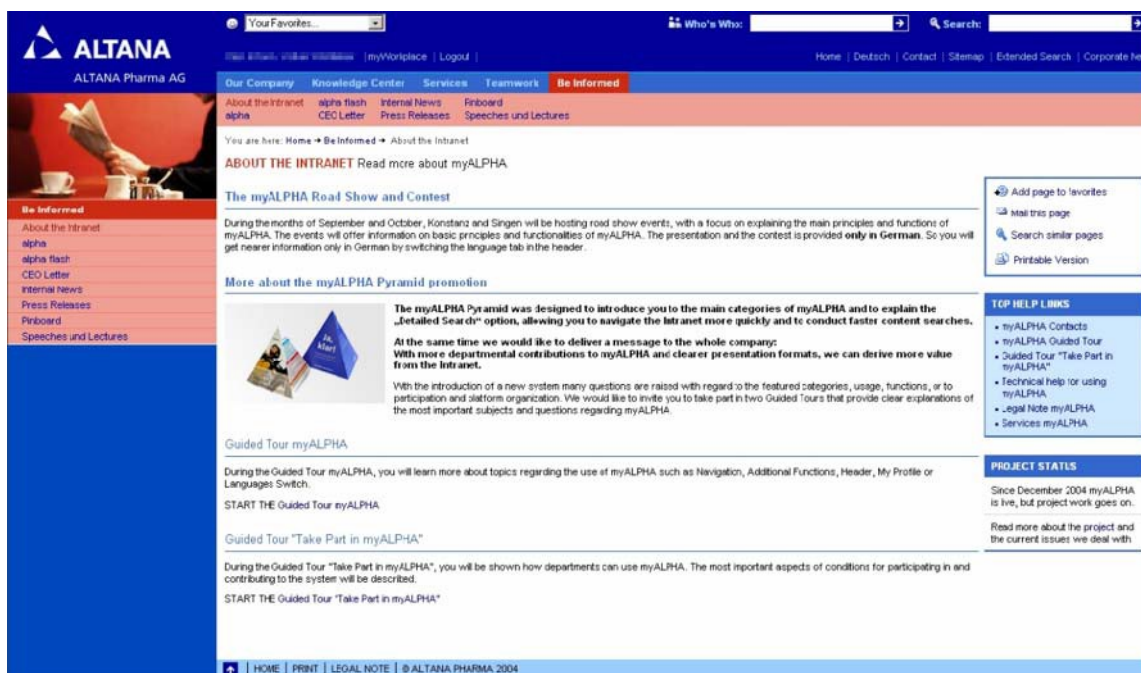


Pictured: To help promote the intranet and direct users to its main content areas and search capabilities, ALTANA gives users this informational pyramid.

Beyond releasing the pyramid, ALTANA Pharma also organized informational events with question and answer sessions at several company branches. All intranet users were invited to pose specific questions or relay intranet difficulties to ALTANA Pharma's intranet project leader, Nicola Winterstein, as well as to Bernd Schopp of namics.



Pictured: A seasonal intranet design.



Pictured: ALTANA launched and continues to run internal marketing campaigns to promote the intranet.

Thanks to the radical new design, however, user acceptance took longer than expected. Employees with more tenure had particular difficulty, while, interestingly, “new employees seem to have fewer difficulties getting familiar with the new intranet,” says Schopp.

TIMELINE


- 1990s: Multiple single-system intranets established, largely based on Lotus Notes or built out of static HTML. Most intranets were department-based; there were numerous Lotus Notes environments and approximately fifteen standalone intranets.
- March 2003: Efforts began to create a single corporate intranet, including plans to migrate content to the new intranet from the most important intranets and Lotus Notes environments.
- March–July 2003: Conducted initial user interviews and evaluated content.
- September–October 2003: Evaluated intranet technology.
- September–December 2003: Designed intranet and created a design style guide for content contributors.
- February–October 2004: Implemented intranet.
- August–December 2004: Launched pilot content project.
- December 2004: Launched intranet.

RESULTS

From start to finish, the intranet design took about a year and a half. Today, ALTANA Pharma employees have a consistently designed, centralized intranet that gives them needed access to a wide variety of tools, plus a single location for accessing important corporate and HR information, ordering supplies, and more.

“Lots of information is now available for every user,” says Pertek, “Whereas in the former system, much of the information had been available for only those who knew exactly where to look for it.”

One example of this is the *Be Informed* section, which delivers corporate, external, internal, and other types of news to users in one location. Here, “different departments are able to publish their news, or general media or press information. The archive of these articles can be accessed by category or in chronicle order—sorted monthly,” added Schopp.


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PRESS RELEASES

Date	Title	Author
12.10.2005	ALTANA R&D Day 2005 London/Bad Homburg, October 12, 2005 – At today's R&D Day in London, ALTANA AG (NYSE: AAA; FVB: ALT), gave an overview on the most important projects in research and clinical development of the pharmaceutical division ALTANA Pharma AG. The emphasis was on respiratory, in particular Daxas® (roflumilast) and Alvesco® (ciclesonide). In addition, R&D projects in gastroenterology (gastrointestinal tract) and oncology (cancer) were presented.	Pinboard
04.10.2005	ALTANA Chemie closed the acquisition of the ECKART group Bad Homburg, October 4, 2005	Pinboard
30.09.2005	ALTANA Chemie acquires Kelstar International Strategic Expansion of ALTANA Coatings & Sealants in the Area of Packaging Coatings in the U.S.	Pinboard
16.09.2005	Ministerpräsident Günther H. Oettinger zu Besuch bei ALTANA Pharma Konstanz, 16. September 2005 Ministerpräsident Günther H. Oettinger hat im Rahmen seines Aufenthaltes in Konstanz auch ALTANA Pharma besucht und mit dem Vorstand des Unternehmens Fragen zur Region und zum Standort Konstanz / Singen besprochen.	Pinboard
12.09.2005	ALTANA Pharma unterstützt die Internationale Schule mit insgesamt 250.000 € Konstanz, 12. September 2005 – ALTANA Pharma spendet der Internationalen Schule Kreuzlin-gen Konstanz dieses Jahr 150.000 € für den weiteren Betrieb dieser wichtigen Bildungseinrichtung in der Region Bodensee.	Pinboard
07.09.2005	Alvesco® von Pneumologen zum innovativsten Produkt gewählt Konstanz, 7. September 2005 – ALTANA Pharma konnte am 6. September den Preis für das neue Asthmapräparat Alvesco® entgegen nehmen.	Pinboard
03.08.2005	Fourth business unit for ALTANA Chemie - Acquisition of the ECKART group - New strategic course for ALTANA AG announced	Pinboard
03.08.2005	ALTANA continues growth course over the first half-year of 2005 Sales growth +5%, Earnings (EBT) +12% Earnings forecast for 2005 increased	Pinboard
01.07.2005	Top line results of first one-year COPD study with Daxas Bad Homburg, July 1, 2005 – Following the announcement of the termination of the Daxas® (roflumilast) collaboration with Pfizer, ALTANA (NYSE: AAA, FSE: ALT) discloses today the top line results of the first one-year COPD study of Daxas®.	Pinboard
01.07.2005	ALTANA and Pfizer are terminating Daxas collaboration Bad Homburg, July 1, 2005 – ALTANA (NYSE: AAA; FSE: ALT) and Pfizer have mutually agreed last night to terminate the Daxas® (roflumilast) collaboration as of June 30, 2005. Under the terms of their agreement, Pfizer will be returning all its rights in Daxas® to ALTANA.	Pinboard

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Pictured: From the *Be Informed* section, employees can easily access this ALTANA press release page.


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OPENING ARI

Created by [H. Pöhlmann](#) 13.06.2003

ALTANA opens ALTANA Research Institute in the U.S.

- ALTANA Pharma AG, Constance, the pharmaceutical division of ALTANA AG, Bad Homburg, today officially opened the ALTANA Research Institute (ARI) in Waltham, Boston (USA).

Having spent several months building up a research organization and reconstructing the facility, the research center is now ready to carry out its functions within the R&D organization of ALTANA Pharma. ARI operations will focus on genomics and proteomics, but will also include an IT/bioinformatics component. The ARI was set up and will be operated in collaboration with strategic partner GPC Biotech AG of Munich.

Please find more information in the press release attached.

Additional Info

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Pictured: A specific ALTANA press release.


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Month	Title	Date / Author
▶ December		
▶ November		
▶ October		
▶ September		
▶ August		
▶ July		
▼ June	Sale of Chromagen and StrongStart product lines The sale of ALTANA Pharma's Chromagen and StrongStart product lines to KV Pharmaceutical Company of St. Louis has now been completed.	16.06.2003 / Martina Hara
	Werkhallentalk Oranienburg Werkhallen-Talk der EU-Kommission bei ALTANA Pharma in Oranienburg	16.06.2003 / Martina Hara
	Opening ARI ALTANA opens ALTANA Research Institute in the U.S.	13.06.2003 / Martina Hara
	Graduiertenkolleg Gießen ALTANA Pharma AG fördert Lungenforschung am Universitätsklinikum Giessen – Gründung eines Graduiertenkollegs	05.06.2003 / Martina Hara
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OPENING CEREMONY IN ORANIENBURG 7th issue 2005



Opening Ceremony for the new ALTANA Pharma production facility in Oranienburg

„Creating Values By Innovation“

On June, 20th 2005, the opening ceremony for the new ALTANA Pharma production facility in Oranienburg was held under the motto "creating values with innovation."

Our guests of honor, Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and Brandenburg's Premier [Friedrich Platow](#), gave notice of their attendance and were received at 2:00 pm by Dr. [Johannes](#) and Dr. [Lohmann](#), who escorted them into the ballroom.

In his welcoming speech, Dr. [Johannes](#) thanked the Chancellor for his visit despite his tight schedule. He also extended a warm welcome to Brandenburg's Premier [Friedrich Platow](#) and to his delegation as well as to colleagues, employees, guests and media representatives. In his speech he emphasized that ALTANA AG, starting from its domestic market in Germany, is committed to innovation and internationalization.

"As a research-based company that does not market copies and generics, but rather regularly invests 20% of its revenue into researching and developing new pharmaceuticals, we are creating values, as you are witnessing here today. These values are much more than just machinery and buildings, these values constitute the expertise, creativity and innovative force instilled in our employees and researchers worldwide."



Chancellor Schröder reinforced this statement by emphasizing that internationalization is the prerequisite for success in every business on a national basis. By committing clearly to Germany as its location, ALTANA has shown that nationality and internationality do not have to contradict one another. ALTANA is setting an example for other German companies by investing one fifth of its annual revenue into research and development. Chancellor Schröder committed himself to supporting research-based pharmaceutical companies in Germany, but also to keeping the health system within reasonable bounds. Finally, he praised ALTANA's company philosophy, characterized by "social and corporate responsibility," and wished the company all the best and a lot of success for the future.

During his speech, Dr. [Lohmann](#) emphasized that the company's operating figures and structure have changed due to its growth. "We have created more than 1,700 new jobs worldwide in the past five years, of which over 900 are based in Germany. This alone shows that our German sites have everything to gain by our policy of internationalization," said [Lohmann](#). He also addressed the Chancellor and the political delegates with a plea for "reliable and calculable political conditions" as well as for the "reorientation of our health system towards competition and the market economy."

Brandenburg's Premier [Friedrich Platow](#) promised Dr. [Koski](#), the General Manager of ALTANA Pharma Oranienburg, that he would fight for favorable political conditions in order to support the production site in Oranienburg.

After the ceremonial opening and the cutting of the blue ribbon by Chancellor Schröder, Premier [Friedrich Platow](#), Dr. [Johannes](#), Dr. [Lohmann](#) and Dr. [Koski](#), the visitors had an opportunity to tour the new facility and to refresh themselves at the buffet.

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Pictured: News about an opening ceremony for a new ALTANA Pharma production plant. A variety of ALTANA Pharma departments use *Be Informed* to share information about their own efforts.


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HR-NEWS Alle HR-News auf einen Blick

Date	Title	Author
05.10.2005	Hausmitteilung 25 / 30.09.2005 Personelle Veränderungen Vorstandsbereich Research and Development	Herrmann, Gernot
30.09.2005	Umbenennung des Instituts in Hamburg im Zusammenhang mit dem Umzug des Instituts für Pathologie und Toxikologie...	Götz, Christian
28.09.2005	Aushang Regelung der Betriebsruhetage im Jahr 2006 gemäß Abschnitt 4 der Betriebsvereinbarung vom 24.08.1999. (Abteilung Chemical Production (OPS/CP))	Herrmann, Gernot
28.09.2005	Aushang Regelung der Betriebsruhetage im Jahr 2006 gemäß Abschnitt 4 der Betriebsvereinbarung vom 24.08.1999	Herrmann, Gernot
28.09.2005	Aushang Urlaub, Gleitzeit, Mehrarbeitsausgleich zwischen den Jahren Resturlaub aus dem Jahr 2005	Herrmann, Gernot
20.09.2005	AUSHANG: Betriebsfest 2005 - Details Lesen Sie hier weitere Infos zum Betriebsfest.	Herrmann, Gernot
19.09.2005	Information zum Tag der offenen Tür Information zum Tag der offenen Tür 24.09.2005, 10 – 16 Uhr	Götz, Christian
19.09.2005	HAUSMITTEILUNG 22 / 16.09.2005 Personelle Veränderungen im Vorstandsbereich Research and Development	Herrmann, Gernot
09.09.2005	AUSHANG An alle tariflichen Mitarbeiterinnen und Mitarbeiter der ALTANA Pharma AG	Herrmann, Gernot

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HAUSMITTEILUNGEN**
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 Gernot Herrmann, HRA
 Gaby Tappert, HI

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Pictured: *Be Informed* also gives users access to the HR news library.

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Month	Title	Date / Author
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November		
October	http://myalpha.ap.altana/home/be_informed/bi_news/bi_nw_hrnews.htm?docId=2708&archiv=2003&month=10 Lesen Sie mehr zu aktuellen Themen aus dem HR Bereich	20.10.2003 / J. Lippert
	HAUSMITTEILUNG Nr. 24 / 17.10.2003 Personelle Veränderungen im Vorstand der ALTANA Pharma AG	16.10.2003 / Christel Kuster
	HAUSMITTEILUNG 23 / 06.10.2003 Personelles aus dem Bereich MCM	16.10.2003 / Christel Kuster
	http://myalpha.ap.altana/home/be_informed/bi_news/bi_nw_hrnews.htm?docId=2688&archiv=2003&month=10 Lesen Sie mehr zu aktuellen Themen aus dem HR Bereich	06.10.2003 / Verena Lippert
September		
August		
July		
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May		
April		
March		
February		
January		

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Verena Lippert, HRA
Christel Kuster, HI

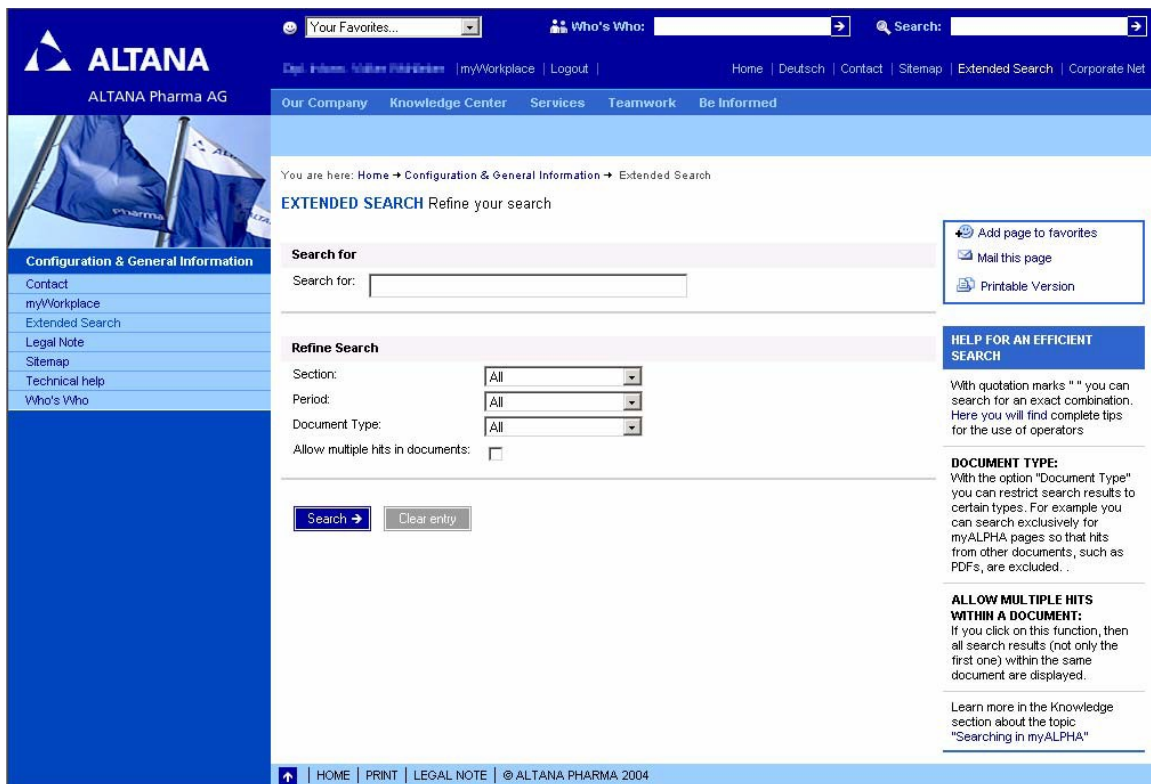
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Pictured: Users can browse the HR news library archive by month.

On the new site, search capabilities have markedly improved, thanks to brand new search technology and content-writing guidelines that include tips for creating search-engine-friendly text. At the same time, ALTANA Pharma is trying to encourage content authors to think of content not just from an author's perspective, but also from an employee's viewpoint, and how an employee might search for that content.



Pictured: The extended search tool. The new intranet provides employees with a single search tool able to return site-wide results.

ALTANA
ALTANA Pharma AG

Your Favorites...
Who's Who:
Search:

[Dep. Inform.](#)
[Nahrungsmittel](#)
[myWorkplace](#)
[Logout](#)
[Home](#)
[Deutsch](#)
[Contact](#)
[Sitemap](#)
[Extended Search](#)
[Corporate Net](#)

[Our Company](#)
[Knowledge Center](#)
[Services](#)
[Teamwork](#)
[Be Informed](#)

You are here: [Home](#) → [Configuration & General Information](#) → [Extended Search Results](#)

EXTENDED SEARCH RESULTS Results of your inquiry

Search for: **acc** [refine search](#)

Searchresults: 154 hits for **acc**
Searchcriteria: Section: All / Period: All / Document Type: All / Allow multiple hits in documents: yes

[Add page to favorites](#)
[Mail this page](#)
[Printable Version](#)

HELP FOR AN EFFICIENT SEARCH

With quotation marks " " you can search for an exact combination. Here you will find complete tips for the use of operators

DOCUMENT TYPE:

With the option "Document Type" you can restrict search results to certain types. For example you can search exclusively for myALPHA pages so that hits from other documents, such as PDFs, are excluded. .

ALLOW MULTIPLE HITS WITHIN A DOCUMENT:

If you click on this function, then all search results (not only the first one) within the same document are displayed.

Learn more in the Knowledge section about the topic "Searching in myALPHA"

Brochures - Brochures ACC provides the brochures to anybody who is interested (General Contact Please contact ACC , write an email to mailto:acc@altana-pharma.de) Location: Services → Services for Departments → Partner Relations → Brochures	83% 15.09.2005
Calendar - Lake Constance Calendar Please contact Birgit Schuster of ACC Kontakt Birgit Schuster Abteilung ACC Tel.: 4026 Location: Services → Services for Departments → Partner Relations → Calendar	84% 15.09.2005
Company publications / Downloads - Please downloads company publications here Company publications / Downloads - Please downloads company publications here . Company publications / Downloads Overview of Downloads Company Profile ALTANA Pharma AG Company Presentation ALTANA Pharma AG Annual Report ALTANA Pharma AG Quarterly Location: Our Company → About Us → Company publications / Downloads	84% 15.09.2005
Christmas Cards - Christmas Cards Please contact Birgit Schuster of ACC Electronic Greetings Send your Christmas Cards online Location: Services → Services for Departments → Partner Relations → Christmas Cards	83% 15.09.2005
Give Aways - Give Aways Give Aways - Give Aways . Give Aways There need not always be a reason for little tokens to be given to express thanks for good cooperation. Here, you can order different kinds of Give Aways to be handed to your business partners. Person in Charge Location: Services → Services for Departments → Partner Relations → Give Aways	83% 15.09.2005
alpha flash - alpha flash alpha flash The new digital employees' newspaper " alpha flash" from Corporate Communications (ACC) will bring the most current information from ALTANA Pharma directly to your computer screen. Please find below the latest issue alpha flash : Open House in Constance on September 24th Search similar pages Printable Version Alvesco® 2005 @ alpha flash Alvesco® - The new product of ALTANA Pharma Alvesco® - First launches in UK and Germany World Asthma Day and ALTANA Pharma's Partnership Alvesco® Update: Where We Are, Where We're Going Alvesco® - Most innovative product 2005 in Germa... Location: Be Informed → alpha flash	80% 04.10.2005
Project Responsibility and Objectives Project Responsibility and Objectives . Project Responsibility and Objectives Central Goals To create a platform that improves the daily work of employees in the domains of information searches, process optimization, and cooperation. Centralized Location: Teamwork → Projects → myALPHA / Intranet → Project Responsibility and Objectives	80% 15.09.2005
Partner Relations - Partner Relations Therefor, ACC provides you with a Calendar of Lake Constance and selected Christmas Cards to give to your external partners. - more Give Aways There need not always be a reason for little tokens to be given to express thanks for good cooperation. Here, you can order different kinds of give aways to be handed to your business partners. - more Search similar pages Printable Version Alvesco® 2005 @ alpha flash Alvesco® - The new product of ALTANA Pharma Alvesco® - First launches in UK and Germany World Asthma Day and ALTANA Pharma's Partnership Alvesco® Update: Where We Are, Where We're Going Alvesco® - Most innovative product 2005 in... Location: Services → Services for Departments → Partner Relations	80% 15.09.2005
Career Portal - Bietet offene Stellen und interne Bewerbungsmöglichkeit Zu den Plotbereichen gehören: AP ACC BUSCO FO RCD/BC RRI alle Abteilungen der IT In Career Center finden Sie alle aktuell bei ALTANA Pharma AG ausgeschriebenen Stellen. Location: Services → Employee Services → Career Portal	80% 15.09.2005
Von Mitarbeiterzeitung bis myALPHA Kontakt: Redaktion: ACC , Hr Dr. ACC , ACC und ACC , Fr. ACC , ACC myALPHA myALPHA ist das neue Intranet der ALTANA Pharma AG, das Ende 2004 live gegangen ist. Location: Services → Get Into → ALPHA - brochure for new employees → ALPHA-brochure → Von Mitarbeiterzeitung bis myALPHA	80% 15.09.2005

1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10

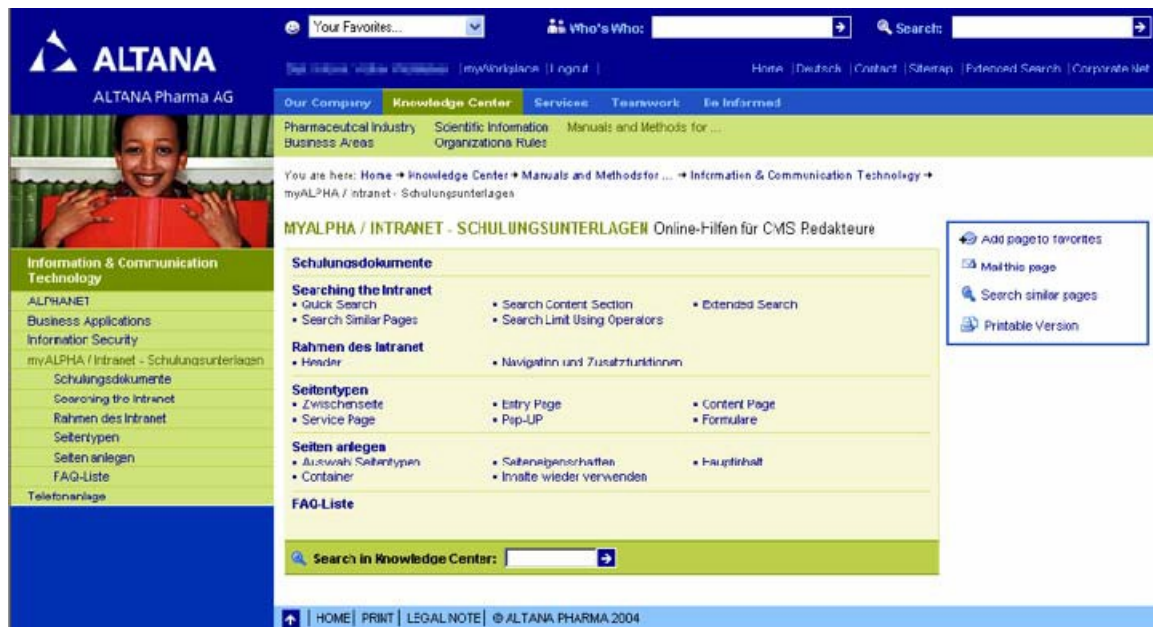
[HOME](#) | [PRINT](#) | [LEGAL NOTE](#) | © ALTANA PHARMA 2004

Pictured: Results from an extended search.

The new, task-focused information architecture makes it easy for employees to find what they're looking for, and is reinforced by color schemes for different sections and

different types of navigation. “Since the intranet was filled with a tremendous amount of unstructured content, the navigation design needs to provide different navigation methods,” notes Schopp. For example, horizontal navigation (top of page) provides the first two entry-level points into the site. Vertical navigation (left side of page) shows the current page, plus the parent and all child pages. For easy skipping, the in-page navigation displays the subsequent two page levels. Finally, a breadcrumb path shows the entire path—all clickable—down to the current page.

To help employees acclimate to the new intranet, the design team created a CMS instruction manual.

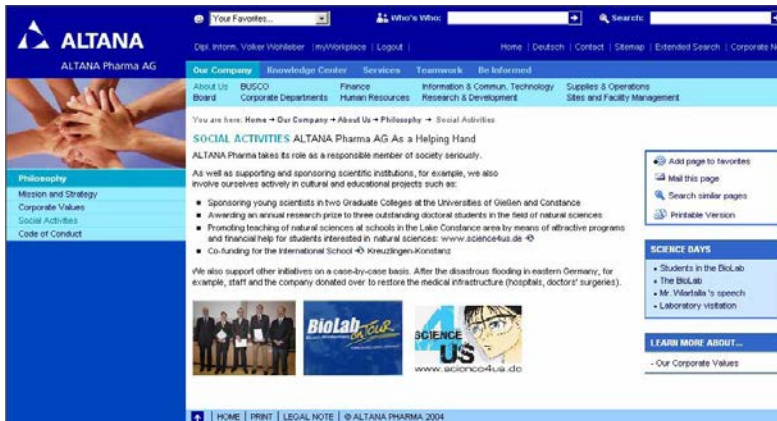


Pictured: Employees have easy access to information about how to use the CMS.

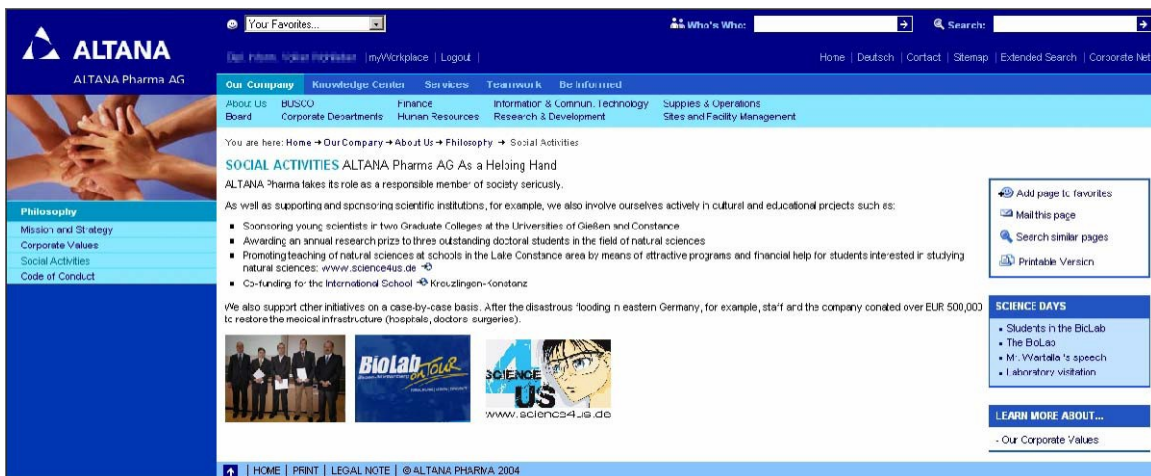
One especially interesting new feature of the intranet is the “liquid layout,” which lets users resize any intranet screen to their liking. “The fluid content area enables the clean display of tables and lists, and—on reasonable screen sizes—there will never be annoying horizontal scrolling,” says Link. “Users can also adjust their preferred font size without hassle, and use multiple windows.”

To create the liquid layout feature, the designers used Cascading Style Sheets.

While users can choose any page size they like, there are some real-world limits. For example, if users size pages too small, “the readability of some pages is far from being optimal,” he says. Optimally resized pages would have about 60 characters per line.



Pictured: The “liquid layout” feature of the ALTANA intranet, which lets users resize pages to any size they want, without displaying a horizontal scroll bar. This shows the page set to a width of 1024 pixels.



Pictured: The “liquid layout” of a page set at a width of 1280 pixels.

With the new intranet now live, a team of four ALTANA Pharma employees maintains it, assisted by more than 100 trained content editors. For the future, ALTANA

Pharma plans to continue to move applications onto the intranet, add new department content, and implement single sign-on.

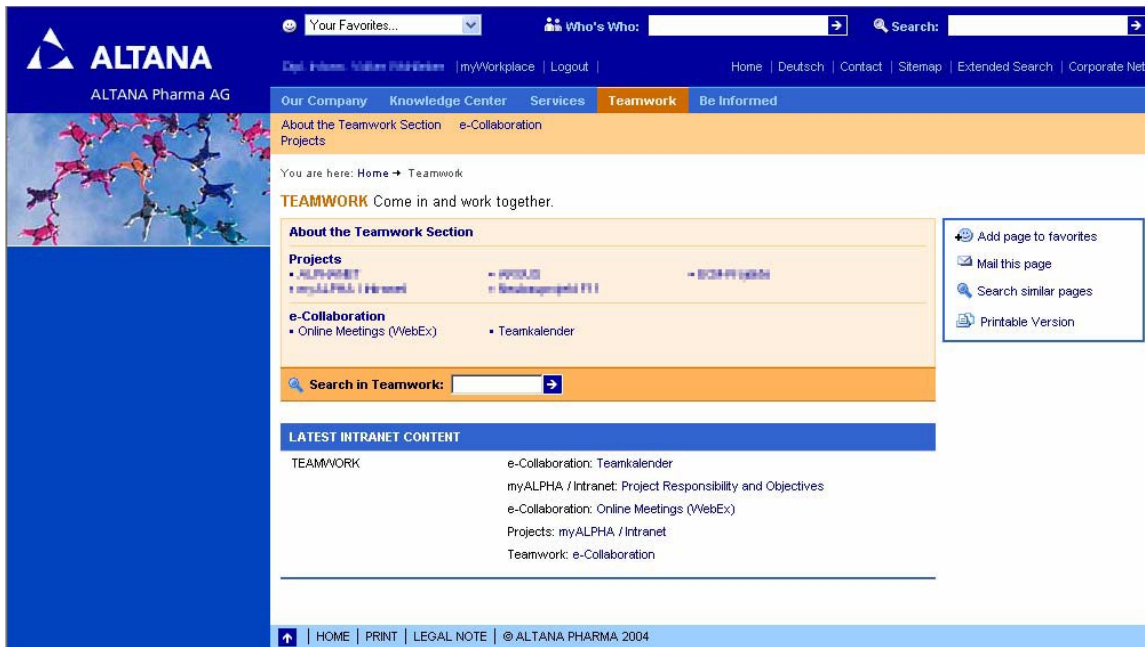
For applications that don't yet reside completely on the intranet, the design team manages to maintain a relatively consistent user experience. For example, take the corporate-wide, intranet-based e-catalog and e-shopping cart employees use to order supplies. While the start of the shopping experience resides in the CMS and is thus part of the intranet, a link from the page leads to the actual shopping cart, which is an external application. Even so, keeping the catalog's start page—which describes what the shopping cart does and where a relevant link leads—on the intranet means that the search engine indexes the content, making it easier for employees to find the shopping engine.

The intranet team uses the same strategy—creating a start page with a rich text description of the application the page links to—whenever an intranet page will pass users to non-intranet applications.

The screenshot shows the ALTANA Pharma AG intranet. The header includes the company logo, navigation links like 'myWorkplace', 'Logout', and 'Search'. The main navigation bar has tabs for 'Our Company', 'Knowledge Center', 'Services', 'Teamwork', and 'Be Informed'. The 'Services' tab is active, leading to the 'E-MAIL SHOP'. The page content includes a sidebar with links to 'Technischer Einkauf', 'Organisation', 'E-Mail Shop', and 'Bestellanforderung'. The main area provides instructions for using the Lotus Notes application, a list of available suppliers, and ordering guidelines. A right sidebar contains links for 'Add page to favorites', 'Mail this page', 'Search similar pages', 'Printable Version', 'RICHTLINIEN & ANWEISUNGEN', and 'KONTAKT'.

Pictured: Using the *E-Mail Shop*, employees can order needed office supplies. This page resides in the CMS, though the link leads to an external application. Keeping the start page on the intranet means the search engine will index the content, making it easier for employees to find it.

The design team is also continuing to implement teamwork functionality. Eventually, "people will be able to organize themselves and work together in virtual team rooms," says Schopp. So far, the intranet doesn't restrict access to team areas, though that is a future goal.



Pictured: A teamwork section at ALTANA Pharma. Future versions will allow users to create their own team areas, restricted to a designated set of users.

LESSONS LEARNED

Insights from Michael Pertek and Bernd Schopp:

Don't wait to implement single sign-on: "Single sign-on must be implemented when the first users start using the intranet. All special or sensitive features will need to be tied to log-in credentials, and it would be extremely difficult to implement a sign-on process subsequent to the initial intranet rollout."

Design alone doesn't sell an intranet. "Usability and acceptance is not just a question of sophisticated design. It is also the result of a logical approach to provisioning information, a logical information architecture, and user-oriented labeling and wording."

Prepare users for the transition. "The intranet launch date is not the end of the rollout process. At ALTANA Pharma, the new intranet dramatically altered how users and editors perceive how the intranet can provide information. Indeed, many aspects of the intranet changed in just one day. Of course, the team involved in the design did not have any problems. Actual end users, however, did not have sufficient time to rapidly assimilate this paradigm shift. In fact, marketing efforts to improve the general acceptance of the intranet is an ongoing issue."

Deliver new features in stages. "Don't deliver too many features at once, since users are often overwhelmed by too many new features. Instead, introduce new features at regular intervals. This way, users can acclimate to new features over time."

Target search with sufficient time and resources. "The intranet contains incredibly heterogeneous content. Thus, it took lots of time and effort to optimize the search mechanism, then to introduce users to its various capabilities. Don't underestimate the resources or even just the conceptual considerations you'll need to implement effective and accepted search capabilities."

Bank of Ireland Group

Using the Intranet:

Bank of Ireland Group is a diversified financial services group with market-leading positions in its chosen domestic markets, and niche status in other selected markets. Headquartered in Dublin, Bank of Ireland profit generation is distributed among the Republic of Ireland (56%), the UK (28%), and the rest of the world (16%).

Bank of Ireland was established in 1783 by Royal Charter and today has 17,000 employees in eight countries. It is the largest Irish bank by total assets, and also the highest rated Irish-listed financial institution.

Design Team:

In-house

Members:

Mary Staunton, group internal communications manager; Mick O'Farrell, editor of **insite**; Breffni Wall, **insite**'s content and publishing specialist; Mairead Anderson, **insite**'s relationship manager; Mairead Haughian, senior graphic designer; Conor Hawkshaw, senior Web developer; Niall O'Callaghan, senior Web developer; Michael Walshe, Web development manager; Martina Osborne, senior business architect; Richard Finnegan, business architect; Robert Treacy, applications developer; Eamon Lyng, applications developer; Padraig MacDonnchadha, applications developer; Natasha Miskella, senior Web developer.

SUMMARY

The Bank of Ireland's **insite** intranet is not like most other bank intranets. Simply put, it swaps serious navy pinstripes for bursts of orange and blue. Don't be fooled, however, by the light-hearted aesthetics: this intranet means business.

Homepage

One goal of the team is to keep users coming back to the intranet, and creating an attractive homepage is one effective technique for doing this. On **insite**, main corporate news items are located center stage where users can quickly and easily read them. The news is accompanied by eye-catching images that add to the users' understanding and punch up the page.

Via the homepage, employees can easily stay abreast of important business news. The *Breaking News* section features several types of business news, separated into tabs for easy scanning. An external news feed provides up-to-the-minute news in business, national, international, sports, and entertainment categories. On the homepage, users can scroll six headlines from a chosen category at any one time, or click through for a full list of the day's breaking news.

Other homepage features that connect users to the world outside the office include an updated stock quote and a link to the company's press releases.

From the homepage, the *My Unit* links lead to information about the logged-in user's operating department.

Pictured: The Bank of Ireland intranet homepage offers personalized, helpful news and an attractive design to keep drawing users back.

Content

Another way to entice users to regularly return to an intranet is to provide valuable, engaging content and relevant news. To be relevant, however, such content must be fresh. The Bank of Ireland intranet succeeds here; indeed, the intranet's news offerings are one of its biggest killer apps.

To access news items, users can navigate from a homepage link or click on *News* in the left-hand menu of any page. The site's news pages utilize a sans serif font, which makes text easy to read, as does the page's ample default text size and the narrow column width for text.

While some features might seem relatively minor, they really go a long way toward helping users. A *Print friendly* link makes it easy for users to print news items and keep them for later. The *Related Links* box offers topical suggestions. Similarly, the *Previous*, *Next*, and *Return to List* links at the end of each article give users other ways to explore the news.

When it comes to news and information, many users understandably reference the source of that information to gauge its believability or trustworthiness. Obviously, a well-known or credible source is better than an unknown one. On the Bank of Ireland intranet, users can see the original source of the news highlighted on the left side of every article. Then, at the end of the article, users can also see the posting date, who posted the article (on their own or on behalf of another person), and the item's

classification level, which is used internally to signify the document's confidentiality.

The screenshot shows the 'insite' intranet interface for the Bank of Ireland. The top navigation bar includes 'insite', 'Bank of Ireland', and links for 'Home', 'About insite', 'Feedback', 'Site Map', and 'Help'. A search bar on the right allows users to 'Search insite' with 'Advanced' and 'Go' options. Below the navigation bar, a breadcrumb trail reads 'You are here: Home > News > Home Page Articles'. The left sidebar contains a 'My Unit' dropdown menu with 'Other Units' and a list of links: 'About the Group', 'News', 'Employee Centre', 'Career Centre', 'Life & Leisure', 'Resource Centre', 'Products & Customers', 'BranchNet', and 'SAP'. A 'People Finder' section includes input fields for 'First name' and 'Last name', and 'Advanced' and 'Go' buttons. The main content area is titled 'Home Page Articles' and features a 'Print friendly' link. The article, 'Global Markets Bulletin Xtra - 30 September 2005', discusses Irish GDP growth accelerating to 4.1% in the second quarter. It includes a thumbnail image of the bulletin cover and a 'Related Links' section with links to previous bulletins. The article concludes with a link to a PDF attachment and navigation links for 'Previous page', 'Return to list', and 'Next page'. A footer box provides publication details: 'Published by: Mick.O'Farrell@boimail.com', 'On behalf of: Dr Dan McLaughlin - Global Markets', and 'Classification: Amber'. The bottom of the page features a copyright notice '© Bank of Ireland 2005', an 'Accessibility' link, and a 'Group Intranet Guidelines' link. A horizontal menu at the very bottom lists various intranet sections: 'Home', 'About the Group', 'News', 'Employee Centre', 'Career Centre', 'Life & Leisure', 'Resource Centre', 'Products & Customers', 'BranchNet', and 'SAP'.

insite Bank of Ireland

Home About insite Feedback Site Map Help

You are here: Home > News > Home Page Articles

My Unit
Other Units

About the Group

News

Employee Centre

Career Centre

Life & Leisure

Resource Centre

Products & Customers

BranchNet

SAP

People Finder
First name:
Last name:
Advanced Go

Home Page Articles Print friendly

Global Markets Bulletin Xtra - 30 September 2005

Irish growth accelerates to 4.1% in second quarter - domestic demand strong, but exports sag

Tale of two economies...

Spending in Ireland is rising at a rapid clip, to the benefit of the service sector, but the manufacturing sector is having a torrid time, and this dichotomy in performance is reflected in the national accounts.

Domestic demand, comprising the spending of households, firms and the Government, grew by 6.3% in real terms in the second quarter, following growth of 5.7% in Q1, but GDP growth as a whole was only 4.1% in Q2, reflecting another negative contribution from exports, albeit less than in the first quarter. In fact import growth has exceeded that of exports for the past four quarters, which has dampened total output growth despite very strong domestic activity.

Fortunately, manufacturing output appears to be picking up which implies that exports may add to growth in the second half of the year, so pulling GDP growth up to or above that of domestic demand. Consequently, we still expect 5% GDP growth for the year as a whole.

For further details, see the attached document:

Attachment: Bulletin Xtra - 30 September 2005
Download pdf (142KB)

Previous page Return to list Next page

Published by: Mick.O'Farrell@boimail.com
On behalf of: Dr Dan McLaughlin - Global Markets
Classification: Amber

Date: 05/10/2005

© Bank of Ireland 2005 Accessibility Group Intranet Guidelines

Home | About the Group | News | Employee Centre | Career Centre | Life & Leisure | Resource Centre | Products & Customers | BranchNet | SAP

Pictured: News articles on the Bank of Ireland intranet are easy on the eyes and offer relevant features including related links; a link to the news item list; links to the previous and next news items; data about the information's origin; and a link to a printer-friendly version.

The Bank of Ireland intranet team handles some intranet content, as well as two other content-related roles: teaching and facilitating. Intranet team members train content contributors and sometimes help them get group-specific content online. Typically, however, content contributors feed any information directly to the intranet, and day-to-day publishing of department-specific content is the sole responsibility of individual departments.

Phone Book

Thanks to the intranet's *People Finder*, staff can easily locate information about any of the 17,000 Bank of Ireland employees. The feature is offered on every page of the site, and allows users to search by a person's first or last name, or by using more advanced options.

Each person's profile relays the user's name, job, phone number, manager, email address, office location, and more. Photos help employees recognize colleagues, and the feature's elegant layout makes it easy to use.

Another useful element: each profile lets users return to the *People Finder* to search again.

The screenshot shows the 'insite' intranet interface for the Bank of Ireland. The top navigation bar includes 'insite', 'Bank of Ireland', and links for 'Home', 'About insite', 'Feedback', 'Site Map', and 'Help'. A search bar on the right allows for 'insite' searches with 'Advanced' and 'Go' options. Below the navigation, a breadcrumb trail reads 'You are here: Home > People Finder'. A left sidebar contains a 'My Unit' dropdown menu and a list of site sections: 'About the Group', 'News', 'Employee Centre', 'Career Centre', 'Life & Leisure', 'Resource Centre', 'Products & Customers', 'BranchNet', and 'SAP'. The main content area, titled 'People Finder results', displays the profile of Mick O'Farrell. His details include: Name (Mick O'Farrell), Job title (Editor - insite), Telephone (353 (0) 1 604369), Mobile, Fax (353 (0) 1 661590), Email (Mick.O'Farrell@boi-mail.com), Manager (Mary Staunton), Business Unit (Group Internal Communications), and Address (A6 Head Office, Baggot Street, Dublin 2, RoI). A photo of Mick O'Farrell is shown to the right of his details. Below the profile, there are 'Back', 'Edit', and 'New Search' buttons. At the bottom, a footer contains copyright information (© Bank of Ireland 2005), accessibility links, and a comprehensive list of site navigation links.

insite Bank of Ireland

Home About insite Feedback Site Map Help

You are here: Home > People Finder

My Unit
Other Units

About the Group
News
Employee Centre
Career Centre
Life & Leisure
Resource Centre
Products & Customers
BranchNet
SAP

People Finder
First name:
Last name:
Advanced ? Go

People Finder results Update your details

Name: Mick O'Farrell
Job title: Editor - insite
Telephone: 353 (0) 1 604369
Mobile:
Fax: 353 (0) 1 661590
Email: Mick.O'Farrell@boi-mail.com
Manager: Mary Staunton
Business Unit: Group Internal Communications
Address: A6 Head Office
Baggot Street
Dublin 2
RoI

Back Edit
New Search

© Bank of Ireland 2005 Accessibility | Group Intranet Guidelines

Home | About the Group | News | Employee Centre | Career Centre | Life & Leisure | Resource Centre | Products & Customers | BranchNet | SAP

Pictured: *People Finder* results pages feature a straightforward layout, and contain all relevant information for locating an employee. They also contain a photo and the name of the employee's manager.

Users can easily update their own profiles by clicking the *Update your details* button. The resulting page, which uses forms, follows all relevant form-related design guidelines, including:

- all fields and field labels are left-justified,
- fields are easily associated with their relevant label, and
- required fields are clearly marked.

Furthermore, the two items that users are not allowed to edit—name and email address—appear as static text rather than fields. This presentation easily and clearly delineates what users can expect to do, or not do, on this page.

At the end of the form, a *Confirm* button makes the changes. Notice the absence of a *Reset* button for this form. This is no mistake: When forms like this offer a *Reset* button, users often accidentally click it instead of *Confirm*. The Bank of Ireland designers notably did not fall into the “reset button” design trap.

To ensure that data stays up-to-date, users—after a pre-determined number of days—are automatically directed to an *Update your details* page at log-in, and asked to take a moment to review their data.

insite Bank of Ireland

Home About insite Feedback Site Map Help

Search insite ?
Advanced Go
Quick Links Go

You are here: [Home](#) > [People Finder](#)

My Unit ▶
Other Units ▶

About the Group
News
Employee Centre
Career Centre
Life & Leisure
Resource Centre
Products & Customers
BranchNet
SAP

People Finder
First name:
Last name:
Advanced ? Go

People Finder

* = mandatory field

Name: Mick O'Farrell

Job title: Editor - insite

Telephone: * 353 (0) 1 604369

Mobile:

Fax: 353 (0) 1 661590

Email: Mick.O'Farrell@boi - mail.com

Manager: Mary Staunton

Business Unit: * Group Internal Communications

Work address: A6 Head Office Floor/Building
Baggot Street Street
Dublin 2 Town/City
County
Post code
RoI Country

Confirm

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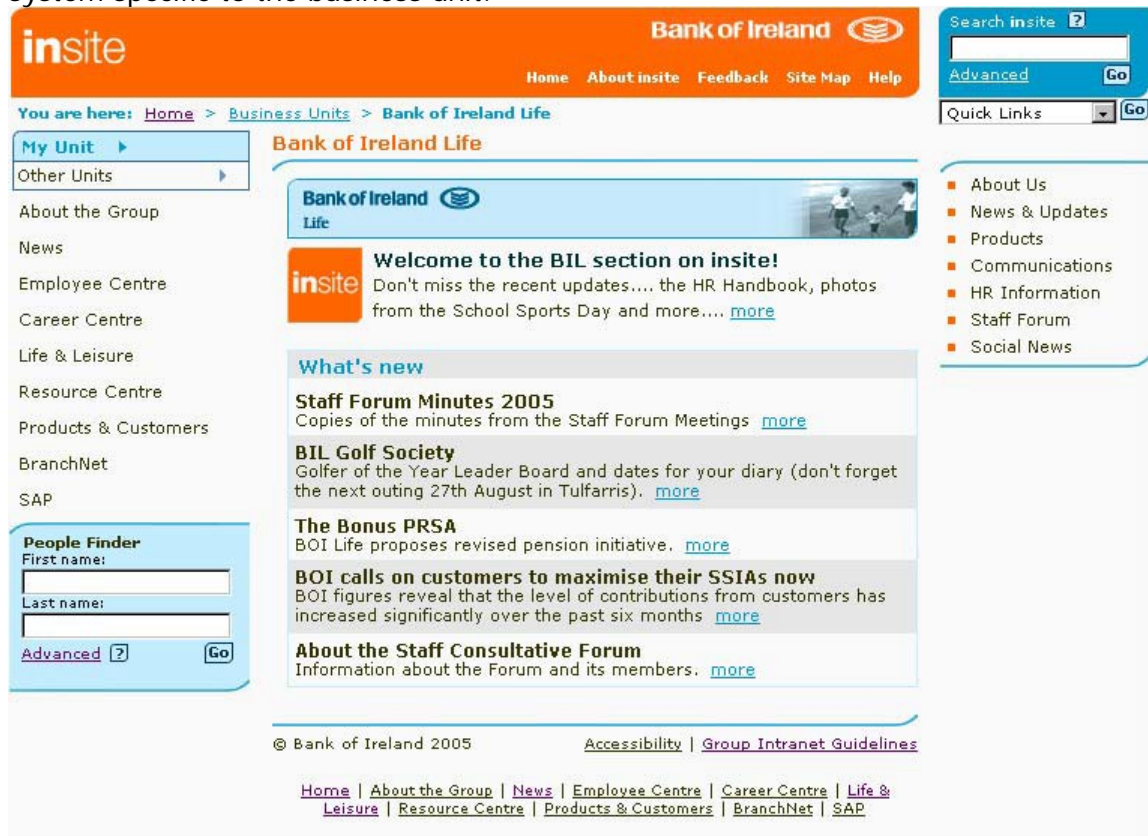
[Home](#) | [About the Group](#) | [News](#) | [Employee Centre](#) | [Career Centre](#) | [Life & Leisure](#) | [Resource Centre](#) | [Products & Customers](#) | [BranchNet](#) | [SAP](#)

Pictured: After clicking the *Update your details* button, users can update their profile by filling out this form. This page helpfully omits a *Reset* button, which users often accidentally click when they want to *Confirm*.

Catering to Users

In addition to the features every user knows they want—a sharp homepage, relevant news, and an easy-to-use employee directory—the Bank of Ireland intranet provides employees with department-level information that’s relevant to their business unit or job function. Departments with employees in multiple locations often have their own launch areas, too.

One advantage of a *Launch Area* is that it allows for an extra right-hand navigation system specific to the business unit.



Pictured: The *Bank of Ireland Life* page is one example of an individual department's launch page, where its employees can find content written specifically for them.

Another launch area, *BranchNet*, is *insite*'s largest department-specific area. *BranchNet*'s specialized content is devoted exclusively to the Bank of Ireland's branch network and includes topics such as branch operating procedures, must-read memos, exchange rates, and an authorized-signature manual. *BranchNet* is also a semi-autonomous part of *insite*, and has its own team of administrators and content publishers.

insite **BranchNet** **Bank of Ireland**

Home About insite Feedback Site Map Help

You are here: [Home](#) > [BranchNet](#)

My Unit ▸
Other Units ▸

About the Group
News
Employee Centre
Career Centre
Life & Leisure
Resource Centre
Products & Customers
BranchNet ▸
SAP

People Finder
First name:
Last name:
[Advanced](#) [Go](#)

BranchNet

Ballsbridge Branch
Due to a major refurbishment that will continue until Summer 2006, Ballsbridge is operating reduced Opening Hours - 10am to 2pm daily. See [M305_2005_Rep](#) for more.

Must Reads ▸

M341_2005_Rep Customer Searches ..	13/10/2005
M342_2005_Rep Release of Security from Credit..	13/10/2005
M339_2005_Rep Remittance of Soiled Notes ..	13/10/2005
M338_2005_Rep M91_2005_NI M101_2005_GB ..	12/10/2005
R21_2005_Rep Mail Centralisation Reminder ..	12/10/2005
M337_2005_Rep Managing Your Money ..	12/10/2005

What's New

M334_2005_Rep Customer Service for Business Custs	11/10/2005
Smart Share Game update	04/10/2005
M317_2005_Rep BoI Student Awards Launch	15/09/2005
Bank of Ireland Calendar for 2006	14/09/2005
BIL - Managing Your Money - July 2005	08/09/2005
M309_2005_Rep Reminder Personal A/c Switching	06/09/2005

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[Home](#) | [About the Group](#) | [News](#) | [Employee Centre](#) | [Career Centre](#) | [Life & Leisure](#) | [Resource Centre](#) | [Products & Customers](#) | [BranchNet](#) | [SAP](#)

Search insite [Go](#)

Advanced [Go](#)

Quick Links [Go](#)

BranchNet links [Go](#)

- Ad Hoc Reports
- BOP
- Call Logging System
- FX Rates
- PHASE
- PMO
- QMC Queries
- Technical Helpdesk
- Search Memos & Circulars

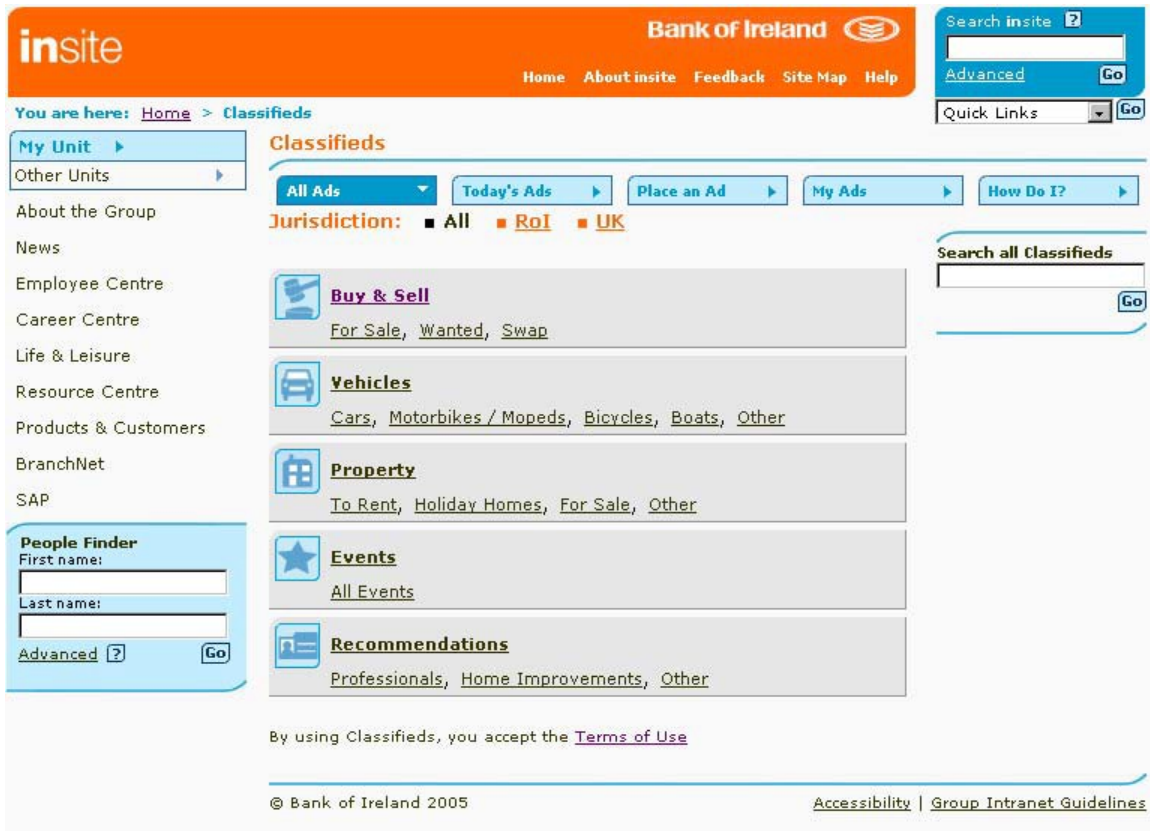
Pictured: Another example of an individual department's homepage: *BranchNet*, where branch staff can find information specific to them, including branch operating procedures, must-read memos, and exchange rates.

The new employees launch page is also useful, containing welcome information and guides to various policies, locations, and procedures.

Beyond features for new employees, another notable trend for intranets is to let employees post and read their own classified advertisements. Many managers and intranet developers realize the importance of work-life balance, and intranet-based classifieds help maintain that balance and provide a relatively safe shopping haven. (It's obviously easier to avoid unscrupulous sellers and buyers when you're dealing with people within your organization. People know where to find you.)

The Bank of Ireland classified interface calls out users' most important classified-related tasks: *All Ads*, *Today's Ads*, *Place an Ad*, and *My Ads*. A *How Do I?* button provides quick help.

Beyond the search feature, users can browse classifieds in five top-level topics, such as *Vehicles* and *Events*, plus several sub-topics.



Pictured: While not strictly work-related, classifieds are nevertheless a nice- to- have feature for users, and one that helps draw users back to the portal.

Overall, the Bank of Ireland intranet includes a variety of features—most for business, but some for personal use. All features are packaged clearly and gracefully, providing further incentive for users to regularly return to the intranet and use it as part of their daily work routine.

URL AND ACCESS

The Bank of Ireland Group's intranet address is <http://insite.boi.com>. "The site is not bookmarked by default in browsers, though most staff members choose **insite** as their default homepage," notes Breffni Wall, **insite**'s content and publishing specialist.

When the intranet launches, it automatically logs in users by referencing their PC log-in details. "This feature eliminates unnecessary login screens for users while still controlling access to information published on the intranet," she says. It also allows for behind-the-scenes targeting of information.

Users with remote access to the Bank of Ireland Group network—in particular, sales people—can also access **insite** remotely.

CONTENT MANAGEMENT

Centralized and Distributed Management

To manage content and publish it to the intranet, Bank of Ireland uses a heavily customized version of Documentum.

In terms of the content itself, the dedicated intranet team maintains information of general interest to the entire Bank of Ireland Group. In addition, each business unit designates its own content publishers to help maintain department-specific intranet content, for which each department alone is responsible.

This arrangement came about for two reasons, says Wall. The first is that “the staff of a given department is best informed as to the relevance, quality, and timeliness of the content that that department wishes to publish.” In addition, “given the size and geographic spread of the group, a central team of publishers would have to be large, and yet still couldn’t realistically be expected to become familiar with every department’s content and publishing needs.”

In other words, distributing responsibilities lets each group do what it does best. Departmental content publishers maintain relevant content for their peers, while “the core intranet team focuses on site design, information architecture decisions, and general publishing improvements,” says Wall.

The intranet team also keeps a close watch on the homepage. In particular, **insite**’s editor has final editorial say over which articles and graphics run on the homepage. This is “to ensure that a group focus is maintained, and to encourage users in all jurisdictions of the group to visit the site,” notes Mairead Anderson, **insite**’s relationship manager.

Such an approach “allows for the forming and maintaining of an identifiable style on the homepage,” she says, regardless of what the individual business units do with their individual launch pages. “Given our devolved publishing process, the other parts of the site may all have different styles or approaches—while staying strictly within **insite** guidelines, of course—but the homepage should have a continuity of style about it.”

Maintaining a Consistent User Experience

Maintaining a consistent intranet user experience further involves the core intranet team, since they train all content publishers and seek to foster a sense of community among them. “Central to the success of **insite**’s publishing model is the sense of community amongst the 200 publishers across the Bank of Ireland Group,” notes Mary Staunton, the internal communications manager responsible for **insite**. To help maintain that, **insite** contains an interactive *Publishers’ Forum* where content publishers can ask questions and swap advice.

“We’ve found that, apart from our centralized publishing team, one of the best sources of help for a publisher is their fellow publishers. Therefore, in the early days we set up a *Publishers’ Forum*—a searchable, question and answer database—where publishers can look for answers or ask questions or just post tips for their fellow publishers,” says Mick O’Farrell, editor of **insite**. While the forum is currently a Lotus Notes-based application, Bank of Ireland plans to soon make it an intranet-based application.

Content publishers help each other out. “More experienced publishers provide guidance and pass on useful tips to novices,” says Staunton. Over time, a repository of tips has also built up, providing a useful knowledge base for all publishers.

Then, to actually publish content, publishers use “pre-defined templates designed by the intranet team in consultation with the relevant business units,” says Wall. “The Web-based publishing tool lets them add text, create links, and select and align images in just a few simple clicks, without having to worry about the layout of the page.”

Templates ensure a consistent user experience for all employees. “The layout and design are consistent for end users no matter where they are on the site,” she says. The CMS also adds several standard elements to content as required, including inserting sub-headlines with “back to top” links and even a table of contents.

Before a page gets published, however, it must first go through a review and quality-assurance process. Typically, this involves vetting by one of a business unit’s designated content approvers.

Content Updating Requirements

All content must also be updated on a regular basis. To ensure that happens, O’Farrell says Bank of Ireland employs a two-pronged approach. “Firstly, the content management tool we use, Documentum, will send out automatic notifications in advance of a piece of content’s expiry date. The user can then update the content and amend the expiry date, or let the content be automatically archived.”

The automatic Documentum emails warn users that if their content expires, it will be automatically removed and archived. “This ‘publish or perish’ policy clearly places the responsibility for ongoing maintenance on the content owner,” notes Wall. “It also enshrines the task of intranet publishing as a key work activity and ensures that publishing does not slip to the bottom of a publisher’s work list.”

Once revised, content can be set to expire after a certain number of months, up to one year. “We felt that this was the best approach, even for content that may be relevant for longer than twelve months,” says O’Farrell, “since it means that every piece of content must be reviewed, refreshed, or removed at least once a year.”

The intranet team, however, doesn’t just rely on automatic expirations. “We carry out manual checks on content—some targeted, some random—and if an area is starting to look dated, we’ll request that the relevant publisher review their content,” he says.

TECHNOLOGY

The Bank of Ireland Group intranet is based on a J2EE architecture (a version of Java for developing and deploying enterprise applications), and runs on three Windows 2000 Professional servers, load balanced using a BIG-IP appliance from F5 Networks. “Each server has two instances of Apache Tomcat installed, which are also balanced using BIG IP,” says Niall O’Callaghan, a senior Web developer. “We use an MS SQL 2000 database for storing content metadata and application data, and use Apache Lucene to index the site and provide search functionality.”

For tracking site problems and running tests, they also “hook into Mercury TestDirector 8 from within sections of the site to collect feedback from staff and manage their comments through our change process,” says Conor Hawkshaw, a senior Web developer.

The team's Documentum CMS includes a content server, which stores and controls content, as well as Web Publisher, which provides a Web-based interface for the group's publishers to create, edit, manage, and publish content using pre-defined templates.

With Documentum, "content is stored as XML, and not HTML as with our previous solution," notes O'Callaghan. "Using XML, we have more flexibility in terms of the presentation of data." In particular, when content publishers submit new content, they're inputting that content into an XML template. Then, "using XSL style sheets, we transform the XML into various types of media, including HTML, JSP, PDF, JPEG, and GIF formats." Two additional advantages of this approach: it's scalable, as well as future-proof, so the intranet team can "expand into other media when the opportunity arises."

The content server, which is based on Java technology, runs on an AIX Platform with a slightly customized Oracle database. "We installed additional components like a breaking news feed, some custom workflow methods, and a replication job for Documentum to interact with LDAP—our centralized user database within the group," notes Hawkshaw. The additional components were written in Java, and are managed using the Apache Tomcat program.

With the J2EE-based Web Publisher, however, the intranet team heavily customized it to meet business requirements. "Documentum provides a Web Development Kit which can be used to customize Web Publisher, and we spent a few months at the start of our project working on this," says O'Callaghan. In particular, "we wrote custom workflow methods to control the flow of content throughout the organization."

The content server and the actual Web Publisher administrators maintain content-related security, ensuring proper controls for and permissions on the content that publishers can edit, approval groups can approve, and so on. This permissions-based system is maintained automatically based on users' credentials. "A custom job imports basic security credentials from LDAP," notes Hawkshaw, then "the site makes use of NTLM [Windows NT LAN Manager] to automatically authenticate users against LDAP, based on their Windows Network account details."

For maintaining the site, developers and authors use a range of tools, including Documentum for adding site content, WebSphere for making application code changes, and Dreamweaver MX for all other changes. Photoshop and Illustrator are the tools of choice for creating and editing images. Finally, Test Director manages bugs, changes, and the overall quality-assurance and release-management process.

GOALS AND CONSTRAINTS

Goals:

- Enhance Bank of Ireland Group's competitive advantage by delivering the right content, to the right end user, in the right format, at the right cost.
- Ensure that the intranet continues to be the primary medium for the delivery of group and business unit (departmental) communications, thereby preserving and enhancing organizational knowledge and strengthening organizational relationships and communications.
- Continuously improve employees' workplace experience, while improving employee performance and job satisfaction.

- For the intranet team, introduce a more flexible solution that: allows greater day-to-day control over site maintenance without requiring skilled IT resources; and also allows key people to focus more on areas best suited to their skills.
- For publishers, improve publishing tool performance, simplify the overall process, and guarantee publishing times.
- Better target content based on a user's business needs, via their business unit (department) launch areas.
- Continue to roll out new and enhanced intranet applications.

Constraints:

- As with any system used by thousands of people, designers had to keep the lowest common denominator in mind, which can over-generalize the intranet. At the same time, very PC-literate users expect continuous enhancements.
- Varying PC specifications existed across the group (a large-scale project is now under way to improve and maintain the technology standards).
- Costs had to be justified in advance, and throughout the project.
- A wide range of interested parties had to be kept on board and committed.
- There was pressure to maintain previous investments and simply upgrade the existing content management tool (though a later business evaluation proved there was nothing to be saved by keeping the old tool).

BASIC INTRANET FEATURES

When it comes to intranet features, "there probably aren't any features on **insite** that haven't already appeared on another intranet, however, what we were aiming for, and what we feel we've achieved, is a successful blend of features," notes Staunton. "Obviously we've included the 'must-haves,' but from the beginning we were determined to include some of what we called the 'nice-to-haves.'"

While must-have features are essential for doing their job, nice-to-have features entice employees to return regularly, which is essential. As she notes, "one measure of the success of an intranet is how often staff log on when they don't necessarily have to." From a business perspective, frequent logging on is a good thing: employees are less likely to miss important communications, or general information about their colleagues and the Bank of Ireland Group itself.

Must-have intranet features include: placing the most important Bank of Ireland Group updates and announcements on the homepage, as well as offering homepage links to other departmental communications. Meeting room booking is also extremely popular. "Users can see an entire day's bookings for all meeting rooms in listed locations before choosing and reserving a room for themselves," says O'Farrell. Canceling a booking is also easy.

insite
Bank of Ireland
Home About insite Feedback Site Map Help

Search insite
Advanced
Go
Quick Links
Go

You are here: [Home](#) > [Room Booking](#)

Room Booking

Booking Grid
Book a Room
Cancel Bookings
Facilities
How Do I?

Date: 19/08/2005

Head Office
Go
Booked by:
Subject:

		9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30	12:00	12:30	13:00	13:30	14:00	14:30	15:00	15:30	16:00	16:30	17:00		
A0-Room 1	12	SF		PP																
A0-Room 10	6	SC			CB															
A0-Room 11	6	BJ																		
A0-Room 12	8	LR																		
A0-Room 2	20	JC																		
A0-Room 4	12	YO'D			CO'H															
A0-Room 5	8	MK		MK		MK		LG												
A0-Room 6	6	KF			CO'R															
A0-Room 7	6	JF																		
A0-Room 8	8	SF		UG			SM													
A0-Room 9	8	LR																		
A3-Room 1	8	SF							CM										SE	
A4-Room 2	8	CG		CR		CG		AM												
A4-Room 3	8	NL																		
A5-Room 2	8																			

Click on the WHITE square to book these times
Click on the ORANGE square to find out more about this booking

Building Facilities Details

Telephones in Meeting Rooms are set to local dialling. If you need this adjusted for your meeting, please create an FMS 2 days prior to meeting. Internet access is available from floor connections. Meeting Room Numbers are as follows: Room 1: Wall-2872, Floor-2873 Room 2: Wall-2874, Floor-2875 Room 3: Wall-2876, Floor-2877 Room 4: Wall-2878, Floor-2879 Room 5: Wall-2880, Floor-2881 Room 6: Wall-2882, Floor-2883 Room 7: Wall-2884, Floor-2885 Room 8: Wall-2886, Floor-2887 Room 9: Wall-2888, Floor-2889 Room10:Wall-2890, Floor-2891 Room11:Wall-2892, Floor-2893 Room12:Wall-2894, Floor-2895

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Pictured: The room booking tool. Users can see an entire day's bookings for all meeting rooms in listed locations, before choosing and reserving a room for themselves. Canceling a booking request is easy, too.

Other popular and often-used features include *People Finder*, for finding employee information, and a listing of internal career opportunities, which is searchable by location, jurisdiction, department, and job type.

If a light bulb needs changing, employees head to the *Facilities Management System*. "Staff in many of the group's buildings can raise a work request via the intranet—if, for instance, furniture needs to be moved, or a spillage needs to be cleaned, and so on," notes O'Farrell.

The screenshot shows the 'Create Request' form within the Bank of Ireland Insite Facilities Management System. The form is titled 'Create Request' and includes a note that '*' denotes a mandatory field. The form fields are as follows:

- Location:** * Baggot Street (dropdown)
- Floor:** * A6 (dropdown)
- Work type:** * Mechanical Services (MS) (dropdown)
- Description:** * A light bulb on the north end needs to be changed - thanks. (text area)
- First name:** * Mick (text input)
- Last name:** * O'Farrell (text input)
- Contact number:** * 353 (0) 1 604369 (text input)
- Email:** Mick.O'Farrell@boimail.com (text input)
- Business Unit:** * Group Internal Communications (dropdown)
- Manager:** * Mary Staunton (text input)
- Cost centre:** (text input)

Below the form, a note states: 'You might be billed for any new work that is carried out.' There are 'Cancel' and 'Submit' buttons at the bottom of the form.

The page footer includes the following text:

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Home | About the Group | News | Employee Centre | Career Centre | Life & Leisure | Resource Centre | Products & Customers | BranchNet | SAP

Pictured: The front page of the *Facilities Management System*, where employees can make premises-based work requests.

Finally, employees can manage purchasing and procurement by accessing the SAP ERP (enterprise resource planning) system via the intranet. Employees can also use the SAP system to review their expenses and remaining vacation days.

Beyond must-haves, one nice-to-have site feature is breaking news. "An external news feed provides up-to-the-minute business, national, international, sports, and entertainment news. The homepage will scroll six headlines from a chosen category at a time, but users can click through for a full list of the breaking news that day," says O'Farrell. The *Life & Leisure* section—which includes sub-sections on health, sports, and the Bank of Ireland Arts Center—is also popular, as are the classifieds, where users can buy, sell, or swap items. "This is obviously a non-business-critical application, but its popularity makes it worth maintaining," he says. Finally, opinion polls—both on serious and light topics—occasionally run on the homepage.

Pictured: For variety, the intranet team occasionally runs an opinion poll on the homepage (at right side, center), such as this question about employees' SSIA (Special Savings Incentive Accounts).

One interesting aspect of the bank's intranet is that for some staff members, it's their only workday source of online information. "Not all staff have Internet access in the workplace. Therefore, for a significant number of staff, accessing **insite** is their means of keeping up-to-date with not just group or departmental news, but with other news in general," notes O'Farrell.

Despite the range of features, designers are careful to keep users of all abilities in mind when designing and upgrading the site. "A particularly important feature of the intranet, overall, was its accessibility to users of all abilities. This was incorporated into the design and implementation at all stages, and tested at regular intervals. The result is that an assessment by an independent intranet usability consultancy was able to report that **insite** 'has achieved a high level of accessibility,'" notes O'Farrell.

Individual department launch areas are offered so that "staff in that department can access information specific to them," says O'Farrell. "The largest of these areas on **insite** is the *BranchNet* area—an area devoted exclusively to the Bank of Ireland branch network, with its specific needs and more specialized content. *BranchNet* is semi-autonomous within **insite**, with its own team of administrators and content publishers." Some of the content contained in *BranchNet* includes branch operating procedures, must-read memos, exchange rates, and an authorized signature manual.

For gauging the intranet's success, creating launch pages such as *BranchNet* were important milestones. "The successful adoption of **insite** as *BranchNet*'s communications tool was a very important result for us as a team, and indeed for the group as whole," he says. "Not only does it epitomize the use of **insite** as an

essential operational support, rather than a 'soft' communications source, but it also illustrates the confidence of the wider business in the intranet overall."

USERS

The intranet is accessible to 17,000 Bank of Ireland Group employees in multiple countries: Ireland, the UK, France, Germany, Australia, Canada, Japan, and the US.

Users hail from a variety of financial disciplines. "As a diversified financial services group, our intranet's users work in the personal, commercial, industrial, and agricultural finance sectors," notes Staunton. "There are also the normal ancillary operations, including administration, human resources, technical support, and marketing."

All users have intranet access, while only some have Internet access, making the intranet a valuable source of information—relating to the bank or otherwise—throughout the day. Currently, employees' infrastructure needs are being readdressed. "A project is in place at the moment which will see all staff having Internet access in the coming year," notes O'Farrell.

USER TASKS

- Read news and general communications about the organization as a whole and particular business units
- Access must-read communications, including memos, updates, and circulars
- Search for policies, downloads, forms, contact details (individual or departmental), internal vacancies, social news, career resources, press releases, press clippings, and marketing information
- Access personal banking applications
- Reserve meeting rooms
- Submit premises-based work requests
- Access national and international breaking news headlines
- Research exclusive staff discounts on products and services
- View classified ads posted by colleagues

BACKGROUND

The Bank of Ireland Group intranet launched as part of the organization's move to "go digital" in 1999–2000, says O'Farrell. "The need for a group-wide, computer-based method of communications was recognized—one which would not only be a repository of essential information, but which would become the primary medium for the delivery of group and business unit communications, thereby preserving and enhancing organizational knowledge, and strengthening organizational relationships and communications."

In short, the organization wanted a single, group-wide intranet, and launched a project accordingly in early 2000. "The result, **insite**, was piloted in 2001. Then, over the next 18 months, **insite** was rolled out to increasing numbers of departments and jurisdictions, and was fully group-wide by 2003," he says.

The intranet grew quickly. “Since its launch, **insite** has gone from being a small site with a small audience to a large, high-volume site, accessible to, and accessed by, the group’s 17,000 employees,” says Staunton.

Two years after the intranet’s launch, however, much of the technology underpinning it needed updating. Indeed, “the technical limitations of the original solution placed huge constraints on the future success of the intranet,” notes Wall. “Simple design changes required complex and time-consuming development work, causing unnecessary and embarrassing delays.” For example, just changing the name of a major group division—following a corporate restructuring—took a whopping 14 days, accompanied by costly development efforts.

Publishing was also needlessly complex, and slow. As a result, “publishing activity waned,” she says. Increasingly, business units called on the intranet team to update their content, shortchanging time for ongoing site improvements.

Given those problems, “it became increasingly difficult to explain the benefits of a group intranet with out-of-date information and a tired design to senior management and colleagues,” says Wall.

DESIGN PROCESS AND USABILITY ACTIVITIES

Business Case

The initial intranet redesign started as soon as the Bank of Ireland Group’s internal communications team assumed full responsibility for the intranet, and one of its first decisions was to replace much of the existing intranet technology. First, however, it had to convince senior management. So, “the first phase of the project focused on building a business case for the replacement of the original site based on reducing the overall operating costs,” says Wall.

The intranet team first examined the existing operational model, application architecture, and technical architecture, then generated a full breakdown of all intranet costs.

Simultaneously, “the intranet team detailed intranet and publishing tool business requirements, generated both through user feedback and various usability reports. Then, the specifications were verified with various areas of the business and prioritized by the business team to determine the scope of the project,” says Wall.



The end result: “a clear picture of the desired solution, as well as estimates for its implementation and ongoing operation at a reduced cost,” she says.

Proof of Concept

Once the business case was approved, the redesign team began creating a proof of concept to vet the new technology, and also try to show that the new approach would offer “real business benefits,” says Wall.

The new site’s user experience was of especial concern. “The team wanted to strike a balance between the group-wide view and the user’s own business unit,” notes Wall. “Both perspectives had to be incorporated and immediately accessible from the homepage and across the site.” So, the design team introduced the *My Unit* concept.


[Home](#) | [People Finder](#) | [Quick Links](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Feedback](#) | [What's New](#) | [Help](#) | [Log Out](#)



Welcome to



Filter Settings: Jurisdiction Filter, Group And Business Unit Filter
Search: [GO](#)

- ▶ [News](#)
- ▶ [Group Structure](#)
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- [SAP >>](#)
- [Staff Special Offers >>](#)

People Finder >>

Search By
e.g. Last Name

Type Text
e.g. Murphy

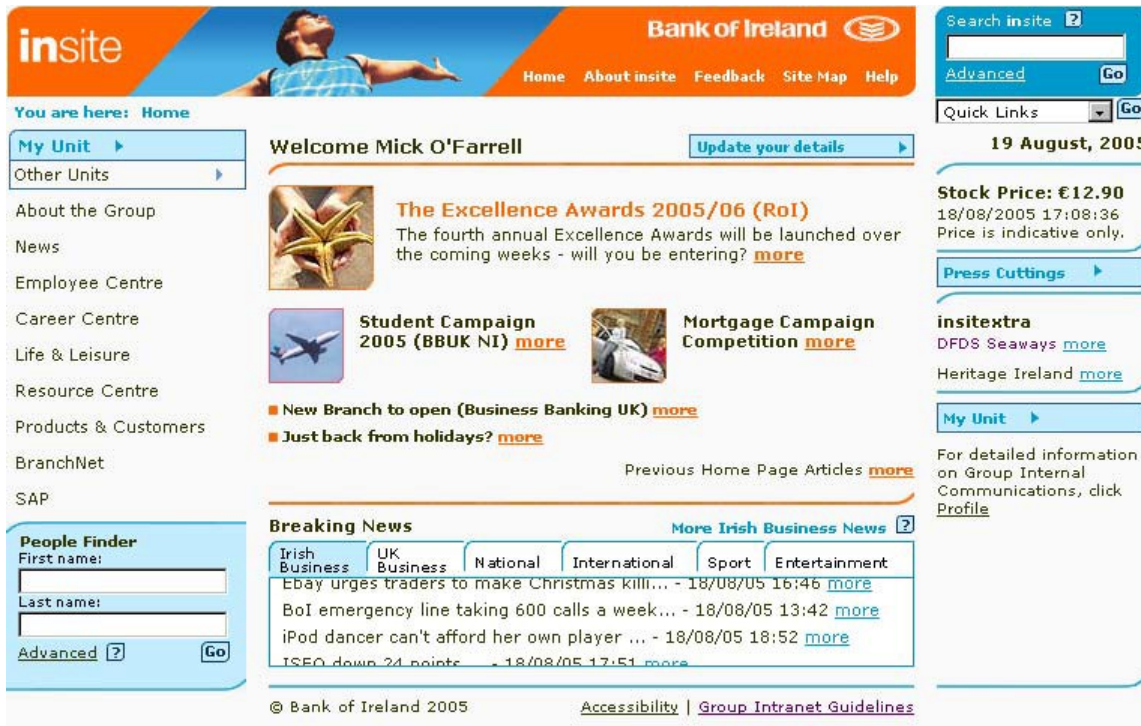
[GO](#)

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Pictured: The previous version of the intranet homepage.



Pictured: One of the redesign team's first projects: creating a new intranet homepage. One notable change is the new balance between whole-organization communications and a user's own business division (My Unit).





Pictured: The new Bank of Ireland Group homepage provides ready access to *My Unit*. Note that this user-tested, finished version strongly resembles the designers' above mockup—"a testament, I think, to the experience and 'audience-awareness' of the core **insite** team," says Bank of Ireland's Mick O'Farrell.

The redesign team spent considerable time researching publishing tools, since the new site would ultimately succeed or fail based on the chosen tool's effectiveness and user-friendliness. This research validated the team's initial choice: Documentum. In particular, the team thought Documentum's distributed publishing capabilities would help "empower content owners to create and update their own content," and thus give intranet content a needed revitalization.

During the proof-of-concept phase, the team found that task-based user scenarios were a useful design technique. "Learning from past mistakes, the project team drew inspiration from usability research and best practices to set the direction for the redesigned site," notes Wall. So, "the team drafted mock-ups of applications based on user tasks and revised the designs based on expert reviews as well as user consultations."

[Home](#) | [People Finder](#) | [Quick Links](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Feedback](#) | [What's New](#) | [Help](#) | [Log Out](#)

[insite](#) > [Tools](#) > [People Finder](#)

News

Group Structure

Products

Staff Information

Policies

Customers

Events & Sponsorships

Vacancies

Search Criteria

Search in:

contains

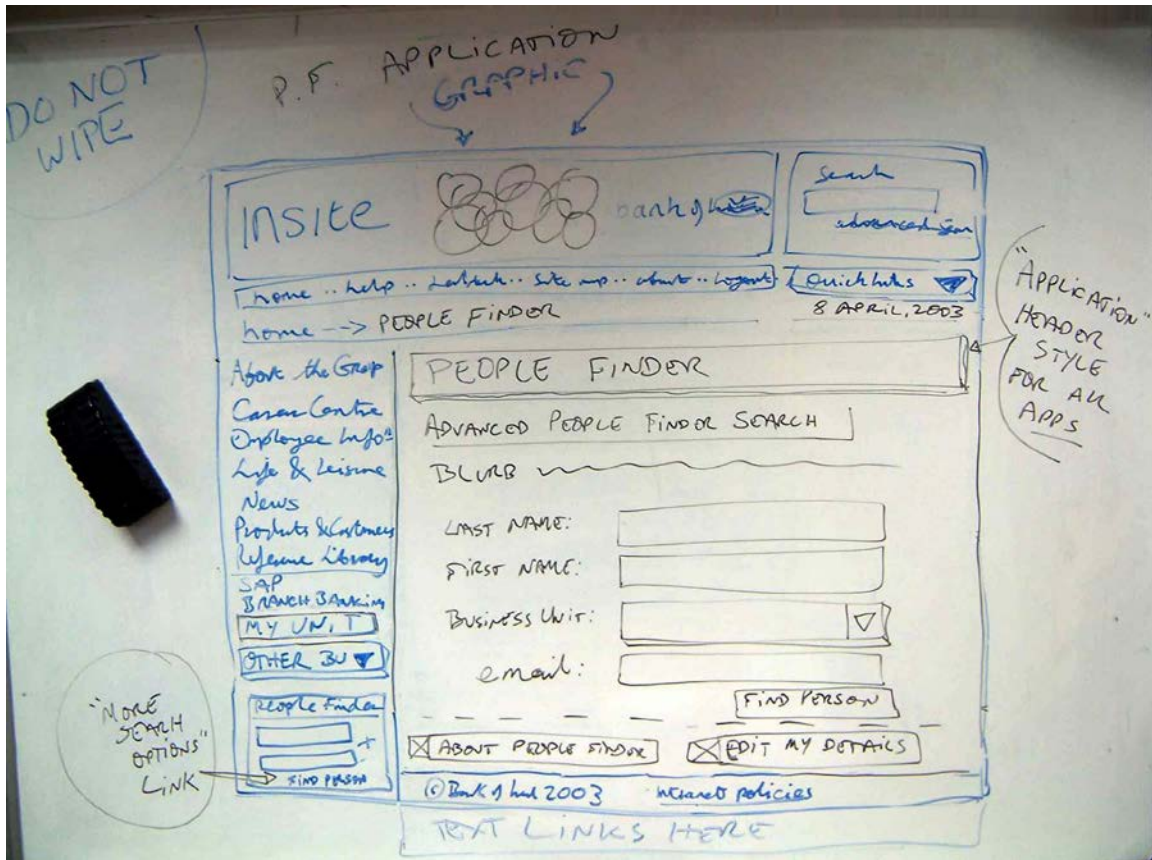
How to use People Finder

People Finder is your window on the Bank of Ireland Group electronic directory. So, how do I use people finder ?

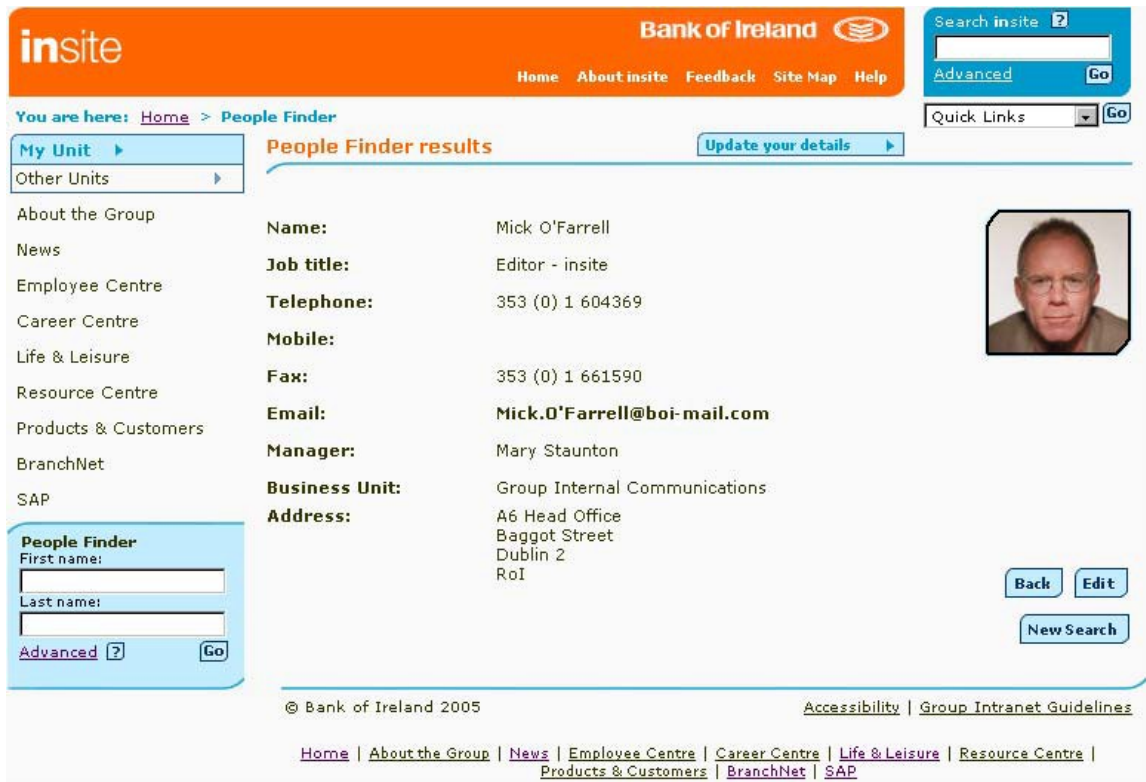
Simple surname search

- 1) Choose the directory you want to search - the main directory is the 'Group Intranet Directory', some business units that have not yet been integrated into this directory and may be available as a separate choice.
- 2) Enter the last name of the person you wish to find. For speed you don't need to enter the full last name, searching for 'Mur' will find all Murray's, Murphy's and Murdoch's in the directory. It will also find all names that contain the sequence of letters 'Mur'.
- 3) When ready to search for people click the 'Find Person' button.

Pictured: The previous version of the intranet's *People Finder* application.



Pictured: The **insite** redesign team's concept of how the new *People Finder* application should look. After undergoing usability testing, the mockups proved extremely useful for the graphic designers and developers who actually had to design and code a finished product.



Pictured: The new version of the *People Finder* intranet application.

Design

The next phase involved finalizing all aspects of the new design. For this, users were integral, and the redesign team brought in a cross-section of people for card-sorting exercises, design sessions, and prototype testing. According to Wall, “early versions of the site were tested in usability sessions with fresh faces from across the group, including branch network and call center staff” and team members used the results to iterate the design. They also recruited business unit champions and representatives.

Wall says that studying user behavior was especially important for smoothing any rough edges in the new site structure. One really helpful result, for example, was discovering where staff “expected to see links to content in different areas of the site.”

As part of the redesign, designers kept accessibility in mind and complied with the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) Guidelines. In particular, they included access keys and keyboard shortcuts to aid navigation. “Considerable effort went into designing and creating a page structure that would scale to accommodate different sizes of text,” notes Wall, which let users magnify text while still maintaining the overall page structure.

The intranet team also brought in a local usability consultancy to evaluate the prototype. “The team gained valuable insights from this evaluation, as it offered a refreshing, outsider’s perspective on the design,” says Wall. “For example, headings and labels were improved by stripping out company jargon that would not make sense to new entrants to the group.”



Pictured: The site map for Bank of Ireland's intranet, post-redesign. A variety of usability techniques, including card sorting, helped the redesign team create the final information architecture.

Build & Test

Next, the redesign team built and tested the new intranet. Doing this required creating cross-functional technical, design, editorial, and business staff teams, composed primarily of in-house employees, as well as such business partners as HP, Accenture, and Documentum. This covered application development, plus implementation of the technical architecture and the content management software.

The team subsequently conducted “comprehensive business testing” as well as “further user and accessibility tests,” says Wall, to further tweak functionality and excise usability flaws.

Then, on the content front, “the editorial team spent time simplifying and honing copy text, error messages, and confirmation messages, to make them as intuitive as possible for the typical non-technical business reader,” she says.

Rollout

With the redesigned intranet built, rollout progressed on two fronts.

First, the intranet team ran a series of seminars and released a new content-publishing guide to acquaint publishers with the new publishing tool. Then, “the process of content migration began, during which publishers reviewed site content and re-published content using the new tool,” says Wall.

It was not just a coincidence, she notes, that these efforts gave the intranet team “an opportunity to purge the site of outdated and redundant content” and focus on presenting the right content, rather than on maintaining a “multitude of jumbled pages. Less was definitely seen as more, as long as staff had essential information from day one.” That said, the team migrated essential and large volumes of information whole, using automated tools.

While publishers migrated content, the development team polished the intranet technology. Then, with launch imminent, “an eleventh-hour breakthrough in providing automatic login to group staff, based on their PC login details, delayed the overall launch,” says Wall. Still, the trade-off was worth it. “Making it easier for staff to access the new site is always more important than any project milestone.”

In January 2005, the new intranet launched as a pilot for a small number of staff members, and the intranet team began gathering feedback and revising the site. “The reality of implementation threw up some interesting glitches along the way and necessitated some fast thinking from the team. In some cases, for instance, incomplete user details had to be updated to facilitate the new automatic login process,” says Wall. Even so, the team soon had the problems ironed out.

There was only one final prerequisite for fully launching the site: support teams had to be trained on the intranet’s new features. “To accommodate this, a formal handover from the project team to operational teams was part of the project exit criteria,” notes Anderson.

TIMELINE

- January 2000: Launched a program to create a single, integrated Bank of Ireland Group intranet.
- February 2001: The board of directors approved continued intranet rollout, and strategy and infrastructure work began in earnest.

- August 2001: Launched a pilot version of **insite** for a limited number of business units.
- November 2001: Following a successful pilot, the intranet rollout expanded to include departments across the group, and included efforts to promote **insite** as the sole intranet for the entire Bank of Ireland Group.
- February 2002: Based on feedback from staff, **insite** underwent a quick facelift, involving minor changes and a new color palette.
- June 2002: The corporate communications department assumed responsibility for **insite**.
- February 2003: Launched first major **insite** redesign project to make the site faster and easier to use, improve available tools and applications, make the site follow new brand guidelines, and offer new publishing tools.
- Late 2004: The intranet team became part of Bank of Ireland Group's HR "culture and engagement" unit.
- March 2005: After a short pilot, the redesigned intranet launched for 17,000 Bank of Ireland Group employees.

RESULTS

The new version of the intranet launched in March 2005, with notable improvements. "For end users, the redesigned intranet is faster and much easier to use," says Wall. "Employees know where to find key information or can easily locate what they are looking for using search." Previously, most employees would ask a colleague for information; now people look to the intranet first.

Thanks to the redesign, intranet applications got a needed speed boost. "The room-booking system was notoriously slow on the old site. Staff tended to book rooms for longer periods than required and never bothered to cancel rooms. This inevitably led to inefficient use of meeting room facilities and, for such a basic office requirement, was hugely frustrating for users," she says. By contrast, the new tool runs much more quickly, and is substantially easier to use. Not surprisingly, "there is huge, group-wide uptake of the tool, and new locations are constantly being added."

Other new tools are less business-oriented, but no less important for building a strong sense of community. The classifieds section, which contains "everything from wedding dresses to plumber recommendations," says Wall, is one such example. "It is a real draw for staff and keeps them coming back on a daily basis." The intranet team might also unveil seasonally themed homepages or group-wide opinion polls.

Such improvements continue to foster increased intranet use. Overall, 75% of Bank of Ireland Group staff access the intranet at least once a week, and many access it much more, with only 5% visiting just once per month or less. "Interestingly, statistics show that staff are checking the site more than once during the day," notes Wall. "This tells us that staff now have an appreciation that the site's content will change during the course of the day."

New content tools also make life easier for publishers, since the more self-explanatory content interfaces necessitate less training. "New publishers can be trained in an hour, and can then join the interactive *Publishers' Forum* on day one of publishing," notes Wall. Much of the credit here goes to designers' redesigned templates, which are now easier to use and thus let publishers "concentrate on the content."

That's led to some welcome results. "Business units are lining up to increase their presence on the site and take ownership of their content, now that the process is so simple," says Wall. Indeed, "as a business activity, publishing is now viewed much more positively than before."

The redesign also gives designers room to grow since the intranet has been "cleverly designed to cope with future redesigns," notes Wall. For example, changing a division's name on the intranet now takes only minutes, and once new content is ready, completely new sections of the site can be added in about a day.

Employees have shared their enthusiasm for the new site. For example, one employee—a Belfast-based business banking manager—sent this feedback: "The new format for **insite** is fantastic. It is so much easier to navigate or find forms and get to what you want to quickly. It's a huge improvement on the old site." Others raved about single sign-on, and one employee praised the new room-booking system in no uncertain terms: "Gone are the days of swearing at a near-impossible process."

Despite the recent, major redesign, regular but smaller redesigns continue. One detail here is especially noteworthy: the bank's redesign team remains intact. "The intranet team started life as part of the initial intranet rollout project team, and is largely composed of the same people now as it was then," notes Staunton. "This is important to note, as the continuity of the team meant that the vision for the intranet was constantly reinforced during the redesign phase."

Going forward, the intranet budget continues to cover five full-time employees, plus all costs relating to running training and refresher courses for content publishers—annually, approximately twelve courses with five participants each. The budget also covers costs for maintaining an intranet call center for employees, staffed with a dedicated support team, and maintenance of the site's infrastructure and applications.

The intranet team continues to regularly improve the site, drawing on a variety of internal and external sources. For example, "the relationship with a local, independent usability analysis group—called AMAS—has continued through a series of quarterly external site audits," says Wall. "Their constructive criticism and practical recommendations have given the team food for thought, and plenty of suggestions for improvements."

The intranet team also continues to solicit employee feedback. In particular, "the internal communications manager and the relationship manager conduct business unit visitation programs to encourage intranet usage and to seek feedback on how to improve the intranet experience for users throughout the group," says Anderson.

Also, the new publishing tools will be getting a shakedown in a series of publishing master classes. The goal is not only to enhance content quality, but also to identify how the tools can be improved. In addition, publishers are being asked to contribute new types of information to help readers. "A 'related links' feature is being introduced on a phased basis across all content templates," says Wall. When submitting content, publishers are being encouraged to provide groups of links to other relevant intranet pages.

LESSONS LEARNED

Insight from Mary Staunton:

Secure your business backing before proceeding. "It's important that the project be 100% driven by the business owners of the intranet. They must be in

control at all times. Otherwise it's extremely easy for the various strands to get out of control and out of sync."

Insights from Mick O'Farrell:

Take time to do the job right. "Allow sufficient time to do the job right, before it's even started. Abraham Lincoln is supposed to have said, 'Give me six hours to chop down a tree, and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe.' I'd advise adding at least another hour, to make sure you're chopping the right tree. For example, during our intranet redesign, in the name of efficiency, different teams were testing different parts of the implementation. At several points, however, one team would finish testing a block of code and raise bug reports, only to find that a separate team of developers had already moved on to the next block of code. This led to some wasted time, since those developers sometimes had to re-work their code, based on bug fixes for the original block. In hindsight, the solution would be to commit from the start to a linear process: design, develop, test, repeat. This will always seem like the longest approach, but will usually save time in the final analysis."

Have a dedicated group of code testers. "If the budget allows—which it almost never will—then a dedicated team of testers would be a big advantage. They'll become familiar with what they're testing, and will therefore more quickly re-test bug fixes and spot errors in new implementations. This arrangement would also free the other teams to concentrate on their own areas."

Make centralized content-approval processes obsolete. "At the beginning of the intranet project, we created a central content approval [CCA] process to vet all content, to ensure publishers were following guidelines. It seemed like a good idea at the time, but quickly became a rubber-stamping exercise and wasted a lot of time; we dropped it. Nevertheless, it may have been a good idea, but only for a very short, initial period. So, if a company is considering introducing a CCA-type step to help ease publishers into the publishing process, then set a very definite time limit, after which the CCA process gets withdrawn."

Encourage feedback. "The value of encouraging feedback throughout an intranet's lifetime cannot be overestimated. A significant part of our redesign was driven by the feedback we'd received over the previous years, and there's no bigger body of testers than a site's actual users. It's also essential, of course, that the intranet's feedback-submission mechanism should be easy to find and easy to use. If it's not, you'll never hear about it, you'll only notice a lack of feedback—which can never be taken to mean you're doing everything right."

Ensure project team continuity. "An aspect that we grew to appreciate was the importance of—as much as possible—keeping the same personnel on the teams as the project proceeded. Of course, some staff were redeployed over the project's lifetime, but keeping the same people meant that significant time and effort were saved by not having to bring new people up to speed."

Don't carve release dates in stone. "Having pre-determined release dates is always a good idea, since it helps focus minds and concentrate team efforts, but we found that it was important that these dates have a small amount of flexibility built into them. Given the complexity of the project, it just wasn't realistic to threaten collapse for the sake of a missed day or two, and so we learned to be careful to manage expectations."

Capital One

Using the Intranet:

Capital One is a cutting-edge company for the Information Age, offering credit cards, auto loans, home loans, small business products, healthcare financing, and savings vehicles. Started as an independent company in 1995, Capital One has quickly risen to the top of the US financial services industry, with 48.9 million customers worldwide and managed loans totaling \$83 billion.

Design Team:

In-house, HP Consulting, Object Systems Group (OSG), Aquent, Deloitte

Members:

Capital One: Linda Feller, portal usability specialist; Sandra Hennet, Web project manager; Catherine Murphy, portal content lead; Van Ngo, IT technical designer; Macon Pegram, IT technical designer; Rebecca Pratt, portal design lead; Christine Sauer, content process manager; David Sequeira, portal usability lead; Molly Wenzler, IT business systems analyst; Elizabeth Woodward, portal technical lead; Brian Gruber, the director of portal and productivity; Catherine Murphy, group manager for portal content and usability

Aquent: Julia Batum, Web designer; Brodie Rich, senior Web designer/information architect

HP Consulting: Janet Beyers, portal consultant

OSG: Gordon Lundy, information architect; Gary Marshall, information architect

Deloitte: Eric Wazorko, project manager

SUMMARY

Many intranet designers possess both design ingenuity and aesthetic mastery. Yet one skill is less common: the ability to take a task-based approach to design. The designers of Capital One's My One Place intranet have this gift. Throughout the site, designers concentrate on users' tasks and giving them what they need, when they need it. Further, the labels are straightforward: the designers resisted the lure of catchy phrases and obtusely named "features" or "wizards."

Homepage

If you work at Capital One, the My One Place intranet portal page is the place to be. On this single page, employees can view news from several sources and communications from Capital One executives. The latter appears in the well-placed *Leadership Information* section in the upper-left part of the page. That's an important piece of homepage real estate, and Capital One makes the most of it, using the space to list everything from bonus and awards information, to announcements encouraging employees to take advantage of tools, training, and other offerings.

Also on the homepage, the *Internal News* section houses *Capital One News*—from corporate communications—and the aptly named *News from Human Resources*.

Meanwhile, subtle advertisements appear in the upper-right part of the homepage. These ads remind users to do things such as enroll in benefits or volunteer in their community.

Other features include a stock ticker and weather reports. While a stock ticker wouldn't be suitable for every intranet, it is quite appropriate for financial services companies such as Capital One. These items are located in the lower-left part of the homepage, in a position that is easy to find, yet not intrusive.

Overall, the homepage is a customizable workspace, affording users easy access to many important features located throughout the rest of the intranet.

Pictured: The Capital One intranet portal's homepage offers employees a variety of relevant news and features, all positioned extremely effectively.

News

Clicking on a news items opens a nicely laid out news page. Above all, on these pages the text is thoroughly readable, and clearly presents each page's headline, subhead, byline, and the author's department affiliation.

A static picture enhances most news stories. When appropriate, articles instead include a play-in-place video. For example, a recent article gave employees a sneak-peek profile of a new advertising campaign—starring the now-famous band of credit card pillagers—and also included the commercial itself. This type of feature creates significant intranet draw, and also invigorates employee morale.

Where video is available, controls are arranged effectively. For example, the play button is the largest and most visible icon. Users can also stop, go forward, rewind, or adjust the volume. If users encounter video-playback problems, the page offers a quick list of ways to resolve common issues.

At the end of each article, users can rate it. This feature really engages users, asking them in bold-faced text to *Tell us what you think*. The link to the survey itself, *16-second survey*, also effectively employs information-bearing text. Such phraseology is far superior to nondescript terms, such as *More* or *Go*. More importantly, the link promises users a quick survey; who can't spare a mere sixteen seconds to answer questions? This is just one of the design team's effective techniques for not only involving users, but also continuously collecting their feedback.

The screenshot shows the Capital One intranet interface. At the top, there's a header with 'My One Place' and 'Capital One' logos, a user greeting 'Welcome, Lee M. Cardholder', and navigation links like 'Personalize', 'View Profile', and 'Change Password'. Below the header, there's a main content area with a 'Capital One News' section. The featured article is 'Visigoths Hanging Up Horned Helmets', dated June 07, 2005. It includes a video player showing a man in a Visigoth costume, text about the company's advertising campaign, and a sidebar with navigation links and a 'Question of the Week' poll.

Capital One News

Visigoths Hanging Up Horned Helmets
Ads evolving with Capital One

June 07, 2005

From: Pam Girardo, *External Communications*

The marauding band of Visigoth pillagers who have been stalking unsuspecting credit card users for the last several years are hanging up their helmets.

This development will be unveiled this week in a series of Capital One ads featuring the rowdy hoard embarking on second careers.

"The Visigoths have become advertising icons and we think these are the best spots we've ever done with them," said Bill McDonald, EVP-Brand Marketing at Capital One. "We're excited to bring them to an entertaining close."

"Our focus is now on evolving the campaign as we diversify our advertising beyond credit cards," said McDonald. "And you'll continue to see more David Spade spots that promote our No Hassle Rewards product. Spade represents the epitome of how people feel when they can't redeem their rewards, and this is really resonating with consumers."

The hoard first appeared in 2000 when Capital One launched its "What's in Your Wallet?" advertisements, a humorous, award-winning campaign using tongue-in-cheek humor to draw attention to the great value offered by the company's products -- without the hassles. In just five years, overall awareness of the Capital One brand is at 98 percent, customer response to direct mail (mail lit) has increased, and the company has more than 49 million customer accounts.

Visigoths Retire (01:15)
View the new commercial and a special look back at the havoc wrought by the Visigoths over the years.

(Video will not play at all sites or via wireless/VPN.)

1. Un-mute computer volume.
2. Press play button above.
3. Adjust volume as needed.

Tell us what you think
Rate this article using our [16-Second Survey](#).

Benefits Open Enrollment Underway
Enroll online by Nov. 12

Associate volunteers
Helping our communities

Question of the Week
Based on Mid-year, which competency are you developing?

Competency	Percentage
Communication	37%
Development	21%
Integ. Thinking	20%
Lives the Values	3%
Results Focus	12%
Teamwork	5%

Total Votes: 1568

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Pictured: This well-designed article includes text, video, and—like all content pages—an innovative, appropriately named *16-second survey* to collect feedback.

Training

Capital One offers numerous training, e-learning, and career development opportunities. All are described and supported on the intranet, specifically in the *Capital One University* section. Here, users can take self-driven online courses as well as instructor-led offerings. The page's news section also contains training-related news, including information about current and upcoming classes.

The page's FAQ helps users resolve intranet problems. While people are encouraged to use the FAQ, if they need additional help they can choose from a list of options,

including an online forum and inline links to call or email a representative. Likewise, the page also includes all of the Capital One library's contact information.

The screenshot shows the Capital One University intranet page. At the top, there's a welcome message for Lee M. Cardholder dated May 25, 2005. The navigation bar includes 'MY CAPITAL ONE' and 'MY WORK' tabs. The left sidebar has a 'PeopleFinder' search box and a list of links: 'HR for Me', 'Intranet Sites', 'Policies @ Capital One', 'Capital One University', 'Instructor-Led Courses', 'eLearning', 'Learning Tracks', 'Leaders as Teachers', 'University Library', 'Register (Learning Link)', 'News Center', and 'Manager's Toolkit'. The main content area is titled 'Capital One University' and contains several sections: 'Instructor-Led Courses' with a link to 'View by Framework' and 'View Course Calendar (Learning Link)'; 'eLearning' with links to 'Web-Based Training (WBT)', 'Audio Learning', and 'Educational Websites'; 'Learning Tracks' with links to 'Project', 'Process', 'Change', and 'More >>'; 'University News' with headlines like 'Anti-Money Laundering CBT Starts Today' and 'Become a Moneywise Instructor!'; and 'University Library' with contact information and a link to 'Details >>'. The right sidebar features a 'NEW LEARNING GUIDE' with a 'my future' graphic and a 'Contact Us' section with a 'Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)' link and contact details. At the bottom, there's a stock market ticker for COF, a weather forecast for Wednesday and Thursday, and a footer with copyright information.

Pictured: The intranet's *Capital One University* is a robust training section that includes self-help tools and links to more information.

Services and Forms

When employees need to do something, they shouldn't have to hunt far and wide to find the related form, department, or person to contact. My One Place avoids this potential problem by providing a *Services* area, with all-in-one access to most of the organization's services. The page includes:

Amenities: Special services related to Capital One, such as banking, ATM, and the *Mother's room*.

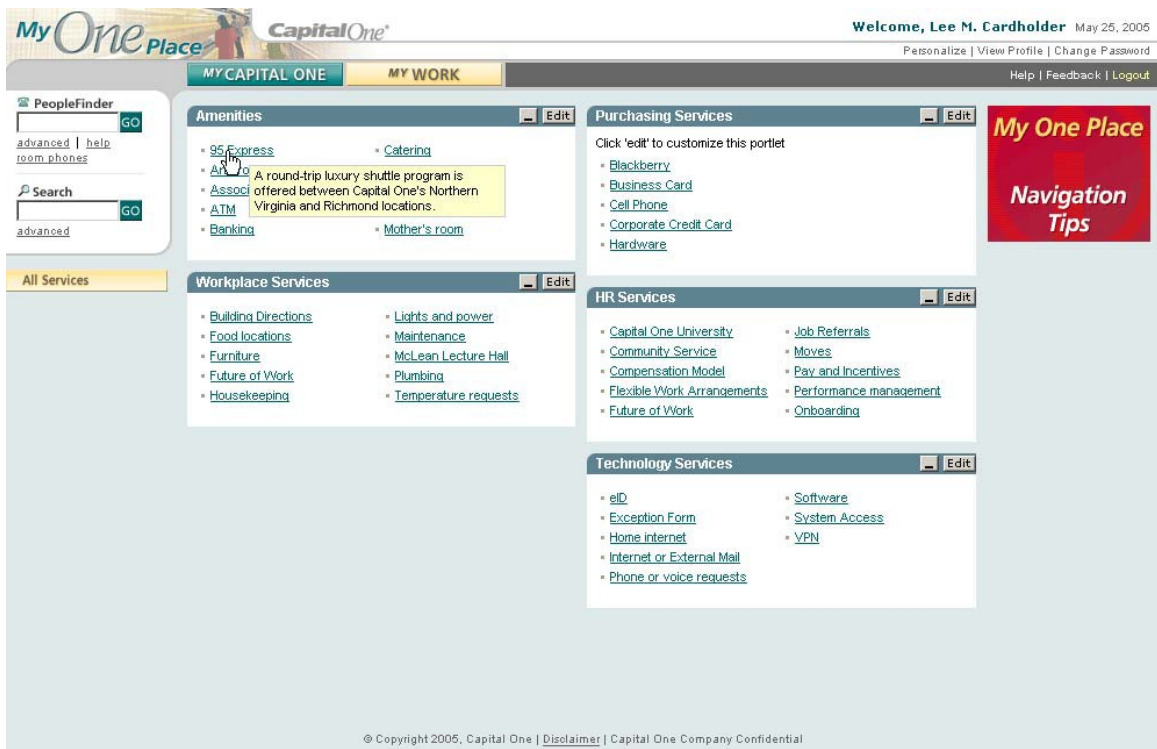
Workplace Services: Services mostly relating to facilities and physical operations, such as plumbing, furniture, and food locations.

Purchasing Services: For obtaining a corporate credit card, cell phone, or hardware.

HR Services: Access to HR-related information, including salary, moving, hiring, and training information.

Technology Services: Help for all technology issues, including software, VPN access, phone, and email.

In short, the *Services* area gives people what they want, when they need it.

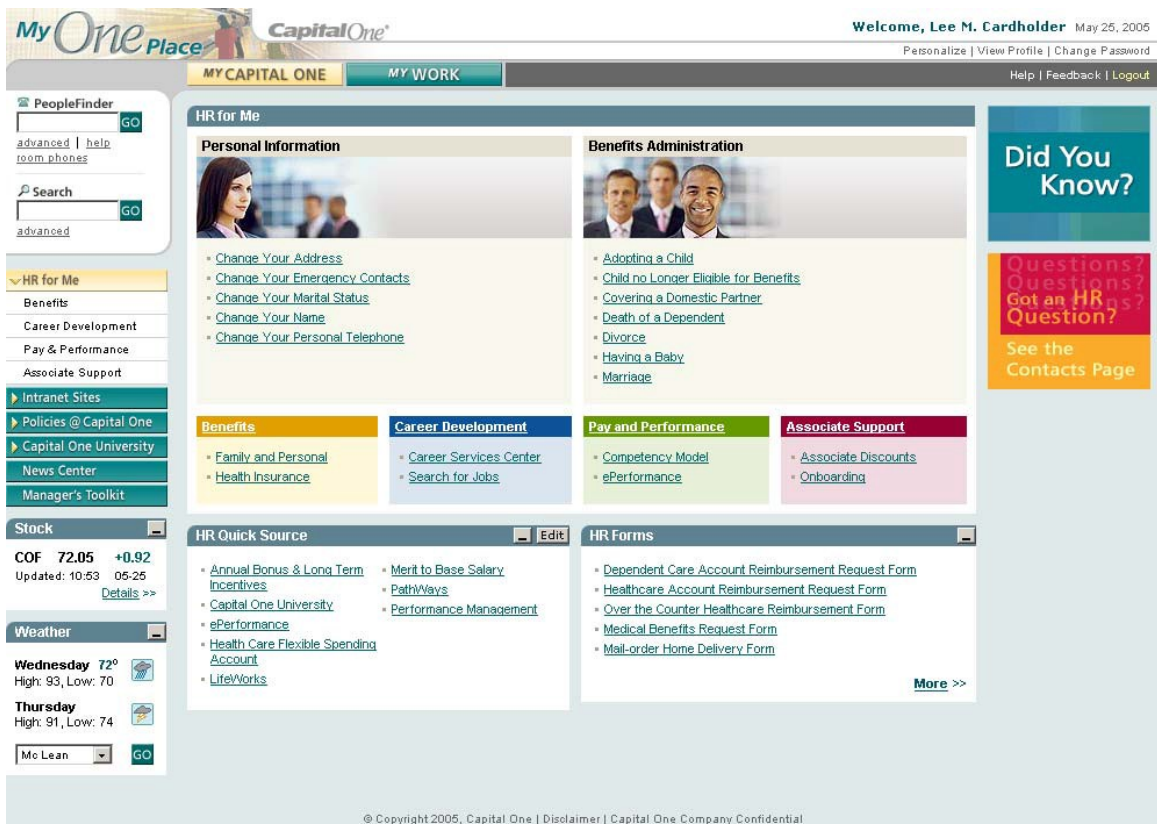


Pictured: The Capital One *Services* page contains links to most of the services an employee would need on a single page.

Giving users what they want, when they need it, is also the philosophy of the HR department's page. That's because the most basic and necessary HR-related tasks are listed right on the main HR page. Once there, users can immediately see how to update their address, emergency contacts, marital status, name, or telephone number. They can also tackle tasks related to performance, pay, training, and much more.

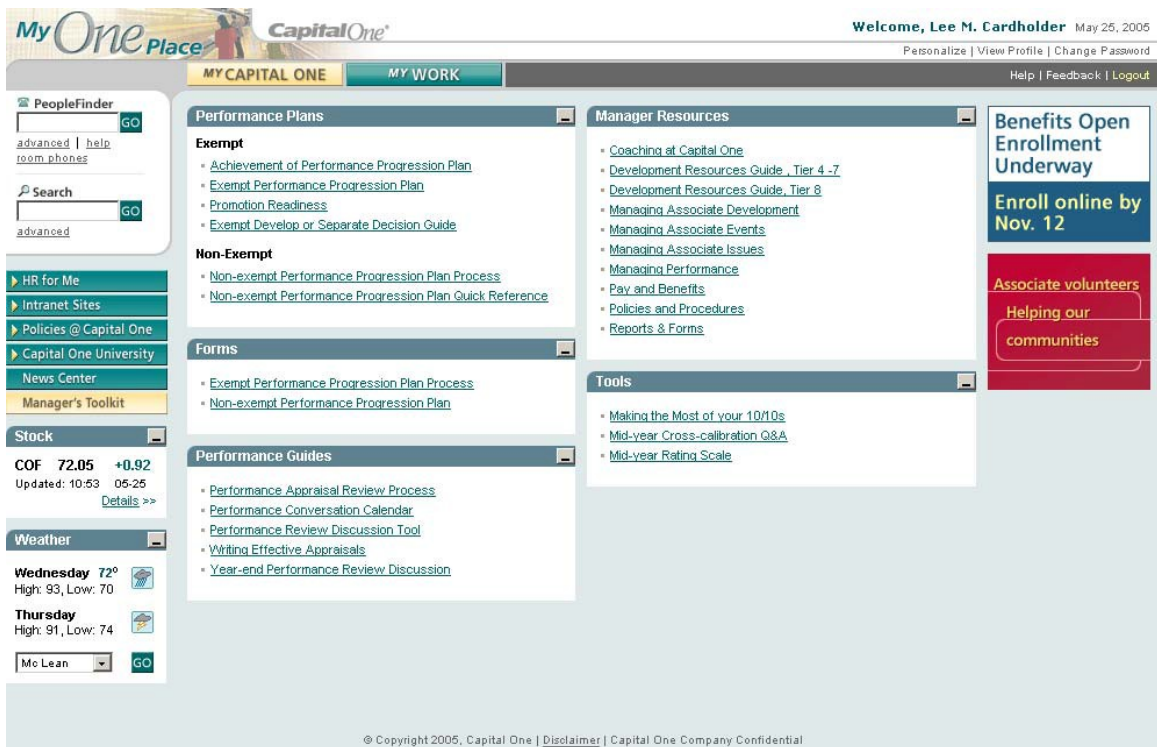
Note how links on this page describe the task a user needs to do. For example, to change your name, the link is simply *Change your name*. This straightforward language goes a long way toward ensuring that employees can easily use the intranet. By contrast, lesser designers might succumb to a catchy, yet vague phrase for the function, such as *Update Wizard*, *Quick Edit*, or *Info. Exchange*. Although these types of terms are common on intranets, users often either ignore them—because they simply don't know what they are—or else click them and end up where they don't need to be.

In short: Plain language always beats complicated language when it comes to effectively communicating how to do something, especially when it's a simple, straight-forward task.



Pictured: The HR department's landing page offers links to scores of HR-related functions, all written in simple, direct language users can understand.

Like the main *Services* and *HR* pages, the *Manager Toolkit* page consolidates management tools in one place. Such resources range from the simple (reports and forms) to the more complicated (coaching and career development).



Pictured: Managers refer to the *Manager Toolkit* to find tools related to employee supervision.

Employee Directory

After users search the employee directory, the results page displays a surprising amount of information. Primarily, the eye is drawn to the right thing: search results. If users still need help, however, they can find it in the page periphery. For example, a link to *Advanced Search* lets people achieve results that are more granular. Yet, appropriately, the link doesn't distract from the general search results.

Similarly, a legend at the top of the page denotes whether a phone number is international, or has any other—perhaps unexpected—characteristics. On the right side of the page, the *Resources* section offers an assortment of just-in-time tips and help. For example, the page includes links to international dialing codes, phone and phone-mail tips, important phone numbers, and a link to update details.

My One Place Capital One®

Welcome, Lee M. Cardholder May 25, 2005
 Personalize | View Profile | Change Password
 MY CAPITAL ONE MY WORK Help | Feedback | Logout

PeopleFinder
 advanced | help
 room phones
 Search
 advanced

HR for Me
 Intranet Sites
 Policies @ Capital One
 Capital One University
 News Center
 Manager's Toolkit

Stock
 COF 72.05 +0.92
 Updated: 10:53 05:25
 Details >>

Weather
 Wednesday 72°
 High: 93, Low: 70
 Thursday
 High: 91, Low: 74
 Mo Lean GO

PeopleFinder
Summary Results
 Can't find what you're looking for? Try [Advanced Search](#).
 Phone numbers marked with a (+) require an international dialing code.
 Phone numbers marked with an (A) identify aspect phones

247 results Page 3 of 10 pages

Smyth, Bill, 425-1781 E-mail: bill.smyth@capitalone.com	External Phone: 804-967-1781 Building: ccc
Smyth, Cecil Bond, 465-1256 E-mail: cecil.smyth@capitalone.com	External Phone: +44 (0) 20 7756 8900 Building: ldn
Smyth, Karen, 425-1781, No external calls E-mail: karen.smyth@capitalone.com	External Phone: 804-930-1781 Building: irc
Smyth, Silvia, 465-3781, *Note for Corp. Operators E-mail: silvia.smyth@capitalone.com	External Phone: +44 (0) 20 7756 8911 Building: ldn
Smyth, Jim (Italy), 481-5231 E-mail: jim.smyth@capitalone.com	External Phone: 804-934-5081 Building: hwd2
Smyth, Mary Catherine (Cathy), 450-5081 (A) E-mail: catry.smyth@capitalone.com Internal Phone: 414-3452 (Secondary)	External Phone: +39 025-8215-5231 Building: trt Building: hwd2
Smith, Maurice M., 425-1783 E-mail: maurice.smyth@capitalone.com	External Phone: 802-935-1783 Building: hwd2

247 results Page 3 of 10 pages

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Pictured: The search results page in the employee directory displays expected information about the people, but also gives relevant, just-in-time help for a number of discrete situations.

After clicking on an employee's name in the results page, users see a detailed document listing a person's name, job title, phone, email, and office location. The page also lists the employee's manager, and a *View Org Chart* link helps users visualize where the person fits in the organization.

Users can also edit their own information here by clicking *Update PeopleFinder Data*.

The screenshot displays the Capital One My One Place intranet portal. At the top, it says "Welcome, Lee M. Cardholder" with the date "May 25, 2005". Below this are links for "Personalize | View Profile | Change Password" and "Help | Feedback | Logout". The main navigation bar includes "MY CAPITAL ONE" and "MY WORK".

The left sidebar contains several sections: "PeopleFinder" with search options, "HR for Me", "Intranet Sites", "Policies @ Capital One", "Capital One University", "News Center", "Manager's Toolkit", "Stock" (showing COF 72.05 +0.92), and "Weather" (showing Wednesday 72° and Thursday 74°).

The main content area is titled "PeopleFinder" and displays details for "Smyth, Mary Catherine (Cathy)". It includes sections for "Contact Information", "Secondary Information", and "Organizational Information".

Contact Information:

- Internal Number: 450-5081
- External Number: +39 025-8215-5231
- E-mail: cathy.smyth@capitalone.com
- Building: [trnt](#)
- Floor: 2
- Cubicle: n/a
- Internal Zip: 12061-0060

Secondary Information:

- Internal Number: 414-3452
- External Number: 804-934-3452
- Building: [hwd2](#)

Organizational Information:

- Job Title: [Development Specialist](#)
- Employee Type: Associate
- Department: Credit Development
- Department ID: 15813
- Manager: [Linda Ringwood](#)
- Admin Assistant: [Tina Rice](#)

At the bottom of the main content area, there is a link to "View Org Chart" and a "Back to summary page" link. A footer note says "Can't find what you're looking for? Try [Advanced Search](#). Incorrect Information? [Update PeopleFinder Data](#)."

The right sidebar contains "Resources" and "Phone Tips" sections with various links.

At the bottom of the page, it says "© Copyright 2005, Capital One | [Disclaimer](#) | Capital One Company Confidential".

Pictured: An employee's details page contains all relevant contact and organizational information, along with additional resources and a link to view the employee's location on the company organizational chart.

As the Capital One intranet demonstrates, intranet design considerations can range far beyond mere aesthetics and raw lists of features. Yet the employee-oriented polish on the Capital One intranet isn't just about designers offering a "nice-to-have" feature; users prize it. Indeed, in multiple satisfaction surveys, users continually express approval for the site's easy-to-use, undemanding ethos.

URL AND ACCESS

The URL for Capital One's My One Place intranet portal is <http://portal>. It's the default homepage for all employees' browsers.

In addition, "we have recently added single sign-on to My One Place, a project we call 'Portal SpeedPass,'" says Brian Gruber, the director of Capital One's portal and productivity. Once users log on to their PCs, the SpeedPass automatically launches and logs them into My One Place and allows automatic access to numerous applications.

On-the-go employees can access the portal via a VPN.

So far, the portal is only designed for use on a PC. "The portal is viewable on BlackBerry mobile devices and on Macintosh computers, but has not been optimized for either of these," notes Elizabeth Woodward, the group manager for the Capital One portal.

CONTENT MANAGEMENT

For managing content, Capital One uses Fatwire 5.0. "We implemented this system in early 2002, before we started our portal project," notes Gruber. The software runs

on Sun servers. The HR department oversees the “content experience,” he says, “to ensure high-quality content that is consistent and well-written” using standards it agreed upon with the corporate communications department. The portal has always been a collaboration—primarily between those two departments. Not coincidentally, both also manage a variety of portlets and channels. For example, corporate communications maintains the *Capital One News*, *Spotlight*, and *Leadership Information* portlets, while HR owns such channels as *HR for Me* and *Capital One University*, plus the *News from HR* portlet.

“The partnership that we have between HR and corporate communications has allowed us to implement content standards and guidelines that work across our portal content areas” says Rebecca Pratt, who was the portal design lead and now manages much of Capital One’s internal communications. “Having both groups represented on the portal content team means that we can quickly identify and respond to gaps in our guidelines. It also enables us to make joint decisions about when to allow content owners to deviate from the guidelines. The effect is that there is consistency across content and a clear governance for content-related decisions.”

A content guide, created in-house, helps direct departments that want to update their parts of the portal. Content standards are also useful when adding new portal sections. “When building any new spaces in the portal, we adhere to our content standards and guidelines, with rare exceptions,” says Catherine Murphy, the group manager for Capital One portal’s content and usability.

Design templates ensure consistent presentation of navigation and content and, on the whole, they work quite effectively, says Murphy. “It hasn’t been as difficult as expected because we are involved in implementation of all content.” Indeed, the portal team keeps a close watch on content through constant auditing and, sometimes, through specific suggestions. In the future, “we plan to run an annual audit of content to determine inactivity. This will help us ensure content remains fresh.”

Even so, fostering high-quality content has become more difficult. “Going back to experienced site owners and recommending changes on an evolved site is more difficult than bringing a new site up and training a new site owner to apply our standards,” notes Murphy.

Content Server
Server Name: intranetcms

User: elizabeth.woodward Role: Editor, Author, Approver Site: PortalHR

Compliance: Managers of associates who do not complete the training will be notified.

Related Article: [Fair Lending Awareness Training Starts Today/10-10-05](#)

Link Text:

Byline:

Article Date: 2005-10-16 19:46:40

Live Date: 2005-10-16 19:46:40

Due Date: 2005-11-04 23:59:59

Expire Date: 2005-11-07 00:00:01

Copyright:

Editor's Notes:

Keyword:

Company: CF4;CF9;COF;CFO;CF1;CF8;CFE;CFS;IT2;IN1;CF5;CF2;CF3;OTHER

Organization: AL;UCO;CDB;COH;CRL;CRG;CRS;CRM;DBK;DB;THB;RES;ES;GCD;GFI;GFS;HLX;HBB;HIB;HUR;HR;ITE;PAS;PSE;SAV;SOA;SSV;UCC;OTHER

Function:

Metro Area: BOI;BOS;DFW;FAXX;PNOX;RIC;SAN;SOUX;TPA;OTHER

Building:

Tier: N;1;2;3;4;5;6;7;8;M;S;OTHER

Job Type: TRUE;FALSE;OTHER

Employee Status: F;P

Priority: normal

Vanity URL: AI/Article/Fair_Lending_Training_101605

Related: No Related Assets

Transmitted: Oct 16, 2005 7:46:40 PM

Modified: Oct 17, 2005 8:14:30 AM by rob.morano

Pictured: All of Capital One's articles, links, and images are managed from its Fatwire CMS. Content managers can also tweak six attributes (including location, department, and level) to aim content at appropriate users—Capital One's version of a personalized portal. In any piece of content, content managers can also reference related articles by including their CMS link in the relevant space (at top of page).

TECHNOLOGY

Capital One's portal technology is BEA Portal 8.0. As noted above, Fatwire 5.0 handles content management. For searching, the portal uses a recent version of Verity Ultraseek.

The portal team also uses various other tools: ClearCase for configuration management, Test Director for test management, and ClearQuest for defect tracking. Production monitoring tools include Prism, Topaz, and Visual Sciences.

The portal team continues to tweak the technology. "We have made some configuration changes in terms of how BEA and Fatwire interact as part of our work to stabilize and speed up the portal," notes Gruber.

In addition, says Woodward, "we have created a content repository that separates the management of content by content authors from the production delivery to My One Place. Both of these [have helped] contribute to high stability, lower maintenance, and improved user experience since the initial portal launch."

GOALS AND CONSTRAINTS

Goals:

- Make the portal the primary communications tool, but deliver only relevant, targeted information to users.
- Improve collaboration and knowledge-sharing.

- Improve users' productivity, especially for common services from the HR, real estate, IT, and supply chain departments.
- Technically, continue to improve the portal's speed and stability.
- Improve content quantity, quality, and consistency.

Constraints:

- Limited time and budget.
- The need to master new portal technology; there's always a learning curve.
- A surfeit of good ideas, and not enough time or money to implement them all.
- Lack of sufficient employee resources and skills.
- The need to transition the organization to one portal, yet not disenfranchise users accustomed to intranets and information architectures that basically worked for them.

BASIC INTRANET FEATURES

The portal offers a large amount of information for Capital One employees, grouped by the tasks they need to accomplish. For example, *HR for Me* includes all the HR information and links a user needs. Overall, the portal provides access to 130 different services.

In addition, the portal gives users a customizable list of *Quick links*, plus access to various types of news and online courses, local weather listings, and a library of policies. Users can also provide feedback about any portal page or news article, and respond to portal surveys.

USERS

Capital One's portal, My One Place, is accessible to 12,500 employees, contractors, and consultants, which includes everyone at the company's locations in the US, the UK, and Canada. By 2006, Capital One plans to expand the portal to employees of Hibernia Bank, which it recently acquired. That will boost portal access to a total of 20,000 users.

USER TASKS

The most typical user tasks include:

- Find other employees, including contact information, location, and information about their job position
- Search for corporate information
- Access corporate, industry, and local news, including archives of past stories
- Use portal-based tools needed to accomplish daily work
- Locate and enroll in training through the corporate university
- Find information about HR programs and policies

- Find and read corporate policies
- View HR metrics
- Access more than 130 corporate services from the HR, real estate, IT, and supply chain departments

BACKGROUND

Plans to create the now-current portal first began in 2002. “Capital One has had an intranet for many years,” notes Gruber. Even so, “in 2002, as we were completing an enterprise-wide ERP implementation, we had the vision to move to a dynamic, personalized portal,” he says.

Indeed, the PeopleSoft ERP implementation, including self-service HR tools for employees, laid the foundation for moving to a portal. The HR department also began planning knowledge management and organizational productivity projects. At the same time, the corporate communications department began investigating how its new CMS could better target users with content.

THE One PLACE

Phonebook Go Search Go Quick Links Select a link... Help Capital One

Your Intranet

- HR for Managers**
Electronically Process Associate Data Changes, Pay Changes, and more...
- HR for Me**
Update your Address and Benefits, View your Personalized HR Profile, and more...
- Your Work**
Take Vacation, Refer a Qualified Individual, and more...
- Your Career**
Pay, Performance Management, and more...
- Your Benefits**
Health, Savings Plan, Time Off, and more...
- Your Life**
Having a Baby, Getting Married, and more...

What's New Online

- [ePerformance](#)
- [Spam Filtering](#)
- [Policies@CapitalOne](#)
- [Work Status Hotline](#)

Business in the Community AWARDS 2005

Capital One News

[ARCHIVES](#)

- [Meet Hibernia: Why the Deal Makes Sense](#)**
8/12/05 - Second in a series about the bank
- [My One Place Unavailable Tuesday Evening](#)**
8/16/05 - Major systems still accessible
- [Boost Your Communication Skills](#)**
8/11/05 - Part I in competency series
- [Capital One Kids Day Event Draws 4,000](#)**
8/11/05 - Aids Richmond Boys & Girls Clubs
- ['Va. Business' Magazine Profiles West](#)**
8/10/05 - COF exec and four others featured
- [Call HR Help Center at New Numbers](#)**
8/10/05 - Start using x6600 on Aug. 16
- [Helping Nonprofits Help Themselves](#)**
8/10/05 - COF launches grant program
- [Software Usage Standard Rolling Out](#)**
8/10/05 - Review and accept agreement
- [No Medical Cost Increases in 2006](#)**
8/10/05 - Benefit plans remain unchanged
- [UK Wins 'Healthy Communities' Award](#)**
7/21/05 - Child tracking system applauded

Stock 84.75 -0.05 [Details](#)
Last updated: 02:37 PM 08/19/05

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Pictured: Capital One's original intranet. The site was mainly used to deliver news, but lacked targeted content, personalization, application integration, and security.

"The portal initiative began in late 2002, and I was given leadership of the team in early 2003," says Gruber. From the start, "we brought our goals of direct access, productivity, knowledge management, and improved content under one team." While organizationally, the HR department took ownership of the portal, corporate communications and IT also participated strongly, and that arrangement continues to this day.

DESIGN PROCESS AND USABILITY ACTIVITIES

Launching the New Portal

To develop the portal, Capital One organized a development team: HP Consulting, to conduct the preliminary studies on translating the old intranet into a new portal framework; Object Systems Group, to design the information architecture; Aquent, to design the presentation layer; and Deloitte, to build the navigation and help design the information architecture. Capital One employees handled all related project management work.

With the team in place, portal development began immediately. “In 2003, we laid our groundwork—by defining business requirements, choosing software, and completing our information architecture [IA]—then we delivered a pilot portal to our first 200 users in February 2004,” says Gruber. That rollout “was mostly done to prove that we could get the infrastructure to work. But it also served the purpose of getting our IA and our designs into production, as the best test for these is using them.”

Subsequently, “we went live to a larger audience in a staged release between May and September 2004,” says Gruber. “This included building out more portlets and adding more content, but no change in design.” By the end of September 2004, Capital One had more than 10,000 portal users.

For the new portal, Capital One chose to eschew personalization at the individual level in favor of targeting information to groups of users. This functionality mirrors and indeed replaces the organization’s previous approach to mass-information dissemination: sending emails targeted to specific subsets of employees.

“While all associates have access to the same My One Place, they will have different, targeted experiences with the system, based on their location and role,” says Gruber. Targeting involves six attributes, including location, department, and level, as well as “some role-based attributes, such as whether or not the customer is an associate, or manages others,” says Gruber. “Interestingly, this parallels part of how Capital One does business: leveraging an information-based strategy to make the right offer to the right customer, at the right time and the right price.”

Using the portal to target information allowed Capital One to stop using email for that purpose, which had immediate benefits. “Giving users less—but more relevant—information makes a big difference in their productivity,” notes Gruber. Furthermore, targeting information on the portal increases its overall usefulness. “Targeting allows us to make My One Place equally relevant to the executive and the administrative assistant.”

From September 2004 to April 2005, the design team focused its efforts on three things. “The first was change management, with the goal being increased adoption and use of My One Place. The second was improving the underlying infrastructure, as we found our biggest issues were with speed, scalability, and stability. Our third area of focus was on listening to our users. We did extensive surveys, held focus groups, sought comments, did interviews with associates at all levels, and responded to feedback from the ‘feedback’ channel on the portal. We learned what people liked and disliked, and what new things they wanted to see,” says Gruber.

From that feedback, the design team discovered users’ five biggest portal pet peeves:

- Logging in

- The *PeopleFinder* search
- The portal's speed
- The search engine
- The surfeit of homepage content

The design team began addressing each problem. Thanks to tweaks of the portal and CMS software, by April 2005, it had improved site speed and stability. Then, in May and June, "we focused on content, creating new content like the *Capital One University* site, revamping content like the *HR for Me* channel, and redesigning the presentation of news on the homepage," says Gruber. These changes improved content quality and consistency, and also reduced the amount of homepage content.

From August to September 2005, the team tackled the final two outstanding usability issues. To address users' log-on complaints, it implemented *Portal SpeedPass* to automatically log users onto the portal and more than twenty related applications once they've logged into the network. "This is effectively single sign-on for the portal, and is based on the log-in that everyone has to do on their PC each morning," Gruber says.

Overall, Capital One moved quickly from idea, to design, to launch. "Once we found the right sponsor and had the right support, it took us ten months to design and build our portal and deliver our pilot phase," says Gruber. "It took a further seven months to fully complete our production rollout."

First Major Redesign

For the portal's first major redesign, things also moved quickly. "The redesign took only about three months from concept to delivery, and that timeline included work on our infrastructure," he says. "Right now, we deliver a new release of My One Place every four to six weeks."

One crucial technique for refining the portal through redesigns is watching what users say about the portal, as well as how they actually use it. "We review our feedback [and] user activity via metrics, and focus group data," says Gruber. "We have also done some one-on-one activities with key users, such as administrative assistants and executives," says Murphy. The bottom of every portal page also includes a feedback button, which many employees use, and the portal team follows the feedback closely.



Pictured: This Visual Sciences tool helps the portal team harvest My One Place metrics to see how employees are actually using the portal. (Note: metrics displayed are for illustration purposes only.)

"We are always willing to adapt based upon feedback—which associates submit online and through user focus groups," says Murphy. "We also have conducted 'Yousability Fairs' that reach out to our associates and managers and collect feedback. Our line-of-business communicators are another influential group that helps us set and adapt our guidelines and standards."

Other rich sources of information, notes Gruber, are conferences and published benchmark studies. "We attend a few conferences each year to learn from others, and are also part of a benchmarking group where we share and learn from others."

TIMELINE

- Early 2002: Implemented Fatwire software for content management.
- Late 2002: Launched a project—driven by the HR department—to create a single, company-wide portal.
- 2003: Intranet design team articulated the portal's business requirements, selected software, and designed information architecture.
- February 2004: Launched portal pilot for 200 users.
- May–September 2004: Portal rollout continued, reaching a total of 10,000 users. Subsequently, portal team size decreased as it transitioned to more of a content-management role.
- April 2005: Improved the portal's speed and stability.

- May 2005: Redesigned homepage and launched a new Capital One University channel.
- June 2005: Launched the redesigned HR for Me; My One Place available to the Auto Finance business.
- August 2005: Launched Services functionality (access to 130 services centralized in one portal location).
- September 2005: Released SpeedPass (automatic portal log-in) to initial user group.
- October 2005: Upgraded search engine and launched Worklist functionality; My One Place available to European businesses.

RESULTS

The principle benefit of having a new portal is simple: It offers one homepage for all of Capital One. "My One Place is the primary source for organizational news, both from corporate communications and from HR. It is the primary place, through our *PeopleFinder* tool, that associates find phone numbers, locations, directions, and organizational information. It is the home for key HR content about benefits, career development, pay and performance, and associate relations. My One Place houses the *Capital One University* site, which is the primary interface into our training and development organization. Other key tasks for which associates use the portal include accessing 130 different services, plus our corporate policy directory," notes Gruber.

The screenshot displays the Capital One My One Place portal interface. At the top, it says "Welcome, Sean Winter" with the date "October 17, 2005". Below this are navigation tabs for "MY CAPITAL ONE" and "MY WORK". The main content area is titled "PeopleFinder" and shows search results for "Gruber, Brian".

Contact Information:

- Internal Number: 804-240-8820
- External Number: 804-240-8820
- E-mail: brian.gruber@capitalone.com
- Building: [WSTCRKBLD7](#)
- Floor: 04
- Cubicle: 4534
- Internal Zip: 12077-0470

Secondary Information:

- Internal Number: 431-5677
- External Number: (804)284-5677
- Building: [WSTCRKBLD7](#)

Organizational Information:

- Job Title: Director, HR
- Employee Type: Associate
- Department: Portal
- Department ID: 11517
- Manager: [Krey, Douglas](#)
- Admin Assistant: [Dunbar, Holly](#)

On the right side, there are sections for "Resources" (including links like Meridian Mail Tips, International Dialing Codes, etc.) and "Phone Tips" (including links like CallPilot At A Glance, Conference Room Phones, etc.).

At the bottom of the page, it says "© Copyright 2005, Capital One | [Disclaimer](#) | Capital One Company Confidential".

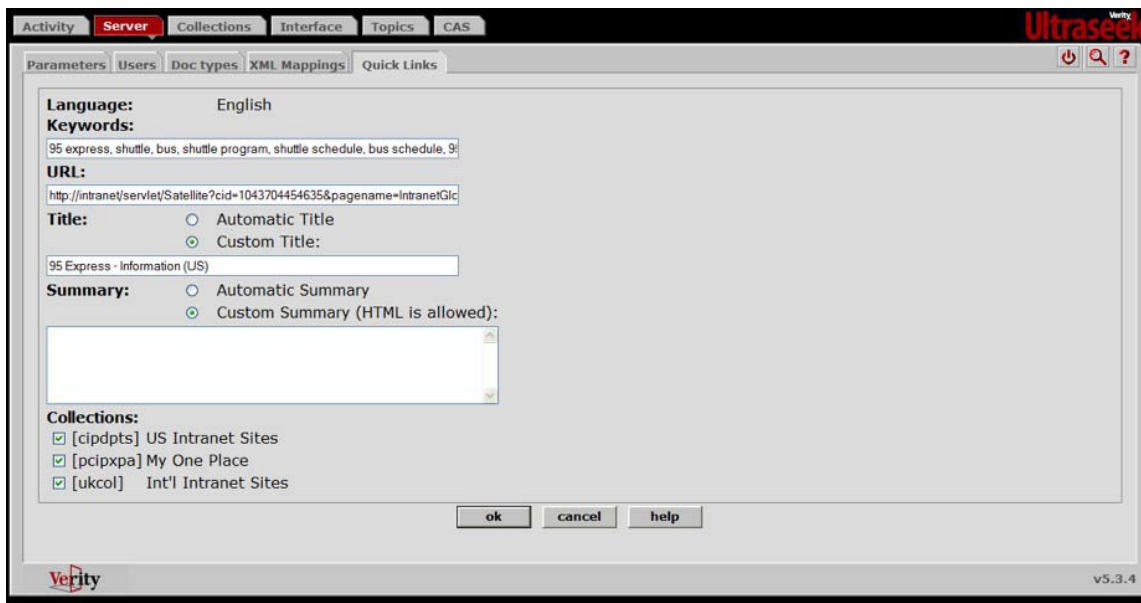
Pictured: A results screen from Capital One's redesigned employee directory, *PeopleFinder*, which provides location information, job role, manager, and administrative assistant contact information. One especially useful feature is the link after "building," which leads to driving directions.

The portal redesign also addressed two of users' biggest complaints: the lack of single sign-on, and the poor quality of search engine results. Now, the portal's *SpeedPass* provides single sign-on and is available to 3,600 users. "It has been a huge hit," notes Gruber. In fact, post-redesign user surveys and interviews found a staggering 100% satisfaction rate. Furthermore, "users tell us they now use My One Place more frequently." Thus, the *SpeedPass* rollout will continue, with the goal of offering it to all users by early 2006.

Gruber says the redesigned portal also offers "vastly improved" search capabilities. While portal search is powered by a Verity search engine, "we found that our tool was outdated and searched only a fraction of the content we had available." So the portal team upgraded the search engine to the latest version, tweaked the search algorithm, tripled the amount of content that was available, and added other desirable functionality, such as *Did You Mean?* responses to increase the likelihood of a successful search.

The screenshot displays the Capital One My One Place portal. At the top, a navigation bar includes "MY CAPITAL ONE" and "MY WORK" tabs. A user is logged in as "Lee M. Cardholder" on May 25, 2005. The main content area features an "Advanced Search" section with multiple search criteria fields, including "For documents that" and "Dated". The search results are displayed as a table with columns for "10", "Sorted by relevance", and "with summaries". A "Search" button is located at the bottom of the search section. On the left side, there are links to "PeopleFinder", "HR for Me", "Intranet Sites", "Policies @ Capital One", "Capital One University", "News Center", and "Manager's Toolkit". On the right side, there is a "Search Help" section with links to "Search these results", "General search methods", "Refining your query", "Search Syntax Summary", "Special Searches", "Meta Tags", and "About Verity Search". A "Search Tips" section provides a tip on restricting search to the title of a document and an example: "title: 'Take the all-associate survey'".

Pictured: To improve search results, the portal team upgraded to the latest version of the Verity search engine, added more indexed content, and also provided users with *Did You Mean?* responses to increase the likelihood of a successful search.



Pictured: Behind the scenes, this tool allows content managers to manage keywords for content and boost the search engine's effectiveness.

The portal team's work on speed and stability also paid off, with the portal's speed increasing by 80% from January to October 2005. The site also maintained an uptime of 99.8% or better for each of the first six months in a row.

Those improvements helped drive a 22% improvement in user satisfaction, as measured by user-satisfaction surveys conducted in October 2004 and May 2005.

Tweaking content on the homepage and on the HR content channel, and improving the search engine, all fostered a dramatic increase in portal use. "In December 2004, we averaged 40,400 page views per day," says Gruber. "By June 2005 our average was up to 57,100 page views per day, and in November it had increased to 72,300 page views per day." Overall, that's a 79% increase in portal use in eleven months. Today 99.3% of Capital One's professional staff uses the portal at least once per day, and an average user logs 3.5 days per week on the portal.

Even with all of the changes, however, the portal still largely rests on the foundational designs and information architecture created very early in the project. "At the highest level, these designs work well for our users, which I think shows that the intense efforts we put into our pre-production design was well spent and successful," says Gruber.

The portal is especially useful for helping new employees acclimate to the organization, though mostly as an adjunct to other training. "We do provide new-hire support materials through My One Place, but because we have a very robust new-hire orientation program, including an instructor-led training session, we've found that new hires mainly rely on My One Place for support once they've gone through this training," notes Murphy.

Training for new managers, however, is more explicitly focused on the portal. "This helps new managers become familiar with all the tools and systems that will be critical to their new role," she says.

Finding New Business Uses for the Portal

With the portal now live, employees are constantly discovering new uses for it. “A great example of how people think about leveraging the portal came about after a Diversity Forum, attended by about 600 associates. The presentation was by James Surowiecki, who discussed his book, *The Wisdom of Crowds*. Basically, he detailed how a group composed of many people, even non-experts, makes better decisions than a very small team of experts,” says Murphy. “After the presentation, at a lunch attended by the author and about twenty-five other people, the idea was brought up—not by a portal team member, but by several others—to use My One Place and our *Question of the week* feature to help guide decisions at Capital One. So the next week, we put up a question asking which credit card features—a big part of our business—were the most useful to them.” In other words, with the portal, Capital One has gained a useful mechanism for gathering data to help guide corporate thinking.

Users also provide the design team with reality checks. For example, even though the portal includes a wealth of features, the team learned that not everyone knows about them all. Take, for example, the results of a focus group on HR content. While users in general found the tool being tested extremely valuable, “the biggest lesson learned for the portal team and those attending the focus group was that not everyone has learned about all the useful tools on My One Place.” In focus groups, participants often suggest creating a specific tool for the portal, only to be shown that it already existed. “At the end of one focus group, one very vocal attendee said, ‘I’m not sure you need to change a thing! I’ve learned so much today,’” says Murphy. As a result, “we know we now need to focus as much attention on educating users on those existing My One Place tools as we go on rolling out new tools.”

Team Changes

Post-portal rollout, the portal design team has changed in two significant ways. First, it’s smaller. “We are smaller primarily because the biggest components of our infrastructure are built and functioning smoothly,” says Gruber. “That said, we do continue to develop new functionality, improve content and navigation, integrate applications and work, and expand to provide services to new audiences.”

Currently the portal team includes twenty-five “full-time equivalents,” notes Gruber, adding that the mix of employees and contractors are drawn from IT, HR, and corporate communications. “These team members perform a diverse range of functions, including design, development, and testing; performance monitoring; content authoring; and listening to customers and conducting usability testing.”

The other significant portal team change, post-implementation, is just that “the team has become more operational,” he says. “Now that we have a working portal that is full of content, we have to spend more of our time managing the content and ensuring an outstanding user experience for our customers. This includes regular content audits, managing search, checking links, and regularly conducting ‘customer listening’ efforts to ensure that we are continuously improving the usability and customer experience of the portal.”

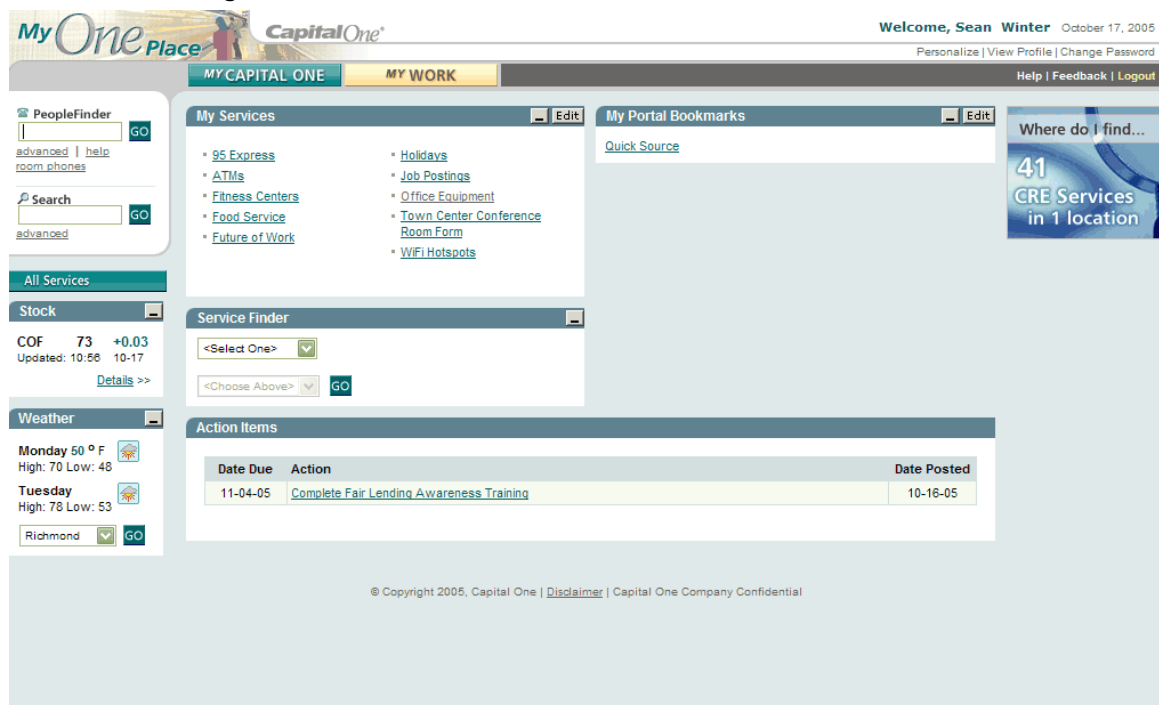
While Capital One doesn’t have specific information about how much it budgets for the portal team’s ongoing training, Gruber notes that staff development is an organization-wide aptitude. “Capital One has been named a ‘top 100’ training organization by *Training Magazine* five years in a row,” says Gruber, adding that the company has made the top 25 each year, and was ranked 18th in 2005. Such training tenets apply equally to the portal team.

Future Portal Plans

Going forward, the portal team has an ambitious agenda for adding portal improvements. They recently began offering the portal to employees based in Britain. Soon, the portal will also feature two new tabs. *My Organization* will house departmental news. “This will distribute ownership of content to the communicators in each of Capital One’s major departments and lines of business,” says Gruber. Meanwhile, the *My Community* tab will introduce communities of practice to “support specific roles in the company, such as project manager.”

Beyond the new tabs, he says, “we are also focused on bringing more work tasks into the portal, including creating an in-box for workflow tasks, and integrating with such things as our document management system,” he says. Today, business applications are largely absent from the portal—though the portal is a gateway to such applications—since the team initially focused its portal efforts on “content, connections, information, development, learning, and providing tools to managers.” In other words, the current portal is young.

Beginning in 2006, “we do plan, over time, to move more work tasks into the portal,” Gruber says. One early example is the now-live *Action Items* portlet on *My Workspace*, which collects various kinds of content from around the portal in one location, allowing users to then act on it.



Pictured: The *My Work* tab aggregates tasks and work-specific tools for portal users. Currently, most business applications don’t live on the portal, but new functionality such as the *Action Items* portlet illustrates how future portal iterations will continue to bring business tools and applications into the portal.

The design team will also soon revisit the homepage design, with the goal being to better visually differentiate “what requires action, versus what is informational,” says Gruber.

LESSONS LEARNED

Insights from Brian Gruber:

Invest time upfront to get a great, usable design. “While we have made a lot of changes along the way, they haven’t been deep architectural changes, and our design has stood the test of time. In fact, having this solid, core design has let us move more quickly with our other changes, and it keeps things consistent for our users. Having consistent navigation also helps them adapt to the changes more quickly.”

Address governance from the start. “We are committed to having a positive, consistent experience for users, which requires strong governance. My advice: implement governance from the very beginning of the project. For example, we built My One Place thanks to a great partnership with corporate communications and IT, yet we initially made clear exactly who owned what. Without this clarity, people get used to doing things their own way, and that leads to an inconsistent user experience, plus inevitable headaches later. So now, as we are bringing in a large amount of new content from other departments and lines of business, we have articulated a clear structure and a sound set of guidelines for how we will govern content on My One Place.”

Remember that everyone works differently. “One of the things that surprised me: how differently people work. In particular, making design decisions based on my own work habits—that would be a bad idea. There is no one, prototypical worker, and perhaps I’ve been most surprised by just how widely users’ responses to new designs and changes has been. With most releases, we get responses from all over the spectrum.”

Successful designs are influenced by listening to many users. “Good design requires input from a broad cross-section of our users. We do this through focus groups and user sessions, and garner invaluable feedback that helps us hit the mark with our designs far better than any decisions we make on our own.”

Many small problems can add up to a major problem. “A lot of small issues can be as bad as, or worse than, a major flaw. For example, we went live with a working portal that had no dramatic flaws, but did have a lot of small issues. None of the issues were show-stoppers on their own, but the combination of all the small things impacted our users worse than having one big flaw. We had to address these issues before we were able to really move forward and get our users excited about the portal. When we did address them, however, the portal really began to take off.”

IBM Corporation

Using the Intranet:

IBM is the world's largest information technology company, with eighty years of leadership in helping businesses innovate. Drawing on resources from across IBM and key IBM Business Partners, the company offers a wide range of services, solutions, and technologies that enable clients—large and small—to take full advantage of the on-demand business era. IBM has approximately 329,000 employees in seventy-five countries and serves clients in 174 countries. The company's employees speak more than 165 languages.

Design Team:

In-house and RSCG 4D

Members:

IBM's User Experience Team: Maria Arbusto, director of user experience; Jason Blackwell, human factors and usability engineer; Nancy Bliss, program manager for user experience/content integration; LaMana Donadelle, information architect; Abigail Lewis-Bowen, intranet standards for Web design & development; Ed McFadden, user-centered design; Sarah Goldman, taxonomy integration; Lauren Murphy, human factors and usability engineer; Chris Pietras, human factors and usability engineer; Wendi Pohs, search and taxonomy integration; Matt Starr, human factors and usability engineer; Simon Ward, intranet standards; Karen Wilson, human factors and usability engineer; Mark Wise, human factors and usability engineer

Euro RSCG 4D: Frederic Bonn, creative director; Matt Stark, account director; Victor Sie, senior art director; Daniel Cardenas, senior UI programmer; Gita Pabla, art director; Imari Oliver, project manager

SUMMARY

International Business Machines (IBM) has approximately 329,000 employees—enough to populate a small city. Based in seventy-five countries and speaking more than 165 languages, all of these citizens use the IBM intranet.

At a large and varied organization such as IBM, maintaining one intranet that uses the same design, templates, search, and navigation is a tremendous challenge. The designers of IBM's intranet, the w3 On Demand Workplace (ODW), take an aggressive, yet realistic approach to implementing consistent design. They created and enforce meticulous intranet design standards, while respecting the intranet as a series of portals and portlets. To deliver the right information to the right people, they employ detailed personalization.

Homepage

The w3 ODW homepage is a doorway to IBM's vast and varied internal online resources. This flexible portal/portlet design offers news and role-specific portlets. Twenty portlets encompass news, content, and applications for all employees.

The *News* section's *Top Stories* area offers internal news features focused on IBM, their competitors, and the industry. Headlines are clearly written links, and a brief description follows each headline to help users choose relevant stories. One especially innovative feature is how the intranet helps users select articles. Indeed, each article's target audience is defined and appears in brackets just after the article description. While the reason for doing this may have been to help users, having an audience predefined (or at least somewhat defined), is also extremely helpful for an intranet's writers and editors.

Nearby, the *In the News* section displays external features that are predominantly about IBM. Providing the source of the article (here, in brackets after the headline), is always useful; it helps users judge a piece's credibility.

The search function (in this case, a portlet) appears in the right column area. At the top of this space is most large organizations' intranet killer app: the employee directory. In this case, the employee directory is known as *BluePages* and the portlet is, appropriately, colored blue. Here, users can simply type a name, or they can choose further options such as searching by departments. The *Other Searches* section allows users to further specify search variables. Users also have the option to choose which search is performed by default, and which additional searches will appear in the search portlet. *Advanced search* helps users further refine their search. At most organizations, having all these features might constitute employee-search overkill, but when you're facing hundreds of thousands of names, taking a moment to further prepare a search can be effective.

With so many intranet pages and sections, it could be difficult for users to keep up with changes and new content additions. Accordingly, the *What's new* portlet keeps users apprised of new intranet portlets, content, applications, and links.

The *Essential Links* portlet pushes recommended links to users based on their profile settings. Users can also add their own links.

Job-specific portlets are delivered to employees who work in areas such as finance, sales, and management.

What's new | Edit | - | ?

Essential links

BT WorkPlace
The BT WorkPlace is a new web-based, resource for BT/CIO/Enterprise Employee Tools such as BTMT, STMT Reports, Web Templates, Calendars, and more!
[Add link](#)

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- [UCD](#)
- [Assets & Expenses](#)
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New RFID technology solution keeps soldiers safe. [Profiled for Aerospace & Defense]


IBM streamlines OSS review
New process impacts how we sell, perform, deliver services. [Profiled for IGS]

Nothing succeeds like access
IBM makes open source browser open to more users. [Profiled for all IBM]

THINK back to 1937
w3 goes back in time to explore early perspectives on innovation. [Profiled for all IBM]

How it works: SOA
Service-oriented architecture realizes the promise of on demand by making companies more agile, responsive. [Profiled for all IBM]

In the news [Past 7 days >](#)

IBM donates laptops, software to genome project
Scientists collecting DNA will be able to transmit samples and blog their experiences without leaving their remote posts. [c/net]

Media Snapshot - August 17
Feds to use IBM supercomputer for research. Hewlett-Packard skirts tech woes. EMC agrees to buy closely held vendor of storage software.

Media Snapshot - August 16
IBM helps Firefox reach disabled. PC sales push Gateway to profit. Agilent unveils restructuring plan.

IBM smart tags
Help Toyota customize its cars. [Investor's Business Daily]

IBM brains capture a PC's soul
Researchers at IBM test the future of computing. [CNET]

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BluePages

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- ☐ You & IBM
- ☐ w3 Standards

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[Advanced search](#)

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Symbol	Current	+/-
IBM	81.69	+0.39
CSC	44.62	+0.52
EDS	22.17	+0.02
GTW	3.27	+0.16
HAND	1.64	+0.03
LU	2.85	-0.03
PALM	27.24	+1.64

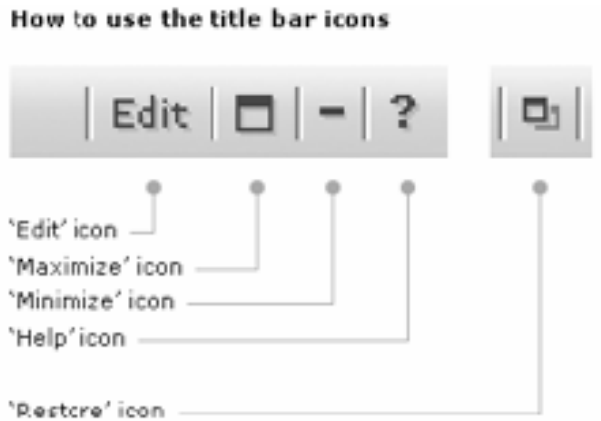
Indices

Index	Last
DOWJONES	10,557.87
NASDAQ	2,148.50

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Pictured: The IBM homepage is a window into a vast amount of intranet content and tools. Even so, the design remains clear: w3 ODW uses profiles to personalize the information and applications that users see. Furthermore, users can customize its layout, including the contents of each tab, to suit their needs.

Each portlet features a title bar, with well-known icons culled from the Microsoft operating system's world of graphic design: minimize/maximize, restore, and help. An additional button, *Edit*, leads to a page that allows users to customize a given portlet's view and content. For example, the *Market Report* portlet's edit page lets users add or remove companies from their personalized stock tickers.



Pictured: A legend of the icons that appear at the top of every portlet.

Main Intranet Areas

The *Home*, *Work*, and *Career and life* tabs, as well as the masthead, appear on all 25 million underlying business unit and department pages.

Users can navigate to role-specific portlets via the *Work* tab.

Act now alerts users to actions they need to take, such as registering for benefits or completing personal development plans. The *Get Personal* and *Planning Center* portlets give employees access to HR and personal finance applications, as well as reference documents for HR programs, policies, and benefits.

The screenshot displays the IBM Mark's On Demand Workplace intranet. The top navigation bar includes links for 'w3 Home', 'BluePages', 'HelpNow', and 'Feedback'. The main content area is organized into several functional sections:

- Act now:** A green banner indicating 'There are no actions at this time.'
- Get personal:** A section for viewing and updating personal information, with links to 'Your Compensation', 'Current PBC Assessment', and 'Your health coverage'. It also includes an 'Account access' section for viewing statements and checking balances.
- Planning center:** A section for learning about programs, benefits, and opportunities, with links to 'Your Career', 'Your Life', 'Your Money', and 'Your Health'.
- Key life and work events:** A section for updating personal information, such as 'Marriage'.
- Career and learning resources:** A section for exploring opportunities, including 'Opportunity Marketplace' and 'Individual Development Plan'.
- Other helpful resources:** A section for accessing payroll services and the claims center.
- You and IBM news:** A section for top stories, including 'IBM pension plan on sound financial footing', 'National Digital Medical Archive now available directly to patients', 'Innovative wellness incentives pay off for IBM', and 'Coaches help new IBMers'.
- Learning@IBM:** A section for recommendations and activities, including 'Professional Leadership Technical Exchange' and 'IBM Content Management Technical Conference'.
- Resources:** A section for global services learning and web lectures.
- Search and BluePages:** A search bar and a section for finding information by name or type.
- Discounts and Logo Merchandise:** A section for purchasing IBM-branded items and taking advantage of employee discounts.

Pictured: The *Career and life* tab on the IBM intranet contains HR information, customized according to the user's profile.



Pictured: The intranet has two mastheads: one for portal pages (top) that features three tabs (*Home*, *Work*, and *Career and life*) and a personalized greeting; and another design for all other intranet pages (here drawn from the *IBM Intranet Standards* page). On both mastheads, persistent links in the upper-right banner take users to the *BluePages* application, a feedback form, and an internal *Help* application. The IBM logo links to the homepage (w3.ibm.com), as does the w3 logo on the left of the masthead.

Employee Directory

If the average employee directory is a hill, the IBM *BluePages* is the Matterhorn. This is not your average employee directory, and while it houses all the typical, necessary information, it also has much more. In fact, designers created it as a strategic tool for finding expertise in the mammoth organization that is IBM.

Appropriately, a robust search feature appears at the top of the employee profile page. Users can search for a person by name, email, phone number, or job responsibilities. They can also perform open-ended searches, which is useful for employees trying to locate peers with specific expertise or experience. For example, an employee can launch a search for “usability” to find employees with that skill.

Users can search all IBM locations or restrict a search to specified locations via the *Location* drop-down menu. An advanced search function offers further opportunities to specify search criteria.

At the top of an employee profile, in what designers call the “business card area,” users find all relevant details about a person. The user’s local time is displayed here, too, which helps colleagues know when it’s safe to telephone. A snapshot of the “reports to” hierarchy allows colleagues to see whom the person reports to—and who reports to that person.

Ever wonder how to pronounce a colleague’s name? *BluePages* even assists with this problem. Users can record their name and upload the sound file to the intranet. This is more than just a common courtesy: proper name pronunciation is a sign of respect that helps create a positive impression among IBM’s geographically dispersed employee community. To hear the pronunciation, users simply click the link marked *Pronunciation*, which appears to the right of a user’s name.

Sametime status appears near a user’s email addresses. Sametime is IBM’s internal instant messaging solution. When a user is green (online), users can start a Sametime chat directly from *BluePages*. This shortcut saves people from having to open the Sametime application or add the person to their Sametime “buddy” list.

Further down in the profile page, a tabbed section houses extensive information about the profiled person. This area is the crux of the expertise locator, where affinities, projects, and proficiencies are stored. All told, this area comprises six information tabs:

Jobs & contact info

Experience & qualifications

Projects & teams

Communities & interests

Reporting structure

Summary

In particular, the *Summary* tab includes:

Controlled vocabulary: Users select from a list of fields based on IBM taxonomy, such as business experience, technology experience, and industry experience. Other applications also employ the common taxonomy, driving information presentation consistency across many different applications.

System-sourced data: Users can choose to display information for various fields—such as skills and certifications—that is pulled from other information sources.

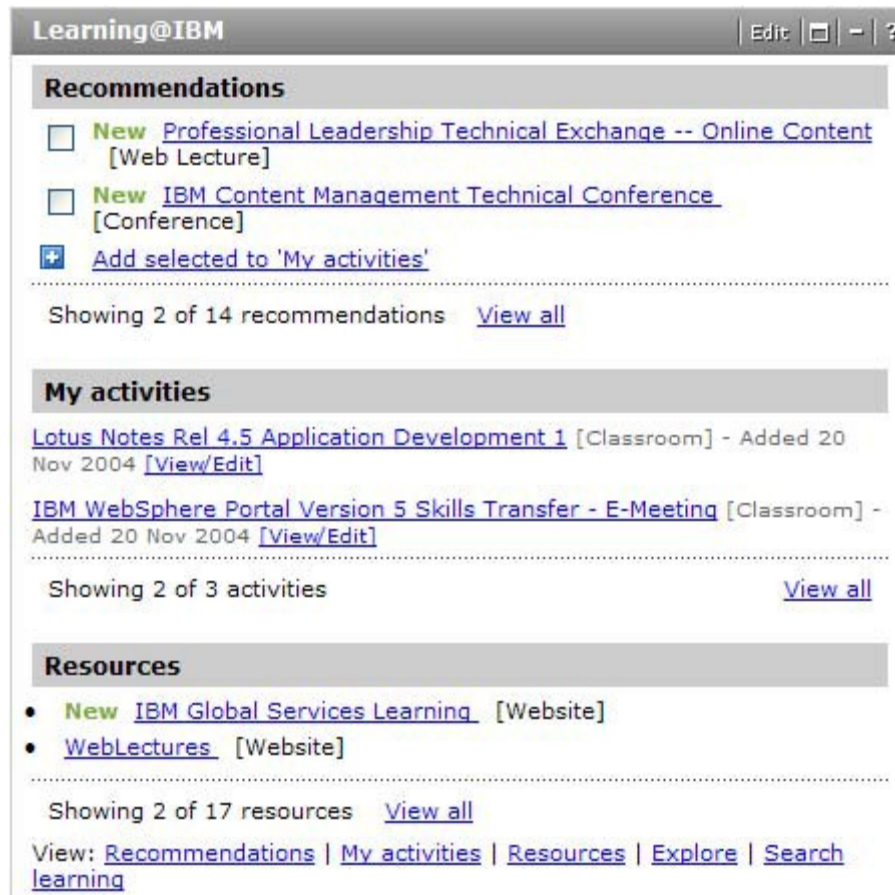
Rich text fields: Users can summarize such things as work experience and areas of expertise in summary fields located beneath the related tab and the *Projects* field. Users can also upload a resume.

With a plethora of features and pertinent information, the IBM *BluePages* is probably the most robust intranet employee directory we've ever encountered.

It's also a killer intranet feature. According to IBM's designers, *BluePages* has the highest satisfaction rating of any internal application. The company calculates that the time savings realized by this powerful application amounts to \$194 million per year.

Training

As a company, IBM works to retain and enrich their employees and enhance their job skills. Each year, managers and their employees spend considerable time discussing education and training plans. For planning the appropriate curriculum, the *Learning@IBM* portlet saves time and delivers prescriptive learning plans, personalized for each employee. These recommendations and resources range from real-world classes to Web-based lectures to reading materials.



Pictured: A close-up of the *Learning@IBM* portlet, a career development and training resource for employees.

Design Standards

Even with more than 25 million pages published by its employees worldwide, IBM's intranet has a consistent look and feel across all its pages. To facilitate this, IBM offers very detailed intranet standards that were created and honed through an iterative design approach.

In general, intranet standards work best if they are:


- sound,
- detailed (including templates and copious examples),
- the result of a collaboration among different groups and domains from across the organization,

- enforced,
- supported by the organization, and
- constantly evolving based on usability feedback and the general evolution of Web design thinking.

Without even one of the above elements, a well-intentioned intranet can fail. IBM's intranet standards fully embody each of these elements.


The intranet itself also telegraphs design standards, with the homepage and main tab areas setting the example, as well as users' expectations. In addition, an entire virtual library on the intranet covers everything a designer or content editor could possibly need to know: color palette, search, navigation, usability standards, interactive content, page templates, portlets, and technical standards, to name just a few.

These myriad intranet standards could overwhelm users if they weren't laid out so simply and named so effectively. Yet they are, which means that when users have questions, they can quickly drill down to the relevant information and bypass the rest. In addition, the library's transparent layout actually advertises sections that designers and content editors typically need to find.


IBM Intranet Standards

Search w3

☐ Search IBM Intranet Standards



[w3 Home](#) | [BluePages](#) | [HelpNow](#) | [Feedback](#)

IBM Intranet Standards home

Design standards

Help standards

Usability standards

Editorial standards

Policy standards

Technical standards

About standards

Site map

Site index

Updated 11 Mar 2005

Site map

The tabs on this page contain table of content maps to the [Design standards](#) and the [Technical standards](#) of the IBM Intranet Standards site.

Design standards

Technical standards

What's new

Template generator

Requirements checklist

Page templates

- Masthead
 - [Overview](#)
 - [Site title](#)
 - [Profiles and personalization](#)
 - [Persistent links](#)
- [Browser support](#)
- [Terms of use](#)
- [Page styles and templates](#)
- [Cascading style sheets](#)

Navigation

- [Left navigation menu](#)
- [Lower-level navigation](#)
 - [Overview](#)
 - [Page toggles](#)
 - [Page-level tabs](#)
 - [Drop-down menu](#)
 - [Content link list](#)
- [Site-level tabs](#)
- [Page-level navigation](#)
- [Breadcrumbs](#)
- [Supplemental navigation](#)
- [Directory list](#)
- [Information architecture](#)

Content area elements

- [Content header](#)
- [Page titles](#)
- [Headings](#)
- [Text treatments](#)
- [Primary content](#)
- [Article content](#)
 - [Overview](#)
 - [Text highlights](#)
 - [In-text sidebar](#)
- [Contact info](#)
 - [Discussion area](#)
- [Sidebar content](#)
- [Table design](#)
- [Labeling updated information](#)
- [Date and time format](#)

Graphics and images

- [Color palette](#)
- [Icons and buttons](#)
- [Charts and graphs](#)
 - [Overview](#)
 - [Bar charts](#)
 - [Pie charts](#)
 - [Area charts](#)
 - [Segmented charts](#)
- [Applying page graphics](#)
- [Photography](#)
- [Image library](#)

Interactive content

- [Multimedia](#)
 - [Overview](#)
 - [Flash](#)
 - [Animated gifs](#)
 - [Video](#)
 - [Audio](#)
- [Form design](#)
- [Secured site icon](#)
- [Message design](#)
 - [Overview](#)
 - [Message dialog boxes](#)
 - [In-context messages](#)
- [E-mail this page](#)
- [Rate this content](#)
- [Printable version](#)
- [Country and language selection](#)
 - [Overview](#)
 - [Browser language preferences](#)
 - [Language selection](#)
 - [Country selection](#)

Secondary windows

- [Custom dialog boxes](#)
- [Pop-up windows](#)
- [Online presentations](#)
 - [Overview](#)
 - [Converting Lotus Freelance Graphics to HTML](#)
 - [Converting Microsoft Powerpoint 2000 to HTML](#)

Local search

- [Search dialogs](#)
 - [Overview](#)
 - [Basic local search](#)
 - [Custom simple search](#)
 - [Custom complex search](#)
- [Results pages](#)
 - [Overview](#)
 - [Search results page](#)
 - [No-matches results page](#)

Portal design

- [Portal theme](#)
- [Portal navigation](#)
- [Portal personalization](#)
- [Portal customization](#)

Portlet design

- [Portlet skins](#)
- [Portlet icons](#)
- [Portlet views](#)
 - [Overview](#)
 - [Default view](#)
 - [Minimize view](#)
 - [Maximize view](#)
 - [Edit portlet settings view](#)
 - [Help view](#)
 - [Configure view](#)
- [Dependent portlets](#)
- [Designing portlets for the ODW](#)

Vendor solutions

[Back to top](#)
[Terms of use](#)

Pictured: The IBM intranet's *Intranet Standards* section thoroughly communicates a comprehensive body of standards for intranet design, including the company's clear layout and text-naming conventions.

Accessibility

One area many designers overlook is accessibility: making sites easy to use for people with disabilities. The IBM intranet, however, incorporates many accessibility features. IBM also designed its intranet for accessibility from the start, which was a smart move. It's easier and less costly to implement accessibility features as you create a design than it is to retrofit a site after the design phase is complete.

A few fundamental features of the IBM intranet's design increase accessibility for older users, users with motor-related disabilities, users with memory or literacy issues, users who have low vision, and—perhaps surprisingly—users in general. These features include:

- Resizable text, sized using built-in browser controls
- Bold, blue, and underlined links
- A color change on visited links
- Adequate space between most links, making them easy targets to “hit” with a mouse pointer
- Consistently good contrast between text and the page background (black and white can't be beat)

During Nielsen Norman Group's accessibility research,¹ we found that blind users using screen readers (which read aloud all text on a page) are typically 75% less successful when using public websites than people who are not blind. The increased failure rates aren't the fault of users, but rather of the designs.

The same usability findings hold true when considering intranet designs. Traditional portal designs are not naturally accessible for blind people because of the seemingly random nature of the page layout. Many times, blind users simply can't get a sense of item order on a page just from listening to a screen reader. This isn't just true for most portals, but also for any Web page that doesn't maintain a simple hierarchy.

To cater to users of screen-reading software, IBM's intranet designers included several features:

- All pages include “skip navigation” links that bypass all navigation elements
- All pages include a list of the access keys available for the page (modern browsers let users jump to specific links by pressing ALT + an access key)
- All pages include “landmarks” that define the start of each page section, including the masthead, left-navigation bar, main content, and sidebar
- All pages must use proper heading tags for each page section, which improves the structure of the pages (screen-reading software can list all headings on a page, which can facilitate easier browsing)
- Portal pages include an index of the portlets available on the page

¹ *Beyond ALT Text: Making the Web Easy to use for Users with Disabilities*, Pernice and Nielsen. To download this report, see www.nngroup.com/reports/accessibility.

- For employees who use custom accessibility settings, the site accommodates personal style sheets that allow easy font-size customization (the style sheets work only on the w3.ibm.com website, so they won't interfere with other sites)

Pictured: When accessed via a screen reader, the homepage is reorganized in a logical pattern to assist visually impaired people.

The number of features and amount of information on the IBM intranet is almost unfathomable. What's more astounding, however, is that its designers keep all of it in check for their users with a consistent and responsive interface.

URL AND ACCESS

The URL for IBM's w3 ODW intranet is w3.ibm.com. "This is the official and standard default URL for IBMers when issued a new desktop or laptop," notes Brian Meyer, a w3 ODW framework architect.

When working remotely, users can securely connect to IBM's internal network using an IBM VPN, which works with any Internet Service Provider. Employees can also use WebSphere Everyplace Connection Manager, which provides secure access to the IBM intranet via existing network connections, including home office broadband, public broadband hotspots, and cellular or wireless networks. Using WebSphere Everyplace Access, employees can also synchronize their mail, calendar, and personal information.

CONTENT MANAGEMENT

IBM employs Interwoven as a content management tool, but only for the intranet. The corporate communications department customized Interwoven to meet its needs. "There is currently no single, corporate-wide content management system within IBM," notes Liam Cleaver, the program director for the w3 ODW program office. However, the IBM CIO's office is currently building "an organic Web-based enterprise content management solution to roll-out across all of IBM."

Intranet guidelines and standards—including those for content—are set centrally, then business units and users in different functional areas actually own and deliver the content and applications. Templates also help enforce a consistent look for IBM's millions of pages.

This approach is not static. "Guidelines, templates, and standards undergo periodic reviews to validate their usefulness with stakeholders, and to identify any new business requirements for the next cycle or iteration," says Cleaver.

Hello Mark | [Edit settings](#) | [Sign out](#)

Search w3

[w3 Home](#) | [BluePages](#) | [HelpNow](#) | [Feedback](#)

News home

[Top stories](#)
[In the news](#)
[MyNews](#)
[Archive index](#)
[Help](#)

Updated 2 Aug 2005

Top stories
[Past 7 days >](#)

Your IBM

Don't miss this film about our company and what it means to be an IBMer. [Profiled for all IBM]

Sun competitive update:
Is Sun dimming or shining?

A closer look at...BPTS
IBM's \$500 billion opportunity to deliver value our competitors can't match. [Profiled for all IBM]

The building blocks of growth
IBM must strike a balance between productivity, collaboration and innovation. [Profiled for all IBM]

IGS Americas Win Wire
AVAYA and Cummins sign with IBM. [Profiled for IGS]

IBM prescribes wireless solution for Children's Hospital
Westchester Medical Center deploys hands-free, radio frequency location communication system. [Profiled for IGS]

ITS second quarter highlights
Review major ITS accomplishments and wins for 2Q and read the VP letter to employees. [Profiled for ITS]

July sales round up
IBM ropes in new clients to end the month with a bang. [Profiled for all IBM]

A refreshing solution for Del Monte Fresh Produce
IBM steps in as single service provider with AMS and SO services. [Profiled for IGS]

Helping clients grow through business partners
IBM and Solutions-IT deliver ITS to support Cemex Inc.'s expansion. [Profiled for IGS]

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How it works: Web services keeps a business running by connecting all its processes online. [Profiled for all IBM]

Where did Marie go wrong?
Take the new training to see our Business Conduct Guidelines in action. [Profiled for all IBM]

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In the news
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How one blog affected Dell
One blog complaining about Dell service contributes to bad buzz. [Jeff Jarvis blog]

Toyota distributor tracks cars with active RFID
Gulf States Toyota worked with IBM Global Services and WhereNet to create a solution that tracks cars on its 84-acre lot. [Frontline Solutions]

Media Snapshot - August 2
IBM: Hackers favor firms, government. Oracle to buy majority stake of India software firm. Intel to tailor PCs for regional markets.

Lenovo upbeat on acquisition
Lenovo says incorporation, including the PC unit in Taiwan, has been going smoothly. [Asia Pulse]

Why Bill Gates wants 3,000 new patents
A year ago, the chairman announced plans to raise its goal of patent applications submitted annually to 3,000 from 2,000. [The New York Times]

Why contribute to Wikipedia?
Research team interested in the motives for participants involved in Wikipedia as authors, administrators, or software developers. [NewsForge]

Long, hard road for Pentagon to performance-based pay
Government Accountability Office summarizes IBM practices. [Washington Post]

Media Snapshot - August 1
Inside Big Blue's vault: Ballmer and Zander make Nice in the name of a gadget called Q. Why Bill Gates wants 3,000 new patents.

Microsoft fights competitors on several product fronts
The company is facing competitive threats in nearly every part of its business. [Dallas Morning News]

Media Snapshot - July 29
Brantano signs deal with IBM for supply chain management. Microsoft plans to step up pace of acquisitions. EDS sees 2Q profit well above estimates.

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Research Triangle Area Site News [Past 7 days >](#)
[RTP 40th anniversary Softball Tournament: Register Now!](#)
In observance of IBM's 40th Anniversary in RTP, Team Triangle is sponsoring a statewide co-ed Softball tournament at the IBM Employee Activity and Fitness [MyPublish V3]

Triangle Area Required Site News [Past 7 days >](#)
[Security Education: Employee Security Responsibilities & Visitor Access](#)
Employee Security Responsibilities & Visitor Access [MyPublish V3]

Apple Computer Inc. [Past 7 days >](#)
[Business Roundup](#)
Ending a high-profile business collaboration, Hewlett-Packard no longer will resell Apple Computer's iPod digital music player, The Wall Street Journal [Technology Daily AM]
[Tech-heavy Nasdaq climbs despite higher oil prices](#)
Tech stocks finished an uninspired session higher, but blue chips declined Monday as a new record high in oil prices was partly offset by a better-than-expected [San Jose Mercury News]

Pictured: The News portlet, maximized view. Content standards and guidelines, plus templates, help ensure that IBM's millions of pages and their content are created consistently.

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141

TECHNOLOGY

IBM's intranet is built on WebSphere Portal to create the portal and portlet environment, and WebSphere Application Server Extended Edition to meter applications and shift capacity on the fly. "This establishes a base application platform that allows added functionality and new portlets, without the need to redesign the site for every addition or update," says Meyer.

The intranet team also employs IBM HTTP Server (IHS), DB2 databases, Lotus Domino Server, and the AIX and Linux operating systems. Interwoven is one of the content generation tools. Lotus Notes database is another. The intranet runs on IBM eServer p5 Servers, and search is handled by WebSphere Integration Integrator OmniFind Edition.

To simplify intranet authentication, IBM uses its Tivoli Access Manager software.

For developing and deploying the site, the intranet team uses Rational Software Architect, Rational Application Developer, Subversion Repository (to manage source code), Apache Maven, and Trac, a Web-based, wiki project monitoring and bug/issue tracking system.

"The underlying technologies have changed significantly since the inception of the ODW—or eWorkplace, as it was originally known," says Meyer. "The original site was built on WebSphere Application Server, and simulated a portal experience, and a significant amount of code was deployed to support this experience. Today, using products such as WebSphere Portal, more time is spent on developing the user experience and exploiting applications."

A similar shift has occurred with the tools on which the intranet team relies. "The new Rational tools have provided a consistent and unified approach for design," he says. "The integration of tools such as Rational Application Developer, Trac, and Subversion have also enhanced developer productivity while providing an integrated design, build, and project monitoring system."

GOALS AND CONSTRAINTS

Goals:

- Serve as the working environment that helps IBMers live and practice the company's values and help their colleagues and the company succeed.
- Make employees more productive.
- Deliver relevant information in context.
- Help employees deliver better service to IBM clients.
- For this redesign:
 - aggregate an employee's most important content and tools, including integrating (in a single portal) tools and services to support user tasks,
 - showcase the WebSphere Portal Server product,
 - reduce costs, and
 - enable better integration across the company.

Constraints:

- The amount of time available.

- The available funding levels.
- The significant process and culture change required to make the intranet team's vision a reality.

BASIC INTRANET FEATURES

Users have a wealth of features to choose from on the IBM intranet, including news, search, and a global address book.

One of the core features, however, is the intranet's ability "to aggregate content and function based on who the user is and what they need," says LaMana Donadelle, an information architect. "The intranet has millions of pages which the user now has to sort through to find what they are looking for. The w3 On Demand Workplace, to a degree, acts like a filter to present the most relevant and timely information to make the user more productive."

To make that filter more effective, users are encouraged to complete a user profile. While that profile helps determine which news, content, and applications they see, "the basic employee information—name, work location, geographical location—is pulled from the same HR system that feeds *BluePages*" and ensures its users get at least basic information, says Maria Arbusto, the director of user experience. "There are several more options employees can select: business unit, job category and role, industry the employee works in or would like to stay current on, and areas of interest such as business subjects, competitors, IBM solutions and products, and technology topics. Internal communications professionals publish news and information for all of these attributes. A completed profile reduces the clutter for the employee and gives them only the content they've asked for."

IBM settings / Sign out

IBM

W3 Mark's On Demand Workplace

W3 Home / AboutPages / Help/Info / Feedback

Home / Work / Career and life

Modify work-related information

[Help](#)

The information you enter below will be used to determine the content on your IBM Intranet home page. Make selections that represent your position and interests. Click on "Submit" to send your changes. Use "Reset" to return fields to their default values. Click "Cancel" to exit the page without saving any changes. All required fields are marked with an asterisk (*).

If you cannot locate a position or interest that matches your work related information, please send a message to the w3 User Experience team (User Experience@new.ibm.com) and include your current Business unit and job category with your suggestion. Your suggestions will help build a catalog of items that more closely represents IBM employees.

Nickname:

Mark

Type the name that you would like to appear in the header on your home page (e.g. Jane Doe).

*Business unit:

IBM Global Services

Integrated Technology Services

Integrated Technology Services Delivery

*Job category:

Information Technology and Services

IT Architect

Principal job role:

Usability Engineer

Industry:

☒ Aerospace & Defense

☐ Automotive

☐ Banking

☐ Chemicals & Petroleum

☒ Computer Services

☐ Consumer Products

☐ Education

☐ Electronics

☐ Energy & Utilities

☐ Financial Markets

☐ Government, Central/Federal

☐ Government, State/Provincial/Local

☐ Healthcare

☐ Industrial Products

☒ Insurance

☒ Life Sciences

☐ Media & Entertainment

☐ Professional Services

☐ Retail

☐ Telecommunications

☐ Travel & Transportation

☐ Wholesale Distribution & Services

Areas of interest:

Business Subjects

☒ Accessibility

☐ Alliances

☐ Benefits & Compensation

☒ Business Governance

☐ Business Strategy

☐ Business Transformation

☐ Collaborative Innovation

☒ Customer Satisfaction

☐ Education & Learning

☒ Employee Services & Assistance

☐ Government, Private Institutions and General Public

☐ Human Resources Policies

☐ Independent Software Vendor (ISV)

☐ Influencer Relations & Advocacy

☐ Information Technology

☐ Intellectual Property

☐ Investment Options

☒ Knowledge & Information Management

☐ Product Development

☒ Project and Program Management

☒ Relationship Management

☐ Social Networks

☐ Supply Collaboration

☒ User Experience

Competitors

☐ Accenture

☐ BSA Systems

☐ Sunland

☒ Cap Gemini/Ernst&Young

☐ Computer Associates

☐ Computer Sciences Corp

☐ Dell

☐ EDS

☐ EMC

☐ Fujitsu

☐ Hewlett Packard

☒ Hitachi Data Systems (HDS)

☐ Intel

☐ Microsoft

☐ Oracle

☐ StorageTek

☐ Sun Microsystems

Solutions & Products

☐ Avira Software

☐ Business Intelligence Software

☐ Customer Relationship Management Strategy

☐ Digital Media Software

☐ Enterprise Resources Development & Integration

☐ i2 Software

☐ iD Edwards Software

☐ Lotus e-learning Services

☐ OnDemand Workplace Software

☐ PeopleSoft Software

☐ Portals, Content & e-commerce Services

☐ Procurement Services

☐ Product Lifecycle Management (PLM)/Dassault

☒ SAP Software

☒ Security & Privacy Services

☐ Siebel Software

☐ Supply Chain Management Services

☐ Tivoli Access Manager and Privacy for e-business Software

☐ Tivoli e-marketplace Manager

☐ Wireless Applications Services

Technology

☒ Automatic Computing

☐ Computer Processors

☒ Computer Science

☐ Computer Software

☐ Desktop & Thin Client Computers

☐ Globalization & Translation

☒ Internet Commercial Services

☐ Java

☐ Linux

☐ Markup Languages

☐ Materials Research

☐ Mathematics

☒ Mobile & Wireless Computing Systems

☐ Open Standards / Open Source

☐ Physics

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Pictured: Users can edit the profile via this form. While doing so is optional, filling out the profile helps the w3 ODW better filter information to users.

Profiles also help the intranet team design and deliver tools for users based on their job function. For example, the *Seller's Workplace* portlet appears by default on the *Work* tab for all employees with a sales job role (that's designated in their profile). That portlet presents users with opportunity data, pulled from a variety of backend systems, and also lets them view their opportunities in the Siebel customer relationship management system.

When a sales professional selects an opportunity in the *Seller's Workplace* portlet, IBM team members associated with that opportunity are listed in a *Teams and Experts* section. These colleagues can answer questions and help the seller quickly follow up with potential clients, or clients with outstanding questions or issues. "This level of sophistication gives sellers a direct link to experts who are available to answer questions and help them get offline and back to their clients," notes Arbusto. "Like the *BluePages* application, *Teams and Experts* has instant messaging capabilities embedded, so that immediate contact can be made without having to toggle screen and open an IM application."

Another interesting w3 ODW feature is *Blog Central*, which IBM has run since 2003. In general, it's a very popular tool, with users in seventy different countries. One handy feature is *Newsfeeds*, a link in the left-side navigation that lets colleagues subscribe to each other's blogs via RSS. This helps reduce clutter and bring users only the information they need.

Why has IBM given employees blogging tools? "Blogging represents an unprecedented empowerment of individual expression and community-building. Within five minutes, anyone who can type can become a global publisher, connecting and sharing ideas," says John Rooney, manager of emerging technology. Add syndication—"in effect, automatic XML tagging of content, and super-easy subscription to it," he says, and it all adds up to "a new and open information platform."

USER TASKS

"There are very few common tasks for which users do not use the intranet. The intranet has surpassed managers as the primary source of information for most employees," says Matt Starr, a human factors and usability engineer.

Some user tasks include:

- Reading personalized news
- Accessing role-specific portlets
- Utilizing applications and tools designed for their specific needs
- Searching the intranet
- Searching *BluePages* for expertise
- Collaborating with other employees
- Maintaining a personal IBM blog, and subscribing to colleagues' blogs
- Using an accessible version of the intranet

BACKGROUND

From eWorkplace to ODW

The IBM intranet, dubbed eWorkplace, began in 1995 and "started much the same as we find in almost any company in any sector we speak to about their intranet system," notes Cleaver. In short, it was "a disparate collection of sites very loosely connected by a corporate homepage."

IBM likes to refer to that era of its intranet as a "solar system model" of planets (business units, countries, individual office locations). Nothing there offered a complete, central solution, but instead "exerted pull" on users, driving them to separate silos.

Eventually, there were more than 8,000 sites inside IBM, including many redundant tools and applications. Given that "former IBM chairman and CEO Lou Gerstner wanted to drive cultural change and use the intranet to help do this—change the mind-set of a global company—this model was not sustainable or effective," says Cleaver, and so, "with executive aegis in place, we began to consolidate."

Beginning in 1998, IBM focused on standardizing and integrating its various IT systems, ultimately consolidating 155 data centers down to just five, with a resulting cost savings of over \$6 billion. "We also joined the rest of the known business world and consolidated from over 100 people in IBM calling themselves the CIO to having only one," notes Cleaver. From an intranet content and application perspective, IBM began identifying various IBM audiences—such as managers—and then focusing on their needs, principally by applying the 80/20 rule. So, for example, 80% of a manager's needs are common (such as managing projects, employees, and teams) and 20% are specific or unique to that manager, and perhaps driven by local laws or regulations. "We then began to consolidate the number and places for a manager to go for their content, tools, and applications, and drove this through the intranet homepage," says Cleaver. Such work continues today.

[BluePages](#)
[Search](#)
[HelpNow](#)
[Feedback](#)

[w3 Home](#)
[MyNews](#)
[Lou's w3 Pages](#)
[About IBM](#)
[About w3](#)
[Article Index](#)

Hello, Mark Wise
 [Modify my profile](#) | [Sign out](#)

May 24, 2001
Scorecard: IBM's Performance
IBM STOCK (IBM) **119.07** **+1.67**
 Quoted at 3:44 pm EDT on May 24
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Search BluePages
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know the business
[Carbon nanotubes](#)
 Constructive destruction
[IBM Annual Report](#)
[IBM Global Services](#)
[Info about Competitors](#)
[EXPAND](#)

work with my team
[TransNote transforms](#)
 New product for IBM, new path for Research
[Using Persona](#)
[ITS - US](#)
[e-meetings center](#)
[Instant Messaging](#)
[New Forums](#)
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apply the tools
[Center puts theory into practice](#)
 Networking center opens in Canada
[IT systems and tools](#)
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[The "How To" Library](#)
[IBM Travel Website](#)
[Standard Software Installer](#)
[EXPAND](#)

get personal
[Let's better connect](#)
 Through new global survey
[You and IBM](#)
[Employees Stock Purchase Plan](#)
[IBM Global Campus](#)
[Career Planner](#)
[EXPAND](#)

Pictured: IBM's corporate intranet homepage version 6, launched in the fall of 2000.

By 2002, there was a strong push within IBM for intranet standards, to push an intranet with a common look and feel for the entire company.

Pictured: The IBM intranet (version 7) homepage, launched in 2003. This was the first version to use a portal/portlet design, albeit without tabs.

Since then, the intranet team has continued to focus on delivering needed content and tools for users. It increasingly relies on personalization and profiling to deliver information based on a person's country, location, unit, employee-type, industry, and job role.

Intranet Team

When the first official IBM intranet launched, the intranet team consisted of one webmaster, one editorial person, and one user experience specialist. The team was part of the corporate communications group.

As the scope of the intranet grew, so did the team. "The team now sets business strategy, user experience, editorial, and technology direction for IBM's intranet across the global enterprise," notes Arbusto.

Today, thirty-seven core team members hailing from seven different IBM organizations produce IBM's w3 ODW. There are ten user experience employees, twelve editorial employees, and ten employees on the technical team (which doesn't include technical support or operations). The w3 ODW business office has five people. "This core team works with about forty-five people from across fifteen other organizations on intranet projects specific to particular business units or subcategories," says Al Miyahsita, the director of the w3 ODW program office. "An example is the team of people responsible for designing, architecting, and supporting Web content for IBM managers, or the learning content that is provided to all employees."

The intranet team's annual budget, which covers new intranet development, deployment, and implementation work across all IBM organizations, is approximately \$12 million.

DESIGN PROCESS AND USABILITY ACTIVITIES

To launch the redesign, the intranet team began with usability reports from the previous release that highlighted known usability problems or design deficiencies. Also, "early in the conceptual design stages, we asked five usability professionals not directly involved with this project to conduct a heuristic review of the intranet portal," notes Mark Wise, a human factors and usability engineer. "Their fresh perspective on the site helped us identify additional design issues and generate new ideas for improvements."

To find applications to build or improve, the redesign team interviewed users to identify which tasks they wanted the portal to handle. The team also combed the intranet feedback to identify common or recurring issues.

The intranet team frequently takes a wider view of the population for which it is designing. "When making some basic decisions, like font size, the standards team obtained statistics on the IBM user population to obtain age statistics so that we could apply principals from the human factors research literature to support design decisions," notes Wise. When needed information didn't exist, IBM's special interest groups—such as the one formed for portal research—researched best practices employed at other sites, to articulate standards and drive design recommendations.

All told, the redesign team conducted "a significant amount of usability and design work" early in the project, he says. Beyond the heuristic review, the team read and

categorized user comments collected through the intranet feedback mechanism, conducted interviews with users, and conducted research on best practices, including competitive analyses.

"We are always looking for ways in which to improve the overall design, usability, and value of the intranet. Several thousand employees are invited to participate in quarterly, global intranet satisfaction surveys. These surveys are used as a rolling indicator of users' satisfaction with the intranet and to help identify areas in need of improvement," says Wise.

The redesign team tested the intranet during development, as well as after deployment. Tests focused on scenarios users could initiate from the portal, such as accessing information, and changing user settings or page layout. Other tasks focused on site navigation, and generic page layouts.

The team employed various usability methods throughout testing, including card sorting, which was especially useful since the redesign team wanted to move beyond just giving users a single "my portal" type of start page. "Since the content of the site was to be distributed across different tabs, a series of card sorts were conducted to identify how users would expect their portlets to be distributed across multiple tabs," says Starr. "Once the clustering of the portlets was decided, we conducted a follow up activity to determine what the default layout of the portlets should be on each tab. This was not a card sort, per se, but followed a similar methodology and analysis."

Once the team built prototypes, it subjected them to several rounds of usability testing. "Early on, we were testing variations on the new design treatments—templates—to establish an overall design platform," says Lauren Murphy, a human factors and usability engineer. Testing involved three iterations: "As individual portlets were being designed, they were tested with end users as low fidelity designs, then later as functional prototypes within the larger portal environment. Finally, all designs were tested through a formal usability test with the production code."

A particular focus of the redesign was on improving accessibility for blind and low-vision users. Designers made changes to page templates to provide better support, and tested the new designs as they went. "Most importantly, the organization and temporal presentation of content, via a screen reader such as JAWS, was modified to better match user expectations and information hierarchy on the page," says Wise. "To test these advanced page treatments, early usability evaluations of the page templates were conducted with screen-reader users. A follow-up test with blind users was conducted in parallel with the final, formal usability test."

According to Murphy, the intranet team encountered few surprises during its redesign efforts. "Since so much work was done early in the design process to understand the usability problems, collect requirements, and focus on usable designs, the usability testing went mostly as expected, with few problems."

Yet, there were some after-the-fact surprises. For example, after the intranet went live, some users' feedback requested the ability to remove, add, or rearrange portlets on their personalized portlet pages. "This function is available to users, but it was not obvious to some users," notes Murphy. The usability team will address the problem in a forthcoming redesign.

According to Arbusto, "from beginning to deployment, the redesign took approximately nine months." Completing the visual design, use case, and design

specifications took about four or five months; and development and testing took six months, as did documentation of design standards. Most of those efforts overlapped.

TIMELINE

- 1996: Launched official intranet homepage.
- 1997: Launched first homepage redesign (redesigns have since continued almost annually).
- 2000: Introduced personalization, with a global design system that includes consistent branding, navigation, interaction, and visual design standards.
- 2001: Redesigned intranet with portlet technology launched.
- 2003: Began current redesign.
- March 6, 2004: Launched enterprise portal redesign.

RESULTS

The goal for the eighth version of IBM's intranet was simple: to further evolve the IBM intranet into an ODW that better provides users with the information and tools they need to do their job. "The basic tenets, or value proposition, we offer to our employees, managers, and executives is this: lower cost, better reach, and focused management," says Cleaver.

IBM's redesigned w3 ODW delivers on those promises, and then some. Thanks to role-based resource delivery and improved navigation and expertise location, the new intranet boosts employees' productivity. The intranet also meets the needs of users: 80% of IBM's 329,000 employees visit the intranet daily.

"The primary focus of the redesign was to create a design environment that could grow as additional portlets, content, and tools were added to the portal," says Arbusto. Some small enhancements had big payoffs. For example, the intranet team reduced the amount of CSS code, which boosted intranet page performance and also makes the site easier to maintain for the intranet team.

Designers also refined the content and placement of information, and created three tabs: *Home*, *Work*, and *Career and life*. "In the previous design, all portlets were displayed on a single page," says Arbusto. These enhancements reduce visual clutter and make it easier for users to scan and access information.

With one intranet and 329,000 users with different needs, continuing to enhance and improve personalization remains a top priority. "Instead of users having to navigate through the Web, through personalization on the portal we are able to deliver useful content and functionality to them, based on how they describe themselves in their profile. This reduces the amount of navigation required by users, saving them time," notes Donadelle.

Of all of the new or redesigned tools on the intranet, IBM's expertise locator, *BluePages*, has been the most popular in user tests, with an 88% positive satisfaction rate. That's probably because the redesigned tool saves employees an average of 72 minutes per month. Likewise, the redesigned manager portal saves each manager an average of 42 minutes per month. The new navigation, which scored an 84% positive satisfaction rate, also gets users to the news, content, and applications they need more quickly.

Other changes help low-vision or blind users. “We made a big improvement in the overall ease of use and intelligibility of the portal for blind and other users of assistive technology,” notes Arbusto. “The improvement in accessibility is a particular point of pride for the team.”

Indeed, as IBM’s advocate for blind users, Matt King, said in a post to IBM’s Blind User Group, “This is one example of how our accessibility efforts are attempting to go beyond compliance and into the realm of focusing on user experience and actual productivity.”

With the latest redesign live, IBM continues to comb existing pages to consolidate information and reduce redundancy. “There are many sites with outdated, redundant, and unnecessary information, and the process of integrating new pages into the ODW puts a spotlight on them, requiring content editors to consolidate and eliminate content where necessary,” says Donadelle.

Backend technology also continues to evolve, which lays the foundation for future changes. “Since the 2004 launch of w3 version 8, we have seen the standardization of more backend support critical to our continued evolution to an On Demand Workplace,” says Cleaver. Such support includes an enterprise taxonomy to help drive personalization and profiling, a migration to WebSphere Portal Server version 5.1 and WebSphere Application Server XD, plus enhancing support for non-Latin-based language characters.

The improved w3 ODW infrastructure lowers development and deployment costs by encouraging reuse. According to IBM’s calculations, every major Web project it doesn’t build saves the company over \$200,000 in development and deployment costs.

LESSONS LEARNED

Insights from Maria Arbusto:

Start with a shared vision. “This is an obvious but often overlooked lesson from any redesign: it is important for the redesign team—including such employees as executive sponsors, developers, visual designers, and usability professionals—to start the project with a shared vision of what we are all trying to achieve. Without such a vision, the team tends to repeatedly circle back on issues. We had such a problem when working on portlet navigation.”

Approach tabs cautiously. “The design of the portal’s tabbed navigation was not as successful as anticipated. Users continue to have trouble recognizing and using the tabbed pages beyond the homepage, despite the fact that the navigation design tested well with users.”

Merrill Lynch

Using the Intranet:

Merrill Lynch (ML) is one of the world's leading financial management and advisory companies, with offices in thirty-six countries and total client assets of approximately \$1.6 trillion. Merrill Lynch has three core businesses: Global Private Client, Global Markets & Investment Banking Group, and Merrill Lynch Investment Managers. Together, these offer private clients, small businesses, institutions and corporations, and financial intermediaries a range of financial services.

Design Team:

In-house and Capgemini

Members:

Jane Muirsmith, director of ML online marketing; Larry Mark, director of employee communications; Kevin Dooney, vice president of ML online marketing

SUMMARY

To design Merrill Lynch's WorldNet intranet, the intranet team employed an iterative design methodology, including card-sorting exercises. Given this groundwork—the significant time the design team spent researching employees' needs and designing ways to meet them—the intranet's success is no surprise. Even so, designers have deftly balanced employees' needs with a range of business needs to arrive at today's winning design.

Unprecedented levels of user traffic on WorldNet speak for the design results. For example, in a month-to-month comparison—from redesign pre-launch to post-launch—the number of unique visitors to WorldNet increased by 10,000. In addition, total visits increased by 700,000 over just two months and page views doubled, reaching 8 million per month.

Homepage

WorldNet's homepage offers a balanced combination of news, market information, and tools specifically designed for Merrill Lynch employees. A large area on the homepage (the top middle) contains two major news items. The rest of the news lives in one of the following tabs: *Global News*, maintained by the employee communications department; *ML Headlines*, generated from external sources; and *New on WorldNet*, which highlights the intranet's new offerings and services. For all news sources, users can easily navigate to archives as well.

On the homepage, the upper-right area is reserved for market information. *Today's Markets* displays a summary of the stock exchanges, so by just glancing at WorldNet's homepage, employees can get a handle on the markets. The *Today's Markets*, *Get Quote*, and *Market Reports* tools use BigCharts.com, a MarketWatch data feed, to unify three formerly separate homepage elements. In particular, the *Market Reports* section showcases one recent market report, with a link below leading to *More Market Reports*.

Employees can use the *Get Quote* tool to find information about stocks they're interested in. (While this is not a feature we'd recommend adding to most intranets, and certainly not to their homepages, in a financial services organization such as Merrill Lynch, this type of tool is completely appropriate.) If the user doesn't know a stock's symbol, the *Get Symbol* link quickly solves the problem.

Merrill Lynch's three core businesses offer a range of services for private clients, small businesses, institutions and corporations, and financial intermediaries. The navigation across the top of each page leads to separate sections for each core

business: Global Markets & Investment Banking Group (GMI); Global Private Client (GPC); and Merrill Lynch Investment Managers (MLIM).

Beyond the homepage features, the designers also make effective use of color and spacing. Even with a variety of homepage features, the design doesn't look cluttered or off-putting.

The screenshot displays the Merrill Lynch intranet homepage. At the top, there's a blue header with the 'WorldSNet' logo on the left. To its right are links for 'Site Map' and 'WN Feedback'. Further right are search bars for 'ML Directory' (with a prompt '<enter last name>') and 'Site Search' (with a prompt '<enter search criteria>'). Below these are links for 'Advanced Directory' and 'Advanced Search'. A navigation bar below the header contains links for 'GMI', 'GPC', 'MLIM', 'LTM', 'CFO', 'GT&S', 'OGC', 'Research', 'Regional Sites', and 'External ML Sites'. The left sidebar is a vertical menu with categories: 'About Merrill Lynch' (including Company Information, Financial Performance, The Brand, How We Do Business), 'Employee Resources' (including Comp. & Timesheets, Benefits, Recruiting, Other), 'Education & Career Dev.' (including ML University, Talent Management), 'Business Support' (including Travel, Reference, Security & Bus. Continuity, Purchasing), 'Technology' (including Technology Help, Tech Tools), and 'Local Office Services' (including Corporate Services, Design & Production, Other). The main content area is divided into several sections. At the top left, there's a date 'September 01, 2005' and a 'Regional Clocks' link. Below this is a map of the Gulf of Mexico with a red line indicating a hurricane's path, titled 'Hurricane Katrina Update'. The text states that Merrill Lynch has pledged \$1 million to assist the American Red Cross and continues to establish contact with employees in affected regions. To the right of the map is a 'Today's Markets' table with columns for index, value, and change. The table lists MER (58.30, +1.14), DJIA (10463.45, -18.15), S&P 500 (1220.87, +0.54), NASDAQ (2147.63, -4.46), FTSE 100 (5328.50, +31.60), NIKKEI (12506.97, +93.37), and HSI (15143.75, +240.20). Below the table is a 'Get Quote' section with a search bar and a 'Find' button. To the right of the 'Get Quote' section is a 'Market Reports' section titled 'The Portfolio Manager's Review'. Below the 'Market Reports' section is a 'More Market Reports' link. In the center of the main content area, there's a section titled '2005 CROSS EVALUATION' with a deadline of 'Selection Ends September 9'. To the right of this section is a 'Read the Full Article' link. Below the '2005 CROSS EVALUATION' section is a 'Global News' section with three articles: 'Mylan Labs to Buy Back Stock', 'Atlanta's Principal for a Day', and 'MLIM President Bob Doll Hosts CNBC's Squawk Box'. To the right of the 'Global News' section is a 'NEW on WorldNet!' section with three articles: 'EMEA - Global Private Client Targets Diverse Markets', 'EMEA - ML Supports Youth through Atlantic Fellowship Scheme', and 'GT&S - GPC Services in New Jersey welcomes home military reservist'. Below the 'NEW on WorldNet!' section is a 'Go to News Archives' link. At the bottom of the page, there's a footer with links for 'Legal', 'Copyright', 'SiteMap', and 'Feedback'.

Pictured: The Merrill Lynch intranet homepage dedicates most of its space to important news items. While the page contains relatively little market information and stock quotes, such information is placed quite effectively.

Another section of the homepage, for global advertising campaigns, occasionally promotes new initiatives or campaigns. When used, this feature replaces *Market Reports*.

WorldNet

Site Map | WN Feedback | ML Directory: <enter last name> | Site Search: <enter search criteria>

Advanced Directory > | Advanced Search >

GMI GPC MLIM HR CFO GT&S OGC Research Regional Sites External ML Sites

September 09, 2004 | Regional Clocks >

About Merrill Lynch

- Company Information
- Financial Performance
- The Brand
- How We Do Business

Human Resources

- Comp. & Timesheets
- Benefits
- Recruiting
- Other

Education & Career Dev.

- ML University
- Performance Management
- Cross Evaluation

Business Support

- Travel
- Reference
- Security
- Purchasing

Technology

- Technology Help
- Tech Tools

Local Office Services

- Corporate Services
- Design & Production
- Other

2005 Industry Awards

Three major publications recognize Merrill Lynch for excellence in Asia and around the world.
July 8, 2005
[Read the Full Article](#)

Leadership Matters

In our continuing series about leadership, Candace Browning, head of Global Securities Research & Economics, says leadership is about listening.
July 5, 2005
[Read the Full Article](#)

Today's Markets

MER	52.26	-0.27▼
DJIA	10305.47	-7.89▼
S&P 500	1118.11	1.84▲
NASDAQ	1864.69	14.05▲
FTSE 100	4538.00	-20.40▼
NIKKEI	11170.96	-108.23▼
HSI	12942.20	-107.76▼

02:05pm ET, September 9 delayed
@BigCharts.com

Get Quote

<enter symbol> [FIND](#)

[Get Symbol >](#)
[More Market Reports >](#)

United Way Campaign
[Click to ePledge >](#)

Global News | **ML Headlines** | **NEW on WorldNet!**

Investment Banking Organization Structure
Greg Fleming and Dow Kim, presidents of GMI, announced management appointments to enhance Investment Banking's regional origination efforts across coverage and products.
September 8, 2004

Colleagues Join New York City's Breast Cancer Walk
To support the goal of finding a cure for breast cancer, GPC colleagues from as far away as California joined walkers in New York City for a 60-mile trek over three days.
September 8, 2004

As a Matter of Fact, This Is Rocket Science
Merrill Lynch's research team has identified a new way to measure a company's financial health.
September 8, 2004

GMI - EYP Dow Kim hosts town hall meeting in Japan
September 9, 2004

GMI - Launch ex-U.S. of Protected Sphinx Hedge Fund Index Note
September 9, 2004

Research - Lang Gibson, Katherine Lynch hired to lead CDO effort
September 9, 2004


Pictured: While the center-right advertisement on the Merrill Lynch homepage typically promotes *Market Reports*, the space is flexible. Other advertisements sometimes run here, such as this promotion for the United Way campaign. Even so, users still have a link to access though *More Market Reports*.

News

When it comes to producing news stories, the employee communications department follows clear, specific standards. This works to users' benefit. For example, each news page displays a heading, subhead, and date, followed by the author's name. In the text of an article, people's names appear in bold-faced text so users can quickly see who's mentioned. Then, in carefully selected places, in-line links further help users navigate stories.

The employee communications department skillfully employs high-quality images to enhance articles. As in the below example, a photograph can channel what the story might not say explicitly: here, that the pictured executive is not only authoritative and knowledgeable, but cheerful as well. Photographs also include a caption, centered just below the image, with the person's name. While this small detail is something many intranet designers omit, captioning photographs—especially those with people in them—is extremely important.

Finally, in the bottom-right part of the page, a box displays links to related articles, which helps users discover stories and news they may have missed.


WN Home

News Archives: News Stories

ML Directory: <enter last name>
Site Search: <enter search criteria>


[All Archives](#)
[Awards](#)
[Corp Memos](#)
[Exec Speeches](#)
[Market Reports](#)
[Mgmt Updates](#)
[News Stories](#)
[Press Releases](#)

2005

- September
- August
- July
- June
- May
- April
- March
- February
- January

2004


[Pre April 2004 Archives >](#)

 Print

"South Asians on Wall Street" Panel: Executives Discuss Cultural Challenges in Financial Services

Published: August 22, 2005

By Steven K. Lee



Rohit D'Souza

A panel of South Asian executives employed by major Wall Street firms advised their South Asian colleagues to pursue their career goals by focusing on their job performance. In discussing their own swift professional ascents, the six panelists, all senior managing directors, focused on how they worked to overcome challenges born of cultural differences rather than of ethnic barriers.

"If I look back on what helped me and hurt me, it had everything to do with my background, but it wasn't ethnicity," said one panelist, Ravi Mattu, head of Lehman's global fixed income research. "It was because there were cultural issues: It was the fact that my communication skills could be better. But it didn't have to do with whether I was South Asian or not."

The "South Asians on Wall Street" panel, organized by Merrill Lynch's Indo-American Professional Network, included MD **Rohit D'Souza**, head of Global Equity Trading, and executives from Lehman, JPMorgan Chase, Deutsche Bank, Goldman Sachs and Credit Suisse First Boston.

"People are not on this panel because they're South Asian," said one of the panelists, Subodh Karnik, a managing director of J.P. Morgan's global currency and commodity group. "We're here because we deliver."

The discussion on August 16 drew about 400 regional employees of major financial services firms interested in career development and networking with industry peers. The executive sponsor of the network, **Paul Critchlow**, counselor to the chairman and CEO, vice chairman Public Markets, noted the "forum was an effective way to create opportunities for recruiting, mentoring, networking and

ML Diversity

Recent Stories

- ▶ Subha Barry Appointed MD and Head of Multicultural Careers
- ▶ Ausaf Abbas, GPC EMEA Head, Treks Into Thin Air for Charity
- ▶ FAs Discuss Growth at Annual African-American Symposium

Pictured: Clear but thorough standards for news stories help ensure that users can easily read and navigate them.

Some articles offer a more dynamic user experience by linking to related videos. In general, the video medium is particularly appropriate for two things: speeches from company leaders, and demonstrations of new technology.

At Merrill Lynch, the intranet page leading—and linking—to any video includes vital information: a concise summary of the event shown in the video and, more importantly, information about the speaker. Beyond giving users needed context to

decide if they should watch the video, this also helps the intranet's search engine properly index the video.

WorldNet

News Archives: Management Updates

WN Home

ML Directory: <enter last name> Site Search: <enter search criteria>

All Archives Awards Corp Memos Exec Speeches Market Reports Mgmt Updates News Stories Press Releases

2005

2004

Pre April 2004 Archives >

Print

Second-Quarter Earnings Management Update

July 14, 2004

With Stan O'Neal, chairman and CEO, and senior EMEA executives in London, along with EVP Ahmass Fakahany, chief financial officer, and executives in New York, the July 15 program crossed continents and performed well.

Stan O'Neal

Ahmass Fakahany
Executive Vice President

Stan O'Neal
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

Philip Yates
Managing Director, Head of EMEA

Harry Lengsfeld
Managing Director, Head of EMEA

Questions & Answers

Management Updates 2Q

STAN O'NEAL
Chairman and CEO

Legal Copyright SiteMap Feedback

Pictured: Selective use of video in articles can enhance users' news-reading experience.

Design Standards and Guidelines

When it comes to designing or contributing content to the Merrill Lynch intranet, the intranet team keeps things simple. Rather than over-detailing design standards and guidelines for users, for example, the intranet's designers have reduced standards to a concise list of the most important things users need to know.

For starters, links on the left side of the *WorldNet Guidelines* page provide users with needed background on the Merrill Lynch brand, plus related advertising and communication standards. Overall, the page's content is uncomplicated, and calls out the most-important information in its primary links:

- Design Standards & Guidelines
- Coded Templates

- Usability Standards & Tips
- Examples of Successful Implementation of WN Guidelines
- How to Register Your Site

WorldNet WN Home

ML Directory: Site Search:

Company Information Financial Performance The Brand How We Do Business

The Brand

- The Brand Overview
- WorldNet Guidelines
- ML Internet Guidelines
- Advertising
- Presentation Templates
- Communications Guide
- Brand Image Library
- Corporate ID Manual

[Print](#)

WorldNet Guidelines

Welcome to the Style Guide for WorldNet. This style guide has been created to keep subsites and business sites in synch with WorldNet's cohesive look, feel and consistent navigation system.

Read below for information about:

- Design Standards & Guidelines
- Coded Templates
- Usability Standards & Tips
- Examples of Successful Implementation of WN Guidelines
- How to Register Your Site >

Your voice is valuable to the ongoing evolution & development of WorldNet.
If you have any recommendations or questions to improve the user experience on WorldNet, please submit them [here](#) >

Design Standards & Guidelines

Reflecting the WorldNet design launched in 2004, we have adopted standard design elements for headers and footers, navigation, font usage & color specs.

Design Standards & Guidelines provide key recommendations to enhance the usability of your site and are derived from best practice research. Implementing these across intranet sites will benefit the firm with:

- Savings in Time & Cost
- Improved, Consistant Online Communication
- Streamlined Server Resources

Detailed standard specs are available by viewing the Design Guidelines PDF to the right.


[View Design Guidelines PDF](#)

Pictured: The WorldNet guidelines page provides users with necessary brand and communication standards. It also offers the templates, details, and examples users need to successfully deal with intranet design mechanics.

New Employees

To help new employees acclimate, the intranet offers tools and services for their specific needs. For example, to give new employees a better understanding of the organization, the intranet provides information about company history, executive management, global offices, and more.

On the history page, a timeline highlights important Merrill Lynch moments from the early 1900s on. The information concisely details how the organization began. Such content, while not mandatory for conducting day-to-day business, can nevertheless be relevant and interesting to employees.


WN Home


About Merrill Lynch: Company Information

ML Directory:
Site Search:

[Company Information](#)
[Financial Performance](#)
[The Brand](#)
[How We Do Business](#)

Company Information

- Company Overview
- Executive Management
- Board of Directors
- Executive Speeches
- Awards
- Press Releases
- ML History**
- Global Offices



ML History


Learn about the Heritage of Merrill Lynch through our company History Timeline. Simply click on the time period of interest:

[Print](#)

Company History Timeline

THE EARLY YEARS 1930s 1950s 1970s 1990s

1920s 1940s 1960s 1980s 2000+



The Early Years

In 1907, Charles E. Merrill arrived in New York filled with dreams, determined to make a name for himself. He met Edmund C. Lynch, and a great partnership began.

1885
Charles E. Merrill was born on 19 October, in Green Cove Springs, Florida.

Edmund C. Lynch was born on 19 May, in Baltimore, Maryland.

1907
Charles E. Merrill arrives in New York City to work for a textile company. He meets Edmund C. Lynch at the 23rd Street YMCA. Lynch is looking for someone to share his boardinghouse room and an enduring partnership begins.

1911
While working for the firm of George H. Burr & Co., Charles E. Merrill writes an article for *Leslie's Weekly* addressed to "Mr. Average Investor." The article emphasizes the broker's need to consider the customer's circumstances and objectives when suggesting investments — the precursor of the modern Merrill Lynch Principle Client Focus.

1914
On 6 January, Charles E Merrill & Co. opens its doors. Merrill's credo: "I have no fear of failure, provided I use my heart and head, hands and feet — and work like hell." Merrill persuades Lynch to join him and, on 19 May, they open their office at 7 Wall Street.

1915
Charles E. Merrill & Co. changes its name to Merrill, Lynch & Co. At the time, an associate noted the partners' complementary strengths: "Merrill could imagine the possibilities; Lynch imagined what might go wrong in a malevolent world."

1919
Merrill, Lynch & Co. hires Annie Grimes as its operations manager, launching the career of Wall Street's first bond saleswoman.

► [View 1920s](#)

[Legal](#)
[Copyright](#)
[SiteMap](#)
[Feedback](#)

Pictured: The Merrill Lynch intranet offers an extensive array of corporate information, including such things as an overview, a corporate history and timeline, and speeches from executives.

The range of the Merrill Lynch intranet's features underscores the extensive time and effort designers spent, and continue to spend, vigilantly collecting feedback from users. The team especially relies on usability studies, as well as intranet-based feedback forms. The results of their efforts have a noticeable, positive impact on the intranet's design—to the benefit of all Merrill Lynch employees.

URL AND ACCESS

The URL of the homepage is <http://www.worldnet.ml.com>. WorldNet is the default start page in all employees' browsers, and is also bookmarked in their browsers. Mobile users can access the intranet via a VPN connection.

CONTENT MANAGEMENT

Merrill Lynch's CMS is a Web-based, custom-built tool—based on .NET and XML—that was designed to support multiple Merrill Lynch sites. It was built in-house, using Visual Studio .NET and Visual Studio 6.0.

"Building a CMS in-house was not a simple task, but we didn't have to start from square one," notes Grimmer. "We've been using an internally built learning management system built for our e-learning platform and noticed many synergies on how courses are built, and how content is displayed, on our websites." The CMS, then, "is built around best practices in workflow management that we've experienced over the years." Today, the CMS supports several Merrill Lynch sites—internal and external—with templates differentiating each site and section visually.

Homepage content is managed by the communications and public affairs business group, which "defines the ongoing development strategy" of the intranet, notes Larry Mark, the director of employee communications. As part of that strategy, the group also maintains intranet guidelines and standards for such things as editorial tone and content, design, look and feel, and navigation. The online marketing group also helps business units design templates that meet those standards and guidelines, while visually differentiating each Merrill Lynch group or region.

So, while each business group manages its own intranet content, it must nonetheless follow guidelines that include design standards, usability standards, and content templates. "Each business group has its own identity within the corporate structure," notes Kevin Dooney, a vice president in Merrill Lynch's online marketing department. "Changes in content and layout reflect this structure and their unique requirements."

Writing for the Web, versus writing in other mediums, also requires a unique approach. For new-content contributors, then, Merrill Lynch offers specific advice for how to approach Web writing:

MERRILL LYNCH'S ADVICE FOR NEW CONTENT CONTRIBUTORS
Keep it brief: writing online is different from writing for print
Clearly identify the main/key points: what do you want the user to know, have, or remember? So: use easy to understand titles write for scan-ability
Always consider the lowest common denominator (lower-literacy users)
Employ bullets, hypertext, and graphics effectively

TECHNOLOGY

To help design the new site, the intranet team used Microsoft Visio to create wireframe designs, then Adobe Photoshop to create design and usability comps. To actually build the site, the team used Macromedia HomeSite.

The intranet runs on Microsoft Windows 2000 Server.

GOALS AND CONSTRAINTS

Goals:

- Create an enhanced and more-useable gateway for employees to access important content, tools, and services on the Merrill Lynch intranet.
- Provide an improved, unified, and consistent navigation system for the entire intranet.
- Be a channel for consistent corporate and employee communications.
- Breakdown silos, better share information, and ultimately consolidate the number of intranet sites.
- Increase the intranet's speed.
- Add or improve various tools for such things as the phone book, printer-friendly content pages, market data, market resources, corporate information, and updates.

Constraints:

- Redesign had to be delivered within four months at a previously agreed-upon budget.

BASIC INTRANET FEATURES

One of the principle features of the Merrill Lynch intranet is clear navigation. "The navigation on the site was a result of an exhaustive audit and study of resources and businesses within the organization," notes Dooney. "While the top-of-the-page navigation reflects the structure of the firm, left-hand navigation strictly adheres to user needs across business units. This header and navigation scheme is consistently used across all intranet sites at Merrill Lynch."

The intranet homepage also effectively differentiates critical news from information that is simply useful or good to know. Furthermore, news is updated daily and written by the in-house editorial staff.

Even so, users wanted more outside perspectives. "Our employees requested more content about the firm from outside sources, so we also provide a real-time, external news feed on the *ML Headlines* tab," says Dooney. Additional homepage tools tackle key market data, stock quotes, and the employee directory.

USERS

WorldNet, Merrill Lynch's intranet, is available to 51,000 employees in thirty-six countries.

USER TASKS

- Read about current news, and issues relating to Merrill Lynch
- Access the company directory
- Reference HR tools, such as compensation and timesheets, 401(k) information, benefits, and career development and educational resources
- Read market data
- Retrieve stock quotes
- Access additional Merrill Lynch sites, including business groups and support sites

BACKGROUND

Merrill Lynch's first global intranet site launched in 1997, and the first major redesign began in 1999.

From the start, each business unit or region has been responsible for its own parts of the site. Each unit designates someone to specifically oversee its intranet, and that individual is part of a firm-wide intranet development group, chaired by the online marketing department. The firm uses this approach "to ensure a common vision and development platform for the intranet, and adequate use and application of the intranet standards and guidelines," says Dooney.

The company takes an organic perspective to redesign. "We approach change as an evolutionary process that occurs over time—as sites are updated and redeveloped—as opposed to it happening within a short, defined period of time," he says.



Pictured: The second version of the WorldNet homepage (post-1999 and prior to May 2004). Among this homepage's problems were that it didn't follow usability best practices, the information hierarchy was difficult to follow, and load times were slow.

Today, the intranet team is composed of people from a variety of departments and functions, including online marketing, employee communications, business group communications, and technology. The intranet team itself is part of Merrill Lynch's communications and public affairs group.

DESIGN PROCESS AND USABILITY ACTIVITIES

The redesign itself was partially driven by the 2003 employee survey, which asked employees for input on the current WorldNet, and what they wanted to see in the future. Over 3,000 employees responded, "an unprecedented response," says Jane Muirsmith, director of Merrill Lynch's online marketing. "Employees demonstrated that they cared a great deal about WorldNet and its future direction—the level of passion and engagement in the survey was astounding."

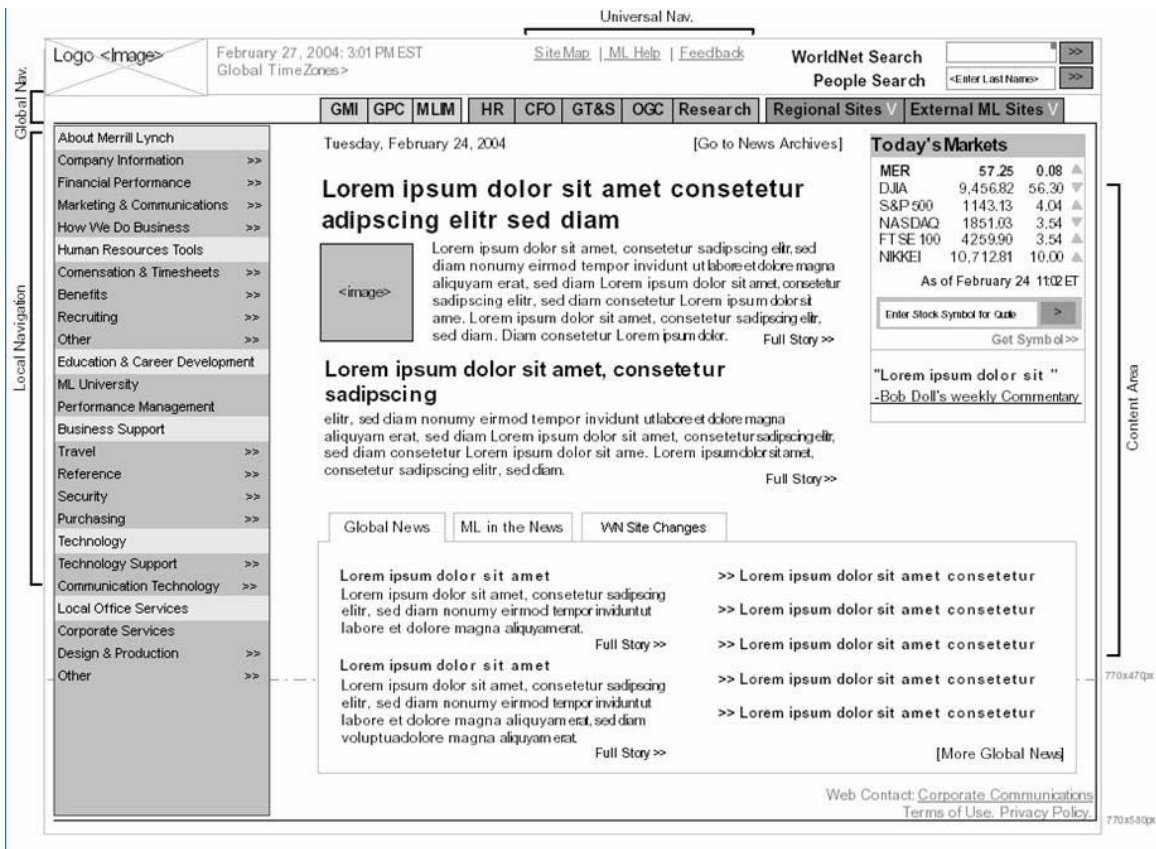
Why did so many people respond to the survey? One factor: “This was the first time that employees were given a voice in the future development of the intranet,” she says. In addition, the survey revealed more people use WorldNet more frequently than the online marketing department had anticipated. Finally, everyone who answered the survey was entered in a drawing to win an iPod.

The survey results showed that most employees wanted intranet improvements to help them do their jobs more easily and keep abreast of relevant business news. From a redesign standpoint, the survey also “provided concrete data, and a foundation to begin the redesign process,” says Muirsmith.

To determine which next steps the intranet design team should take, the group—along with Capgemini—began to benchmark Merrill Lynch’s intranet against other financial services intranets, as well as against leading intranets in general. This helped create “best practices, and ‘next-practices,’ that would meet our audience’s needs, as well as our business needs,” Muirsmith says. The team also gathered input from senior management, and studied intranet logs to discern problem areas for users.

One feature in need of improvement was navigation. While the employee survey highlighted this, the intranet redesign team needed actual information about what to adjust. “To create the navigation for the site, we needed to identify users’ needs and expectations,” says Muirsmith. To do this, the team used a variety of usability methods, including user interviews and analyzing users’ intranet feedback. They then began building mockups.

“After some initial wireframes, designs, and content bucketing, we conducted a card-sorting exercise to identify users’ wants and frustrations. This exercise helped define the navigation and nomenclature scheme,” she says.



Pictured: After gathering user feedback and conducting card-sorting exercises, Merrill Lynch used multiple wireframes to hone the new design. This is one of the penultimate homepage mockups.

TIMELINE

- 1997: Launched the first global Merrill Lynch intranet site.
- 1999: Released second version of WorldNet.
- Summer–Fall 2003: Conducted the 2003 employee survey, including questions about employees' perceptions of, and desires for, the intranet.
- Fall 2003: Gathered business requirements for the redesign.
- December 2003: Made small design and nomenclature enhancements to WorldNet to create a more unified-looking site.
- January 2004: Began WorldNet redesign.
- February–March 2004: Planned redesigned intranet and built new information architecture, design, taxonomy, and nomenclature.
- April–May 2004: Built hard-coded version of WorldNet.
- May 2004: Launched third iteration of WorldNet.
- June–December 2004: Developed new CMS.

- December 2004: Relaunched third version of WorldNet, powered by a CMS that syndicates content to both the intranet (WorldNet) and the external site (ML.com).

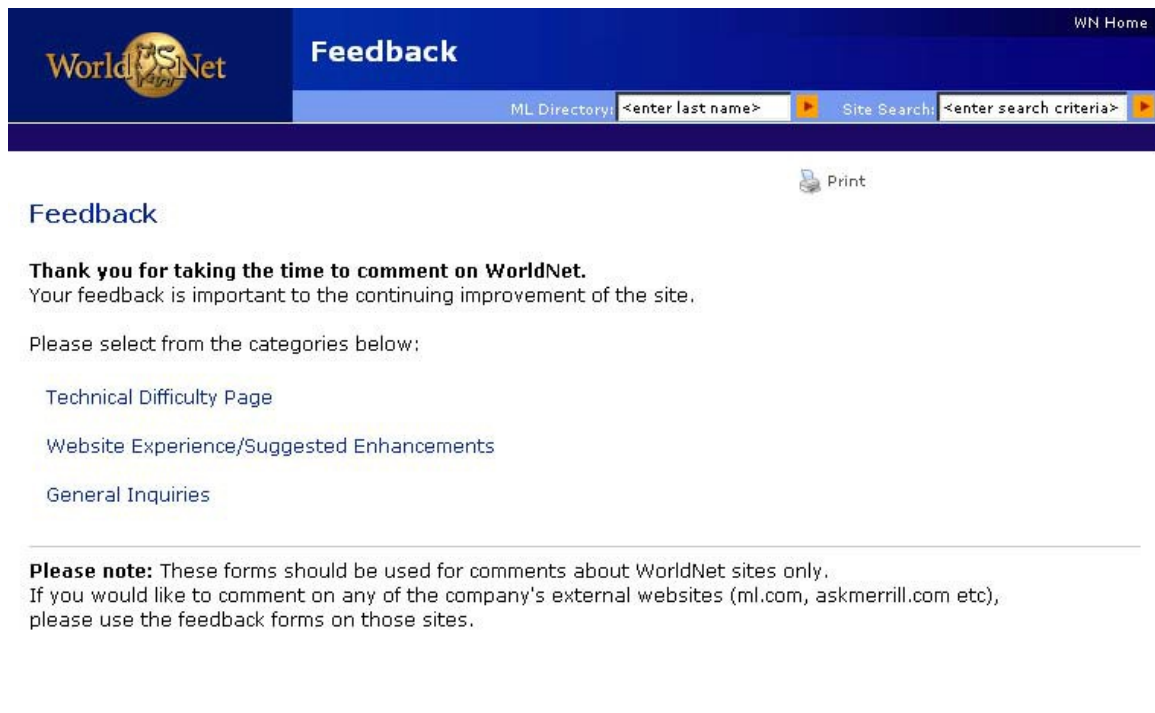
RESULTS

After the new intranet launched, there was an “unprecedented increase in traffic to and use of the Merrill Lynch corporate homepage,” says Dooney. For example, homepage views increased by 475%, total visits increased by 160%, content and news archive access was up by 500%, and use of HR tools doubled or even tripled.

Today, thanks to the new intranet, “users are accessing more information, and using tools more easily and more quickly,” Dooney says. Users have also praised features such as the new *ML Headlines*, a real-time news feed from CBSMarketWatch.com.

The time spent honing the navigation—through wireframe designs and card-sorting exercises—also paid off. “To date, this receives some of the highest usage” of any feature, post-redesign, notes Muirsmith.

Another effective feature redesigned for usability is the site-feedback tool, which helps the intranet design team continually improve the site.



WorldNet Feedback WN Home

ML Directory: <enter last name> Site Search: <enter search criteria>

Print

Feedback

Thank you for taking the time to comment on WorldNet.
Your feedback is important to the continuing improvement of the site.

Please select from the categories below:

- Technical Difficulty Page
- Website Experience/Suggested Enhancements
- General Inquiries

Please note: These forms should be used for comments about WorldNet sites only. If you would like to comment on any of the company's external websites (ml.com, askmerrill.com etc), please use the feedback forms on those sites.

Pictured: To continue to improve the WorldNet, the intranet team relies on user feedback. To foster such feedback, the intranet team guarantees it will respond to users' feedback within one working day.

Another redesigned tool is the employee directory, which must be featured on all WorldNet sites, per the company's intranet design guidelines.

Enter your search criteria below, then click the "Submit" button to see your results. If you are unsure of the spelling of the individual's last name, you can enter just the first few characters or an asterisk (*) as a wildcard; the first name is optional.

Basic search

Last name	<input type="text" value="Doe"/>
First name (or nickname)	<input type="text" value="John"/>
Department Name (keywords)	<input type="text"/>
Or Cost Center/Expense Code	<input type="text"/>
Telephone number	<input type="text"/>



Phonetic Search: Use phonetic search for "sounds like" spelling of last name.

[Update Your Phone Number](#)[Clear](#)[Submit](#) **Advanced Search**

[Click here](#) to search the directory by business unit or office location.

SYSTEM UPGRADE NOTICE: [Information About ML Directory](#)

- Still can't find who you're looking for? The [Help](#) page has tips on conducting more effective **searches**.
- Use the [ML Branch Locator](#) to find **Merrill Lynch branch offices** in the United States.
- If the **work location address** is incorrect or missing, please contact your local [Employee Service Center](#) to make the necessary correction.
- If your **contact numbers** (phone, fax, etc.) are incorrect or missing, you may update this information via [Employee Direct Access](#) (EDA) on the HR Tools portal. Changes should appear by the next business day.
- If your **e-mail address** is incorrect or missing, please visit [End User Computing](#), click on "Global Services" and then select "Email" (under "User Setup & Changes"). If you need additional assistance, please contact your local [Employee Service Center](#).
- Landscape orientation works best for printed output. You can change the **page orientation** by choosing the "Print" option from the "File" Menu. Then click on "Properties".

Pictured: All Merrill Lynch intranet sites must include access to the company directory. The directory adheres to the most recent WorldNet standards, including look and feel guidelines.

While different divisions are responsible for maintaining their own content, thorough guidelines ensure a consistent user experience.



Global Technology & Services

GT&S Home : WN Home

ML Directory: <enter last name>
Worldnet Search: <enter search criteria>

About GT&S

- Home
- Organizational Chart

GT&S Divisions

- Global Operations & Infrastructure Services
- ML Technology
- Global Corporate Services

ML Resources

- Business Continuity Mgmt
- Knowledge Exchange (KX)
- Media & Communications
- Leadership & Talent Mgmt
- MLU
- Policies & Guidelines
- Purchasing
- Recognition Program
- Security
- Six Sigma
- Technology Help Desk
- Tech Vendor Management

News & Announcements



GT&S Major Services

Loren ipsum equalla enad masat pera unasadilla twetro quave klimera fragat spetsos.

Ipsum equalla enad masat unasadilla twetro quave klimera.

[Read full announcement >](#)

Other News

[GT&S News Archives >](#)

- Announcing GMI Services**
 As you know, our organization is a critical component of the firm's service strategy, playing a central role in delivering first-rate client service, processing, and operational risk management solutions for our business partners.
- Introducing TechHelp -- Enhanced Technology Support Now Available in Most NY/NJ Locations**
 Technology help is now available through one easy-to-remember phone number and one easy-to-use website.
- ZOTOB Worm Outbreak -- Action Required**
 On Sunday, August 14, Merrill Lynch was notified of a cyberthreat involving a computer virus known as the ZOTOB worm and preventive measures were immediately taken to protect the firm.

Leadership Corner



Diane Schueneman
 Global Operations & Infrastructure Svcs



Rahul Merchant
 ML Technology



Michael Cowan
 Global Corporate Services

Campaigns

2005 Merrill Lynch Cross Evaluation >
 Selection Phase ends September 9.

Events

GPCT CTO Forum
 September 8

GPCT Book Fair
 September 13

GPCT LEaD Meeting
 September 15

[View Calendar >](#)

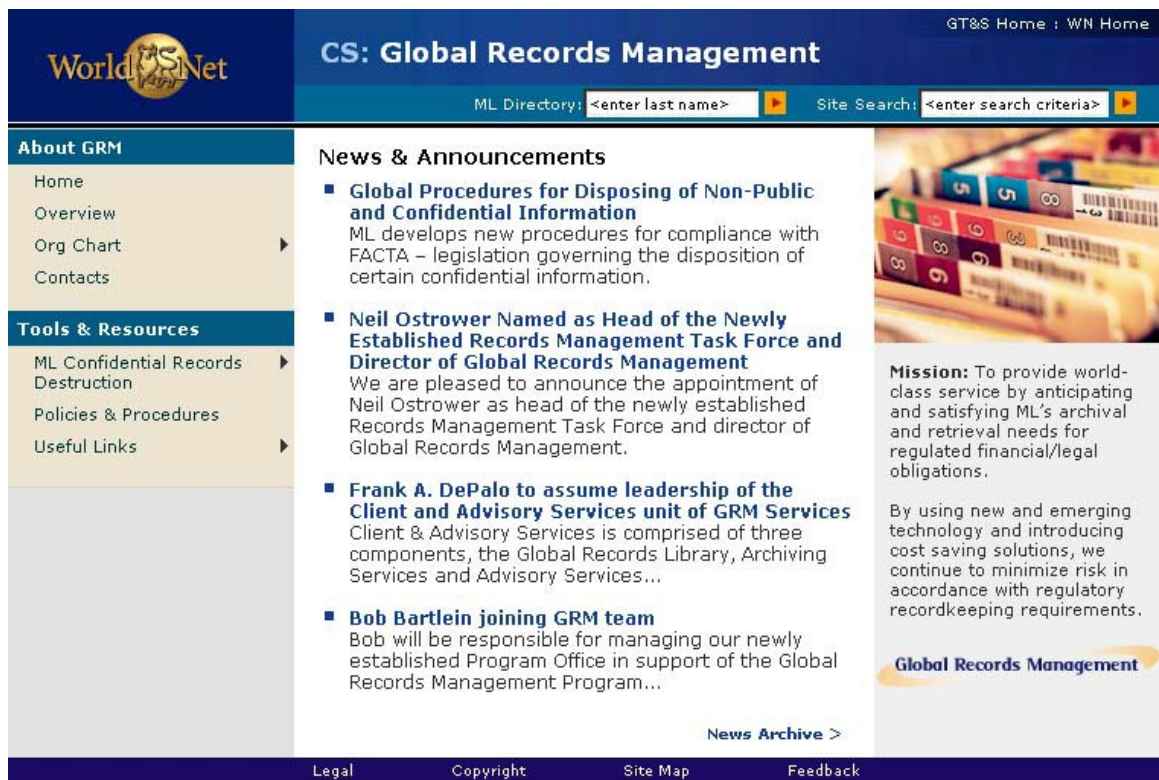
Notables

GPCT - Update on Recent Changes in Global Banking & International Technology
 August 5, 2005

GTI - Policy Reminder: Installation of Unauthorized or Unlicensed Software
 August 4, 2005

Legal
Copyright
Site Map
Feedback

Pictured: The homepage for *Global Technology & Services*, Merrill Lynch's main support organization. Users would typically arrive here after clicking a top-navigation link on the WorldNet homepage. Like all sites, this one applies the corporate intranet standards and guidelines, which nevertheless allow for modifications so divisions can communicate their own unique identities.



Pictured: A *Global Technology & Services* sub-page, *Global Records Management*, applies the GT&S business's intranet style while still remaining compliant with overall intranet guidelines.

LESSONS LEARNED

Insights from Kevin Dooney:

Don't navigate exclusively by corporate structure. "It's important to give users a navigation based on their needs, rather than just to mirror the corporate structure."

Keep it simple. "Never underestimate the power of simple, clean design."

Use graphics sparingly. "Only use graphics to illustrate key messages."

Write for the Web. "Always remember writing for the Web differs from writing for other mediums."

Insight from Jane Muirsmith:

Think big. "You can do a lot more than you think you can—with a little time and money—as long as you have committed, talented people alongside of you. A sense of humor also helps."

METRO Group

Using the Intranet:

METRO Group is one of the world's largest international retailing companies, with 2004 sales of €6.4 billion and roughly 250,000 employees operating in approximately 2,100 locations in thirty countries. The company's well-known sales divisions comprise the operating business and operate independently. They include Metro/Makro Cash & Carry, world market leader in cash & carry wholesale; Real hypermarkets and Extra supermarkets; Media Markt and Saturn, market leader in consumer electronics centers in Europe; and Galeria Kaufhof department stores.

Design Team:

Pleon GmbH

Members:

Pleon: Britta Neisen, consultant; Tim Ulrich, art director; Alexandra Edelmann, screen designer

METRO Group:

Strategic work: Zygmunt Mierdorf, METRO Group's Networking sponsor, member of the management board, CIO, and vice president of HR; Petra Rob, general manager and head of corporate communications; Simone Schiffner-Backhaus, Networking project manager and head of new media.

Functional work: Andrea Guhrauer, webmaster; Uta Rösler, CMS; Bernd Rodde, editor; Kerstin Lengert, HR Self Services; Christoph Theile, Gallup Q12 Actions; Walter Dreuw, collaboration; Paul Greenstreet, E-Learning; Martin Gehrman, management reporting; Andreas Visser, business procurement; Paul Kittel, corporate management information systems; Melanie Steffens, advanced retailing; Sylvia Borcharding, IT

SUMMARY

To create METRO's Networking intranet, the designers carefully considered the company's two primary needs. First, it required a seamless user experience, despite multiple backend applications. Second, the intranet's design and structure had to serve twenty different METRO Group companies in thirty countries.

The designers delivered on both fronts. Along the way, they also had the opportunity to try new design approaches. Would designers without creative freedom have invented an interactive game—fully integrated into the intranet and in multiple languages—to successfully train employees about aspects of the business? We think not. Without such freedom, this intranet would not be what it is today.

Homepage

At METRO Group, the Networking homepage communicates all current METRO Group news, including corporate news (*Metro News*), plus announcements and articles from the press (*Press news*). There is also news about the intranet itself: *New on the METRO Group intranet*. An editorial team controls the content and placement of these and other news modules.

A large part of the homepage's top-middle section is dedicated to an ongoing news piece. The lower section of the screen is devoted to a photograph of a recent advertisement, along with a textual summary.

From the homepage, an always-visible horizontal navigation bar gives users access to an employee address book, search, extended search, and the sitemap. It also lets them set their preferred language—English or German.

The METRO Group includes several sales divisions, such as Real, and Metro Cash & Carry, that have their own brand identities. These companies use Networking's

structural and technical facilities with their own corporate designs. This approach ensures an efficient use of resources while maintaining both corporate identity and consistent design.

METRO Group **NET.WORKING**

Logout | Help | Sitemap | Deutsch | Search terms | Extended Search | Address Book

Networking Start

- Information
- Self Services
- Collaboration
- Management
- METRO Group
- METRO AG
- Sales Divisions
- Cross-divisional companies
- Locations
- Topics METRO Group

METRO Group Internet Advanced Retailing Future Store Initiative DEG METRO STARS

Sales Divisions:

Cross-divisional compan:

Short Cut:

Pressnews 13.10.2005

Fleischhandel im Visier der Fahnder »
 Ekklige Geschäfte »
 Entscheidung über Praktiker vertrag »

more » News » News FSI »

Announcements

07.10.2005 » MCCI, Spain: Managing Director
 30.09.2005 » MCCI, China: Project Manager
 30.09.2005 » Praktiker: Regional Manager
 Archive »

New on the METRO Group intranet

Advantage With immediate effect, "Advantage" provides a review of the most important events at the METRO Group during the past months.

Metro News

12.10.2005 » Raffle: Win tickets for a top game of the DEG METRO STARS
 11.10.2005 » METRO Group Networking: Insurance Brokers present their new intranet
 07.10.2005 » Managers in debate with the minister for economic affairs of Saarland
 Archive »

Press releases Companies

28.09.2005 » Praktiker: Expansion abroad continued
 27.09.2005 » Media-Saturn: Now also on the internet: Cool sound at cool prices
 26.09.2005 » Praktiker: 200 new trainee jobs in new vocational training year
 Archive »

Press releases METRO Group

30.09.2005 » METRO Group reduces stake in Loyalty Partner
 28.09.2005 » METRO Group and GS1 Germany jointly establish accredited RFID Test Lab
 23.09.2005 » METRO Group opens its bilingual company kindergarten "Metro-Sternchen"
 Archive »

Advanced Retailing

Start Knowledge Trip

METRO AG | terms of use | contact | last updated: 13. October 2005

Pictured: The METRO homepage offers news and applications.

News

The *Metro News* pages offer engaging content about the company. (Users can navigate to the news via homepage links or the left-hand menu bar.) Authors use bold-faced text to call out the most important sections, and crisp images support content. For special topics, such as statements from management board members or reviews of the most important events at METRO Group, Networking also offers users news in the form of video segments. Controls enable users to fast forward, rewind, and pause the segments.

» Information

» Issues Mngt.

» News & Press

» Metro News

» Metro News 1st Semester 2005

» Metro News 2nd Semester 2004

» Metro News 1st Semester 2004

» Metro News 2003

» Metro News 2002

» Metro News 2001

» Announcements

» Press releases METRO Group

» Press releases companies

» Mobile News

» Job market

» Check lists

» BKK

» MYS

» Corporate Design

» Internet

» Travel

» Self Services

» Collaboration

» Management

» METRO Group

» METRO AG

» Sales Divisions

» Cross-divisional companies

» Locations

» Advanced Retailing

» Topics METRO Group

» >Geschlossene Bereiche

» # Intranet (alt)

» >Schulungen

METRO Group Internet

Future Store Initiative

DEG METRO STARS

Sales Divisions:

Cross-divisional compan

Short Cut:

Information / 26.09.05 III

Metro News 26.09.05

"Company kindergarten as a sign for the compatibility of job and family"

In the presence of around 180 guests the METRO Group on 23 September 2005 opened its bilingual company kindergarten. Starting in early October, 65 children between the ages of 4 months and 6 years at the Duesseldorf campus in Germany will be cared for bilingually – in German and English.

In his inauguration address Zygmunt Mierdorf, Executive Vice President Human Resources of METRO Group, stressed the commitment of the METRO Group to its corporate social responsibility. However, the kindergarten was not only built as a contribution to a more family-friendly society. "Naturally, in the first place we want to help our employees achieve a balance between their family and professional lives."

Joachim Erwin, lord mayor of Duesseldorf, in his speech labeled the construction of the company kindergarten as a "Renaissance of reason". Formerly it used to be normal that companies provide care for the children of their employees. Since public services are increasingly backing out of this area, creating new childcare centers represents an important social contribution.



Zygmunt Mierdorf: "This company kindergarten is an important investment into the future."



Zygmunt Mierdorf, Dr. Richard M. Hesck (German Red Cross Duesseldorf) and Joachim Erwin (lord mayor of Duesseldorf) officially opened the "Metro-Sternchen".



After the end of the official part of the inauguration the children took over.

Playing, romping and learning

After the end of the official part of the inauguration the children took over: Together with their parents they visited the new kindergarten for the first time that afternoon. The two-story building designed in warm yellow and red hues houses a total of four group rooms. Large windows make the rooms bright and friendly. Added to this are the dormitory and nursery rooms for the youngest as well as a handicraft room and a small gym. Free space for playing, romping and learning is also provided for in the outside area of the "Metro-Sternchen". A large slide leads from the first floor down to the climbing wall, sand box and tree house. On a walking school trail, the small children learn to make their first steps. The complete area is designed child-friendly down to the very last detail.



Red and yellow hues give the building a friendly touch.



"Metro-Sternchen" offers care to a total of 65 children

Bilingual childcare pays tribute to the internationalization of the METRO Group

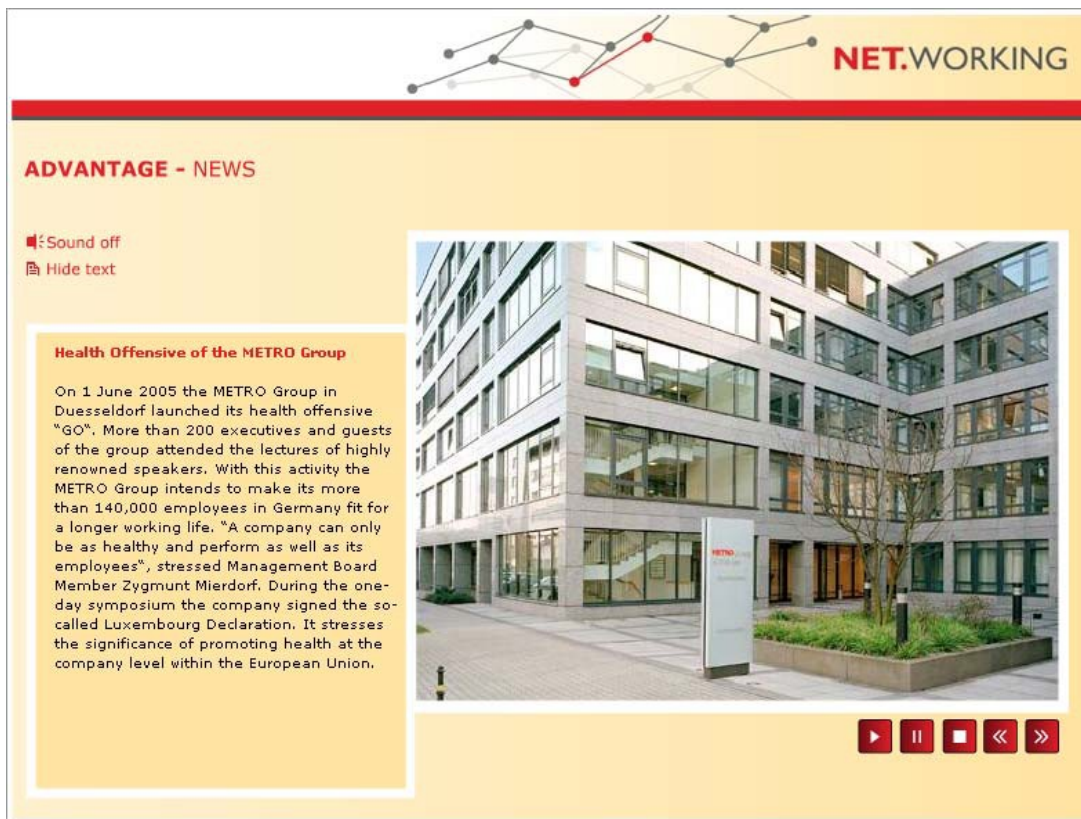
The kindergarten of the METRO Group will open its gates in October. From then on 65 children aged between four months and six years will be cared for bilingually in both German and English. With this move the group pays tribute to the company's increasing internationalization. In Duesseldorf alone, people from 30 different nations are working for the METRO Group.

■ More about the group's day care facility for children "Metro-Sternchen" [more](#) »

Corporate Communications - New Media

start of page

Pictured: News pages feature well-written text and photos, in this case including pictures of a company kindergarten's opening.



Pictured: Other news stories can offer engaging sound bites with video news.

Navigation

On Networking, users have a complete overview of all companies and locations in the METRO Group. Even so, controls automatically limit access to those specific pages for which an employee is authorized.

This site's navigational structure deserves special mention. In general, crafting an information architecture, and more specifically, creating manageable menus, is a demanding business. With this in mind, the METRO Group's designers opted for a basic, tree-structure menu-navigation structure. In particular, they avoided fly-out and cascading menus, making navigation easier and less physically taxing for users, since they don't have to hold down a mouse button or carefully maneuver their mouse (without clicking), to reach nested navigation menus.

In the left-hand navigation bar, main content pages for a particular category open directly below the main menu item. Once a main content page link is clicked, the page displays in the main part of the page. To help users know where they are in the site, double arrows and indentations denote the selected categories and subcategories, and the link of the currently selected page is colored red. To further orient users, breadcrumbs also appear near the top of every page.

Networking also sports a major navigation enhancement: drop-down boxes on the start page that include quick links to the most frequently used content and applications.

Pictured: METRO Group opted for left-hand navigation that expands without “flying out.” In other words, it doesn’t cascade or require users to depress a mouse button to keep it open, making it easier and less physically taxing to use.

Knowledge Transfer

For particularly abstract topics, designers chose to create Flash animations that illustrate topics using images, text, and animation aimed at appealing to users’ various learning styles.

For example, the *METRO Group Future Store Initiative* clearly notes the topic’s name above the screen, so users can easily refer to it. Buttons below the tutorial screen’s main area give users further control over their session, including fast-forward, rewind, and pause controls. Generally, offering such features is important whenever you offer animation; it’s especially so in an e-learning environment, where users may want to replay content, take notes, or pause to think further about a topic. Also, if users are well versed in a particular concept, control buttons let them quickly skip past it when reading a chapter.

As we’ve seen in our website studies, users get frustrated and bewildered when they lack sufficient control over online learning environments. In particular, users hate not knowing a tutorial’s length—in pages or time—or where they currently are in the process. METRO Group’s tutorials astutely avoid this problem by numbering each step in a red progress bar, and coloring the current step gray so users can quickly check their progress.

In addition to a simple, explanatory animation on the left, designers also employ supplemental text on the right side of the page. Having both text and animation can help many users, and also better facilitates learning for people who have cognitive, literacy, or auditory disabilities.

METRO Group **NET.WORKING**

Logout | Help | Sitemap | Deutsch | Search terms | Extended Search | Address Book

print page | send page

Networking Start

- Information
- Self Services
- Collaboration
- Manager Cockpit
- METRO Group
- METRO AG
- Sales Divisions
- Cross-divisional companies
- Locations
- Topics & Projects
 - Advanced Retailing
 - Awards
 - EDI
 - Future Store Initiative
 - Health Promotion
 - Networking Project
 - SOP/SAR
 - Environment information system
 - Weiterbildung
 - NEU: Advanced Retailing
 - Introduction
 - Market/Branch - Distribution
 - Future Store (FSI)**
 - SAF Superstore
 - Logistics
 - Buying
 - IT-Systems
 - Category Management/Marketing
 - Committees
 - METRO Group Internet
 - Advanced Retailing
 - Future Store
 - DEG Metro Stars

Sales Divisions:

Cross-divisional compan:

Short Cut:

Topics & Projects / Special Feature

Future Store Initiative (FSI)

Retailing is currently undergoing a process of fundamental change. METRO Group sees this period of transition as an opportunity to actively participate in shaping the future of the industry. METRO Group has therefore created the Future Store Initiative.

Introduction **Details**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

SHOPPING WITH THE PSA

1 2 3 4 5

Hello Ms. Weber
Welcome to the Future Store

In order to use all of the PSA features, customers identify themselves by holding their Future Card at a 10cm distance from the scanner, which is located on the left side of the PSA.

The device then greets customers with their name.

start of page

METRO AG | terms of use | contact | last updated: 17. August 2005

Pictured: A Flash animation leads employees through a concept, noting their relative progress through the module.

In a creative approach to online teaching and learning, the METRO Group's designers crafted a game in which participants travel through a world of large METRO control centers, and tour advanced retailing topics. The METRO Group offers the game as an incentive to improve employees' advanced retailing knowledge. For employees, however, the game is fun, and that's the main appeal. Another motivation, perhaps, is winning the game, at which point an employee receives a certificate of completion.




[Logout](#) | [Help](#) | [Sitemap](#) | [Deutsch](#) | | [Extended Search](#) | [Address Book](#)

[print page](#) | [send page](#)

Networking Start

- Information
- Self Services
- Collaboration
- Management

- METRO Group
- METRO AG
- Sales Divisions
- Cross-divisional companies
- Locations
- Advanced Retailing**
 - AR Strategy
 - FSI
 - Networking
 - Metro Link
 - CTA
 - CT HR
 - AR Basic Projects
 - AR News
 - Infopool
- Topics METRO Group
- >Geschlossene Bereiche
- # Intranet (alt)
- >Schulungen

METRO Group Internet Future Store Initiative DEG METRO STARS

Sales Divisions:

Cross-divisional compan

Short Cut:

Advanced Retailing

Advanced Retailing embodies a vision to develop METRO Group into the best of the globally networked organizations. The Advanced Retailing concept pools the most important future-driven projects, which have the objective of optimizing work processes with innovative technology. This includes internal processes as well as customer and supplier-centric processes. [more](#)

Core Subjects



Common Template

Common Template Accounting
standardizes and integrates accounting processes and systems in the METRO Group. [more](#)

Common Template HR
standardizes and integrates the human resources processes in the METRO Group. [more](#)

Basic Projects



Advanced Retailing News

20.12.2005 » Networking: Employees learning online and on time

19.12.2005 » Basic Projects: Current News of calendar week 50

12.12.2005 » Basic Projects: Current News of calendar week 49

Infopool

Medialibrary
Wide range of information material about projects of Advanced Retailing for use in presentations or trainings. [more](#)

Glossary
Comprehensive collection of terms concerning Advanced Retailing. [more](#)

[start of page](#)

METRO AG | [terms of use](#) | [contact](#) | last updated: 05. December 2005

Pictured: This page contains background information about Advanced Retailing, and describes and links to the *Knowledge Quest* game.

In the *Knowledge Quest* game, players must surmount challenges to reach a specific goal. Along the way, they get clues to help them solve the puzzles. This is important—users don't want to play a game they can't figure out. Of course, while a game's hidden treasures can be fun and challenging, hidden user interface controls are not. This game deftly avoids any such problems.

Throughout the game, a *Quest-Calculator* scoreboard reports the player's current score, as well as the maximum score (the score to beat). The latter adds a competitive edge to the learning environment.

At the bottom of the game, a control bar displays a *Game Rules* link so users can reference them while playing. The *Pause Knowledge Quest* link is easy to find, and a useful feature: If users are interrupted—say by an actual job-related task—they can click the link and avoid squandering their progress in the game.

KNOWLEDGE QUEST. LOGIN **NET.WORKING**

WISSEN **HO-CHI-MI** **CONHECIMENTO** **ЗНАНИЕ** **KNOWLEDGE** **知識**

NOT YET REGISTERED?

LOGIN:

USER NAME

PASSWORD

GO!

FORGOT YOUR USER NAME OR PASSWORD?

BACKGROUND

RULES

IN THE KNOW?

Welcome! Go on a knowledge quest and discover the world of Advanced Retailing. Do you already know a thing or two about subjects of Advanced Retailing? Here you can put your knowledge to the test.

Pictured: The login screen for *Knowledge Quest*.

Two things that make for a great intranet are innovation and attention to details. METRO Group designers consciously attended to both, and the results speak for themselves.

URL AND ACCESS

Many Metro Group employees have the intranet homepage set as their default homepage.

CONTENT MANAGEMENT

The METRO Group's CMS allows METRO Group's decentralized content editors to easily contribute material. The CMS runs on an Oracle application server and database, with XML as the internal data format. When content is served, it goes through XSL Transformation.

Various groups in the company helped design the new CMS technology, including METRO Group's new media department and the content systems department of MGI (METRO Group Information Technology GmbH). An IT supplier then developed the software in close cooperation with METRO Group. Previous CMS versions were already being used for the intranets of individual sales divisions, cross-divisional service companies, and the METRO Group itself.

Unlike the company's previous CMS products, the new CMS provides a single system for all authors. Group-wide, approximately 500 authors contribute content via the Networking CMS for the METRO Group intranet or its companies' intranets. One especially useful aspect of the METRO Group's CMS is the ability to store content in one place, then reuse all or parts of it on any METRO Group site. For example, all METRO Group companies publish recent corporate content on their intranets, yet the content is saved in only one location. "This way we reduce the work not only for creating, but also for maintaining, content," says Uta Rösler, project manager of the Networking CMS.

The CMS helps enforce many of METRO Group's design guidelines. "Enforcing design standards for intranet content has not been a problem, due to the fact that most standards such as positioning, fonts, and layout are already being managed by the content management system," says webmaster Andrea Guhrauer. Furthermore, a style guide details special formatting standards for things the CMS can't control. Authors are informed of any changes—and the importance of following standards—during regular events.

[Logout](#) | [Help](#) | [Sitemap](#) | [Deutsch](#) | | [Extended Search](#) | [Address Book](#)

[print page](#) | [send page](#)

Networking Start

- » Information
 - » Issues Mngt.
 - » News & Press
 - » Metro News
 - » Metro News 1st Semester 2005
 - » Metro News 2nd Semester 2004
 - » Metro News 1st Semester 2004
 - » Metro News 2003
 - » Metro News 2002
 - » Metro News 2001
 - » Announcements
 - » Press releases METRO Group
 - » Press releases companies
 - » Mobile News
 - » Job market
 - » Check lists
 - » BKK
 - » MVS
 - » Corporate Design
 - » Internet
 - » Travel
 - » Self Services
 - » Collaboration
 - » Management
 - » METRO Group
 - » METRO AG
 - » Sales Divisions
 - » Cross-divisional companies
 - » Locations
 - » Advanced Retailing
 - » Topics METRO Group
 - » >Geschlossene Bereiche
 - » # Intranet (alt)
 - » >Schulungen

METRO Group Internet Future Store Initiative DEG METRO STARS

Sales Divisions:

Cross-divisional compan:

Short Cut:

Information / 04.11.05 II

Metro News 04.11.05

Metro promotes Chinese cuisine with top chefs

The Metro House of Training in Shanghai has appointed ten of the best chefs in Shanghai as "Honorary Consultants". They will in future give regular lectures to professional customers at the training kitchen of Metro Cash & Carry China.

With this program professionals in the hotel and restaurant business are to receive merchandize information, cooking skills and operational consulting support. The objective is to promote the Chinese culinary culture. The program in addition also serves the long-term target of Metro Cash & Carry China to combine its corporate philosophy with the Chinese culture and thereby improve business operations.

The top chefs of Shanghai at the appointment ceremony.

Jean-Luc Tuzes: "In the medium term, Metro will open six to ten stores per year in China."

"We will maintain the high standard"

Jean-Luc Tuzes, CEO of MCC China, attended the conference and presented the letters of appointment as "Metro Training Kitchen's Honorary Consultant" to the chefs. "China is one of the most important strategic markets of the METRO Group. In the medium term Metro will open six to ten stores per year in China", stressed Tuzes. "Metro Cash & Carry has a very good reputation with regard to food hygiene and quality. We will consistently maintain this high standard. At the same time we will increase our research efforts and develop more value-adding services for our customers to meet their needs."

Management of MCC China assists chefs

At the launch of the training program Jean-Luc Tuzes and He Yizhao, Director of Shanghai Restaurant Association, presented the dishes prepared by the ten top chefs to the guests attending the event. Subsequently, two of the chefs performed a live cooking show. Wearing the Metro apron Mr. Tuzes together with Patti Lo, Vice President Human Resources of MCC China, and Jean-Pierre Bienfait, Vice President Operations of MCC China, assisted the chefs.

Corporate Communications – New Media

[start of page](#)

METRO AG | [terms of use](#) | [contact](#) | last updated: 04. November 2005

Pictured: A METRO Group news page combining text and photos.

TECHNOLOGY

The intranet was visually designed using Adobe Photoshop. To construct and serve pages, the design team uses Java, Java Server Pages, HTML, CSS, Jakarta Struts, XML, XSLT, and JavaScript.

The main development tool is Eclipse, a free tool, and the team uses PVCS Version Manager for version management.

Development is performed on Windows machines that run a J2EE standalone application server locally. All developers' application servers are connected to a central developer database (Oracle version 9.0.2.4, soon to be 9.0.2.6).

Red Hat Linux on Intel-based Blades is the operating system for the testing, pre-production, and production environments, which contain partially clustered Oracle iAS, plus Oracle databases. To track bugs, the team uses Mercury Test Director.

GOALS

- Create a uniform work and information platform.
- Seamlessly integrate three technical systems.
- Standardize design, navigation, and technology throughout the intranet.
- Optimize the design to function on multiple platforms.
- Improve the intranet's usability.

BASIC INTRANET FEATURES

METRO Group Networking provides a uniform work and information platform for all personnel in all METRO Group companies and countries. As Simone Schiffner-Backhaus, Networking project manager and head of new media, notes, "We have designed METRO Group Networking as the 'single point of truth' for METRO Group personnel. In other words, this is where they find needed information, applications and communications resources for their everyday work. Our objective is to make access to information simpler for our employees, to foster social and trans-national collaboration within the group, and to map—and thus improve—internal administrative processes in Networking."

Networking offers users a variety of applications. Among them are the popular Networking HR applications, which include a group-wide address book and a vacation management and planning tool. Since the new site went live in June 2004, the tools has already handled over 10,000 vacation requests.

METRO Group **NET.WORKING**

Logout | Help | Sitemap | Deutsch | Search terms | Extended Search | Address Book

Networking Start

- Information
- Self Services
- Collaboration
- Manager Cockpit

Sort: Last Name

Name	Organisation	Address	Communication
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rodde, Bernd	METRO AG, Unternehmenskommunikation, kaufmännische/-r Mitarbeiter/-in	Schlueterstrasse 1, 40235 Duesseldorf, Germany	+49 (211) 6886-1918 rodde@metro.de

Select All Download Back

Print

start of page

METRO AG | terms of use | contact | last updated: 18. August 2005

Pictured: The METRO Group address book contains the contact data for all company personnel. To help orient users, the design includes alternate-color highlighting and red hyperlinks for sending an email, seeing a full employee profile, and so on.

METRO Group **NET.WORKING**

Logout | Help | Sitemap | Deutsch | Search terms | Extended Search | Address Book

Networking Start

- Information
- Self Services
- Collaboration
- Manager Cockpit

Details View

Mr. Bernd Rodde

Communication	
E-Mail	rodde@metro.de
E-Mail 2	
Phone	+49 (211) 6886-1918
Phone 2	
Fax	+49 (211) 6886-2310
Fax 2	
Organisation	
Company	METRO AG
Org. Unit	Unternehmenskommunikation
Position	kaufmännische/-r Mitarbeiter/-in
Cost Center	0000002100
Manager	Schiffner-Backhaus, Simone
Address	
Street	Schlueterstrasse 1
City	Duesseldorf
Postal Code	40235
State/Region	NRW
Country	Germany
Building Name	Bruecke 01

start of page

METRO AG | terms of use | contact | last updated: 18. August 2005

Pictured: A detail page from the METRO Group address book. Pages contain complete employee contact information in a clearly organized structure: the most important data—email, telephone, and fax—appear at the top of the page.

Another feature is *Networking Collaboration*, which provides tools and methodologies to facilitate collaboration across organizational units, companies, and countries.

The screenshot shows the METRO Group Networking Collaboration web application. The header features the METRO Group logo and a network diagram with the text "NET.WORKING". Below the header, there is a navigation bar with "Home" and "Help" links, and a search bar labeled "All sources". The main content area is titled "Collaboration" and includes a welcome message for colleagues, a "New!" announcement about the pilot phase starting on April 12th, and a description of the pilot phase. A sidebar on the left lists navigation options: "Networking Start", "Information", "Self Services", "Collaboration", "Management", "Collaboration", "Workgroups", "Information Links", "News", and "Public". The main content area also features a "Training Dates" section with a calendar icon, a "First Steps in Collaboration" section with a footprint icon, and a "FAQ" section with a question mark icon. Below these, there is a "New!" announcement about web-based training on project management. The bottom section includes "Collaboration News" with two entries dated 26.04.2005, "My Workspaces" with a list of workspaces, "General Links" with a list of links, "Personal Links" with an "Add new link" button, and "Personal Documents" with a "No documents to display" message. The footer contains the METRO AG logo, "Terms of use", and "Contact" links.

Pictured: Networking offers tools and methodologies for employees to collaborate across organizational units, companies, and countries.

A business procurement application gives employees an easy way to order office stationary, IT supplies, hardware, and other office essentials.

For posting announcements, Networking includes a virtual pinboard.

Networking also collects metrics and provides users with a business dashboard to analyze the data, facilitating information collection and the creation of reports for the METRO Group's managing board.

METRO Group **NET.WORKING**

Networking Start Bernd Rodde Adressbuch

Urlaub beantragen

Urlaub bzw. Freistellung beantragen

Art der Abwesenheit: Jahresurlaub

Abwesend vom: 18.08.2005 Donnerstag

Bis einschließlich: 18.08.2005 Donnerstag

Genehmigung durch: Simone Schiffner-Backhaus

Notiz: [Empty text area]

Überprüfen Senden

Zeitkonto	abtragbar bis	Anspruch	verbraucht	geplant + genehmigt	nicht verplant	Einheit
Jahresurlaub 2005	30.04.2006	30,00	15,50	0,00	14,50	Tage

METRO Group Internet
Advanced Retailing
Future Store
DEG METRO STARS

Seitenanfang

METRO AG | Nutzungsbedingungen | Kontakt

Pictured: The form employees fill out when requesting leave, which also displays their remaining vacation time.

The company's 150 personnel controllers rely on the intranet's international database, including HR data and key business information.

METRO Group **NET.WORKING**

Networking Start Edward Example Address Book

Purchasing

Shop in 3 Steps

1 Select Goods/Service 2 Shopping Cart (Empty) 3 Complete and Order

In this step, you can search for goods/services and add them to your shopping cart. In step 2, you can display your shopping cart and check list. In step 3, you can order your shopping cart.

Step 1: Select Goods/Service

You can add items to the shopping cart using the following methods:

Search in Individual Catalogs:

- Old Purchase Orders and Templates
- Internal Goods/Services
- Metro Catalogue 1

Found nothing? Use the following order form:

- Describe Requirement

« Back Continue »

start of page

METRO AG | terms of use | contact

Pictured: A procurement page where employees can order office and IT supplies, and IT hardware.



Das Intranet der real- SB-Warenhaus GmbH





Networking Start

- Home real,-
- Informieren
- Arbeiten
- Zusammenarbeiten
- Führen

- Anwendungen
- Fachbereiche
- Formulare
- Projekte
- Service
- Unternehmen

METRO AG Presseschau
METRO Group Intranet
real,- Internet
Extra Internet
Extra Intranet

Vertriebslinien:

QS-Gesellschaften:

Direkteinstieg:

Logout

Hilfe

Sitemap

Suchbegriffe

Erweiterte Suche

Telefonbuch

Im Markt Ratingen testet real- ein neues Kassensystem

Seit dem 25. Juli wird im real,- Markt Ratingen ein in Deutschland bislang einzigartiges Kassensystem getestet. Dabei werden der Erfassungsvorgang, also das Scannen der Artikel, und der Bezahlvorgang voneinander getrennt. Bereits in der ersten Woche nutzten 1.750 Kunden dieses neue System.

» mehr

Ein Herz für Tiere

Süßenborn – Corina Pfeifer, Mitarbeiterin in der Elektroabteilung, wollte den Kunden kurz vor Geschäftsschluss beraten, als dieser aufgeregt zu ihr hinkam und Sie bat mitzukommen. Doch was er ihr zeigte, verschlug ihr die Sprache: In der Aktionsschütte bei den Waschmaschinen lag in einer Plastiktüte ein kleines Kaninchen, dass offensichtlich von einem anderen Kunden dort „entsorgt“ wurde.

» mehr

Wocheninfo

Ihre real,- Wocheninfo erscheint am Mittwoch.

extra Wocheninfo

aktuell & wichtig

06.01.2006 » Pressemitteilung: Finanzspritze zum Jahresstart

28.12.2005 » Pressemitteilung: Einkaufs-Tipp für leere Geldbeutel

30.11.2005 » real,- aktuell: Stellungnahme zu Greenpeace-Vorwürfen

Neue Inhalte

06.01.2006 » Announcements 1. Halbjahr 2006

22.09.2005 » Intranet Türkei

21.07.2005 » Pinnwand

Aktualisierte Seiten

Klicken Sie hier »



Das neue Kassensystem



Corina Pfeifer aus Süßenborn

real- SB-Warenhaus GmbH

Nutzungsbedingungen

Kontakt

Seitenanfang

USERS

USER TASKS

- Read up on corporate news and news specific to METRO Group companies
- Look for information on a particular company-related issue, such as advanced retailing concepts
- Handle personal requests online, including vacation requests
- Collaborate with other employees in virtual team rooms
- Search for people or job positions in the company
- Order office and IT supplies, and IT hardware

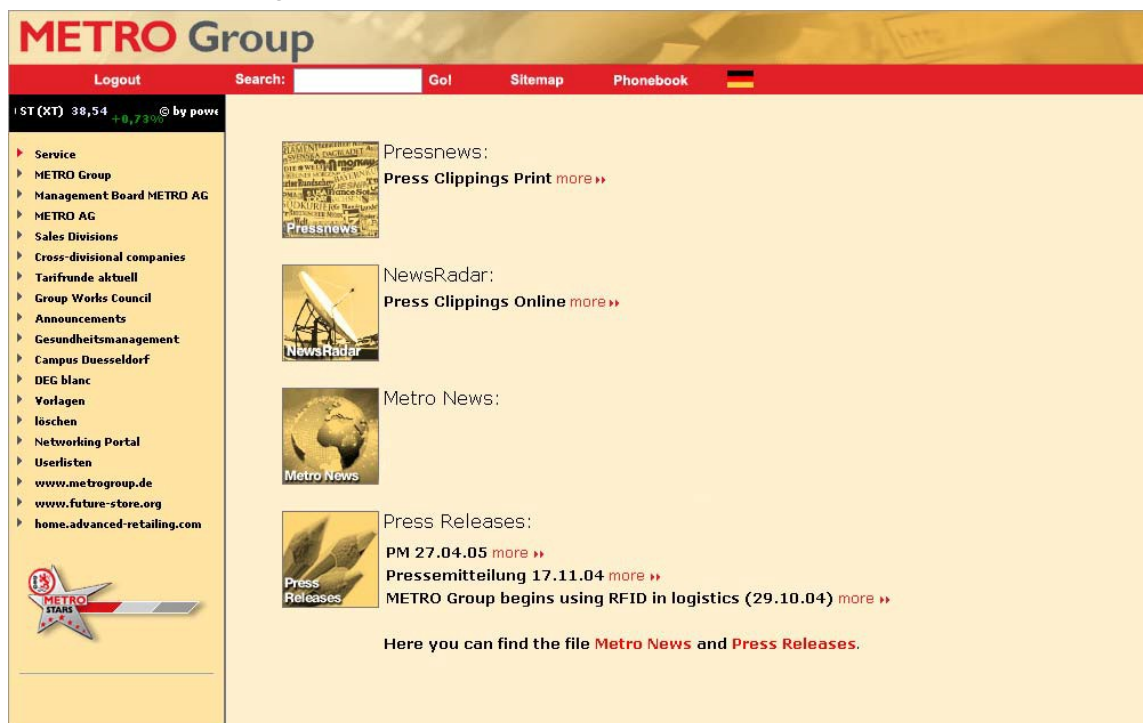
- Conduct research
- For new employees, access checklists of essential orientation steps

BACKGROUND

The original METRO Group intranet launched in 1998 and was designed purely as an information medium—a one-way path to get information to employees. Very quickly, however, the intranet began transforming from a static place to store information, to a work and information platform that helps employees do their jobs.

Even so, the homepage design had a static air: it included links only to broad news categories—not to actual news items—and its icons rarely changed. Sub-pages also relied on an abundance of icons, and were difficult to navigate.

On the technology front, the first intranet's design team used software that was not J2EE-compliant and did not run on a J2EE application server, which made it difficult to integrate with other enterprise systems. The template mechanism was also proprietary, and no instance of the previous software ran locally, which made testing more difficult. Changes had to be loaded onto a test server and vetted there.



Pictured: The METRO Group intranet homepage in the summer of 2004, prior to re-launch. The homepage was very static, partly because the latest news was accessible only after clicking one of the page's links. Also, changes to the image elements were rare.

DESIGN PROCESS AND USABILITY ACTIVITIES

For the most recent redesign, the company largely moved away from the previous intranet version. With Networking, the METRO Group began to build a new, standardized work and information platform for all employees.

"Networking's goals are to improve internal administration processes by providing better technical support, to accelerate the internal exchange of information, and to promote both cross-company and cross-divisional cooperation. In this context, processes are being standardized, so that increasingly complex tasks can be managed more easily," notes Zygmunt Mierdorf, a member of the METRO Group management board, as well as the company's CIO and vice president of HR. "For METRO Group, Networking is the workplace of the future."

Networking is based on three "technology pillars": the CMS, SAP ERP software, and Microsoft Sharepoint. The intranet implementation focused on maintaining a seamless link among them.

Within Networking, there are multiple sub-projects to improve specific functions: HR self services, Gallup Q12 actions (a twelve-question assessment of employee engagement levels designed by The Gallup Organization), content, collaboration, e-learning, management reporting, business procurement, corporate management information systems, and advanced retailing. General tasks, including IT, user interface, and communications, are also included in the Networking team structure.

The intranet redesign was largely handled by the online relations practice of Pleon GmbH in Germany. Given the short implementation timeframe, a group of experts—designers and consultants—was brought in at project launch to assess the current METRO Group intranet and analyze employees' opinion of it. MGI, METRO Group's IT service company, carried out the technical implementation.

With results in hand, the redesign team outlined intranet requirements and began the redesign process, quickly developing three potential design templates. The team says it drew inspiration from the design of the Networking logo, other intranets and websites, and browsing through design books and trade journals.

Ultimately, one template was selected and used to develop various, additional site templates. Initially, due to time constraints, the designers were unable to perform a usability test of the previous intranet. The very tight schedule also meant that the project had to sacrifice a detailed usability test—such as a testing of design prototypes—during the development phase.

After the intranet went live for some divisions, the redesign team conducted formal usability tests. The testing included a questionnaire to assess users' PC and intranet skills, to help define different types of users.

Usability test questions focused on the following issues:

- What draws a user's focus?
- Are users aware of the content and services the intranet provides?
- Are all technical functions used and are they clear to users?
- Are users satisfied with the information offered?
- Are users happy with the design and does it invite them to use the intranet?
- Do users find information where they expect to find it?
- Is the navigation structure clear and understandable?
- Is terminology clear?
- Is additional information necessary? Is any content missing?

While taking the usability test, subjects were provided with a list of tasks to accomplish. A moderator encouraged test subjects to think out loud during the process, while a minute-taker wrote down all observed problems during the execution of a task. In a final, standardized interview, the test subjects were asked once more to judge the intranet's usability and produce optimization suggestions.

At that point, the redesign team again brought in experts to assess Networking's design. The team used the results from both the expert and user evaluations to further hone the design.

Overall, the testers rated the design, information offered, navigation principles, and functionality very positively. In terms of color, typography, and visualizations, the design was described as being very appealing and clear-cut. The challenge of creating a standardized appearance for the various technological platforms was mastered, as proven during usability testing: while surfing, users did not perceive any disturbing changes when moving between various systems. In fact, only a few suggestions for improvement were submitted, for a few specific areas. Some users, for example, wanted the homepage to have a stronger visual focus.

The new pull-down menu, which gives users direct access to certain subject areas, also tested very well with users. One potential problem, however, was with the names of some menu items. The team plans to tackle that issue in the next redesign.

TIMELINE

- 1998: Launched first intranet.
- 2000: Redesigned first intranet.
- 2002: Redesigned second intranet.
- May 2004: Began third redesign project.
- September 2004: Launched third redesign

RESULTS

The latest version of Networking launched in September 2004. "With Networking, the METRO Group enables its employees to have quicker access to up-to-date information, take less time to carry out purely administrative tasks, and easily share knowledge within the group," says Schiffner-Backhaus.

Networking quickly gained acceptance with employees, as it features significantly more topical content than the prior intranet. To date, 57,000 employees have access to the intranet, and twenty METRO Group companies use one or more of the Networking applications.

Today, METRO Group Networking supports the METRO Group companies by: making concentrated information available in one place; providing information quickly and with high topicality; mapping administrative processes in a standardized and technical form; and fostering employee collaboration.

Furthermore, the intranet makes cost synergies possible—through office supply procurement, for example. It also reduces duplicate work by sharing knowledge more effectively. In line with Networking, the company also adjusted and simplified its IT infrastructure.

LESSONS LEARNED

Insights from the METRO Group Networking team:

Always evolve. “Transitioning the intranet from a purely informational medium, to a place where employees can both retrieve information and also work, became an economic imperative. Networking is evolving to become an even more important instrument for optimizing and improving the efficiency of internal administrative processes.”

Orient employees. “To foster users’ acceptance of the intranet, we use a fast orientation process, and also maintain a consistent user interface. This allows us to add different, technical systems as needed, without changing the intranet format—or the user’s experience. In this context, a clearly laid-out structure with a clear delimitation of the navigation levels is also essential. Last but not least, innovative and interactive design elements increase the attractiveness of Networking and thus its acceptance by the users. Never underestimate the importance of clear design.”

O2 (UK) Limited

Using the Intranet:

O2 plc is a leading provider of mobile services, offering communications solutions to customers and corporate entities in the UK, Germany, and Ireland. O2 plc also has businesses on the Isle of Man, and owns O2 Airwave, an advanced digital emergency communications service.

Design Team:

In-house

Members:

Sharon Isaac, head of intranets; Rowan Pratt, intranet manager of the editing team; Alasdair McKenzie, technical team and project delivery manager

Editing team: Alex Armstrong (designer), Michelle Hanson, Brett Farnell, Phillip Hall, Helen Orme

Technical team: Jas Nagra, Nathan Gasco, Michael Hein, Guy Dixon, Andy Price

SUMMARY

O2 plc has offices in the UK, Germany, Ireland, and the Isle of Mann. O2 (UK) Limited has thirty-five offices, five call centers, and over 250 retail shops. The UK intranet, vitalO2, plays a key role in business communications. With roughly half of the 10,000 UK employees working in call centers and 1,500 working in retail, O₂ (as the company is also known) needs a way to keep employees informed, trained, and motivated. To help, different intranet sub-sites are designed for specific user groups, and are easily accessible from the vitalO2 homepage.

Still, in a large, distributed organization, getting the right data to the right employees isn't easy. To address this, the intranet's designers included the *My settings* link at the top of every page. Using this command, employees can tailor multiple variables to configure pages for their needs.

Homepage

The vitalO2 homepage houses news for every business area and the company as a whole, including details of its latest activities or internal campaigns. It also includes news about the UK market.

Managers get a dedicated toolkit to help with their managerial tasks. Meanwhile, all users can browse currently open job positions and view details relating to the building they work in, including the day's lunch menu. All this comes courtesy of the homepage.

The screenshot shows the vitalO2 UK intranet homepage. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links like 'A-Z', 'Sitemap', 'My Settings', 'About vitalO2', 'Help', and 'Feedback'. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with 'Home', 'Workplace Resources', 'Working At O2', 'Policies', 'News Centre', 'Products & Services', and 'About O2 UK'. The left sidebar is a vertical menu with sections: 'Search' (with a search box and 'Phone Directory', 'vitalO2' buttons), 'How do I...?' (with a 'Please select' dropdown and 'Go' button), 'Useful Forms' (with a 'Please Select' dropdown and 'Go' button), 'Where I Work' (with links to 'Where I Work', 'UK Office Directory', 'Restaurant Menu'), 'About O2 (UK)' (with a 'Please Select' dropdown and 'Go' button), and 'My Favourites' (with links to 'Managing People', 'Google', 'vitalO2 User Guides', 'Book a Courier', 'Quickplace', and 'Manage My Favourites'). The main content area is divided into several sections: 'Welcome to O2 UK' with a message about the new look, 'Other UK news' with a list of news items, 'Latest Campaigns' with four featured campaigns, 'Latest Jobs @ O2' with a list of job openings, and 'Useful Links' with a list of internal links. On the right, there's a 'News and Announcements' section with a 'Press' tab, a 'Shareprice' section showing the LSE price, and an 'External O2 Websites' section with a list of external links. The footer contains a 'Legal Notice & Privacy Policy' link, an 'Add to vitalO2 Favourites' button, a 'Your view: I found this page' rating section, and a 'Back to top' link.

Pictured: The homepage of the O₂ UK intranet relays news, recent campaigns, and links to favorite intranet pages. It also lets users search the intranet and even find their building's lunch menu.

The Fun Zone

The vitalO2 intranet features *O₂ Fun Zone*, an entire area full of extracurricular activities and tools for employees. *O₂ Fun Zone* has games, wallpaper, ring tones, and more. One especially fun feature lets co-workers send e-cards both internally and externally. Among these branded e-cards are those for birthdays and Christmas, as well as "get well" and congratulations cards. The most popular e-cards, however, are for Valentine's Day. On that day only, employees can send anonymous valentines to other employees.

Filling out an e-card is simple. A picture of the card is displayed in the main section of the page. Because the user who's sending the card is already logged in, the *From* field is pre-filled. The message subject line is also pre-filled with a default message matching the card type, but users can edit this field. A larger field accommodates the user's personal message to the recipient.

vitalO₂		A-Z Sitemap My Settings About vitalO ₂ Help Feedback		Other O ₂ Intranet: <input type="button" value="Go"/>	
		O2 plc	vitalO₂ UK	Communications	Admin
Home	Workplace Resources	Working At O ₂	Policies	News Centre	Products & Services
		About O ₂ UK			

Search

Phone Directory vitalO₂

- > Advanced Phone Directory
- > Personal Address Book

O2 Email

O2 Txt Messaging

Devices

O2 Fun Zone

FaceStore

Floofs

Game Arcade

Mixipix

O2 Music

Ringtones & Wallpapers

E-Cards

O2 Conferencing / Chat

BlackBerry

XDA

WAP O2 Active

O2 Pocket

Merchandise

O2 Portal Sites

WebMap

My Favourites

- > Managing People
- > Google
- > vitalO₂ User Guides
- > Book a Courier

You are here: Home > Products & Services > O2 Fun Zone > E-Cards >

Send an E-Card

From:

To:

Subject:

Message:

Last Updated: 23/05/2005 15:29:00

Next Review Date: 23/08/2005 15:29:00



Pictured: Graphics for the “thank you” and Christmas e-cards.

Accessibility

The O₂ UK intranet offers some very good features to assist users with disabilities. For example, people with deteriorating vision often find it helpful to have a strong contrast between text and the page background. On most vitalO₂ pages, the text is black or dark blue and the page is white, which provides very high contrast for users. Even so, vitalO₂ takes things a step further and actually lets users adjust the contrast themselves.

Most pages aren't stuffed with links, which helps people using a screen reader quickly listen to all or most of the links. A typical page design also includes adequate space between text links, which makes life easier for users who have motor-related disabilities.

Having standard and consistent navigation across the top and down the left side of every page helps low-vision users acclimate to each new page.

Users can also change the text size, which makes reading easier for people with decreased vision. It also makes clicking a mouse button easier for those with decreased motor skills. In addition, increasing the font size makes all page text larger—not just some text, as is typical for so many contemporary page designs. To increase the font size, users select the larger A button in the upper-right part of the page. To decrease the size, users click the smaller A button next to it.

Users can also alter text size using built-in browser functions, such as *View > Text Size > Largest* in Internet Explorer. But some users don't know about this functionality, and thus don't use it. The aforementioned A button approach is more visible and straightforward, and lets designers signal font-size changes in a manner that makes sense to their users.

The screenshot shows the O2 UK homepage with a blue header and navigation bar. The main content area is divided into several sections: a left sidebar with search and navigation links, a central 'Welcome to O2 UK' section featuring a message from Matthew Key, and a right sidebar with news and announcements. The footer contains legal notices and a 'Back to top' link.

Header: vitalO₂ | A-Z | Sitemap | My Settings | About vitalO₂ | Help | Feedback | Other O2 Intranets | Go

Navigation Bar: Home | Workplace Resources | Working At O2 | Policies | News Centre | Products & Services | About O2 UK

Left Sidebar:

- Search:** Phone Directory | vitalO₂
- Advanced Phone Directory**
- Personal Address Book**
- How do I...?** Please select [Go]
- Useful Forms** Please Select [Go]
- Where I Work**
 - Where I Work
 - UK Office Directory
 - Restaurant Menu
- About O2 (UK)** Please Select [Go]
 - CEO Matthew Key
 - Organisation Charts
 - Business Principles
- My Favourites**
 - Unified Login Tool
 - Your Companion
 - Home
 - Working At O2
 - News Centre
 - Manage My Favourites
 - Archived Favourites

Main Content:

- Welcome to O2 UK**
- A message from Matthew Key: it's still all to play for!**

In the latest survey of mobile customer satisfaction, we have held onto our No. 1 position but been joined by Orange and Vodafone in a three-way tie at the top! To break away from...
- Other UK news**
 - Have you joined the Pension Plan of the year?
 - Behind the scenes with the Kaiser Chiefs
 - The winners of the 'Night at the Opera' competition are...
 - O2's community heroes take to the red carpet
 - Have you joined the O2 Fantasy Football yet?!!
- Latest Campaigns**
 - Spirit O2: Spirit of O2 Awards
 - The O2
 - Balance
 - Our Change Process
- Latest Jobs @ O2**
 - Senior Application Development Lead**

Slough
Technology Services
Ref No TSO1589
Grade PCGU
 - Relationship Manager**

Leeds
Technology Services
Ref No Tech435
Grade MPG4
 - Channel & Partner Relationship Manager**

Flexible
Technology
Ref No Tech434
Grade PCGU
- Useful Links**
 - Clarity - Time Recording
 - Companion
 - Gatekeeper
 - Our Change Process
 - Service Desk Online
 - talk2hr - 0800 7312638
 - Training & Development
 - TSO Scorecard
- Line Managers Toolkit**
 - New Starters Guide
 - Recruitment
 - Performance Management
 - Leavers Process
 - More Useful Links

Right Sidebar:

- News and Announcements**
 - Industry Press
 - BLACKFRIAR...
 - Carphone Warehouse growth leads Tele2 to mull UK...
 - NTL FINALLY BUYS TELEWEST TO CREATE UK CABLE GIA...
 - Carphone eyes telecom rivals...
 - Advertising: Trying to Connect With a Hip Crowd...
- Shareprice**

LSE - 158.00p (-4.00p) @ 13/10 4:16pm

 - Share Price Calculator
 - Share Price Info

There are **79** days left in **Q3**
- External O2 Websites**
 - O2.com
 - O2.co.uk
 - Manx Telecom
 - O2 Airwave
 - O2 Ireland
 - O2 online.de
 - O2 Asia

Footer: Legal Notice & Privacy Policy | Add to vitalO₂ Favourites | Your view: I found this page [Very Useful] [vote] | Back to top

Pictured: The default homepage with the default font size.

A-Z | Sitemap | My Settings | About vitalO2 | Help | Feedback

Other O2 Intranets
Go

vitalO₂

O2 plc
vitalO2 UK
Technology Services
Admin

Home
Workplace Resources
Working At O2
Policies
News Centre
Products & Services
About O2 UK

Search

Phone Directory
vitalO2

Advanced Phone Directory
Personal Address Book

How do I...?

Please select
Go

Useful Forms

Please Select
Go

Where I Work

Where I Work
UK Office Directory
Restaurant Menu

About O2 (UK)

Please Select
Go


CEO Matthew Key
Organisation Charts
Business Principles

My Favourites

Unified Login Tool
Your Companion
Home
Working At O2
News Centre
Manage My Favourites
Archived Favourites

Welcome to O2 UK

A message from Matthew Key: it's still all to play for!





In the latest survey of mobile customer satisfaction, we have held onto our No. 1 position but been joined by Orange and Vodafone in a three-way tie at the top! To break away from...


Other UK news


Have you joined the Pension Plan of the year?
Behind the scenes with the Kaiser Chiefs
The winners of the 'Night at the Opera' competition are...
O2's community heroes take to the red carpet
Have you joined the O2 Fantasy Football yet?!!

Latest Campaigns


Spirit of O2 Awards


The O2


Balance


Our Change Process

Latest Jobs @ O2

Senior Application Development Lead
Slough
Technology Services
Ref No TSO1589
Grade PCGU

Relationship Manager
Leeds
Technology Services
Ref No Tech435
Grade MPG4

Channel & Partner Relationship Manager
Flexible
Technology
Ref No Tech434
Grade PCGU

Useful Links

Clarity - Time Recording
Companion
Gatekeeper
Our Change Process
Service Desk Online
talk2hr - 0800 7312638
Training & Development
TSO Scorecard

Line Managers Toolkit

New Starters Guide
Recruitment
Performance Management
Leavers Process
More Useful Links

News and Announcements

Industry
Press

BLACKFRIAR...
Carphone Warehouse growth leads Tele2 to mull UK...
NTL FINALLY BUYS TELEWEST TO CREATE UK CABLE GIA...
Carphone eyes telecom rivals...
Advertising: Trying to Connect With a Hip Crowd...

Shareprice

LSE - 158.75p (-3.25p) @ 13/10 4:06pm

Share Price Calculator
Share Price Info

There are **79** days left in **Q3**

External O2 Websites

O2.com
O2.co.uk
Manx Telecom
O2 Airwave
O2 Ireland
O2 online.de
O2 Asia

Legal Notice & Privacy Policy
Add to vitalO2 Favourites

Your view: I found this page

Very Useful
vote

Back to top

Pictured: The homepage with an increased font size, which can help users with decreased vision more easily navigate the intranet.

Search

The site search and employee search functions are equally important on any intranet. Yet, finding a way for them to coexist—both on the homepage and every

200

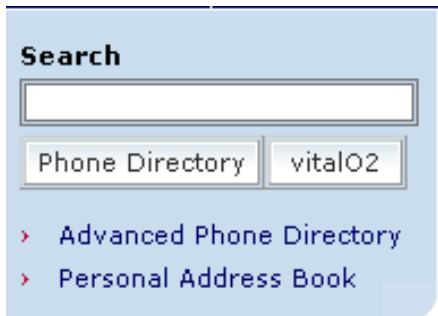
INFO@NNGROUP.COM

48105 WARM SPRINGS BLVD., FREMONT CA 94539-7498 USA

other intranet page—can be a challenge. Based on our usability research, we’ve generally found that the most usable way to offer search is to ensure that site search and employee search:

- are in close proximity to each other,
- feature distinct names so users can quickly differentiate them, and
- share a search field, letting users select the search location by either clicking a radio button or selecting from a drop-down list.

When designing vitalO2, designers made some astute choices along these lines to ensure that the intranet’s search capabilities are usable. In addition to addressing the first two recommendations, the designers took an inventive approach to the third. Rather than clicking a simple *Search* button, users select the search location when they invoke the search by clicking either the *Phone Directory* or *vitalO2* button. Users can also set their default search in *My Settings*. This will allow them to hit the enter key to invoke the search without having to mouse-click one of the two buttons. The search interface also offers a link to an advanced phone directory search.



The screenshot shows a search interface with a light blue background. At the top, the word "Search" is displayed in bold. Below it is a text input field. Under the input field are two buttons: "Phone Directory" and "vitalO2". Below the buttons are two links, each preceded by a right-pointing arrow: "Advanced Phone Directory" and "Personal Address Book".

Pictured: The *Search* function lets users choose whether to search the intranet or the employee directory by pressing a button after entering their search.

Employee Directory

The phone directory is the intranet’s most frequently accessed feature. The directory offers the expected and essential features—including name, email, and phone number—as well as more advanced features. Some especially interesting ones involve social interaction with the employee directory. Users can edit their own personal information, which is now a somewhat standard feature on good intranets. But here, if other users find that someone’s personal details have incorrect information, they can click the *Update Details* button to send that person a message requesting that they update their details. The prompt reads: “If you know these details are incorrect, clicking *Update Details* will let this person know they need to edit their details.”

The phone directory also offers an online SMS, with the ability to send an SMS to multiple people at once. To write a message, employees use a simple open text field on the personal detail page, and then click an icon to send the message.

The personal detail pages also let users download a colleague’s details—or even a building’s details—to their mobile device via SMS. In addition, they can add details to Outlook Contacts, which is also quite useful for BlackBerry users.

[A-Z](#) | [Sitemap](#) | [My Settings](#) | [About vitalO2](#) | [Help](#) | [Feedback](#)

Other O2 Intranet: Go

[Home](#) | [Workplace Resources](#) | [Working At O2](#) | [Policies](#) | [News Centre](#) | [Products & Services](#) | [About O2 UK](#)

[O2 plc](#) | [vitalO2 UK](#) | [Communications](#) | [Admin](#)

Search

[Advanced Phone Directory](#)
[Personal Address Book](#)

My Favourites
[Managing People](#)
[Google](#)
[vitalO2 User Guides](#)
[Book a Courier](#)
[Quickplace](#)
[More favourites](#)
[Manage My Favourites](#)

You are here: [Home](#) >

Phone Directory Detailed View

[Phone Directory Help](#)
 If you know these details are incorrect, clicking "update details" will let this person know they need to their details

Jonathan Smith - General Clerk

Telephone	0113 0000000
Mobile	0774 0111111
Fax	0113 1111111
Mobex	
Email	Jonathan.S@O2.COM
Building	O2 Bath Road 260 Bath Road, Slough, BERKS, SL1 4DX, GBR
Post Point	GW 2

Enter TXT and click button on right

Project/Experience	
Company	O2 UK
Department	Marketing
OUC/Cost Centre	OCG8
Line Manager	John Smith

Pictured: A detailed person document offers the essential phone book features, along with useful SMS-related features and the ability to request that a user update his or her details if the viewer thinks they're incorrect.

Users can also view organizational charts and create their own personal address books.

[A-Z](#) | [Sitemap](#) | [My Settings](#) | [About vitalO2](#) | [Help](#) | [Feedback](#)

[Home](#) | [Workplace Resources](#) | [Working At O2](#) | [Policies](#) | [News Centre](#) | [Products & Services](#) | [About O2 UK](#)

[O2 plc](#) | [vitalO2 UK](#) | [Communications](#) | [Admin](#)

Search

Phone Directory vitalO2

[Advanced Phone Directory](#)
[Personal Address Book](#)

My Favourites

[Managing People](#)
[Google](#)
[vitalO2 User Guides](#)
[Book a Courier](#)
[Quickplace](#)
[More favourites](#)
[Manage My Favourites](#)

You are here: Home >

Phone Directory - Personal Address Book

You currently have 9 record(s) in your address book

Address Book

Name	Company	Building	Telephone	Mobile	Delete	Send SMS
SMITH Jonathan	O2 UK	CLL-SL	0113 0000000	07740 111111	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SMITH Jonathan	O2 UK	CLL-SL	0113 0000000	07740 111111	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SMITH Jonathan	O2 UK	CLL-SL	0113 0000000	07740 111111	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SMITH Jonathan	O2 UK	CLL-SL	0113 0000000	07740 111111	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SMITH Jonathan	O2 UK	CLL-SL	0113 0000000	07740 111111	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SMITH Jonathan	O2 UK	CLL-SL	0113 0000000	07740 111111	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SMITH Jonathan	O2 UK	CLL-SL	0113 0000000	07740 111111	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SMITH Jonathan	O2 UK	CLL-SL	0113 0000000	07740 111111	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SMITH Jonathan	O2 UK	CLL-SL	0113 0000000	07740 111111	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Send an SMS

From: +

Message

[Legal Notice & Privacy Policy](#)
[Add to vitalO2 Favourites](#)

Your view: I found this page

[Back to top](#)

Pictured: A personal address book lets users find their most important and most frequently referenced contacts in seconds.

Help-Related Items

A specific *Help* section in vitalO2 contains application-related user guides and interactive user guides, along with FAQs highlighting some of the most commonly asked questions about the site.



Pictured: The *Help* area of vitalO2 gives users access to interactive user guides and FAQs relating to the vitalO2 site and applications.

Feedback

Users can submit intranet feedback, which is routed directly to the design team. The *Feedback* form used for this process is very straightforward, with clearly labeled and well-aligned fields. For example, the message at the beginning of the form briefly explains what to do if the feedback deals with either specific page content or updating the phone directory.

Upon submitting feedback, users receive both online and email confirmation of their feedback along with a unique ID. This allows them to track their feedback's progress and status.

vitalO₂ A-Z | Sitemap | My Settings | About vitalO₂ | Help | Feedback

Other O₂ Intranet:

O₂ plc vitalO₂ UK Communications Admin

Home | Workplace Resources | Working At O₂ | Policies | News Centre | Products & Services | About O₂ UK

Search

Phone Directory vitalO₂

> Advanced Phone Directory
> Personal Address Book

My Favourites

> Managing People
> Google
> vitalO₂ User Guides
> Book a Courier
> Quickplace
 > Manage My Favourites

You are here: Home >

Feedback

In order for us to continue to improve our site, we welcome any comments or feedback. If you have feedback on the content of a particular page, then it may be better to direct it to the content owner listed at the foot of the page.

If your enquiry is related to updating your Phone Directory details, then use the Phone Directory Help link under Related Links.

Related Links

> About vitalO₂
> Work Request Form
> Phone Directory Help

Your Details

Name

Email Address

Contact No/Ext

Hours Of Work

Building

Business Unit

If the feedback is for a specific page, then please include the URL / Path

Please include your comments (providing as much detail as possible if you are raising our attention to a problem with the site)

Comments

Pictured: The Feedback form lets users send an intranet-related comment to the intranet design team.

The fact that the O₂ UK intranet developers constantly look for user feedback to foster intranet improvements further reinforces not only that this is an excellent intranet, but also that the design team itself excels.

URL AND ACCESS

The intranet's URL is <http://vitalo2.pri>, and it serves UK-based O₂ employees. To view the intranet, employees must be connected to the corporate LAN. However, the team also developed Mobile vitalO₂, which holds the vitalO₂ site's core features and is currently available to employees with BlackBerry devices.

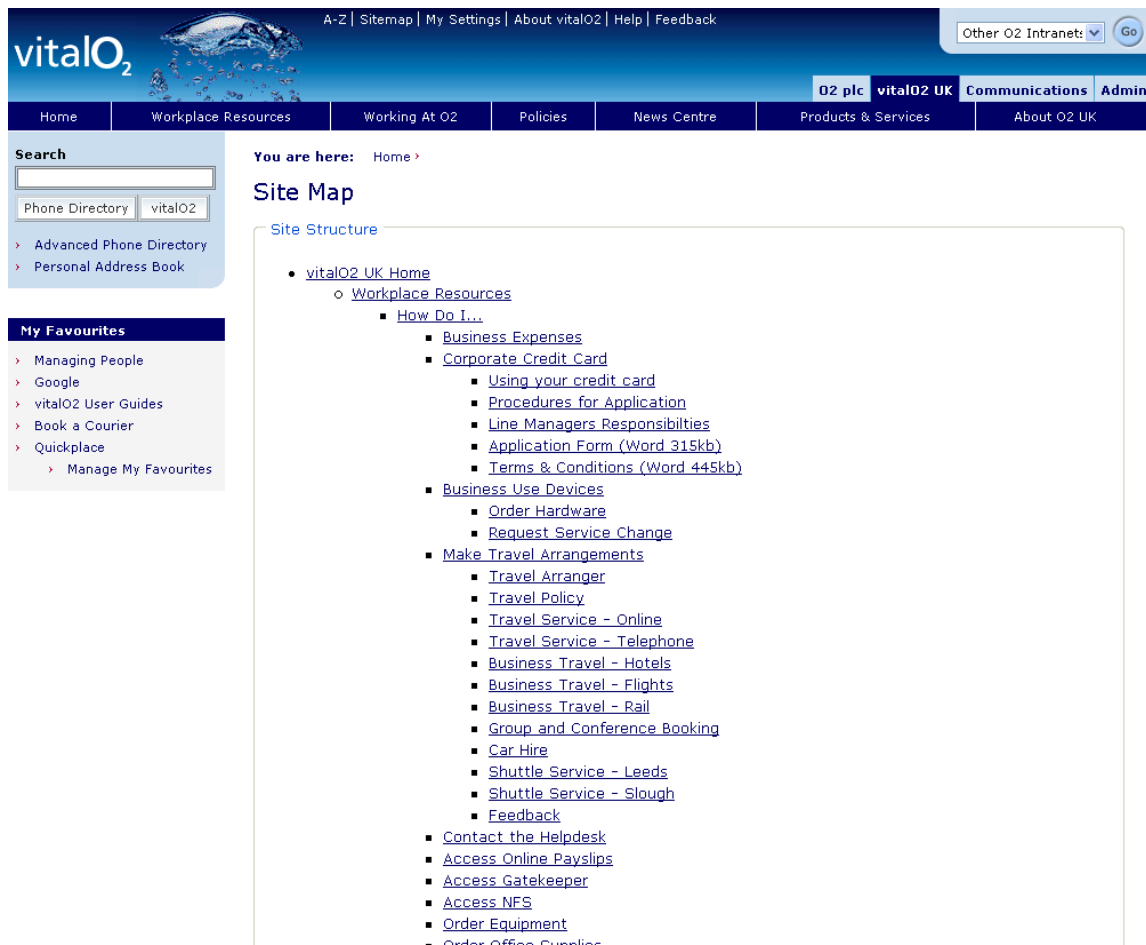


Pictured: Mobile vitalO2, available to BlackBerry users, contains the vitalO2 site's core features.

CONTENT MANAGEMENT

Managing Content without a CMS

O₂ currently doesn't have a CMS for vitalO2, though it anticipates implementing one in 2006 or 2007. Currently, the intranet team uses its custom-designed Web application, Site Manager, to control all key page elements including navigation, page owner details, review dates, and metadata. "The Site Manager tool also has built-in functions to control the publishing of navigation," notes Alasdair McKenzie, the vitalO2 technical team project delivery manager. McKenzie says Site Manager also will automatically send content owners email alerts about upcoming review dates, controls the A–Z listing of sites and the site map, and "is the central place for access to all the application admin areas."



Pictured: The Site Manger tool gives Web editors the ability to edit the site map, pictured here.

Content is added to the site through a set of pre-designed templates administered via Dreamweaver. "As O₂ has a 'buy not build' policy, the team had to adopt this approach to ensure that the basic auditing needs were met and that the management of the site remained simple," McKenzie says.

Primary content owners for vitalO2 are the HR, property, and communications departments. "We asked for one representative from each of these areas to take ownership and responsibility for coordinating ownership of pages within these areas," notes Sharon Isaac, O₂'s head of intranets. Leading up to the intranet site's launch, these key stakeholders were kept apprised of progress via regular intranet-forum meetings, "to ensure they were still aligned with the project plan," she says.

Since the launch, such meetings are now held only every other month. "The purpose of this forum is to go through user stats and any trends that may have affected the stats," she says. "The forums also allow attendees to discuss planned roadmaps within their areas to ensure that resources can be aligned to complete key tasks."

All vitalO2 changes are handled by the Web-editing team, unless the work requires software development. Thus, the intranet team doesn't have to supply templates to content editors, says Rowan Pratt, manager of the vitalO2 editing team. "We do, however, provide editorial guidelines covering tone of voice, consistency, formatting, and so on, to ensure that the provided content requires minimal editorial changes."

To change content, a content owner submits a work request through a workflow tool, which allows the request to be assessed and assigned to the next available and appropriate editor. The content owner will then receive an email confirmation containing a link to monitor progress, check the status, and view notes associated with the work. Or, "if someone other than the registered page owner has submitted a change, then the page owner is notified and asked for approval," notes Pratt. The Site Manager tool also tracks changes so editors can easily revert to previous versions.

Intranet Staff

The editing team consists of five people: four Dreamweaver specialists and one designer. The technical team consists of four ASP and SQL developers. Both teams comprise the intranet team, which is part of the online marketing team. In addition to maintaining the intranet, the intranet team maintains an O₂ customer services knowledge base for 4,500 call center employees and 1,500 retail employees; 62 different departments' sites, hosted on a CMS tool the team built; and all intranet applications.

TECHNOLOGY

In the UK, O₂ intranets are hosted in a Microsoft environment. The website is hosted on a Windows 2000 Server with SQL2000. Most PCs have Windows XP, so Internet Explorer 6 is the primary browser, though some Internet Explorer versions 5 and 5.5 exist, along with Opera.

The intranet search engine used is Verity.

GOALS AND CONSTRAINTS

Goals:

- Make the site more user friendly.
- Improve the information architecture to increase site usability.
- Enhance accessibility.
- Make the site reflect the O₂ brand.

Constraints:

- Diminished resources: company-wide job cuts led to loss of the team's information architect.
- Two developers departed during the redesign project and weren't replaced until after the launch.

BASIC INTRANET FEATURES

Beyond delivering content to users, vitalO2 provides access to a number of applications. One key tool is an improved phone directory, which lets users search by mobile number or job description; send one or more SMS messages from their browser to their team, peers, or other contacts using internal numbers in their personal address book; add someone's details to Outlook contacts; view a dynamically generated organizational chart; and create a personal address book.

The intranet is also a place to carry out such tasks as requesting leave, updating phone records, accessing online pay slips, researching job vacancies, comparing mobile handsets, entering expenses, and submitting purchase orders. The most common intranet task is searching the phone directory, though other popular features include accessing the *A–Z*, *My Favourites*, the building directory, the news center, and staff discounts. “We also find that policy information is a key interest on the site,” says Isaac.

Using *My Settings*, users can tailor the display of intranet content to their own needs. “This is useful, with thirty-five buildings and seven directorates,” notes Isaac. Available content that can be tailored includes lunch menus, details about buildings, and news related to the user’s area of business. Users can also select their font size and contrast, and set the search engine default to the phone directory or the intranet.

Other useful tools include the ability to add any page on vitalO2 to favorites, the *A–Z* site listing, and interactive user guides. In addition, line managers automatically see added links on their homepage for such things as recruitment, induction, and the leaver’s process.

Employees can also send e-cards, including birthday and Valentine’s Day cards.

USERS

Roughly 10,000 employees in the UK, including 4,500 call center employees and 1,500 retail employees, have access to vitalO2.

USER TASKS

- Access the phone directory
- Search by mobile number
- Send an SMS
- Locate building details
- Generate an organizational chart
- View lunch menus
- Read news relating to a user’s own business area
- Add an intranet page to favorites
- Access an *A–Z* listing of intranet content
- Access management tools
- Send an e-card

BACKGROUND

O2 (UK) Limited, formerly BT Cellnet, was formed in November 2001 after demerging from British Telecom. The new company’s agency-designed intranet launched around the same time as the spin-off, and was managed in-house using Dreamweaver templates. “Unfortunately the original vitalO2 design wasn’t scaleable, so in May 2003, a new site was launched,” says Isaac.

Even though the new site used the same technology, the design was different and the new navigation didn’t work well for users. Part of the problem: discussions over

whether the O₂ Group site would supplant the UK site were still unresolved by the time the site launched. In addition, the site had been designed to meet stakeholders' requirements, but not those of users. After the intranet team attempted some quick fixes, it realized a new design would be necessary.

The screenshot shows the O2 UK intranet homepage as of August 19, 2005. The page is cluttered with a dense menu on the left and a complex arrangement of news and announcements. The main headline reads 'The new vitalO2 launches tomorrow'. Below this, there's a 'TOP STORY' section with a welcome message and a 'NEWS SERVICES' section with various links. A calendar for August 2005 is displayed, along with a 'Today's reminders' section. The right sidebar contains a 'Around O2 plc' section with links to industry news, press releases, and other company-related information.

Pictured: The old version of the intranet homepage. Users had difficulty navigating the site.

19th August 2005

Phone Directory

[Need HELP with this feature?](#)

☒ Intranet ☐ Phone Directory

Groupwide applications
[PHONE DIRECTORY](#)
[JOBS@O2](#)
[SHARE PRICE TOOLS](#)
[QUICKPLACE](#)
[PERSONALISE SETTINGS](#)
 Local applications
[GERMANY](#)
[IRELAND](#)
[MANX TELECOM](#)
[UK](#)

[Home](#) > [Phone Directory](#) > [Search Results](#) > Sharon Isaac's details

Name:

[Advanced Search Options](#)
[International Characters](#)

Personal details
 SHARON ISAAC [UPDATE YOUR DETAILS](#)

Name	Sharon Isaac	Telephone	01753 344444
Role	Head of Telecommunications	Mobile	0777 777777
Company	O2 UK	Mobex	
Email	Sharon.Isaac@O2.co.uk		
Building	1st Floor, West Wing	OUC/Cost Centre	0000
	Westinghouse House	Fax	01753 344444
	Stroud	Post Point	Stroud Road
	GL50 2AA		
	UK		
Line Manager	Angela Thomas		

Pictured: An old version of the intranet's phone directory.

In September 2004, the intranet team began the most recent redesign, with a target launch set for the summer of 2005—two years since the previous design appeared. “Using the knowledge gained from the previous launch, we determined that we would bring in an information architect to provide expertise, in case we ran into conflicts.” So, when an editor left the intranet team, he was replaced (in December 2004) with an information architect.

DESIGN PROCESS AND USABILITY ACTIVITIES

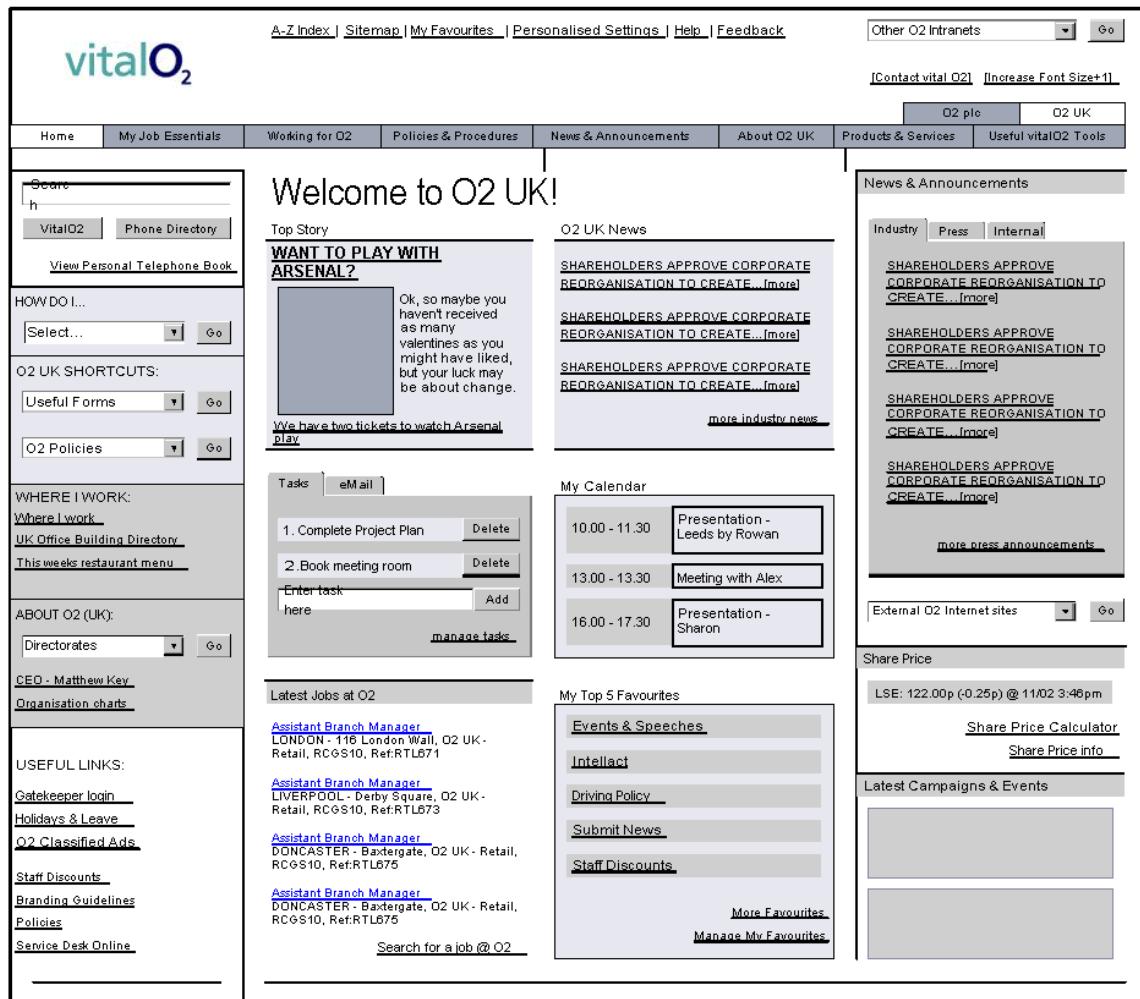
The information architect's first job was to research the existing site and learn its scale and scope. “He then interviewed twenty-three people from six different locations in varied roles, such as customer service advisors, personal assistants, plus HR, senior managers, security, and legal,” says Isaac. Ages, education levels, and level of computing expertise varied widely among interviewees.

“The goal of this research was to build up a picture of vitalO2 users, to understand their environment, their needs, goals, and tasks,” she says. The information architect then created nine personas, including their triggers, needs, likes, dislikes and frustrations, and the site areas they accessed most frequently, to give the intranet team something to develop against.

“Out of all our personas, our primary persona was Kelly Ward, a personal assistant/executive assistant,” says Isaac. The name was made up, and the persona's characteristics were an amalgam of many different interviewees.

PERSONA: KELLY WARD
KELLY'S GOALS
Always be one step ahead: Kelly likes being one step ahead, and wants to be perceived as someone who always seems to have the answer to a problem
Gain reputation for producing quality work: This largely depends upon the quality of information that Kelly has access to
Be regarded as a exceptional employee: Kelly wants her efforts to be recognized and appreciated by those who she works with
Day to day organization of managers: Includes management of their diaries, i.e. arranging meetings
Responding to queries: This may include finding answers to legal and contractual questions
Processing Purchase Orders
Ordering items from suppliers: This may include ordering office equipment, mobile phones, electronic data devices
KELLY LIKES THE FOLLOWING ON VITALO2:
Text messaging: Finds this facility very useful in keeping in touch with people throughout the organization
Quantity of Information
O2 Classified Ads: Useful way to sell items
KELLY DISLIKES THE FOLLOWING ON VITALO2:
Site search functionality: Finds that it doesn't return effective results or useful links to information
Branding: Feels that the general site look and feel doesn't conform to agreed-upon O ₂ branding guidelines
Contact List: Unable to keep entries up-to-date, doesn't appear to be owned by any one person
Information: Sometimes tends to be buried quite deeply within the site
KELLY'S SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR VITALO2 ARE:
Improvements to the metadata that relates to information contained on VitalO ₂ , including details about the source, who is responsible for it, when it was last updated, whether it is complete and any additional references or links to related documents, presentations, Web pages, etc.
KELLY HAS THE FOLLOWING GENERAL USER REQUIREMENTS:
Improve the search and quality of the results that are returned
Improve the quality of important information—ensure it is up-to-date, complete, and easy to access by either logical navigation or site search
Ensure that the intranet site conforms to agreed-upon branding guidelines

Once the personas were created, the intranet team began a card-sorting exercise with another group of employees to help categorize the site's information. "The information architect methodically worked through his evaluations, user profiling, and card-sorting exercises to produce a series of draft wireframes that he thought could work for the new vitalO₂," says Isaac. These wireframes were further tested with end users until the intranet team was satisfied with the usability results.



Pictured: For the redesign, the O₂ intranet team generated wireframe designs based on user testing, then tested multiple versions of the wireframes.

“Once the wireframes were completed, they were passed on to our designer and accessibility champion, Alex Armstrong,” says Isaac. Armstrong generated a series of designs based on the wireframes and the entire intranet team selected two for consideration by O₂’s brand manager and by Lambie Nairn, the agency responsible for the O₂ brand.

“Once the design was agreed upon, further user testing was carried out on the screenshot and minor changes were made,” she says. Armstrong then broke pages down into HTML and ensured that the homepage and all sub-homepages were appropriately built using CSS. Before being turned over to the Web editors, pages were first made accessible.

“As part of the accessibility build, the site has been developed to meet all Web Content Accessibility Guideline priority 1 checkpoints, with the majority of priority 2 checkpoints also being achieved,” says Armstrong. “It has been tested with multiple browsers, including a text-only browser, and has been tested using a variety of accessibility toolbar components.”

The experience of creating an accessible site design left its mark. "Accessibility has now become a core part of the planning of any new work, and we are constantly looking for ways to improve the mechanisms used in this area," says Armstrong.

One result of that awareness is the method for displaying a page's headline and content. On a typical page, headlines are next to content. But, if a user increases a page's font size, the headline is automatically stacked on top of the content. "When we carried out usability testing on the site, we found that anyone using a larger font size suffered from two parallel columns with large text in them. So, by changing these around, we were able to improve the usability of this page," says Armstrong.

As the intranet team steadily progressed toward the redesign deadline, a lack of resources began to complicate its efforts. When the project started, there was a full team of thirteen people, including a full-time information architect, notes Isaac. "Due to the company job cuts in May 2005, the team lost their information architect in June—six months after he joined. Luckily, the majority of work was completed by the time he left, but other members of the team had to carry out the final stages of the user testing that he'd started."

Then, during a critical project stage, two developers left and their positions remained unfilled until after the redesign launched, "putting enormous pressure on the team to deliver the same work with less people," she says. Even so, "with all credit to the team, the project was only delayed once, by six weeks."

TIMELINE

- November 2001: O2 plc was formed; an agency created vitalO2, the UK intranet.
- May 2003: Launched second O2 UK intranet, which was difficult to navigate.
- September 2004: Began next redesign.
- November 2004: O2 joins intranet benchmarking group to evaluate its site.
- December 2004: Recruited information architect.
- May 2005: Job cuts force departure of information architect.
- Summer 2005: Two developers leave the intranet team.
- August 2005: Redesigned site launched.
- November 2005: Conducted first benchmarks of new site.

RESULTS

The new site launched on August 17, 2005. While the launch was six weeks late due to staff turnover, "the estimated budget for this project was £34,000, and we were under," says Isaac.

To benchmark improvements, the intranet team tested the old site and planned to test the new site three months after it launched. In the interim, the team received mostly anecdotal feedback. "So far, we have had some great comments from our users," says Isaac, adding that one user went so far as to say "'The new vitalO2 is very sexy.'" Another user said, "Having recently used the new phone directory, I can confirm that I found the format to be extremely useful and a vast improvement on

what existed before.” Users also liked the new design. As one user put it, “the new format looks great and is a lot more useful.”

In November 2004, O₂ joined the Intranet Benchmarking Forum (IBF), which benchmarked leading UK organizations on six dimensions: content, navigation, design, consistency, engagement, and accessibility. Then, in October 2005, the IBF hosted the IBF Best Intranet of the Year awards at the IBF Live event. There were four categories of awards; O₂ walked away with the Best Design award for its redesigned intranet.

LESSONS LEARNED

Insights from Sharon Isaac:

Balancing simplicity and features is always a challenge. “This project has been a major learning experience for the team, and the main challenge has been coming up with a solution that gives the team the simplicity and benefits of a content management system while still meeting the needs of the auditing and editing teams.”

Find an accessibility champion. “We selected an accessibility champion from our team—Alex, our Web designer—who would specify accessibility requirements and then roll them out. We realized by the end, however, that balancing this with all of the design and CSS authoring was too much to foist on one individual. Looking back, all team members should have been able to actively implement accessibility, leaving the champion role to simply oversee, and make decisions on the approaches.”

Staples

Using the Intranet:

Staples Inc. invented the office superstore concept in 1986 and today is the world's largest office products company. With 65,000 talented associates, the company is committed to making it easy to buy a wide range of office products, including supplies, technology, furniture, and business services. With 2004 sales of \$14.4 billion, Staples serves consumers and businesses ranging from home-based businesses to Fortune 500 companies in twenty-one countries throughout North and South America, Europe, and Asia. Headquartered outside of Boston, Staples operates approximately 1,716 office superstores and also serves its customers through mail-order catalog, e-commerce, and contract businesses.

Design Team:

In-house

Members:

Ben Cornish, learning technology manager; David Evans, design manager; Tim Semen, usability project manager; George Levesque, portal strategy project manager; Margaret Woisard, portal strategy project manager; Lindsay Germanos, portal strategy project manager; Curran Leahy, business consultant

SUMMARY

The Staples@work intranet houses a wealth of tools, many designed to facilitate some of the company's most-critical business activities. Even so, the Staples@work designers favor a simple presentation throughout, so employees can get the tools they need to maximize their productivity without distractions.

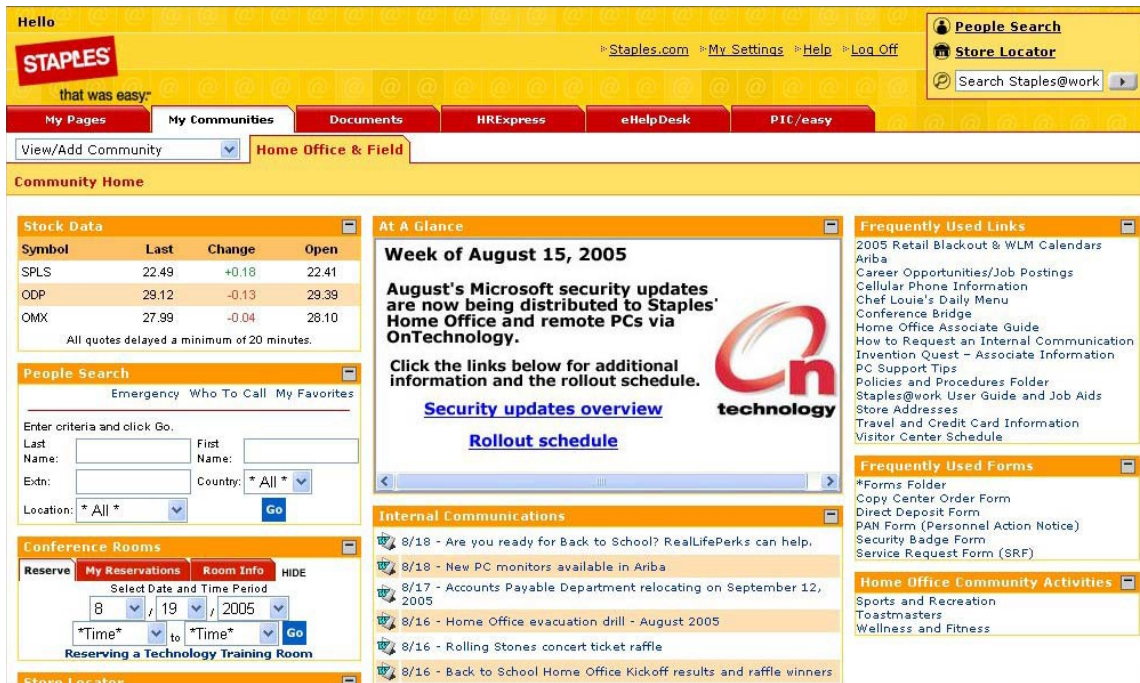
Homepage

The Staples intranet homepage offers all of the features employees might expect from a homepage: news, employee directory, announcements, and links to frequently used intranet areas. After users log in to the intranet, it gives them personalized content and grants access to relevant content stores.

Users can also access communities and sites dedicated to different company project teams. Another feature lets them add their favorite communities to an easily accessible drop-down list.

The homepage keeps employees—known at Staples as *associates*—informed about company activities and news. They can also access online benefits information and enrollment details, search for store addresses and staff phone numbers, reserve conference rooms, or sign up for training. In addition, all employees have access to the *eHelpDesk* page, where they can perform such tasks as submitting work orders and checking the status of various systems.

Overall, the look of the homepage mirrors the corporate branding and color scheme. Even the well-known corporate tagline—"that was easy" appears on the homepage.



Pictured: The Staples homepage offers all of the features users expect from a homepage, clearly presented and designed to mirror corporate branding standards.

Supporting Store Employees

Staples@work is a useful tool, both for the Home Office employees and those who work in the actual stores with customers. Using online training tools, store employees can learn about new products, access store and divisional financial reports, and even print out instructions for setting up displays and promotions.

Using kiosks on the sales floor, store employees can access a "locked-down" portal version to assist customers by looking up inventory or generating price comparisons with competitors' products. To ensure easy viewing, all store-facing pages are limited to two columns, since many store employees view the portal on relatively small computer screens.

Pictured: Employees can access a locked-down version of the portal when assisting customers on the store floor.

Here's one example of how the locked-down portal works: A customer approaches a store employee requesting a product, and the employee looks it up using the portal. When the employee discovers it's not in stock, she can further determine which stores have the product in stock and—using the intranet's *Store Locator* tool—easily give the customer directions to any of 1,680 Staples stores.

Employees can also use the *Store Locator* to search for a store city, state, zip code, or store number. The clear design effectively communicates which items need to be entered to run a search. Or, as an alternative to searching, employees can click the *Regional Listing* to browse a list of stores.

Pictured: The *Store Locator* tool makes it easy to find a specific store, clearly communicating which variables must be entered to run a search.

Beyond such tools, store employees also have their own, dedicated intranet section: *Store*. This area supplies them with the information they need to best meet customer needs. For example, the page's main content area, *Circular Central*, highlights products listed in the current week's circular—always a subject of customer interest. Such information helps store employees better respond to customers' likely questions, as well as make specific product recommendations.

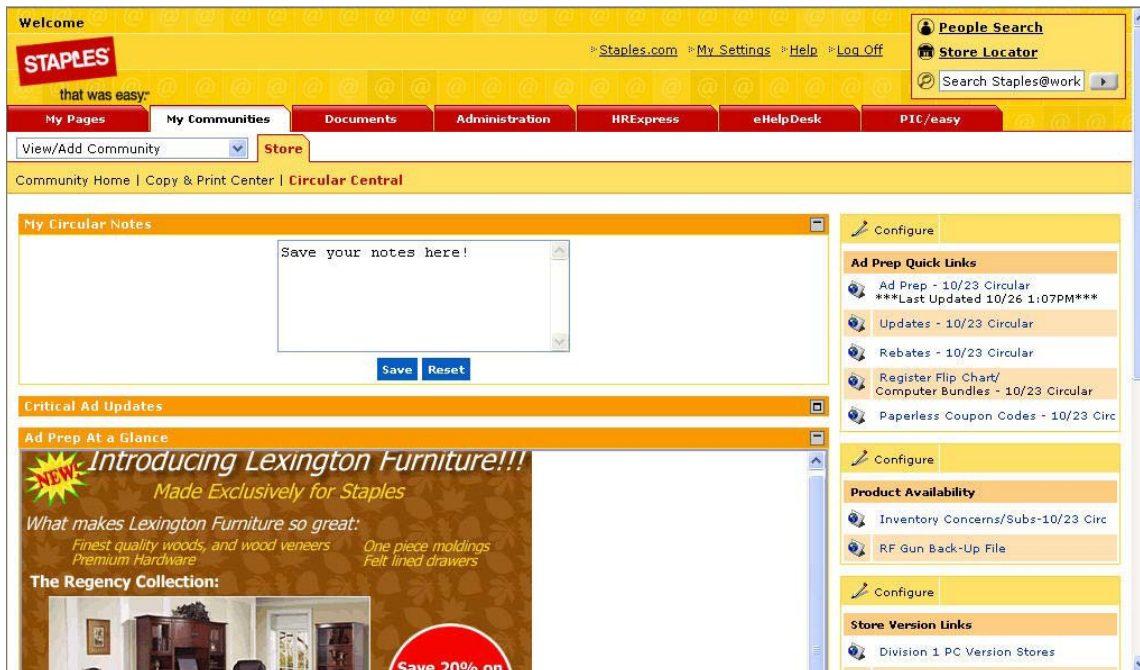
FYI: Bulletin Board, located below the circulars information, serves a similar function, denoting important product and process updates for employees.

On the left side of the page, *Store Quick Links* helps employees quickly navigate to needed applications. The section covers such topics as safety information, how to plan for store promotions, and policies and procedures for the copy and print center.



Pictured: The homepage for US-based Staples employees.

Circular Central also keeps employees in the loop on upcoming store sales. "In addition to detailed instructions on the printing and placement of signage, updates on inventory availability, and information about coupons and rebates, the page offers a 'notepad' that managers in one store—from varying shifts—can use to keep one another informed on the progress made in preparing for the advertised sales offers," says George Levesque, a portal strategy project manager.



Pictured: *Circular Central* keeps store employees abreast of upcoming sales so they can better help customers. The page also lets managers from different shifts in the same store share their efforts and progress in preparation for upcoming sales.

Staples also offers an array of community pages. For example, while the name "Staples" likely conjures an image of brick-and-mortar stores, its telephone sales (telesales) are also an important business channel. So, the telesales community gets its own homepage. Each week the *Selling Strategy of the Week* appears, offering telesales employees concise advice on how to better complete a sale.

Weekly Highlights appears on the right side of the community homepage. Here, the sales team can track their sales for the previous week and gauge which campaigns are performing the best. While seeing this kind of information is an excellent reference, it's also an excellent motivator for individuals and teams to sell more.

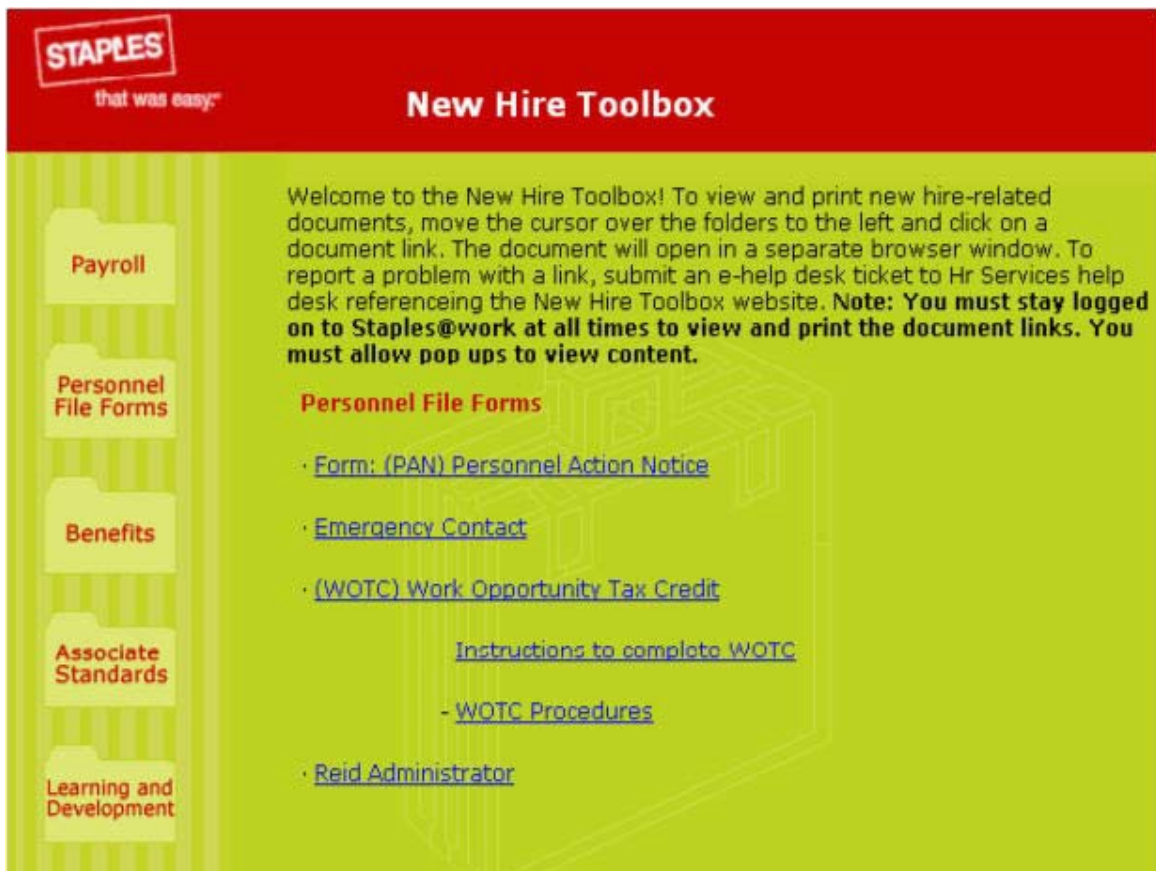
The left side of the page offers the sales force further tools to meet their needs. For example, *Training Information* covers guidelines, strategies, and programs; *Forms* includes a lengthy list of process-oriented, telesales-specific forms; and *Career Development* relays telesales-related job opportunities.



Pictured: The *Telesales* community page helps keep the phone sales team up-to-date on the latest product-selling strategies, information, and sales results.

New Hires

The *New Hire Toolbox* consolidates all of the steps and forms new employees need. The links and folders are straightforward and uncluttered, and users can print any document or form. This helps reinforce a sense of security for people who have recently joined the organization.



Pictured: The *New Hire Toolbox* consolidates all of the steps new employees need to take and the forms they need to print out and submit.

Another useful feature is the intranet's training section, which lets new employees browse available classes. More importantly, this section actually details which classes are mandatory and includes the deadlines for meeting those training requirements. Users can also easily see which courses they've already completed.

Welcome New Hire

STAPLES

that was easy:

My Pages My Communities Documents HRExpress eHelpDesk PIC/ma

View/Add Community HRExpress

Community Home

HR & Benefits Links

- *Career Opportunities / Job S
- 401(K) Web Access
- All Benefits Information
- Associate Connection (benefi
- Associate Discounts / RealLife
- Associate Job Referral
- Auto and Home Insurance
- Benefits Resource Center
- Blackout Dates (earnings)
- Direct Deposit Form
- E*TRADE OptionsLink
- Employee Stock Purchase Pla
- PAN Form (Personnel Action M
- Performance Appraisal Proces

Employee ID FAQs

HR Express System Avail

HRExpress - Training

Certification Tests

Required Training

Training Enrollment

Training Enrollment Status/C

Training History

Training Reports(Other)

Training Reports(US Stores)

Menu

Search:

- My Favorites
- Employee Self Service
- Personal Information
- Payroll and Compensation
- Benefits
- Training and Development
 - Required Training
 - Training Enrollment
 - Training Enrollment Status
 - Training History
- Employee Home
- Change Password/PassWord Hint
- Manager Self Service
- Reporting Tools
- Change My Password

New Hire Training

Required Training

George Levesque

If the page is blank, there is no data available at this time.

Course Name	Course Code	Required By Date	Status
Harassment Prevent	001431	08/08/2004	Completed
How Staples Makes a Profit	000282	06/16/2004	Completed
NHO Phase 1	000280	05/11/2004	Completed
NHO Phase Two	000281	06/16/2004	Completed
Staples for Success	000171	11/06/2004	Completed

Go To: [Training History](#)
[Training Enrollment Status/Cancellation](#)
[Training Enrollment](#)

Pictured: The intranet's training section offers employees a list of available classes, details mandatory enrollments and related deadlines, and provides a list of completed courses.

Another community, *HR Field Mgmt*, gives HR managers easy access to all job-related policies, confidential information, forms, and support tools. In particular, guidelines and forms assist them with such employee-related tasks as hiring, terminating, promoting, training, and compensation. In addition, "as these individuals also wear the hat of trainer, this page gives them access to the materials needed to run in-person courses at remote locations," notes Levesque.

Welcome

that was easy:

Staples.com My Settings Help Log Off

People Search Store Locator Search Staples@work

My Pages My Communities Documents Administration HRExpress eHelpDesk PIC/easy

View/Add Community HR Field Mgmt

Community Home

Directors Only

- HR Conference Call Schedule
- Severance Info

Additional Information

- Agenda Based Visits
- Diversity Organizations
- DM Announcement Instructions
- Ethics Tracking
- Exit Interview Survey
- Handbilling/Picketing Guide
- HR Audit Documents
- HR Structure Job Descriptions
- MEET Training Materials
- Phonelist
- Quarterly Termination Reports
- Reasonable Accommodation Meeting Schedule
- Reasonable Accommodation Request Form
- Religious Accommodation Request Form
- Retention
- Store Closing Materials
- Turnover Data

NAD Additional Info

- 2005 FC & SDO Holiday Schedule
- 2005 Field Cust Svc Holiday Schedule
- 2005 Field SBA & SNA Holiday Schedule
- 2005 Part-time Benefits Info
- Benefits Enrollment Guide 2005-2006
- Code of Ethics Tracking Form- Remedy
- Contact List- NAD HR
- FC Address Listing
- Mid-Atlantic/Southern Region HR Responsibility
- Northern Region HR Responsibility
- Quill HR Responsibility
- SDO Address Listing
- Western Region HR Responsibility

Compensation Links

- 2005 Retail Management Bonus Plan Summary
- 2005 Store Hourly Wage Policy
- BTE Compensation Overview
- Stock Option Grid
- Store Hourly PA Wage Calculator

NAD Compensation

- Compensation Guidelines
- General NAD Comp Information
- Job Titles - Job Codes
- Salary Structures

Direct Links

- Blue Cross Blue Shield Website Flyer
- Cigna Website Flyer
- Employee ID Card Template
- Personal Choice Plans Resource Center
- Personal Choice Plans Website Flyer
- SHRM Site
- Sirva- Relocation
- Sobel and Radt
- Staples News
- Sterling Reports
- TMP Worldwide
- Worker's Compensation Information

Recruiting Links

- Background Check Release Form
- Brassring
- Business Code of Ethics Policy
- Campus Career Center
- Career Opportunities Folders

HR Policies - Click Here for Full List

- Adoption Assistance Program
- Alternative Work Schedules
- Arrests and Convictions
- Associate Referral Form & Program: Positions at Home Office and Non-Store Locations
- Associate Handbook (Spanish)
- Associate Handbook
- ASSOCIATE CLASSIFICATION - US STORES
- Associate Referral
- Attendance Policy Summary (NAD Only)
- Attendance

Medical Plans - Click Here for Full List

- Blue Cross Blue Shield EPO (2)
- Blue Cross Blue Shield EPO - Spanish
- Blue Cross Blue Shield PPO Plus - Spanish (2)
- Blue Cross Blue Shield PPO - Spanish
- Blue Cross Blue Shield PPO
- Blue Cross Blue Shield PPO Plus (2)
- Cigna HMO, Open Access 1 and Open Access 2 - California - Spanish
- Cigna HMO - Open Access 1 and Open Access 2 - Spanish
- Cigna HMO, Open Access 1, Open Access 2 - California (2)
- Cigna OOA

Report 2 Web - HR Field

Reports

- Folder View
- Report List
- Catalog Search

Personal

- Personal Folder
- Favorites
- Subscriptions
- Report2Web Settings

Communications Central - MAP (Field Managers)

Please set your Map username and password through Edit

Legal Links

- Attorney Letters
- Civil Rights Charges
- Handling Legal Documents
- Who's Who
- Workplace Investigation Tools

Pictured: HR managers have easy access to all policies, forms, and support tools necessary to hire, terminate, promote, and train employees, and to deal with compensation-related matters.

Making Suggestions

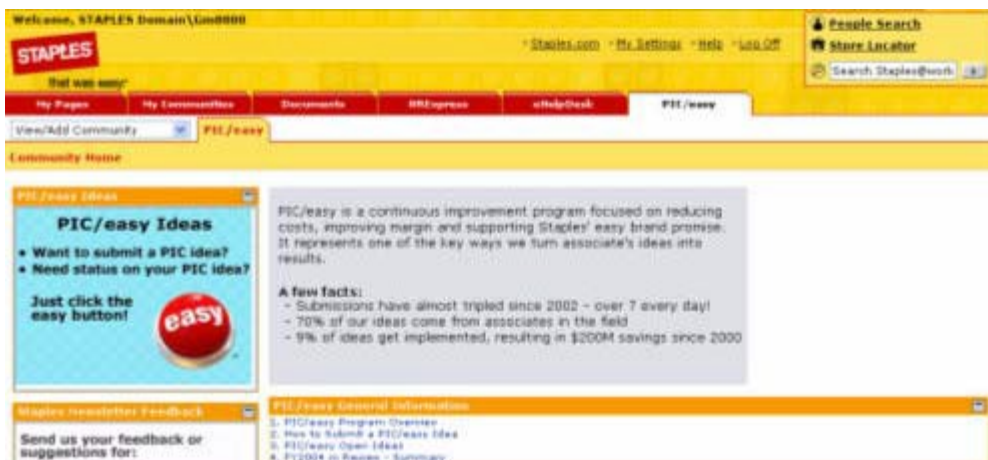
When it comes to streamlining business operations, some of the best ideas come from people in the field. These employees often find innovative solutions to problems or identify small process improvements or tweaks that can increase productivity. Either way, it's useful to capture and share such knowledge.

To do this, Staples maintains a *Profit Improvement Culture* (PIC) page where employees can submit suggestions for how to improve processes, reduce costs, and

boost profits. While most organizations practice such knowledge transfer at least informally, Staples uses a more formal suggestion-box process, with noticeable results. "In 2003, we automated the PIC idea submission process through an online form on the intranet, and our submissions tripled," says Margaret Woisard, a portal strategy project manager. "The form also improved internal processes by building in workflow that directs each idea submission, based on certain criteria selected in the form, to the affected area of the company for review and consideration."

Today, the *PIC/easy Ideas* program continues to encourage employees to submit ideas for ways to cut costs or promote changes that, to quote the corporate tagline, help customers feel like "that was easy." To make a suggestion, an employee simply clicks the *easy* button on the *PIC/easy* page.

The form works: sales associates alone contribute about 70% of all suggestions Staples receives. Furthermore, Staples listens. Beyond making employees feel valued, such behavior is also good for the bottom line. Over the past five years, for example, Staples has implemented nearly 10% of the submitted ideas, and estimates that those ideas alone have saved \$200 million. Another excellent aspect of the *PIC/easy* tool is that Staples calls out these facts right on the page, further promoting a culture of idea-sharing and reinforcing the importance Staples places on listening to its employees. Of course, it also entices people to continue to submit ideas.



Pictured: Users can click the *easy* button to make a suggestion. As text in the tool notes, "PIC/easy is a continuous improvement program focused on reducing costs, improving margin and supporting Staples' easy brand promise. It represents one of the key ways we turn associate's ideas into results."

The Staples intranet does an excellent job of serving its roughly 43,000 users. The portal replaced a variety of separate sites that had supported individual business units. Now, one interface serves not only the Home Office associates, but also the stores and general managers—and it serves them all well.

URL AND ACCESS

Staples@work is the default homepage for all employees' Internet Explorer browsers. "By using a combination of the computer's IP address and the login credentials, we are then able to direct each associate to the start page appropriate to her or his business unit and location," says Levesque.

A limited number of power users can access the intranet via a VPN, though that will likely change soon. "Expanding the intranet for full extranet capabilities is one of the next major initiatives being considered," he notes.

In Staples stores, employees can use back-office and point-of-sale machines to access the intranet, and also use customer-help kiosks to browse a locked-down version of the intranet. According to Levesque, "this 'locked down' version eliminates the possibility of customers accessing confidential information, and associates tying up these machines with anything not related to assisting a customer."

At some Staples distribution and fulfillment centers, employees also share PCs. Even so, "because these machines are in locations that are restricted to Staples associates, full access to all pertinent intranet content and functionality is made available," he says.

CONTENT MANAGEMENT

Content management for Staples@work is handled by Plumtree (now BEA). Today, there are nearly 20,000 documents, all organized by folder structure. Initially, end users place documents in shared, file-server folders, and documents are then filtered by folder. Before they're added to the CMS, however, content owners must first approve them.

Plumtree is also used to maintain the CMS taxonomy, which was designed—and is still maintained—by the Staples@work team, together with business owners from various company groups. "The taxonomy is managed administratively through the Plumtree UI," notes Curran Leahy, a business consultant. "It is a living, breathing creature, as folders are added, modified, or deleted on a nearly daily basis."

Content is filtered to employees based on their security credentials. "Security has been set so that content and folders are secured to only those associates who will find the information relevant," says Leahy. "This allows the administrator to manage one taxonomy while presenting different views to any group of associates." As a result, the Staples@work taxonomy differs for stores and for headquarters.

Similarly, search results may differ, with a search in a store for a store employee returning different results than a search carried out by a Home Office employee. As Leahy notes, "securing Staples@work in this manner makes the experience easier for the user, ensures content reaches its intended audience, and allows confidential data to be communicated through the portal."

Hello

STAPLES
that was easy™

Staples.com My Settings Help Log Off

People Search
Store Locator
Search Staples@work

My Pages My Communities Documents HRExpress eHelpDesk PIC/easy

Search Again: Entire Portal Advanced Search Submit Search Feedback

Search Results
Sort by: Relevance

Results from your search: 193. Showing: 1-10.

Rank	Name	Last Modified
1	HGII Mystery Shop ... HGII Mystery Shop Program As part of Hypergrowth II, we are introducing an enhanced Copy & Print specific Mystery ... use to find their monthly storewide mystery shop scores. Results are posted daily as store shops are completed. DMs and Regional Sales and Service Managers should monitor the website regularly to ... (Properties and Folders)	8/18/05 8:00 PM
2	Mystery Shop Managers Guide ... This guide will provide you with the information necessary to understand the Mystery Shop program. Ultimately, the goal of the Mystery Shop program is to provide outstanding customer service ... WHAT IF I DON'T AGREE WITH A SHOP ? We are aware that situations will present themselves in which a General Manager or an ... one "profile" for a mystery shopper. Quality service checks are routinely performed to make sure shops are accurate and timely. OTHER RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO YOU Along with this manager's guide ... (Properties)	8/11/05 10:37 AM
3	Mystery Shop Improvement Ideas ... Ideas to increase your stores Mystery Shop scores are provided here ... (Properties)	8/11/05 10:37 AM
4	Mystery Shop Form ... This form may be used by District or Store Managers when performing practice mystery shops . Try mystery shopping different sections instead of measuring overall service in one or two visits ... INFORMATION DIRECTIONS: Fill out this table and the table for the departments you choose to mystery shop . VISIT DATE START TIME Indicate the exact time you entered the store: EXIT TIME Indicate ... the 'NA' response if you visited a competitor location. Select all that apply. ST2 Were shopping carts or baskets available near the entrance for customer use? ST3 Was the store clean ... (Properties)	8/11/05 10:37 AM
5	Mystery Shop 2005 Spread the Word ... Communicating the 2005 Mystery Shop Spread the Word This Spread the Word document will assist you in communicating 2005 Mystery ... helpful Copy Center Mystery Shop What's New in 2005? Measurement Periods - Stores will be shopped according to the 2005 fiscal calendar, and not by month as has been done in ... (Properties)	8/11/05 10:37 AM
6	1-008 Understanding Mystery Shops	8/15/05 7:01 AM

Pictured: Search results from Staples@work. Results can differ depending on a user's access credentials, and whether they're using the Home Office portal or a store-based, locked-down portal version.

The Plumtree software also lets project members upload and share documents to a project-member-only space, including version control and document check-in and checkout.

Today, about 150 employees based in the US, Britain, Germany, and Canada maintain the 20,000 documents that exist on Staples@work. "Content contributors are generally content experts in their area of employment," says Leahy. "For example, content related to store signage is provided and managed by those associates who are most familiar with sign content. This structure ensures greater content accuracy and promotes a sense of ownership that extends far beyond the core Staples@work team."

Staples settled on this content management strategy as a way to organize the portal's staggering amount of content. "It is not feasible for an individual or small group to manage 20,000 documents," says Leahy. Furthermore, such an approach "allows faster growth and faster response to end-user requests" and keeps different businesses groups involved and invested in the portal.

Still, the approach took some honing. "When Staples@work was first deployed, there was significantly less decentralization," says Leahy. "Rapid growth necessitated a change, but the software did not yet permit decentralization in a clean way. As the software was improved, we were able to review and update the methodology to that used today."

For content presentation, templates are scarce, she says. "There are templates for more advanced functionality, such as page, community, and portlet creation," but otherwise, few document templates are used. Instead, Staples relies on design guidelines and standards:

STAPLES: CONTENT GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS	
Document Formatting:	Align text to the left. Avoid justifying and centering your text except on title pages or as necessary
	Limit regular document sizes to 2 MB
	Always spell check and proofread your file before placing it on your file share, to eliminate the onscreen correction underlining
	Don't create local hypertext links in documents. (Local means placing links within your own documents that link to other documents on the Staples@work share directory.) These cause problems and result in broken links if those documents are updated or removed
	Bookmarks within a document are acceptable
	Avoid posting Excel documents with macros unless absolutely necessary
Typefaces, Fonts, and Backgrounds:	Limit headlines' type size to a maximum of 18–20 points
	Limit typefaces to two different typefaces on a page
	Use standard online typefaces such as Verdana, Tahoma, and Arial. Many uncommon and decorative typefaces are difficult to read
	Avoid using ALL CAPITALS—for emphasis, opt for bold or larger type
	Avoid using italics, which is difficult to read on monitors.
	Remember black text on a white background is easiest to read
	Don't use light-colored type over a dark background; also keep this in mind with PowerPoint presentations
Graphics:	Use colors sparingly, and only in headlines and section headings
	Always use Staples logos according to their accompanying guidelines
	Limit graphics. Use them only when relevant to your document's purpose or theme
	Only use .JPG or .GIF graphic formats, and limit total file size to less than 2 MB
	Don't use copyrighted graphics from other sources
File Properties:	Limit colors to the 216-color palette of "browser-safe" colors, which are a Web standard, and compatible with most monitors
	Staples@work uses Document/File Properties to create the portal link, document description, and search server keyword index. Therefore, document properties are essential for helping people find content on the intranet. Filters are set on all portal folders to reject documents that have incomplete properties information
File Size:	Due to network limitations at our store locations, document size is limited to 2MB. The portal team works with content providers to reduce file sizes by converting some documents to PDF format, cutting larger documents into more manageable pieces, and eliminating background templates or unnecessary images. Exceptions to the file size rule are made where necessary or when the document is intended for a limited audience with access to sufficient bandwidth

To ensure content contributors understand intranet-content guidelines, every contributor must first attend a portal training session, where the guidelines are emphasized. Guideline enforcement can also be automated in Plumtree, and the intranet team can easily generate reports of content that doesn't meet guidelines. Even so, "our challenges are more in the areas of keeping the content current and relevant than in how it is presented," notes Levesque.

Plumtree's Studio portlets also provide form- and survey-creation tools. One useful result of this approach is that non-technical employees can create "robust forms and surveys without touching code," notes Elyssa Ramirez, a portal IS team member.

TECHNOLOGY

The CMS is Plumtree 5.0x Enterprise Portal, including its associated applications: Collaboration Server, Content Server, and Studio Server, and Plumtree also handles intranet searching. The portal team uses Microsoft Visual SourceSafe to manage the changes it makes to Plumtree.

The intranet runs on Intel-based hardware with the Windows 2000 SP4 operating system. Where required, Staples also runs Apache Web server, IBM WebSphere 5.1.0.3, and Microsoft .NET 1.1.

For bug tracking, the team uses UltraApps Issue Manager, and for quality assurance, SilkTest from Segue Software.

GOALS AND CONSTRAINTS

Goals:

- Ensure Staples@work is a primary source for all corporate communications and information
- Give employees access to business applications and interactive tools, such as the corporate phone book, conference room scheduler, internal publications, and a document library covering all Staples departments
- Take better advantage of Plumtree functionality, such as Web Services, user profiles, and studio and collaboration portlets, to increase portal applications' capabilities and efficiency
- Expand the use of community pages beyond major business units to smaller work groups and project teams
- Enhance the working relationships of project teams using collaborative tools, such as discussion boards, workflow management tools, and task calendars
- Improve search capabilities, especially to make it easier to locate frequently used HR information
- Offer more employees use of personalized *My Pages*
- Facilitate users' ease of navigation between group, department, and project pages

Constraints:

- Limited access to the intranet for mobile users (through a VPN only)
- Budget and time, and problems selecting an appropriate CMS platform
- A limit on Plumtree customizations (to facilitate easier upgrades)
- Inflexible blackout periods—including holidays and the back-to-school period—restrict when major releases can go live

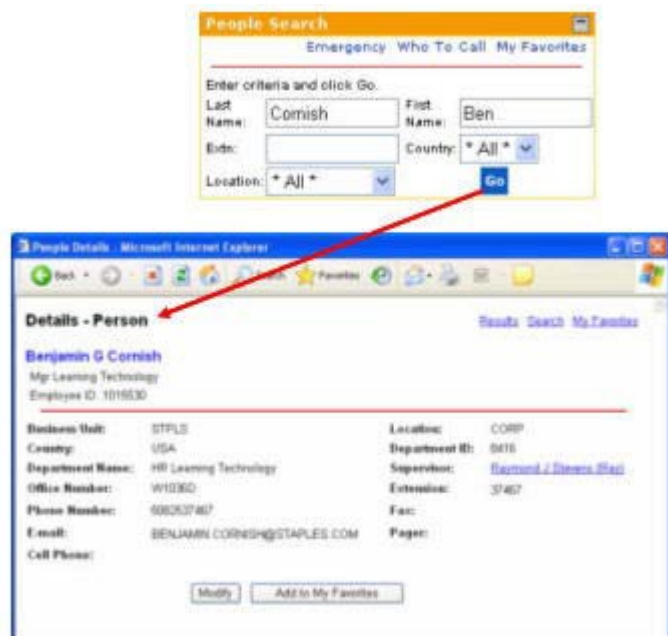
BASIC INTRANET FEATURES

Staples@work offers many features that make it easier for employees to do their jobs, while also supporting feedback mechanisms to continuously improve those processes.

For example, the *Management Action Planner* gives store managers a variety of needed tools and information. Meanwhile, using the *PIC/easy* tool, any employee can suggest changes meant to better help customers or facilitate improved employee productivity.

More than thirty-five business-focused communities also deliver needed tools to employees.

Meanwhile, the intranet also includes a variety of essential features. For finding employee information, for example, Staples@work users have *People Search*. Beyond returning such information as telephone numbers and email addresses, the popular tool lets employees update their own information. Search results also include an employee's supervisor—a contact point for helping solve problems quickly when the employee isn't available. Because *People Search* is so popular—and useful—users have multiple ways of accessing it. "We supply access by both a link in the header throughout the portal experience, as well as through a portlet window on the most commonly used community pages," says portal strategy project manager Margaret Woisard.



Pictured: Results of a *People Search* include not only basic employee information, but also a link to the employee's supervisor. This facilitates more rapid problem solving if the employee is unavailable.

Personalized *My Pages* let most employees customize a variety of pages related to work and personal interests, with features ranging from self-maintained lists of important portal links to weather and local movie times.

Another interesting feature is a store locator tool, which allows employees to quickly find store information by city and state, zip code, or store number. This tool has also

found uses beyond what the designers might have originally envisioned. For example, "the store number look-up is especially useful to accounting when they are trying to research issues on accounts payable or receivable," notes Woisard.

Another popular tool is the *Internal Communications* portlet, which offers breaking news about the business and the employee's location. Behind the scenes, security restrictions control the information that is presented to different employees.

Corporate communications can also use a promotional feature, "a graphical way to grab the viewers' attention for important messages about quarterly profits, social issues, upcoming events, and so on," says Woisard. For example, one recent feature highlighted a company initiative called "Staples Soul," which is "the company's commitment to diversity, ethical business practices, the environment, and community relations."



Pictured: The *Internal Communications* portlet, which delivers personalized, breaking news about Staples, as well as the employee's business location.

USERS

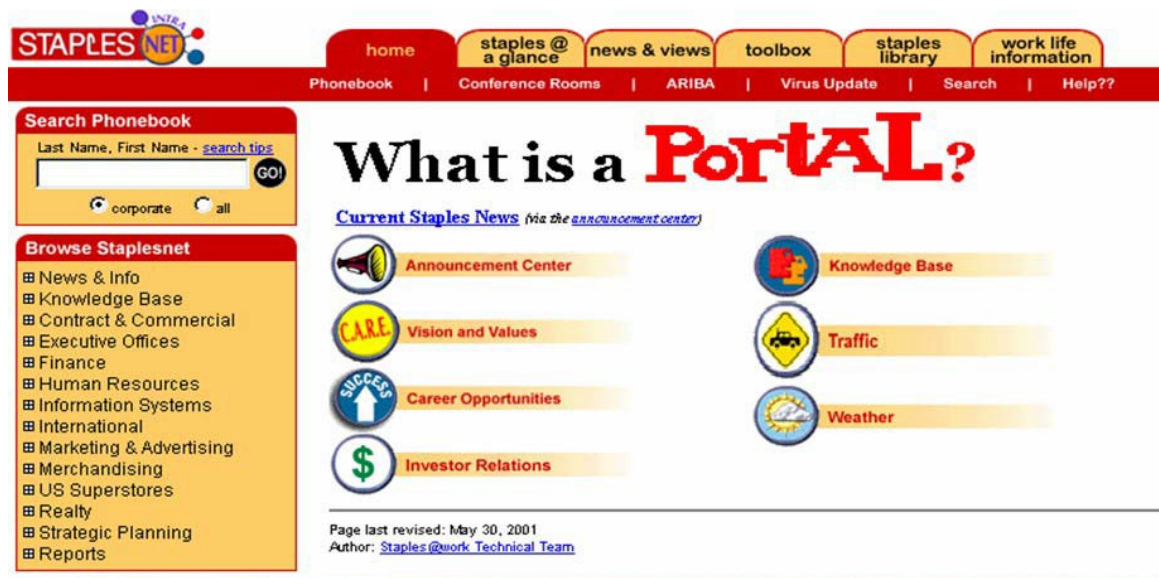
Staples@work is accessible by about 43,000 Staples employees in the US corporate offices and stores, and in offices and stores in Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, and Belgium.

USER TASKS

- Find employee information
- Read breaking news about Staples, as well as particular Staples business locations
- Use one of more than thirty-five business-focused communities to access business- and role-related tools
- Reference HR and facility-related information
- Use the *PIC/easy* tool to submit an idea for improving a process or maximizing profits
- Use portal-based training tools (especially for new employees)
- For managers: use the *Management Action Planner* tool to track important managerial information and help manage the myriad tasks related to managing a store.
- Access essential business metrics (such as inventory and budgets) using the *Report2Web* tool
- Locate stores and store information

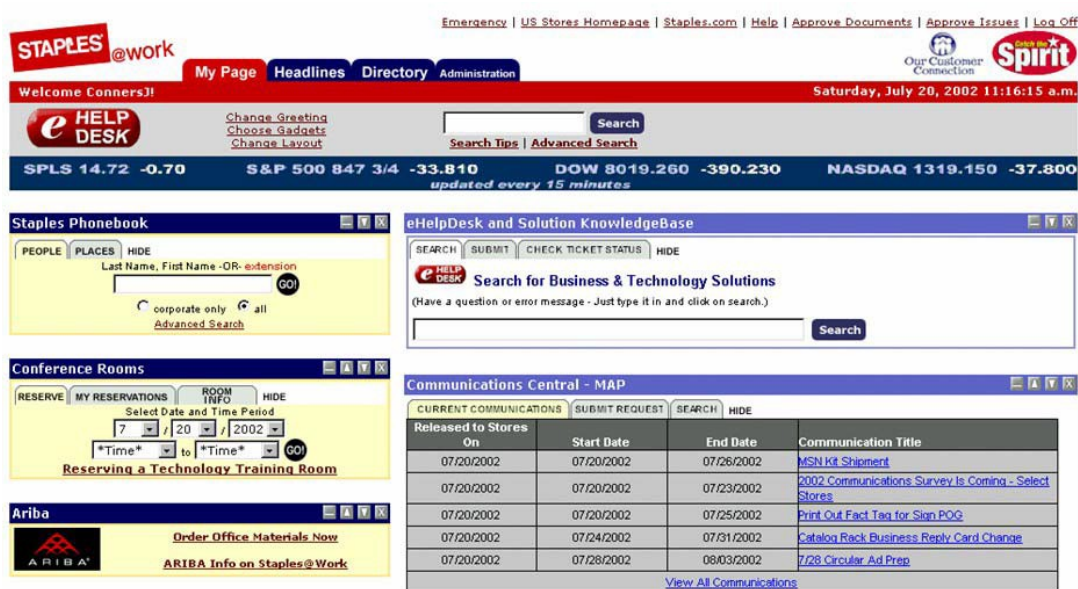
BACKGROUND

In the 1990s, various intranets grew organically within Staples and served different audiences. Collectively known as Staplesnet, they often sported different designs and navigation.



Pictured: A homepage from one of the original Staples intranets, circa 1999.

In February 2000, Staples began rolling out its first enterprise-wide portal, Staples@work, which was based on Plumtree software. This provided a single portal interface for everyone: managers and employees, and people located both in corporate headquarters and at stores and support sites. The new portal also included new tools, such as a conference room scheduling application.



Pictured: In 2000, Staples introduced its first enterprise portal, Staples@work. While the intranet team continued to add features, this design basically held until 2002.

The move to a portal necessitated additional staff. "When Staples@work first rolled out in 2000, there were two project managers in the HR group who oversaw all content and administration," notes Lindsay Germanos, a portal strategy project manager. "They worked closely with three IS team members. Within a year, however, the team needed to expand to support company initiatives and a growing need for content on the portal. A decision was made to split content and administration functions, so two new roles were developed and added in the global resource and technology department to manage administration functions. At this time, the IS team also added new members to the team."

In July 2002, Staples launched a major redesign of Staples@work and began rolling out the portal to additional business units and international sites. The portal team also began actively governing the intranet at this time, as well as collecting portal-related metrics.

In 2004, Staples purchased an upgraded version of the portal software. This upgrade included improved features, such as the ability to use newer coding languages and additional portal tools that offer employees improved services and applications. (The "Design Process" section above offers more details on this upgrade and redesign.)



Pictured: The second major redesign of Staples@work launched in 2002 and expanded the intranet to other sites and overseas business units. This design basically held until 2004.

Today, the Staples intranet team includes sixteen people, including managers drawn from three different areas of the business: the portal strategy team, the global resource and technologies team, and the HR and intranet systems group. "Due to a few job shares and some individuals' job responsibilities outside the portal, only about ten full-time equivalents of these people's time are devoted solely to the intranet," says Levesque.

The HR and learning technologies and communications department owns the intranet. The portal strategy team, inside that department, includes six people who are responsible for content, site usability, metrics, and content-provider and end-user portal training. In the same department, the four-person global resource and technologies team oversees the administrative functions of Staples@work. The HR and intranet systems group—comprised of six people in the IS department—handles portal, ASP application, and portal architecture development and support.

In 2005, the team added two new portal-devoted employees (from the HR department) and began to cross-train additional personnel on portal procedures and technologies.

DESIGN PROCESS AND USABILITY ACTIVITIES

Staples heavily emphasizes user-oriented design. "The Staples@work team has always looked to usability findings as a major driver for design and interface improvements," says Levesque. "The project managers in the portal strategy team all have a deep interest and varying levels of experience in website usability. This core competency, and a requirement that any new portal presence or change include

guidance from the portal strategy team, ensures that all development follows a user-centered design approach.”

With this approach, Staples continued to redesign its intranet. Yet, by 2004, it had been several years since the intranet had undergone a major redesign. The intranet team began preparing for a major upgrade.

First, it collected user feedback. “Most previous changes had resulted from information supplied by various sources including associate surveys, user feedback, support center data, and issue escalations,” says Levesque.

To develop a portal redesign plan, the portal team set milestones, including many based on usability activities. For example, “the first two activities included the development of personas and a massive associate survey, followed by interviews with a broad sample of respondents,” he says.

Key findings from this research helped immediately focus the redesign and what would constitute project success. According to Levesque, the research revealed the following top problems: “difficulty and frustration in using search, an inability to locate important human resource information, limited access to the personalized page functionality, and a lack of awareness of the availability of portal pages other than the individual’s start page and the HR page.”

Next, the redesign team enlisted the Staples human-factors team to conduct a heuristic site evaluation. “The human factors group, while primarily focused on the retail website and business applications, is and continues to be available to the portal team for consultation and guidance,” says Levesque.

To develop a wireframe of the proposed new homepage—a start page for all Staples employees—the portal team combined findings from the heuristic analysis and the user surveys and interviews. However, designers quickly determined that one size might not fit all, says Levesque. “While many of the recommendations from this wireframe were incorporated in the final start pages for the five business units, it was determined that a universal start page would hinder some key business functions.”

Welcome Test User [Staples.com](#) [Help](#) | [My Account](#) | [Log Off](#)

[My Pages](#) • [Communities](#) • [Directory](#) • [HR Express](#)

Search [GO](#)
[Advanced Search](#)

Home Office and Field
Home Office and Field Home | Company Information | Home Office Calendar

Stock Data

SPLS	xxx.xx	xxx
ODP	xxx.xx	xxx
BCC	xxx.xx	xxx

For stock index information, use...

At a Glance

People Search

[My Favorites](#)

Last Name First Name
Ext. Country ALL
Location ALL

Who to Call
Retail Regional Phone Listing
Emergency Phone Numbers

Room Reservations

Reserve | My Reservations | Room Info
Select Date and Time Period

MM DD YY

Reserving a Tech Training Room
Conference Bridge
Link Building Schedule (Reservations)

Store Search

Enter City and State or a Zip Code to
locate the Staples Store nearest you

Home Office Links

- Ariba Order Supplies)
- Blackout Dates (Earnings)
- Chef Louie's
- Copy Center Order Form
- Corporate Center Guide
- Easy Brand Wallpaper
- Service Requests
- Submit easy/PIC Ideas

Staples Ethics

- 2004 Code of Ethics Reminder
- Code of Ethics
- Equal Employment Opportunity
- Harassment Prevention
- Record Management

eHelpDesk and Solution KnowledgeBase

SEARCH | SUBMIT | CHECK TICKET STATUS | HIDE

Search for Business & Technology Solutions
(Have a question or error message - Just type it in and click on search.)

Choose a Business Area to Search.

Community Publications

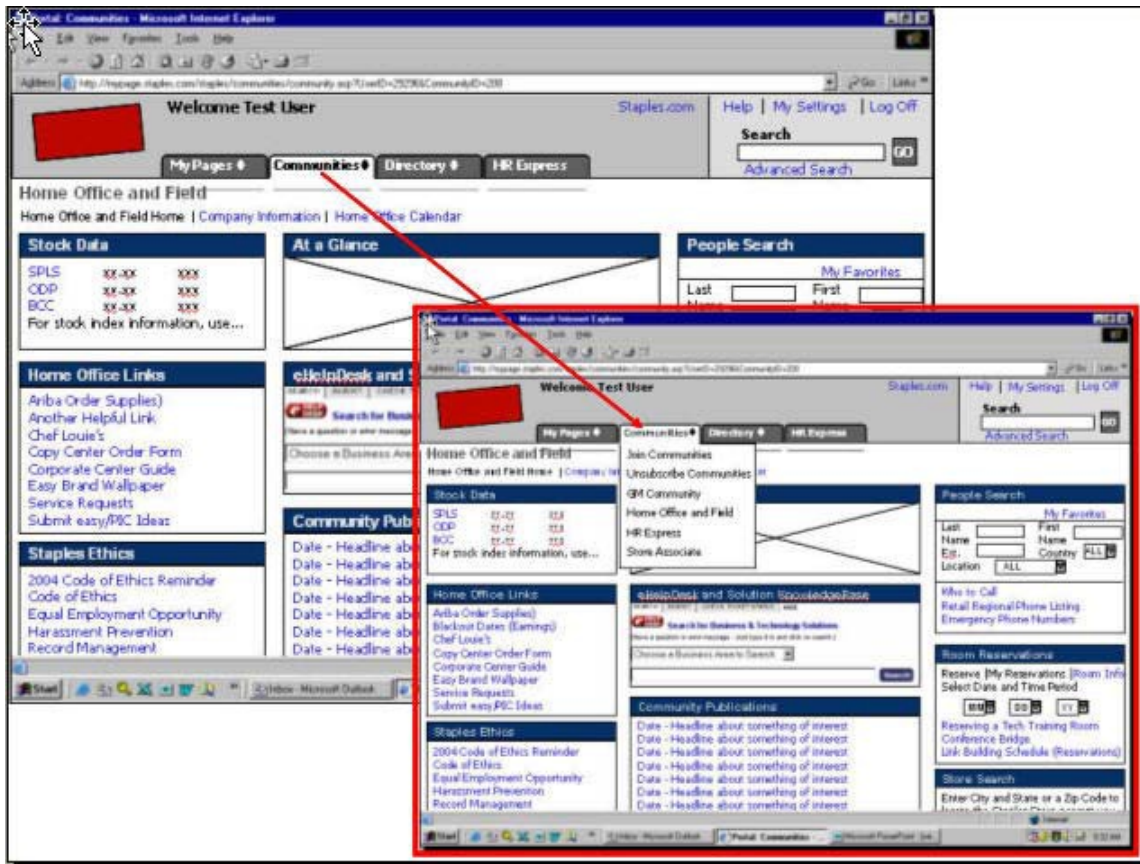
- Date - Headline about something of interest
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Pictured: The redesign team created several interactive PowerPoint presentations for prototyping the site. This was the initial one.

The team regrouped and opted to see which navigation designs the Plumtree 5.0 software could easily offer out of the box. Yet “like most off-the-shelf products,” says Levesque, the software’s approach didn’t mesh exactly with how Staples had approached—or wanted to approach—navigation. Implementing it would also have meant a radical change for users.

So, the team set about modifying the available navigation schemes. “We decided it was best to devote the additional time and resources to customize the navigation. We took the best of our old design, thereby offering some familiarity to the end user, yet incorporated more current insights from the likes of Jared Spool, Jakob Nielsen, and the personal usability experiences and training of our team,” he says.

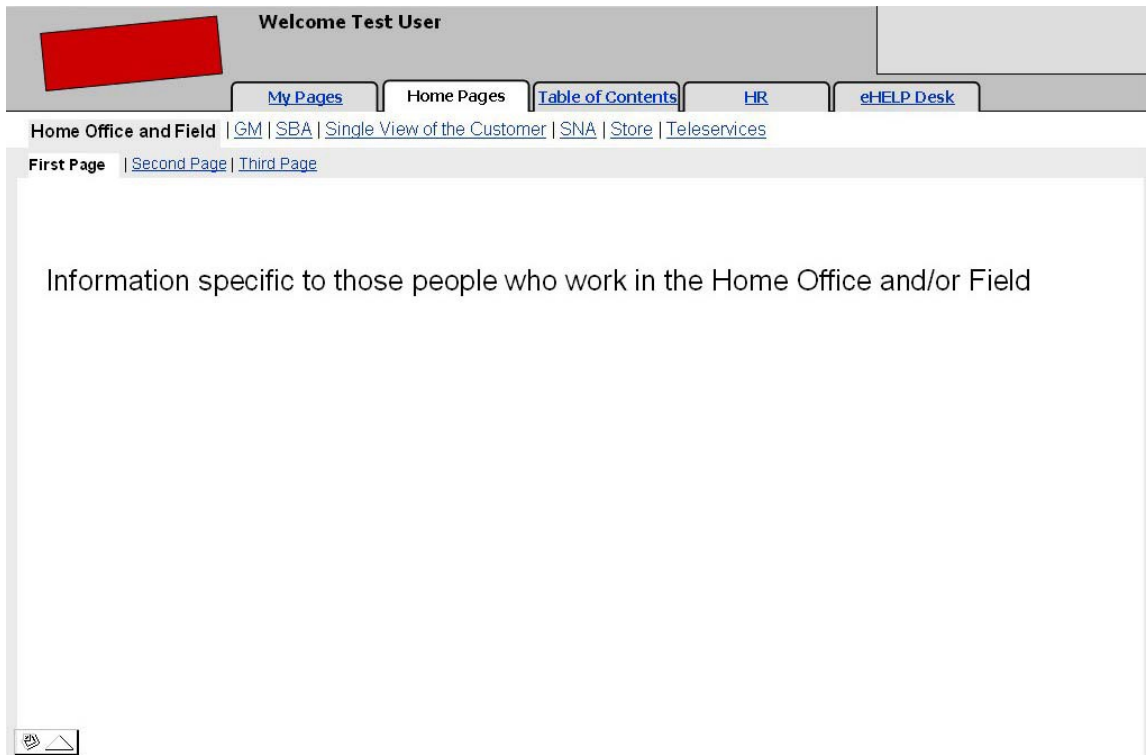
To design the new navigation, a cross-functional team formed with members of the human factors, portal strategy, HR technology, and IS groups. The portal strategy team then developed wireframes, and tested them with a diverse group of twelve employees, focusing especially on header links and search functionality. “We were especially concerned about some of the out-of-the-box search functionality,” notes Levesque.



Pictured: The initial wireframe design Staples tested with twelve diverse employees, focusing especially on header links and search functionality.

This first round of usability testing produced notable results and confirmed some designers' suspicions. For starters, users had difficulty using a "saved search" feature. "Eventually, we decided not to include this new option in the redesign since the resources required to solve all the inherent usability issues would have jeopardized our deadline," says Levesque.

The initial navigation scheme, which required a mouse click on a tab to expand a drop-down list, was also unsuccessful. "While test users had no difficulty using this method when navigating to a different tab, they saw no clue to lead them to click on the current tab to navigate to other pages within the same area of the portal," he says.



Pictured: The first wireframe the intranet team created to redesign the intranet's navigation.

Designers also discovered that users didn't understand some of the portal's terminology, even though the terms had been used on the portal for years. So, the designers immediately added nomenclature testing to the redesign project.

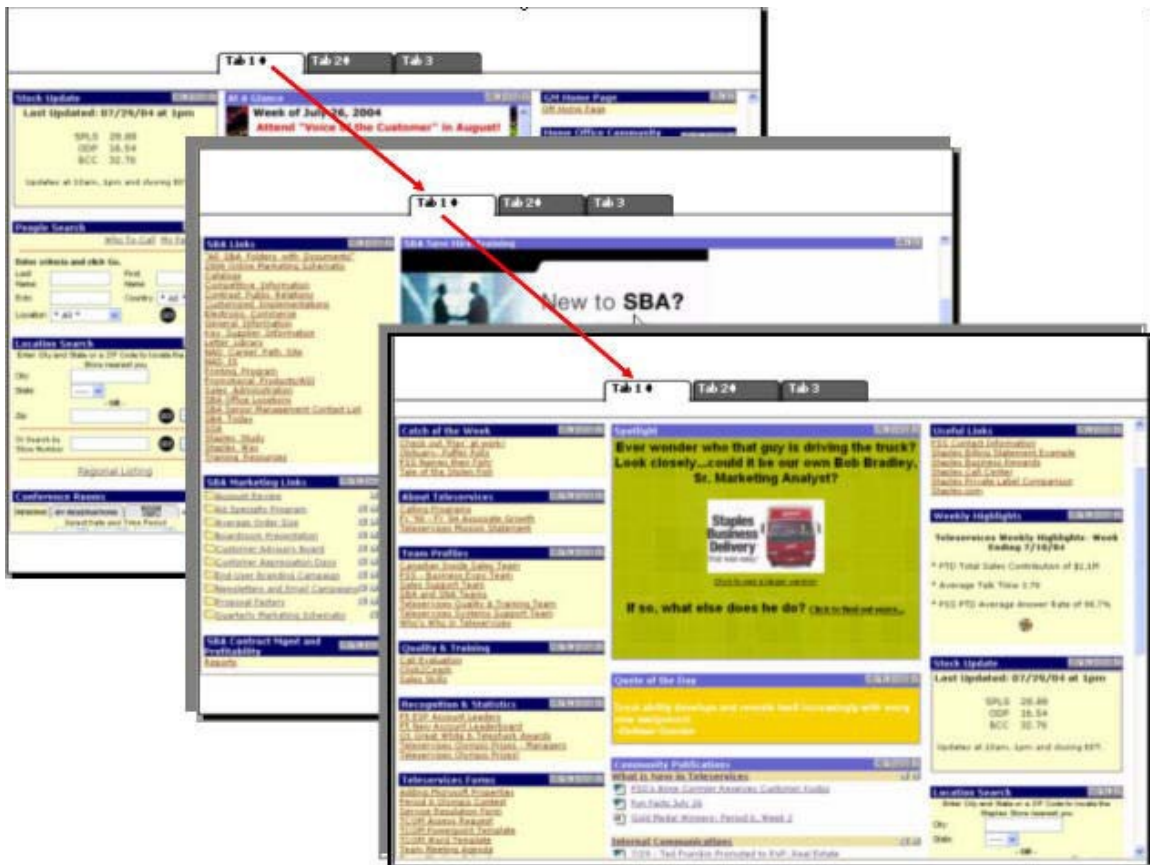


Pictured: A wireframe Staples used to help test portal nomenclature. Initial tests revealed many users were unfamiliar with terms long used on the portal.

The nomenclature testing highlighted various problems users had; some were easier to solve than others.

For example, “one of the biggest struggles for users was the term ‘communities’ in the Plumtree environment,” notes Levesque. Yet, a major redesign goal was to expand employees’ use of such pages—especially beyond their current business-group use—to help more small-scale project teams. The redesign team therefore had to solve the problem with the *Communities* label.

To help, the team launched another round of nomenclature testing, this time using several wireframe designs of community pages, each with three tabs in the top navigation bar. “The tabs were simply numbered, with all wireframes indicating Tab 1 as active,” says Levesque. Usability testers asked users to not only identify which pages they would use as part of their jobs, but also to suggest names that would appropriately convey a page’s function to other employees.



Pictured: Wireframe designs from a second round of nomenclature testing, which asked users to identify the business unit pages they would use in their jobs, and then to suggest appropriate names for them.

While users could identify the business unit pages they would need to use in their jobs, they generally had great difficulty finding a name that would appropriately convey a page’s purpose to other users. “Most ended up saying ‘communities,’ simply because that is the term they have seen used on the portal for several years. A few proposed ‘homepage’ but felt that would not work where there are more than one homepages.’ Others said ‘start page’ but, again, withdrew that idea when they realized there would be multiple pages under this tab,” notes Levesque.

Ultimately, designers opted to change the *Communities* label to *Community Pages*. They thus retained “a familiar, if not fully understood, term,” he says, and also conveyed that multiple pages lived in one tab.

With the above results in hand, the redesign team created a new prototype, eliminating the drop-down tab in favor of a drop-down located below the tab, to the right of page links. “In our previous test, we had combined, in one list, the links to other community pages with the actions users could take, such as joining another community,” says Levesque. “In this round, we decided to separate these functions into two drop-downs, one labeled *View Another Community* and the other called *Community Actions*.”



Pictured: The next redesign wireframe revisited the homepage, swapping drop-down tabs for drop-downs located below the tab, and to the right of page links. Designers eliminated the single link to community pages, adding drop-down links for *View Another Community* and *Community Actions*.

“Users had no idea what *Community Actions* might do and always went to *View Another Community*, even if the scenario told them to join another community that was not in their community drop-down list,” notes Levesque. Results from this round of usability testing found that merging the two drop-down lists would work so long as there was a clear separation between the list of actions and the list of pages.

“Users also had some difficulty finding the drop-down lists, as they were placed to the far right of the page, beside the page links. Users were looking to the left instead—for navigational elements.”

Also, during testing, “an interesting issue arose in the users’ search for a way to navigate to another community page,” he says. First, users looked for an appropriate navigational element on the left side of the page. Next, most opted to go to the *Community Links* portlet on the top of the page’s right-hand column, even though it’s only a list of frequently used links. Nevertheless, “many users who had seen this

heading for years on the portal now interpreted it to mean links to other communities.”

In other words, designers needed to defuse the nomenclature problem. “As a result, we changed the heading of this portlet to *Frequently Used Links*,” he says, since that better described what actually lived there.



Pictured: A wireframe used to test a nomenclature change: from *Community Links* to *Frequently Used Links*. Users mistook the former name—even though it had been used for several years—for a list of links to discrete communities. The new name more correctly describes what the portlet actually contains.

Another wrinkle: When building the final site, designers discovered it would be easier to build the drop-down list of *Community Pages and Actions* if it was part of the left-hand navigation. So, the designers conducted one more usability test with the changes, using a working version of the new site running on a development server.

All redesign efforts were also encumbered by the need to weigh desired customizations against the maintenance time they'd require through successive Plumtree versions, notes Levesque. “While the Plumtree software is a great foundation to build our intranet on, it did force us to consider any interface modification very carefully so we were not overly burdened by reapplying customizations during future upgrades.”

Throughout the entire redesign process, each usability test included a satisfaction questionnaire. In it, users reported finding the new site easier to use. “Only one of the test users felt the new design was neither better nor worse than the old, with all other respondents agreeing that the new design was ‘markedly better,’” notes Levesque.

Another redesign goal had been to redesign the portal's HR section. Given time constraints, however, a full redesign wasn't possible. “Our redesign schedule, like

any change affecting our stores, was constrained by the retail 'blackout calendar' which restricts major releases from occurring during peak busy times like back-to-school and the holidays," says Levesque. "A delay in the development of our new design by only a few weeks would have resulted in our needing to postpone release for several months."

Even with such time constraints, "we wanted to do something to address the large number of complaints received about this area of the portal in the survey and interviews," he says. Designers therefore opted to streamline the presentation of HR information. First, they removed all links to HR information from the start page, housing them instead on an *HR Express* page. "These links were placed in a prominent portlet at the top-left corner of the page so they are the first thing a user sees when arriving on the page." Designers then added links to information users access most frequently.



Pictured: A wireframe Staples used to test HR information changes. Because the team lacked sufficient time to redesign the HR area, it instead removed all pieces of HR information from the homepage except for a link to a new *HR Express* section.

While most of the redesign involved software changes, the *HR Express* changes didn't, which meant the redesign team was also able to just launch them as soon as testing was complete. "We implemented it two months before the release of the new design," notes Levesque. "This way, associates were not overwhelmed with too many changes at one time."

TIMELINE

- Through 1999: A variety of homegrown intranets established.
- 2000: Launched Staplesnet, the first centralized intranet.
- 2001: Completed full conversion to new intranet.
- Fall 2001: Deployed intranet to stores.
- July 2002: First major intranet upgrade.
- May 2003: Deployed intranet to UK locations.
- November 2003: Deployed intranet to Germany.
- August–December 2004: Intranet redesign planned; requirements detailed.
- December 2004–March 2005: Designed new intranet.
- March–May 2005: Developed new intranet technology.
- May 2005: New intranet thoroughly tested on development servers.
- June 2005: Launched redesigned intranet.

RESULTS

On June 20, 2005, the redesigned Staples intranet, Staples@work version 5.0, went live for its approximately 43,000 users.

The redesign maintains core approaches, such as presenting each corporate intranet as a different sub-portal that delivers content and applications specific to country and business needs. In each sub-portal, specific groups of users also get targeted content and applications via community pages.

The redesign, however, introduces myriad new features, including a user-tested interface, enhanced communities, and improved search. The redesign also heralds the intranet's availability for the Quill business unit, which direct markets office supplies. Behind the scenes—and well hidden from users—upgraded Plumtree technology helps make this possible, facilitating many of the new features.

Overall, users now have easier access to tools that help them maximize their productivity. For example, the intranet's *Management Action Planner* (MAP) delivers important information directly to store managers. "In addition to simple notifications, this tool is a means of distributing documentation to the stores without burdening the email system, and includes a workload management tool that allows for the assignment and delegation of tasks, in addition to the ability to track task completion," says Woisard.

Communications Central - MAP (Stores)

Current Projects Search Calendar HIDE Enter Map

Legend: ● Overdue ● Starting after 5 days ● Current ● Starting within 5 days ● Completed

Project	Start Date	End Date	Hours	Status
Back To School Hiring Program	06/07/05	10/31/05	0h 0m	Reviewed
New IRG Customer Contact Center	08/08/05	02/01/06	0h 30m	Reviewed
Brother Stamp BOGO Coupon Codes	08/18/05	10/01/05	0h 5m	Not Started
New Store Voice Platform	08/31/05	10/09/05	0h 0m	Reviewed
Connecticut Jabra Shipper - Hands Free Legislation	08/31/05	10/07/05	0h 15m	Reviewed
Signage	08/31/05	09/16/05	0h 0m	Not Started
Copy Center Site Survey	09/01/05	09/16/05	0h 0m	Not Started

FYI Bulletin Board

10.19.05 FYI-Software Eng
10.12.05 FYI-New Fax Num
10.06.05 FYI-Store Setup

STAPLES

What was edited:

Management Action Planner (MAP)

Project Tasks | Calendar |

Projects: All View | Overdue | Search

gm9000 Store View: 9000

List of Projects for Assignment & Status Update

2 Projects have been edited by the Home Office.

Project Legend: Starting later than 5 days Starting in 5 days Due Soon Overdue

Project	Type	Start Date	Due Date	Hours	Assigned To	Status
09.21.05 FYI Connection Newsletter		09/21/05	09/27/05	0h 0m	General Manager - STORE	Not Started
09.28.05 FYI Connection Newsletter		09/28/05	10/04/05	0h 0m	General Manager - STORE	Not Started
10.18 Standby Disposal		10/14/05	10/20/05	0h 10m	General Manager - STORE	Not Started
10.05.05 FYI Connection Newsletter		10/05/05	10/11/05	0h 0m	General Manager - STORE	Not Started
10.12.05 FYI Connection Newsletter		10/12/05	10/18/05	0h 0m	General Manager - STORE	Not Started
10.18.05 FYI Connection Newsletter		10/18/05	10/25/05	0h 0m	General Manager - STORE	Not Started
10.14 Software Disposal		10/07/05	10/14/05	0h 30m	General Manager - STORE	Not Started

Pictured: The *Management Action Planner* provides relevant communications and tools directly to store managers. Many such communications previously flowed over email.

Meanwhile, managers also get access to needed metrics, including inventory reports, sales goals, and budgets, via the *Report2Web* tool. This replaced the two previous methods for sharing such information: printing and express-mailing reports, or emailing large Excel files. By contrast, "our *Report2Web* tool allows store managers to access these essential reports through the portal at greater speed and efficiency," says Levesque.



that was easy.™

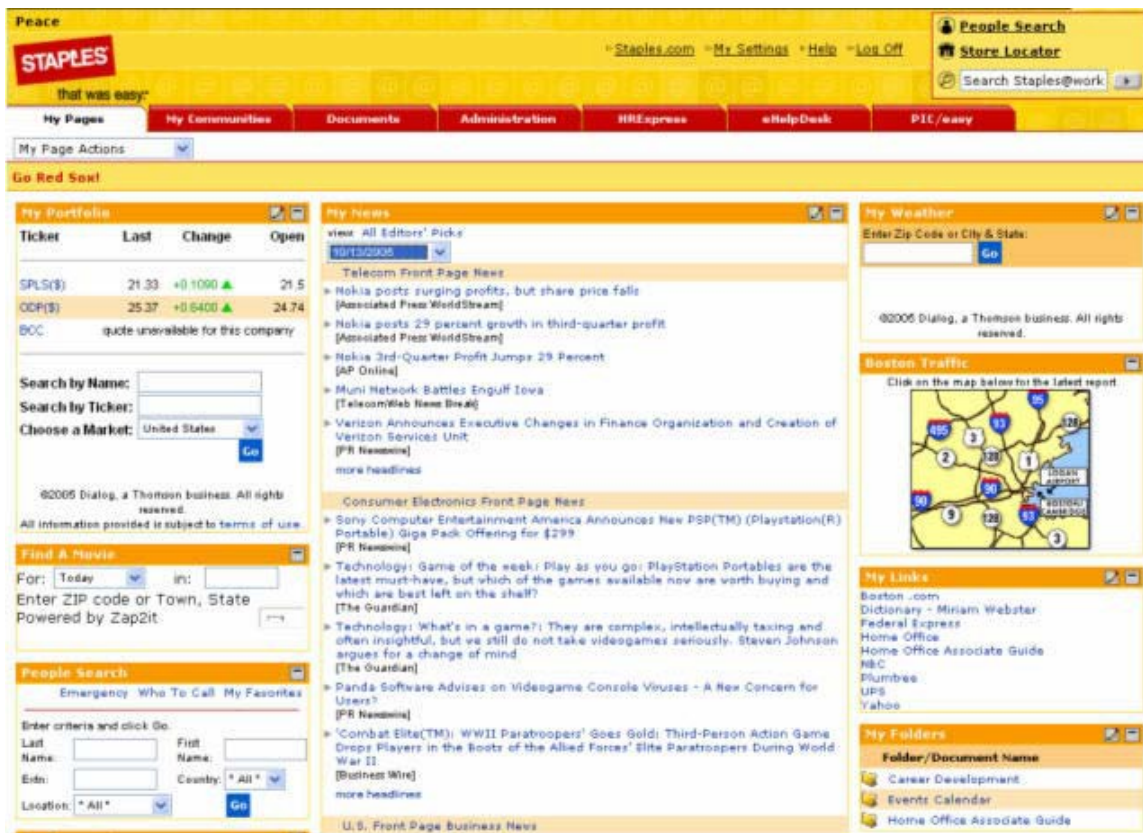
Report2Web
Express

[Help](#) | [Settings](#) | [LogOff](#)

Public Folders My Reports Show All Reports Search			
Title ▲	Date	Actions	
Personal Folder/[POD_WEB] Proof of Delivery	10/31/2005	Versions	
Personal Folder/[SUP003] Supplies Adjustment Report (Store)	10/31/2005	Versions	
Personal Folder/Adjusted Budget FY05	11/3/2005	Versions	
Personal Folder/Bonus Payout Summary	10/19/2005	Versions	
Personal Folder/Business Services Copy Center PL	11/7/2005	Versions	
Personal Folder/Compensation Bonus Delivery Letter	10/19/2005	Versions	
Personal Folder/Compensation Bonus Hourly Team Detail	10/19/2005	Versions	
Personal Folder/Compensation Earnings Hourly Team Detail	9/6/2005	Versions	
Personal Folder/Coupon Manager Override Report	11/18/2005	Versions	
Personal Folder/Cross Channel Customer Tracking for the RMB	11/9/2005	Versions	
Personal Folder/Customer Experience Daily Metrics	11/21/2005	Versions	
Personal Folder/Customer Experience Monthly Metrics	10/30/2005	Versions	
Personal Folder/Donation Eligible List	10/31/2005	Versions	
Personal Folder/Fall Clearance Inventory Report	11/4/2005	Versions	

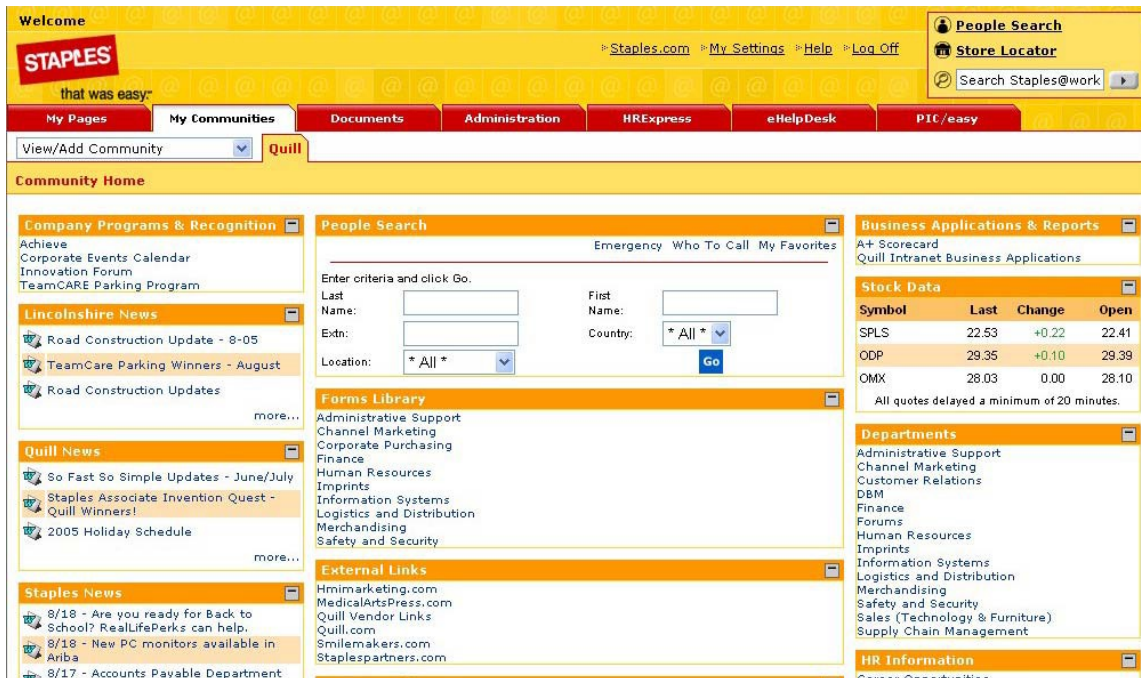
Pictured: The *Report2Web* tool gives managers access to needed metrics, including inventory reports, sales goals, and budgets.

Beyond management tools, almost all employees can create personalized *My Pages*. "These pages can include a combination of work-related portlets as well as personal interest portlets like 'find a movie,' personalized news, weather and stock information, area traffic reports, and self-administered lists of frequently used links," notes Woisard.



Pictured: Staples employees can create personalized *My Pages*.

While new technology brings behind-the-scenes improvements to community functionality, an improved nomenclature also drives greater employee use of communities. Already, there are more than thirty-five communities on Staples@work, with such names as *Home Office* and *Field*, *HR Express*, *Store General Managers*, *Supply Chain*, *Single View of the Customer*, *Staples@work Portal Team*, *UK Retail*, and *Germany Retail*.



Pictured: An example of a community homepage for Quill Corp., an office supplies direct marketer based in Lincolnshire, Illinois, which was acquired by Staples in 1998. (Quill and Quill.com operate as a separate brand from Staples, serving small to medium sized business customers.)

For new employees, a variety of portal-based training tools help them get quickly oriented. Information presented via such tools varies widely, since orientation necessarily differs by job function and business unit. As a result, proffered information can range “from basic indexed documents with efficient access, to all pertinent new-hire information and requirements, to online courses about the company’s history and philosophy,” says Woisard.

A related tool is for the management personnel responsible for training new employees. In particular, she says, “the portal gives access to the *Retail New Hire Toolbox* that insures all regulatory and business-critical disclosures and documentation are shared and processed, and that the new associate is informed of all the training available to promote success within the company.”

LESSONS LEARNED

Insights from Ben Cornish:

Secure early vendor involvement. “Probably one of the biggest lessons learned during the redesign was to seek vendor involvement and partnership early, and communicate with them continually throughout the project. As we faced hurdles, or questions during the upgrade, it was easier to seek support from the vendor and technical experts, since we had kept in close contact from the start.”

Get executive-level sponsorship. “Strong executive sponsorship within Staples allowed us to leverage the relationship between our executives and the vendor’s senior management team to quickly resolve any concerns that could have otherwise jeopardized the project.”

Insights from George Levesque:

Think in small iterations. “While not a new lesson, user feedback reinforced this fact: iterative modifications that slowly and consistently improve and enhance your site are easier for end users to absorb than large-scale, dramatic changes.”

Use large-scale changes for effect. “While our standard philosophy supports smaller, iterative changes, we felt pairing several iterative changes with a very costly upgrade of the portal’s backend software gave this redesign excellent visibility. Rolling some of our iterative changes into the much-bigger software upgrade and redesign project dramatically increased both the actual and perceived return on investment.”

Design is not democratic. “For design and usability, one lesson learned is: Design development cannot be a democratic process. While everyone’s voice should be heard during the discovery and testing process, subsequent, actual design decisions and processes should not involve representatives from all parts of the portal team. For example, while the IS team offers essential input into what can or cannot be built using the chosen technology, they do not have the interactive design or usability expertise to help develop such aspects of the site as the graphical design, page layout, or navigation flow.”

Vodafone Group plc

Using the Intranet:

Vodafone is the world's leading mobile telecommunications group, with operations in twenty-seven countries and on five continents. Vodafone has 171 million customers worldwide (registered proportionate customers as of September 30, 2005), plus twenty-seven partner networks that provide a full range of mobile-telecommunications services, including voice and data communications.

Design Team:

In-house: Vodafone Global Web Enablement (GWE), part of Vodafone's global IT organization, in cooperation with Vodafone's Group Internal Communications department

Members:

Armin Hessler, director of GWE; Stefan Delater, head of demand management; Stefan Böcking, head of core platform and applications; Thomas Färbinger, head of operations; Darren Briggs, head of Group Internal Communications; Vanessa Curran, intranet user experience manager

SUMMARY

Vodafone Group plc is a mobile organization in every possible way. For the Vodafone intranet, vista, designers not only applied their own skills, but also channeled the organization's collective mobile-device proficiency—and then some. The result is an intranet that helps more than 65,000 employees worldwide to collaborate, offers innovative ways to be more productive, and reinforces the corporate culture and goals.

Homepage

To give employees a single starting point for accessing local or global corporate information, the design team opted to replace hundreds of separate Vodafone intranet sites with a single intranet: vista. This one intranet is now the main source for working tools and content for about 70,000 employees working in nearly twenty countries.

Within Vodafone, every local operating company has its own, localized homepage containing both local and company-wide information. Global information appears on the left side of every homepage and is administered by a centralized internal communications team. Meanwhile, information local to a user, and administered by one of many local internal-communications teams, resides in the middle and right columns.

Users can access content in multiple languages. All content is served by a single, internationalized CMS; the intranet can handle any language or language-related characters.

Common features on every homepage include: the Vodafone share price; a personal greeting (with the user's first name); global links (*Personalize*, *Help*, and *Sitemap*); first-level navigation; a toolbar with universal applications such as *People Finder* and *Search*; and a set of four banners containing pushed content. All of these features are visible on every intranet page, except for the banners, which are suppressed to allow more space for content.

Combining personalization and customization helps users find what they need, as well as see only what they need. In other words, the intranet helps prevent information overload by employing profile-based filtering and personalization.

No matter what the country or language, the intranet offers a standard user interface design. Such an approach always makes it easier for users to navigate across an

intranet. At Vodafone, this approach also reinforces Vodafone's values and corporate culture. In fact, according to the design team, the intranet has become "one of the major drivers in creating a single Vodafone culture across all local operating companies." It fostered this single-culture vision by moving from multiple intranets in different languages and based in different countries to a single intranet that provides content in both English and local languages. The portal has also reduced duplicate efforts and decreased content management cost and complexity.



Pictured: The Vodafone intranet homepage for employees in Spain. No matter which country employees work in, or which language they speak, the Vodafone intranet maintains a consistent interface. Such an approach always makes it easier for users to navigate across an intranet.

Hello Thomas | LSE 150.5p +0,25 11 Oct 2005 11:46 AM (GMT) disclaimer

Personalise | Help | Contact us | Sitemap | Log-Out

News

Our Company

Our Marketplace

Our Workplaces

My Job

Working Together

Knowledge Store

Default View
People finder
Vodafone Group
Search Vodafone Intranet
Advanced Intranet Search

Read Arun's speech at the i2010 conference
Click here

Vodafone
News und Jobangebote hier

Vodafone Zuhause:
mehr Infos & TV-Spots

Global FEATURES

VTV News

Arun's Corner September 2005
Check out the latest Arun's Corner - where he shares with you his reflections on the business for September 2005
Find out more

One Vodafone
The route map for becoming a truly global company
More information
See the latest video

Aktuelle Meldung

11.10.2005
team online: most of Now. Neue weltweite Imag

Düsseldorf. Frischer Wind in unserer Werbung: Vodafone startet in Kürze weltweit eine neue Image-Kampagne. Ziel ist es, Vodafone zu einer noch beliebteren Marke zu machen. In der Kampagne wird heraus gestellt, dass Vodafone für den Kunden etwas Wertvolles ist und ihm großen Nutzen bringt. Erste Infos zur neuen Kampagne finden Sie ab sofort im Vodafone-Intranet. Der Start in Deutschland ist für Anfang 2006 geplant, vorher ändert sich bei uns nichts hinsichtlich Werbeauftritt, Slogan und so weiter.
Read more

Lokales Intranet

Willkommen im Vodafone D2-Intranet

Services

- Telefon
- Arbeitszeitkonto
- Reisekosten
- Wöchentlicher Pressespiegel
- VF D2 Team Room
- HR - Portal

UMTS Info-Portal

22.09.2005
connect: Vodafone hat das beste UMTS-Netz

Stuttgart. Erneut hat Vodafone bei UMTS die Nase vorn: Vodafone siegte beim zweiten großen UMTS-Netztest der connect. Das Fachmagazin hatte mit einem bundesweiten Feldtest die Leistungsfähigkeit der vier deutschen UMTS-Netze anhand von realen Szenarien wie Telefonieren, Internetsurfen oder E-Mail-Transfer akribisch gemessen. Das Gesamt-Fazit von connect: „Vodafone fährt auch in diesem Jahr absolut verdient und mit veritablem Abstand den Testsieg ein.“
Mehr Infos

Corporate Social Responsibility

Für die Welt, in der wir leben

- CR-Report der Vodafone D2 GmbH
- Vodafone Group CR-Report
- Weltweiter interner CR-Report
- Vodafone Stiftung
- Vodafone Stiftung für Forschung

Vodafone Welt

- vodafone.de
- vodafone.com
- Vf-Collection Shop.de
- Vf-Teamrooms

Vision and Values

Pictured: The Vodafone intranet homepage for employees in Germany.

Pictured: The Vodafone intranet homepage for employees in Greece.

The Mobile Intranet Portal

With a company full of mobile professionals, it's not surprising that the intranet caters to mobile users. Indeed, employees can access vista not only from their office PCs, but also while commuting to the office, sitting in meetings, or traveling. Such access comes via 3G mobile connect cards in their laptops or through mobile devices such as PDAs, Vodafone Live! mobile phones, or BlackBerry devices. Thus, employees have anytime, anywhere access to colleagues' contact details, as well as company news and other work-related information.



Pictured: The first version of the *Mobile Portal* homepage.

When accessing the intranet with a mobile device, the intranet first recognizes the mobile user's MSISDN (Mobile Subscriber ISDN Number) and automatically displays the user's name, which it pulls from the global employee directory. Employees authenticate on a mobile phone just as they would on a PC or laptop: by using their Windows password. The login screen is straightforward, and also offers a *Forgotten your password?* link.



Pictured: The mobile login screen for the Vodafone intranet is to the point, and also offers a useful *Forgotten your password?* link.

Employees using Vodafone Live! phones or BlackBerry devices can access content and intranet applications such as the corporate directory (*People Finder*). By default, the Mobile Portal shows a drop-down list of items from which to select, so users can sort what they want to view. The homepage also includes a few short news items.



Pictured: Using Vodafone Live! phones or BlackBerry devices, employees can access useful intranet applications, such as *People Finder*, the company's global, corporate address book.

By paring news to a short list—as befits the available screen real estate—the intranet's designers made reading corporate news and announcements on mobile devices as convenient as possible.



Pictured: A list of news items on the mobile version of Vodafone's intranet.

The vista designers masterfully utilized the relatively limited display space on mobile devices. Their designs make it possible to convey a lot of information in a small space, as is immediately apparent when viewing a news item. News articles have everything they need: a title, date, high-resolution photo, summary text, and a clear link to the full article. Even better, summary text isn't just the start of the article, grabbed to function as a summary. Instead, the summary is written separately, and

makes the best possible use of the number of allowed characters, giving users a truly concise article overview.

From a graphic design standpoint, the sans serif typeface, coupled with the high contrast between the text and background, helps employees better view the content on the undersized space a mobile device affords.

At the end of an article, *Back*, *Home*, and *Log out* links make it easy for mobile-device users to further traverse vista.



Pictured: A news article on the mobile-device version of Vodafone's intranet is perfectly formatted for a small screen.

A key feature on most intranets is the employee directory—a fast way to find coworkers' vital information. At Vodafone, employees can use a mobile-device version of *People Finder* to search for their colleagues by name, phone number, department, or other criteria.

The screenshot shows the Vodafone Intranet 'People Finder' interface. At the top is a red header with the Vodafone logo and 'Vodafone Intranet'. Below this is a 'People Finder' button with a dropdown arrow and an 'OK' button. A second 'People Finder' section features a small icon of two people, the title 'People Finder', and three input fields: 'Keyword (Name, Phone No.):', 'Department:', and 'Company'. Below these is a 'Sort By' dropdown menu and another 'OK' button. At the bottom of this section is a '> Help' link. A navigation bar contains three items: a left arrow icon with 'Back', a home icon with 'Home', and a red 'X' icon with 'Log out'. The footer of the interface shows the '© Vodafone Group' logo.

Pictured: The *People Finder* on the Vodafone mobile-device intranet enables users to search by name, phone number, or department.

After entering a search for an employee's information, the search-results page also appears in a format designed for mobile devices. The page clearly displays the user's name and group. Displaying these search results in a Web browser, of course, would be insufficient: users immediately expect to see an email address and phone number. On a mobile device, however, there's scant space to display all that information by default. Also, consider a user's immediate concern when searching for employee information on a mobile device. One primary question is probably, "Is this the person I'm looking for?" The two pieces of information that let someone answer that question are most likely the person's name and business group, as Vodafone displays here.



Pictured: On mobile devices, employee search results display the two most pertinent pieces of information for each hit: an employee's name and business-group affiliation.

Once a user selects someone from the search results, that employee's complete information appears, including name, phone number, fax number, company, department, building, and email address. By selecting the underlined phone or mobile numbers, users can call colleagues directly. Links also allow users to easily search again, or request help.

The screenshot shows the Vodafone Intranet 'People Finder' interface. At the top is the Vodafone logo and 'Vodafone Intranet' text. Below is a 'People Finder' search bar with an 'OK' button. The results show a profile for 'Volker Smith' with a placeholder icon. The profile details are as follows:

Phone:	+49 211 820 XXX
Fax:	+49 211 820 2678
Mobile:	+49 XXXXXXXX
Company:	Vodafone Group Services (VHG), Mannesmannufer 2, Düsseldorf
Department:	Group Technology
Building/Room:	405
E-Mail:	volker.smith@vodafone.com

Below the details are links for 'New search' and 'Help'. At the bottom are navigation buttons: 'Back', 'Home', and 'Log out'. The footer shows the 'Vodafone Group' logo.

Pictured: After searching the employee directory, a user can opt to view information about a particular employee, as shown here, and call him or her directly by selecting one of the underlined phone or mobile numbers. Displayed information includes name, phone number, fax number, company, department, building, and email address.

Video

One of Vodafone's internal communication goals is to give everyone the opportunity to publish video news content in one place, so employees can share ideas, experiences, and best practices with their colleagues around the world. A first step in this direction was the launch of Vodafone TV (VTV), a global video channel that employees can watch on the Vodafone intranet. VTV is a monthly broadcast assembled by a global team of Vodafone correspondents, who also draw some of their content from local teams. All VTV contributors do their own filming, which makes it a truly multicultural, Vodafone-focused space. Access to VTV is unrestricted for all employees.



HOME PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULE NEWS MY VTV FEEDBACK ABOUT HELP

HEADLINES



IT training for the visually handicapped

The Vodafone Portugal Foundation has pledged more than €60,000 to support a national IT training network for the visually handicapped. Starting this month, instructors will get 120 hours' training and be supplied with specially adapted computers.

Big Brother goes mobile in Holland

For the first time in the Netherlands, Vodafone live! with 3G customers can check out the Big Brother house 24 hours a day, seven days a week, thanks to a live feed. They also saw the first episode three days before it appeared on TV.

ON AIR

DELIGHT OUR CUSTOMERS



10 October 2005 Now campaign launch

Hear about the launch of our exciting new brand campaign, now.



VIEW

VTV NEWS



6 October 2005 VTV News

VTV News is now live - we go-karting with the UK, reveal the secret of Ireland's Vodafone live! with 3G promotion and join in the celebrations to mark England's cricket victory, plus much more!



VIEW

THE VODAFONE JOURNEY



23 September 2005 England's historic Ashes victory

England's Cricket Team, sponsored by Vodafone, finally won the recent Test Series to bring the Ashes home after 18 years. VTV joined them as they celebrated their victory.



VIEW

ON LINE

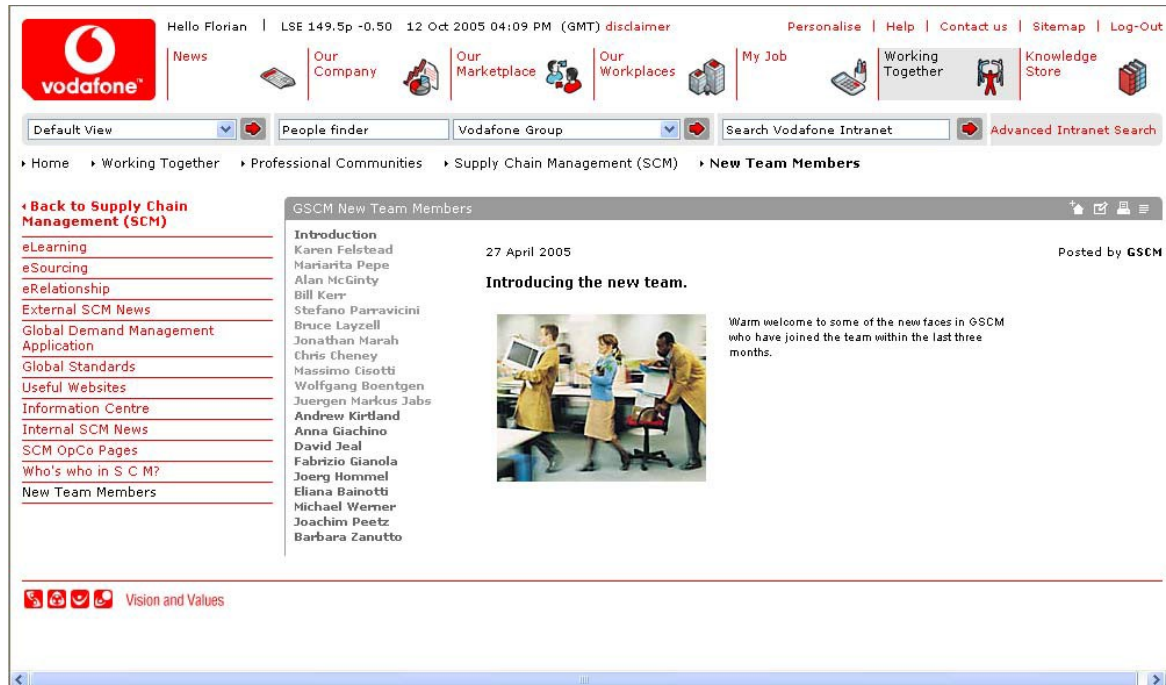


COPYRIGHT © 2004 VODAFONE GROUP

Pictured: VTV, a monthly broadcast assembled by the Group's Internal Communications team.


Employee Development

Vodafone's intranet offers features that assist employees and enrich their working lives. For example, new employees can find an introduction to the intranet from within their intranet-based team space. The intranet offers a "warm welcome" and encourages others to do the same.



Pictured: The intranet welcomes new employees and also highlights recent hires.

Vodafone understands the importance of employee motivation and retention, and so offers extensive career advancement information and suggestions on the intranet. The *My Career and Development* section also offers options for e-learning, training, performance management, and more.


Hello Florian | LSE 150.5p +0,25 11 Oct 2005 11:46 AM (GMT) disclaimer
Personalise | Help | Contact us | Sitemap | Log-Out

[News](#)
[Our Company](#)
[Our Marketplace](#)
[Our Workplaces](#)
[My Job](#)
[Working Together](#)
[Knowledge Store](#)

Default View | People finder | Vodafone Group | Search Vodafone Intranet | Advanced Intranet Search

Home > My Job > **My Career and Development**


[Back to My Job](#)
[My Profile](#)
[My Work Resources](#)
[My Career and Development](#)
Global Career Web
Learning & Development
What Development Do I Need?
What Development is Available?
Performance Management
Inducting new starters
[My Admin](#)
[Managing my Team](#)
[My Well-being](#)

Welcome |

My Career and Development

The pages in this section provide all the information you'll need to manage your Learning and Development at Vodafone.


What Development do I Need?



Within this section you will find tools to help you and your manager to assess your Performance Needs. These tools cover all your requirements for self assessment such as PBQ, 360 and links to the Performance drivers. Information on the Performance dialogue process can also be found here.

> [What Development do I Need?](#)

What Development is Available?



In this area you will find a range of development options available to you as an individual or manager within our business. These development options can be tailored to your preferred learning style.


> [What Development is Available?](#)

VGS Career and Development

Welcome to Career and Development

At Vodafone Group Services, we're committed to "Building the Best Global Team", to help our business meet the challenges it faces in an increasingly competitive environment. Help us achieve this by managing your own learning and development. We've designed this site to support you in this.


Inducting new starters



It's important that every new person joining Vodafone, or even just a new team, gets the best possible support and information to get them up and running with confidence.

> [Inducting new starters](#)


Performance Management



The key objective of Performance Management is to develop high performing individuals who in turn deliver a high performing business. Performance Management is a business process. We are introducing a new global Performance Management system in Vodafone Group Services (VGS) in 2005.

> [Performance Management](#)

Learning & Development



"Whatever you are, be a good one." Abraham Lincoln. Use this site to find out more about learning resources, opportunities to develop your skills and how to support the learning and development of your direct reports.

> [Learning & Development](#)

Vodafone Global Rotation Programme

Going places? You could be.

> [Read more](#)

GP&S Job Offers

05-04-04


Link to Job Offers on Global Career Web

Thank you for your interest in career opportunities within Group Marketing and Group Technology & Business Integration. All of our current vacancies are now advertised on the Global Career Web under Vodafone Group Services.

> [Link to Global Career Web](#)

Meet the Customer

02 May 2005 Posted by HR



The Meet the Customer programme (MTC) is a vital part of our key business goal, to put the customer at the heart of everything we do in our day-to-day business within the Vodafone Group; it reflects our Passion for Customers, and goes hand in hand with our Passion for Our People and

Passion for Results.

> [Read more](#)

eLearning in the UK


UK Aspen eLearning



Aspen allows you to search for timely information, exchange ideas with peers, and perform all of your training in one place. From the career tab in myWorld, click on Aspen UK e-learning, from here you can search for learning activities, register yourself and learn!

> [UK Aspen eLearning](#)


eLearning



This is an exciting time for Vodafone. New technologies, products and services are constantly emerging. Learning is vital in maintaining our pace of innovation, our ability to manage alliances and the quality of our processes and market proposition.

ASPEN is a global application for managing learners and training resources. It has a tool for developing high quality learning content. Its Virtual Classroom System (VCS) enables live and collaboration learning over real-time web-based sessions. Contact your learning department to find out more.

> [e-Learning](#)


[Vision and Values](#)

Pictured: The *My Career and Development* section offers options for e-learning, training, performance management, and more.

Thanks to designers' deft balancing of mobile-device design considerations with the need to promote a unified Vodafone corporate culture, the Vodafone intranet delivers its users an exceptional—and truly mobile—intranet.

URL AND ACCESS

The URL of vista—the name of the Vodafone intranet since its launch in 2003—is <http://intranet.vodafone.com>. The URL is the default for all Vodafone employees.

Although the intranet has a fixed URL, the homepage it serves is determined by which Vodafone organization a user belongs to.

Once users log on to the corporate network, they're automatically authenticated on the intranet and numerous other applications.

When users are away from the office, they can access the intranet from their PC using a 3G Mobile Connect Card and a secure VPN tunnel to Vodafone's network. Alternately, users can use their Vodafone Live! Phone or Blackberry to access a version of the intranet—in multiple languages—designed solely for mobile devices.

CONTENT MANAGEMENT

Vodafone designed its CMS in-house, about three years ago. "At the time, there was no CMS on the market fit to integrate with portal servers. Thus, to create a suitable experience for our editors, we needed to custom develop one," says Florian Riedl, product manager of the vista content management application. The content-management paradigm used is less the typical approach of "binding content to navigation nodes in a tree," and more of a "one-to-one relationship between a dedicated repository and a portlet."

Every portlet has its own display settings, personalization, and access rights. Each content repository contains the settings for administration rights, workflow steps, groups assigned to the workflow, metadata, and the items that will be pre-selected for preview.

Portlet settings apply identically to all portlet text, which provides a consistent user experience. "For the end user, this provides many conveniences: every portlet features an edit mode, which will seamlessly direct the editor from an end-user portal experience to the CMS, where he can create, modify, or expire content. After the task is completed, he returns to the portal with one click," says Riedl.

In addition, having different, discrete content repositories makes it easy to designate content editors. "A repository's administrator is able to assign editors and groups from all different Vodafone companies to join in the content creation of a specific portlet, no matter where it will be shown within the portal," he says.

The basic portal technology is Vignette V/6 content management software. "To fulfill our requirements, we were looking rather for a content management framework than for out-of-the-box functionality. We scoped the need for frameworks to ease the programming and operations of workflow, versioning, user management, content caching, and personalization. In all these areas, Vignette—at this time—was the most complete and compelling product," he says.

All of the Vodafone user interfaces were custom-built by a Munich-based design agency, Jetzt design. Vodafone then hosted focus groups—led by Gartner Group and TRBI—to ensure the designs met editors' expectations. "We were successful: the system currently lists more than 600 active editors around the globe," notes Riedl.

Post-focus groups, Vodafone also added additional CMS features: Realobjects EditOn Pro, for client-side, rich-text editing; MQSeries JMS for portal-side repository integration; and Apache Xalan/Xerces libraries for preview and production content rendering.

Two major CMS requirements were version control and the ability to use metadata. "The repository's owner as well as editors who have been granted the right can view older versions, compare versions for changes made and even revert to previous versions," he says. "The delete function will not physically delete, but mark the content item—including all its versions—for archiving. Central administrators are able also to re-activate archived content."

The screenshot displays the Vodafone Group Intranet interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Vodafone logo, user information (Hello Tom, LSE 150.0p -0.25, 11 Oct 2005 03:26 PM (GMT) disclaimer), and links for Personalise, Help, Contact us, Sitemap, and Log-Out. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with icons and labels for News, Our Company, Our Marketplace, Our Workplaces, My Job, Working Together, and Knowledge Store. A search bar is also present with the text "Search Vodafone Intranet" and a link to "Advanced Intranet Search".

The main content area is titled "article Item List : gscm_newteam2005" and includes a "Glossary | Help" link. A message states: "This list shows all the content items of the content model with the workflow step they are part of. By selecting several items you can perform one task over all of them at once. Additionally, you can create a new item, access an item or the content model." Below this, there is a "CONTENT MODELS" section on the left with a tree view of various content types, including Company, Content Push Folder, Czech Republic, D2 Homepage, Functional PoBs, GNSP Content, Global Content, Locations, Me, News & events, PoB Portal, Reference, Reference Folder, Shared Content, UCD, Application Link Out, Article, Banner, Content Browse, FAQ, Flash file, Flexible Content Type, General Information, Help, News, UK Repositories, VF Ireland Repository, VSD Test Folder, Vodafone Aus, Vodafone NZ, elbdemo1, and vso_test_cma2_cp.

The main table displays a list of articles with the following columns: Title, Variation Type, Variation Category, Task, Status, Short Descr., and Last Mod. The table shows five items, all with a status of "Published" and a task of "Live". The first item is "Barbara Zanutto" with a last modification date of "2005-04-27 16:19:37.0". The second item is "1.Introduction" with a last modification date of "2005-04-27 16:18:15.0". The third item is "Michael Wemer" with a last modification date of "2005-04-27 16:20:38.0". The fourth item is "Joachim Peetz" with a last modification date of "2005-04-27 16:21:17.0". The fifth item is "Juergen Markus Jabs" with a last modification date of "2005-04-28 07:43:44.0".

At the bottom of the page, there is a "Vision and Values" section with icons and a "I need to:" section with links to "See my task list", "Configure Content Model", and "Create Content Model".

Pictured: A list of articles, with their associated workflows, in Vodafone's content management application, which was largely developed in-house.

Vodafone notably doesn't distinguish content management from portal management. "In our experience, the split between content management and its presentation is a legacy of commercial products offering those respective features," notes Carolin Lückner, product manager of the portal management application. "That split does not exist within Vodafone."

Indeed, to ensure their content is not only written correctly, but works well in a portal context, content editors wanted the ability to quickly flip between an editing, and an end-user view of their content, including the position of the relevant portlet on a portal page.

Out-of-the-Box Portal

Mostly non-technical people are responsible for building vista's pages and portlets, and maintaining the associated content. So, Stefan Böcking, head of core platform and applications at Vodafone, hit upon a novel solution: a "portal out of the box" wizard—a simple, easy-to-use and intuitive portal administration tool. "Initially developed as a linear wizard for basic administrative tasks, it has evolved into a flexible, task-driven configuration tool including navigation, page, and portlet [dubbed "modules" on the portal] management," he says. The "portal out of the box" concept has even been awarded a European patent. Together with the user management application, these tools have been built to meet the specific requirements of the Vodafone editorial community.

OpCo pob wizard

Edit Page HELP

You can edit some of the properties of this page. The details you can't edit are greyed out. Please make sure that all mandatory fields (*) are completed.

PAGE DETAILS

Unique name *
gve_userguide_page2

Description *
Vista Content Publishing Userguide Page 2

Page Layout
Navigation and Two Columns

Navigation Label* (the name which appears on the navigation bar - N.B. at least one label is required)

English Label*	Vista Content P	German Label		Dutch Label	
Spanish Label		Arabic Label		Greek Label	
Hungarian Label		Italian Label		Portuguese Label	
Swedish Label		French Label		Japanese Label	

Supported Module Scope
Local Modules Supported

Others are allowed to add pages below this page
yes ☒ No ☐

CANCEL **OK**

Pictured: The initial "portal out of the box" wizard. The wizard allowed for a linear approach, guiding users through all necessary steps, one at a time, to create a page or module. With growing functionality and more experienced users, however, the company needed a more flexible, task-based configuration tool.

Hello Florian

LSE 150.25p +0.00

11 Oct 2005 11:55 AM (GMT) disclaimer

Personalise | Help | Contact us | Sitemap | Log-Out

News

Our Company

Our Marketplace

Our Workplaces

My Job

Working Together

Knowledge Store

Default View

People finder

Vodafone Group

Search Vodafone Intranet

Advanced Intranet Search

Home

My Job

My Work Resources

Intranet administration tools

Portal Administration

Portal administration

LOC portal administration

Community portal administration

You are logged in as Vista Training Portal Administrator

Navigation management

Page management

Module management

Views management

Create the properties for the new page

Please insert the page details. Fields you cannot edit are greyed out. Fields marked with (*) are mandatory.

Page location:

/vista_training_portal/pmc_vista_training_testpage_01/

ID and description

Unique Page ID* (use only lowercase_letters_numbers_no_spaces):

vista_

Page description* (reference for you and your team):

Allow for child pages:

(can others add pages below this page?)

☒ Yes
☐ No

Page context:

(supported module scope)

☐ global page (global modules)
☐ shared page (global and local modules)
☐ local page (local modules)

Navigation label

the name that appears on the navigation tree – at least one label is required.

Default Label*:

VF Czech Republic:

VF Information Systems:

VF Germany:

VF Greece :

VF Australia :

VF Holding:

VF Malta :

VF UK :

VPE:

GP&S:

VF Terendi:

GM:

VF Deutschland GmbH:

GT & BI:

VF Luxembourg:

VF Vista:

VF Albania:

VF Egypt:

VF Global Content Service:

VF Group Services:

VF Ireland:

VF New Zealand:

VF US:

VF Spain:

VF Hungary:

VF Italy:

VF Japan:

VF Nederlands:

VF Portugal:

VF Romania:

VF Sweden:

Tool logout

EMA

CANCEL

NEXT

Vision and Values

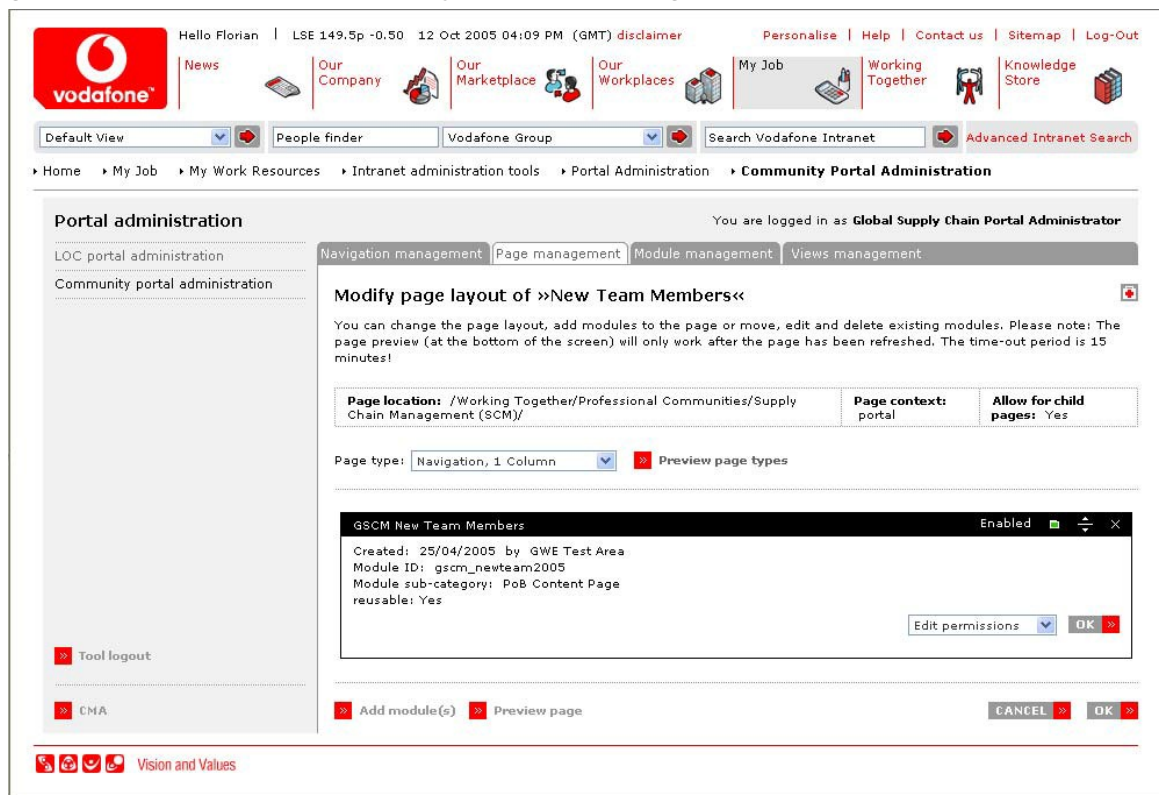
Pictured: The new version of the “portal out of the box” wizard. Tabs provide access to the main tasks, minimizing the number of clicks needed to accomplish any portal-related management task. While this page is part of the intranet, designers have differentiated its look, so administrators can easily distinguish it from the rest of the site.

Vodafone Group's Internal Communications department leads the editorial community, which includes representatives from every local operating company.

Global versus Local Content

The intranet maintains a balance between local and global Vodafone content. At the portal level, "the intranet's information architecture is built on a federated model where the first- and second-level navigation is the same for every company," says Lücker. "We differentiate between 'global pages,' 'shared pages,' and 'local pages.' While global pages are purely administrated by global administrators—and local pages by local administrators—shared pages can be administered by both parties." All business units have also signed off on a company-wide approach to displaying content: global content appears in the left-hand column, and local content in the right-hand column.

To foster a consistent user experience, the portal team maintains user interface guidelines, which the portal software enforces. Portal administrators also select the look of a portlet from a list of predesigned templates. "A central review and acceptance process has been established for adding any new template to the template library," says Vanessa Curran, a member of the Group's Internal Communications department. "Usually the creation of new templates is driven centrally by Internal Communications, after having considered both the local and global requirements submitted by the different organizations."



Pictured: Part of Vodafone's portal administration tool. Portal administrators can change the page layout, add modules to pages or move, edit, and delete any existing modules.

[Hello Tom](#) | [LSE 150.5p +0.25](#) | [11 Oct 2005 12:06 PM \(GMT\)](#) | [disclaimer](#) | [Personalise](#) | [Help](#) | [Contact us](#) | [Sitemap](#) | [Log-Out](#)

[News](#) | [Our Company](#) | [Our Marketplace](#) | [Our Workplaces](#) | [My Job](#) | [Working Together](#) | [Knowledge Store](#)

[Default View](#) | [People finder](#) | [Vodafone Group](#) | [Search Vodafone Intranet](#) | [Advanced Intranet Search](#)

[Home](#) | [Working Together](#) | [Professional Communities](#) | [Vista Reference Centre](#) | [GWE Release Schedule](#)

[Back to Vista Reference Centre](#)
[User Management](#)
[Admins and Editors Corner](#)
[Vista User Guides](#)
[Bugs & Workarounds](#)
[SDC Vodafone Málaga](#)
[Migration Centre](#)
[GWE Release Schedule](#)
[GWE Services](#)

GWE Release Schedule
 13/09/2005 by Carolin Lucker

The roadmap below lists the major releases that are upcoming in the next 4 months. For each of the product releases it provides the User Acceptance Test (UAT) and final deployment dates as the key project milestones. Please refer to the detailed deployment list below for further information or use the contact information provided for each of the releases.

GWE Release Schedule
☒ Highlight current date
 Scale calendar

Release/Project/Stream	2005					
Title	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
► CDA 2.0 Homepage Redesign and Personalisation						
► Vista Mobile Portal 1.1						
► Peoplefinder 1.2						
► Web Statistics 1.1						
► Web Clipping Kapow						
► Shareprice update						
► CMA 2.1.2						
SSO for Teamrooms						
SSO for Vista						
SSO for ECS						
► Roaming Information Portal						
Extranet Lite						

[Detailed Release Schedule](#)

[Vision and Values](#)

Pictured: An actual content page in vista. Pages can contain one or two columns, with or without left-hand navigation. This example shows a one-column page with left-hand navigation and contains a module (portlet) that allows for a Flash-based graphics presentation.

Mobile Portal content is likewise stored in the CMS, so editors don't have to duplicate any content. Instead, they simply designate where the content should be published.

TECHNOLOGY

The Vodafone intranet utilizes a shared-services model. "One centrally managed and operated platform is being used by all Vodafone operating companies without local duplications of cost," notes Armin Hessler, Vodafone's director of Global Web Enablement.

While a systems integration firm handled the initial design specification, implementation, and operations for Vodafone's intranet, Vodafone now manages the intranet itself, and develops additional applications. "The platform itself was developed by California-based Vodafone Americas, and applications such as portal administration and content management are continuously enhanced and supported by Vodafone Spain," notes Hessler. "Additional development is handled in Italy or through Vodafone Egypt."

Vodafone Information Systems in Germany operates the intranet infrastructure and applications operations. All hardware is located in Germany, where any needed configuration management is also performed.

"Vodafone's intranet is truly a joint global undertaking, and was also the first program that executed the 'one Vodafone' idea of integrating different countries provisioning components to a global services delivery," says Hessler.

All told, Vodafone's intranet is built from Vignette Portal, Vignette V/6 Content Management, BEA Weblogic Application Server, Autonomy Search Engine, MQSeries JMS, Apache Xalan/Xerxes Libs, and Apache Webserver. Support systems often utilize additional software components: Apache Tomcat for the *Mobile Portal*, Pegasystems PRPC for workflow, Kapow Technologies RoboSuite for integration, EMC Documentum for document and records management, and EMC Documentum eRoom for collaboration.

The core intranet systems run on Sun Solaris hardware. There are eight central development and testing environments, two environments for user-acceptance testing, two levels of staging to production, and one production environment, which delivers the intranet to about 70,000 users worldwide.

Supporting all of those environments is a serious undertaking. "To operate at an availability of 99.8%, our operation is using the following set of tools: IMSWare for configuration management, IBM Tivoli and Mercury Interactive's Topaz for monitoring and to get a real-life impression of what the end-user experience is in terms of browser performance. Finally, Mercury Interactive Loadrunner is used to test performance in lab situations at peak conditions," notes Thomas Färbing, Vodafone's head of operations.

He says in the past year, Vodafone has also begun investigating more open source tools, such as the RedHat distribution of Linux, for its support systems and integrated applications.

GOALS AND CONSTRAINTS

Goals:

- Reduce costs by:
 - Consolidating IT infrastructure
 - Reducing maintenance and support
 - Using fewer software licenses
 - Realizing more one-time development and deployment of applications across Vodafone Group
 - Creating a global services support framework
 - Using one toolset and training approach for all employees
 - Adopting a "develop once – operate once" strategy
- Create benefits for functional areas, such as:
 - Quick set-up and launch of a functional portal under a fully managed concept—no need to worry about support, sign-on, security, etc.
 - Cross-border procurement and marketplaces for software configuration management

- Global HR processes and shared tools
- Collaborative portals for global account managers and corporate employees
- Increase employee productivity by offering:
 - A common user interface with optimal navigation
 - A single source for all information
 - Single sign-on
 - Easier communication and collaboration (such as chat functionality, team rooms)
 - Universal applications, such as the corporate directory, intelligent search, and e-learning
 - Access to global news and dynamic content, including market reports and Web-based TV

Constraints:

- Every operating company must sign off on the Web-enablement program
- Finding agreement on a migration timeline that balances joint milestones and local organizations' individual pace
- The need to clean content—in multiple languages—on multiple legacy intranets and microsites while migrating it

BASIC INTRANET FEATURES

Users are automatically logged on to the intranet; single sign-on takes over after they log in to their workstation. Opening their browser also brings up vista automatically.

Users see only the content and applications relevant to their profile, though users can also personalize their homepage's appearance.

Employees benefit from a standard user interface design for all content. "The consistent user experience facilitates navigation, interaction with applications, and supports the communication of our Vodafone values and corporate culture. In fact, the intranet has become one of the major drivers in creating a single Vodafone culture across all local operating companies," notes Curran.

Because the intranet is mobile-device-enabled, employees can retrieve information or use key applications such as the *People Finder*, a company-wide address book, using Vodafone Live! phones or BlackBerry devices.

Vista also provides a number of tools and applications for Vodafone employees. Some of these are tailored to local needs and thus are only accessible to users in certain countries, but others are available to all Vodafone employees.

A single corporate employee directory is the basis for *People Finder* and *Expert Finder*. Users can also update their information through *People Finder*.

Hello Carolyn | LSE 146.75p +0,00 14 Oct 2005 12:27 PM (GMT) disclaimer
 Personalise | Help | Contact us | Sitemap | Log-Out

News | Our Company | Our Marketplace | Our Workplaces | My Job | Working Together | Knowledge Store

Default View | People finder | Vodafone Group | Search Vodafone Intranet | Advanced Intranet Search

Home | Personalise

Back to Toolbar
 Personalise
 Expert Finder
 Sitemap
 Help
 FAQ
 Contact us

User Profile Self Service

Personal Data

Below is your profile information. You can change only a subset of the displayed information. If some other information is incorrect please provide a feedback clicking the feedback button.

Employee Number:
 First Name: Last Name:
 Middle initial:
 Title:
 Gender: Preferred Language:
 Image: (Max. File Size 25 KB)

 REMOVE ADD

Company

Company Name: Department:
 Job Title:
 Report to: Select a person

Contacts

(Telephone numbers should contain country code, main number and extension. Ex: +49 211 123456)

Phone Numbers: Mobile Numbers: Fax Numbers:
 Email:

Location

Street:
 Postal Code: City: Country:
 Campus: Building: Room:

Feedback CANCEL SAVE

Pictured: Employees can easily maintain and update their profile via the intranet. Local rules dictate which fields an employee can edit.

The intranet search engine will search not only the intranet, but also other internal or external document repositories. Employees also have intranet-based access to the document management system, Web-based community portals and collaboration spaces (team rooms), and e-learning tools. A business process management tool facilitates business process automation.

Creating online surveys with a consistent look and feel is easy with a Web-based survey application.

Recently, the intranet team added some wiki functionality to the site, though initially Vodafone had to adapt the technology to its needs. Among those needs was to integrate the wiki functionality with the company's information security and single sign-on standards, control access rights, and impose a consistent user experience. According to Böcking, "users are now able to use this easy and collaborative technology for such things as creating glossaries, announcement boards, blogs, and project areas."

The intranet also includes a news research tool, an SMS messaging tool, a currency converter, Web statistics, and a world clock.

In addition, the intranet houses numerous community portals, including ones for marketing, HR, and finance. Access to some communities is restricted, meaning unapproved users simply won't see any links to that community.

VODAFONE COMMUNITIES (SELECTED)	
Name	Purpose
Supply Chain Management	Offers supplier information, best practices, product catalogues, and workflow functionalities
Performance Management System	Contains all information relating to the company's internal performance-review process, including business rationale, process overviews, forms and guidelines, and instructions
Finance Academy	Provides information and tools for managing one's professional and career development
Executive Collaborative Space	Supports Vodafone's top executives by allowing them to share information in a highly secure Web environment.
Global Roaming Portal	Maintains a consistent source of information about roaming for customer care centers

The screenshot shows the Vodafone Intranet Migration Centre. At the top, there's a header with the Vodafone logo, user information (Hello Tom, LSE 150.25p +0.00, 11 Oct 2005 12:16 PM (GMT) disclaimer), and navigation links (Personalise, Help, Contact us, Sitemap, Log-Out). Below the header is a secondary navigation bar with links like News, Our Company, Our Marketplace, Our Workplaces, My Job, Working Together, and Knowledge Store. A search bar is also present. The main content area is titled 'Welcome to the Migration Centre' and includes sections for 'Migration Guide', 'Migration Reference Library', and 'Module Demonstration Page'. A sidebar on the left lists various links like 'User Management', 'Admins and Editors Corner', and 'Vista User Guides'. A feedback form is located on the right side of the page.

Pictured: The homepage for a Vodafone community dedicated to helping Vodafone business units migrate their content to the new intranet.

Hello Florian | LSE 150.5p +0.25 | 11 Oct 2005 11:46 AM (GMT) disclaimer | Personalise | Help | Contact us | Sitemap | Log-Out

News | Our Company | Our Marketplace | Our Workplaces | My Job | Working Together | Knowledge Store

Default View | People finder | Vodafone Group | Search Vodafone Intranet | Advanced Intranet Search

Home | My Job | My Career and Development

Back to My Job

My Profile
 My Work Resources
 My Career and Development
 Global Career Web
 Learning & Development
 What Development Do I Need?
 What Development is Available?
 Performance Management
 Inducting new starters
 My Admin
 Managing my Team
 My Well-being

Welcome!
My Career and Development
 The pages in this section provide all the information you'll need to manage your Learning and Development at Vodafone.

What Development do I Need?
 Within this section you will find tools to help you and your manager to assess your Performance Needs. These tools cover all your requirements for self assessment such as PBQ, 360 and links to the Performance drivers. Information on the Performance dialogue process can also be found here.
[What Development do I Need?](#)

What Development is Available?
 In this area you will find a range of development options available to you as an individual or manager within our business. These development options can be tailored to your preferred learning style.
[What Development is Available?](#)

VGS Career and Development
Welcome to Career and Development
 At Vodafone Group Services, we're committed to "Building the Best Global Team", to help our business meet the challenges it faces in an increasingly competitive environment. Help us achieve this by managing your own learning and development. We've designed this site to support you in this.

Inducting new starters
 It's important that every new person joining Vodafone, or even just a new team, gets the best possible support and information to get them up and running with confidence.
[Inducting new starters](#)

Performance Management
 The key objective of Performance Management is to develop high performing individuals who in turn deliver a high performing business. Performance Management is a business process. We are introducing a new global Performance Management system in Vodafone Group Services (VGS) in 2005.
[Performance Management](#)

Learning & Development
 "Whatever you are, be a good one." Abraham Lincoln. Use this site to find out more about learning resources, opportunities to develop your skills and how to support the learning and development of your direct reports.
[Learning & Development](#)

Vodafone Global Rotation Programme
Vodafone Global Rotation Programme
 Going places? You could be.
[Read more](#)

GP&S Job Offers
 05-04-04
Link to Job Offers on Global Career Web
 Thank you for your interest in career opportunities within Group Marketing and Group Technology & Business Integration. All of our current vacancies are now advertised on the Global Career Web under Vodafone Group Services.
[Link to Global Career Web](#)

Meet the Customer
 02 May 2005 | Posted by HR
 The Meet the Customer programme (MTC) is a vital part of our key business goal, to put the customer at the heart of everything we do in our day-to-day business within the Vodafone Group; it reflects our Passion for Customers, and goes hand in hand with our Passion for Our People and Passion for Results.
[Read more](#)

eLearning in the UK
UK Aspen elearning
 Aspen allows you to search for timely information, exchange ideas with peers, and perform all of your training in one place. From the career tab in myWorld, click on Aspen UK e-learning, from here you can search for learning activities, register yourself and learn!
[UK Aspen elearning](#)

eLearning
eLearning
 This is an exciting time for Vodafone. New technologies, products and services are constantly emerging. Learning is vital in maintaining our pace of innovation, our ability to manage alliances and the quality of our processes and market proposition.
 ASPEN is a global application for managing learners and training resources. It has a tool for developing high quality learning content. Its Virtual Classroom System (VCS) enables live and collaboration learning over real-time web-based sessions. Contact your learning department to find out more.
[e-Learning](#)

Vision and Values

Pictured: Vodafone's *My Career and Development* community gives users information and resources for continuing their professional development.

USERS

Vodafone Group plc has about 70,000 employees located in twenty-seven countries.

USER TASKS

Some of the Vodafone users' most-popular intranet tasks include:

- Find people and experts with specific skill sets in the corporate directory
- Update their personal profiles
- Search the intranet and related collaboration, discussion, and document management systems
- Watch the latest Vodafone Group news on VTV
- Read company and industry news
- Participate in communities
- Access HR forms for such things as performance management, leave, new starters, or a termination checklist
- Obtain facilities information, including available meeting rooms (which can then be booked), car parking, and health and fitness facilities
- Read global and local policies, including safety advice, corporate identity/design standards, and communications guidelines
- Find information on office locations worldwide, including road maps and timetables
- Access information about Vodafone's project management methodology
- Read about career and development opportunities
- Access intranet-based tools and applications
- Find intranet-based social clubs and interest groups, such as *Vodafone Sports*
- Find information about new customer products and campaigns
- Conduct or participate in surveys and polls
- View the local lunch menu

BACKGROUND

In September 2001, Vodafone's senior management team made a strategic decision to more rapidly Web-enable the enterprise. To facilitate that, two of the board members, Brian Clark, now the HR director for Vodafone Group, and Thomas Geitner, the chief technology officer, sponsored the creation of the Global Web Enablement (GWE) department. GWE's mission was to drive the design, development, implementation, and operational management of the Vodafone core communications and collaboration infrastructures, such as the VPN, mail backbone, email systems, intranet Web applications, and other projects.

At the time GWE was formed, Vodafone had just finished a series of major acquisitions. The two events were closely related, says Hessler. "GWE was at the

forefront of exploring how to work effectively with sixteen formerly independent, local operating companies.”

One of the first moves was to establish a shared IT infrastructure and architecture. Initial work included standardizing on Microsoft email clients, creating a VPN—including a secure email backbone—between all majority-owned operating companies, and introducing one, global instance of Microsoft Active Directory.

Only then did Vodafone begin its intranet project. “At that point in time, more than fifty local intranets and several hundred micro-sites existed within Vodafone Group—all built on different architectures, with different hosting providers, and application development capabilities,” notes Stefan Delater, head of demand management.

By April 2002, the intranet team had evaluated software vendors and selected a product, to be implemented by a systems integrator. The initial intranet went live for a pilot group of 400 employees in Germany and Britain. “The following months were used to gain experience with the platform and its applications, and to prepare for the global launch,” says Hessler. The intranet team especially had to iron out problems relating to intranet performance, and access and sign-on, given the heterogeneous network topologies. Such issues were solved on a country-by-country basis.

As the project progressed, the intranet team introduced a governance and operations model, and honed the information architecture through extensive user testing.

DESIGN PROCESS AND USABILITY ACTIVITIES

During 2002, the redesign team conducted an early concept user test, “designed to solicit feedback from representative users of the intranet pilot to validate preliminary design concepts,” says Curran. Seven employees participated in the UK, and three in Germany. “In addition to question and answer inquiries, participants were asked to complete a number of tasks including locating and sorting content items, and navigating a PowerPoint wireframe prototype.” A graphic treatment of the proposed user interface design was also presented to stimulate conversation with users. All results were used to create subsequent prototype design iterations.

In September 2002, the intranet team brought in four employees from the UK and Italy to evaluate an HTML prototype, and later in the month, tested the final version of the site.

In April 2003, the first version of vista launched for all of Vodafone Group’s roughly 70,000 employees. “Since then, the platform and applications have been subject to continuous updates to introduce functional and technical improvements,” notes Böcking.

In March 2004, for the first major intranet redesign, the intranet team conducted user tests—both group sessions and in-depth interviews—at four Vodafone operating companies in Europe. The tests included about seventy users with a wide range of job positions, seniority levels, and intranet usage habits.

Throughout the redesign, the intranet team took pains to verify results for all of Vodafone’s operating companies. “All of our design activities were cross-checked with our operating companies. While this increased the complexity of the process it added significant value and experiences from many different markets,” says Curran.

The result was an intranet with improved visual appeal, ease of use, accessibility, and consistent branding.

In April 2004, the Vodafone intranet became the default homepage for all of Vodafone.



Pictured: The first version of the vista homepage. Main goals for the redesign included reducing the size and prominence of the global header, plus giving more space to actual content, lightening and streamlining the design, and introducing icons in the top-level navigation to create a more engaging user experience.

Pictured: The new version of the Vodafone intranet.

TIMELINE

- September 2001: Global Web Enablement (GWE) department formed to Web-enable Vodafone.
- April 2002: Launched a pilot version of the intranet.
- June–October 2002: Conducted tests on information architecture and user interface design.
- April 2003: Launched intranet for entire organization.
- March 2004: Redesigned user interface, including the page header, toolbar, breadcrumbs, footer, and portlet skins.
- April 2004: Vodafone intranet became the default homepage group-wide, for more than 65,000 employees.
- July 2005: Launched Vodafone *Mobile Portal*.
- October 2005: Content from ten out of seventeen Vodafone operating companies fully migrated to the Vodafone intranet; all local legacy intranets, infrastructures, and platforms were shut down.
- April 2006: Target date for completing migration of content to vista from another four Vodafone countries.

RESULTS

By October 2005, ten out of the seventeen operating companies targeted for content migration had completed content migration to vista. Those companies are Vodafone Australia, Egypt, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Spain, Malta, Portugal, New Zealand, plus Vodafone Group Ltd. The remaining companies—in Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Japan, Romania, the Czech Republic, and the UK—anticipate completing their migration by the spring of 2006.

Thanks to this migration, “vista has replaced hundreds of local, global, and functional intranet sites and is now the single point of entry to both local and global content and information for all 70,000 employees in nearly twenty countries,” says Delater.

The decision to maintain a single Vodafone intranet is paying off. By the beginning of 2005, the intranet had already surpassed 1.5 million hits per day, and with continued migration of legacy intranets to vista, hits are expected to grow monthly by 10%. The content repository already contains over 25,000 documents, and continues to grow.

With each new company that migrates onto the intranet, the design team gains more proficiency. For example, just eight weeks after Vodafone finalized its acquisition of two companies in the Czech Republic and Romania, “both companies were fully connected to the intranet, including single sign-on and the set-up of a local homepages,” says Delater.

Hence, despite office locations in different countries and the fact that Vodafone employees use many different languages, vista is helping Vodafone not only “enable our employees to make better and faster decisions,” says Delater, but also “driving one Vodafone culture for the company.”

Offering the Vodafone intranet platform as a shared IT service for all Vodafone companies has also helped reduce costs, since there’s just a single organization-wide

development effort for applications, not to mention a central hosting and support model.

The single corporate intranet also eliminates the problems Vodafone experienced with having many different intranets: duplicated content, inconsistent navigation, and inefficient processes that drove up intranet-related costs and complexity. The new intranet purposefully uses both a local language and English, to reinforce a single Vodafone company culture.

Thanks to a standardized, consistent user interface, employees can also easily navigate both local and global content, and find needed applications.

Users have access to many extremely useful applications, including *People Finder*, which searches information for all 70,000 employees. Another application, *Expert Finder*, searches for employees by expertise.

People Finder


Quick Search

Keyword (e.g. Name, Email): Company:

Advanced search **Help**

User Profile

If your details are incorrect please contact [us](#)

	Name: Carolin L. <input type="button" value="📄"/>
	Job Title: Application Manager <input type="button" value="📊"/>
	Department: Group Technology
	Company: Vodafone Group Services (VHG)
	Phone No.: +49 211
	Fax No.: +49 211
	Mobile Phone No.: +49 172
	E-mail Address: carolin.l@vodafone.com
	Address: Mannesmannufer 2 Düsseldorf 40213
	Building/Room/Campus: Behrensbau
	vCard: Yes <input type="button" value="📄"/>

Back

Pictured: *People Finder*, based on a centralized, global directory, contains all relevant data for locating or contacting other Vodafone employees. Apart from standard entries like name, address, phone number, and email address, *People Finder* contains optional information such as a photo and the employee's position in the organizational structure, including access to a dynamically generated organizational chart.

Even though Vodafone standardized on one large, distributed intranet, it's also maintained 99.8% availability—an impressive feat.

LESSONS LEARNED

Insights from Stefan Delater:

Freshness counts. “Turning over content quickly is key for attracting people back to the intranet. Even so, real intranet stickiness comes from combining content with essential tools for supporting day-to-day work.”

Regularly convene stakeholders. “Bring all stakeholders together on a regular basis to get buy-in and to drive decisions.”

Insights from Stefan Böcking:

Don't skimp on content-related training. “Training of editors and administrators is key to ensure a content management and portal administration application is accepted and adopted by users.”

Consider each application separately. “Do not follow a single dogma for integrating applications into the intranet. Actually, all integrations can work—from a simple link to deep, backend integration—providing they meet a users' expectations and maintain a seamless user experience.”

Insights from Armin Hessler:

Get senior executive backing. “Senior management buy-in is critical for coping with diverse stakeholders who have different, sometimes conflicting and contradicting interests.”

Pull, don't push. “Move from a push to a pull mentality. Employees should be attracted to the intranet by daily updates and interesting content that drives them to browse and search the intranet for the information they need to do their jobs.”

Recommendations for the Intranet Design Process

Understanding the lessons learned from these great intranets will help you design a better intranet for your organization or your client's organization. You can also do other more process-related things to improve intranet usability. Based on the above cases, the 2001-2005 winning intranets, and our other experiences testing intranets, we offer here a few of the most important recommendations for designing a usable intranet. Note that these recommendations have changed very little in the last few years.

WATCH PEOPLE WORK

When designing intranets, don't forget that you already know the end users: They're the people you pass in the hallways, sit by in the cafeteria, and park next to in the garage. Use these interactions to your advantage, and get yourself an invite to watch how your colleagues work. See how they're using and not using the intranet, and discover design opportunities that will make the intranet a more useful part of their day-to-day work.

CONDUCT USABILITY EVALUATIONS

Remember: you don't need a complete, finished design before you can garner valuable usability feedback. In fact, it's better to get early feedback on incomplete designs. Test with prototypes and paper mockups. Or, if you're interested in design elements similar to those on a particular website, test the features using that website. You can observe people using any current system, even if it's not an intranet per se, to determine which features are well designed.

Looking through all of this year's design submissions, we once again observed a lack of consistently applied usability processes. In particular, many companies skimped on regular usability testing, heuristic evaluations, and field studies. Even the busiest development teams with the craziest deadlines should take the time to watch people attempt basic tasks using the design. It doesn't take long to do a quick test. We also encourage design teams to bring together a group of designers and developers—even for just twenty minutes—to review a site's design, then identify, discuss, and agree on the top usability issues.

HELP CONTENT CONTRIBUTORS SUCCEED

The most well-received intranets have fresh information that people need and want. One way to keep information updated and interesting is to give employees easy and intuitive methods for adding and editing information. When users—or designated content providers—contribute content, they have a stake in the intranet's success. Facilitating this process invariably produces compounded returns: when you foster excellence among content providers, content gets increasingly better and invariably leads to an intranet with more varied and useful information. This, in turn, drives more employees to visit the intranet more often, ensuring that it remains a business-critical tool.

CONSIDER ACCESSIBILITY

Many companies already employ—or will hire—people who use assistive technology. Yet, almost all of the intranets submitted this year had accessibility problems for users with low vision, no vision, or motor-skill challenges. The chief accessibility offenders were: too many graphics, tiny text, poor contrast, limited space between links and text, and small targets. Unfortunately, there seems to be a trend toward using these precise features. On the positive side, while many submissions overused graphics, many others used them sparingly, and when they did use them, they were well labeled for users with low vision or no vision.

MEASURE ROI

Most of the winning intranets made obvious strides and fostered great usability improvements; they've no doubt created productivity and efficiency gains for their companies. That said, most intranet teams don't formally (or even informally) measure any return on investment. Often, such measurements are not a priority because of tight schedules and the way organizations allocate money. For example, the money to design and maintain the intranet might be allocated to the vice president of IT, while the actual productivity gains are found in the HR department.

Regardless, it's important to pause and measure the time users take to accomplish a task, both before and after a redesign. Take your decreased task time and factor the resulting, increased financial savings across your organization. Then, make the gains known to the different departments involved and also at higher levels, so even the most upper-level managers understand the importance of well-designed internal systems.

Intranets Not Selected: Common Issues

Each year that we conduct the Intranet Design Annual, it gets increasingly difficult to choose only ten winners because we find more than ten truly excellent designs. Unfortunately, we find truly problematic designs as well.

While we won't name or show examples from intranets that didn't make this year's top ten, the following are some of the major problems we saw from across the submissions not included in this report.

EXCESSIVE ADVERTISING

In some cases, intranets actually looked like advertisements for different business groups within companies, or even for the intranets themselves. Too many pages were cluttered with logos and taglines for various organizational programs or intranet features. Such ads take up valuable screen real estate. Some users will just skip these ads completely. For many, however, ads are distracting and draw their attention away from the information they're currently reading or trying to find. This can compromise productivity and user satisfaction with the intranet.

Rather than rely on advertising, spend time refining a solid information architecture supported by a simple and scalable navigation scheme. When you get these fundamentals right, you don't need flashing lights to get users' attention.

TOO MUCH BRANDING

There's a general trend toward branding features with catchy yet meaningless names. For example, rather than labeling employee search something intuitive, such as *Find a person* or *employee directory*, some sites opt for "creative" (and a less descriptive) link names, such as *People Central* or *Find Wizard*.

Naming features according to the tasks they facilitate is far better than aiming for a supposedly "memorable" name.

TEXT THAT'S HARD TO READ

On several intranets, we found insufficient contrast between the text and the page background. One trend we see—probably in an attempt at elegant aesthetics—is to use light gray text on a white background, or medium-gray text on a light gray background. We also see default text size shrinking. Such designs can compromise readability.

LACK OF BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH

Several companies with non-winning intranet designs had run usability studies. Many, however, failed to conduct behavioral research. Instead, they relied on surveys or focus groups to discern users' opinions. Such techniques are insufficient. Intranet teams need to watch how people actually use the intranet or the design prototype. Doing so provides invaluable insights into how designers can simplify and refine an intranet.

Selection Criteria and Process

This year marks the sixth annual Nielsen Norman Group intranet usability competition,² which seeks the best examples of intranets that are easy to use and meet users' needs. In August 2005, we posted the call for submissions on <http://www.useit.com>. In response, we received submissions from almost seventy organizations of different sizes, from various countries and industries. These submissions included intranet screenshots, explicit descriptions of the intranet's design and how it works, notes about the design process (including usability methods employed), detailed information about users and potential users, and the intranet's goals.

To judge the entries, we followed a four-step process: 1) initial design reviews and numeric rankings; 2) follow-up questions with the top submissions (when necessary); 3) design sorting, followed by thorough design reviews to choose the top ten; and 4) follow-up interviews with the top ten.

INITIAL DESIGN REVIEWS AND NUMERIC RANKINGS

Based on the initial submission information, the three judges (see [About the Authors](#)) conducted simple design reviews and whittled down the entries to the tier-one submissions. In addition to written commentary, we rated each site numerically. We based these ratings on criteria typically viewed as key to intranet usability, including some criteria that emerged from submissions and trends in our previous contests. We rated the following criteria in each submission on a 0 to 3 scale (with 3 being the best rating):

Navigation:

- Main navigation on every page
- Consistent/easy navigation
- Consistent style across the intranet
- No horizontal scrolling
- Minimal vertical scrolling

Design:

- Pleasing aesthetics
- Engaging homepage design
- Good contrast between text and background
- Easy-to-read text
- Easy-to-read links
- Good use of graphics
- The right amount of text

² In lieu of one Intranet Design Annual, we conducted a competition focused only on government-related and public-sector intranets. *Ten Best Government and Public Sector Intranet Designs* is available for purchase at <http://www.nngroup.com/reports/intranet/government/>.

- The right number of links
- Clean design

Search:

- Consistently available search
- Good search design (ideally, a simple open field at the top of pages)

Personalization and News Delivery

- Personalization/tailoring to different offices or cultures
- Organization-related news
- Information about internal groups

Content

- Well-written text
- Employee directory or directory search
- Content posting and editing capabilities

Overall

- Simple forms
- Support for the main corporate functions
- Encapsulation of the organization's spirit
- Use of innovative/fun features

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS WITH TOP TIER (WHEN NECESSARY)

After collecting this extensive information from site designers, along with information about their users, goals, and internal usability evaluations, we thoroughly reviewed the intranet designs. We evaluated them based on usability, look and feel, and elegance. We also considered the target users, their tasks, and how well the site's applications might help them complete these tasks. We did not conduct usability evaluations with test participants. We do believe, however, that intranet usability studies are best conducted with users, and we've conducted (and are currently updating) a usability research study in which intranet users test various intranet designs.³

DESIGN SORTING AND THOROUGH DESIGN REVIEW

Next, we reviewed the intranets and sorted the top thirty designs based on numeric ratings. We then conducted more thorough design reviews of the top twenty-five sites, and from this selected the ten best intranets.

FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS WITH TOP TEN

After choosing the top ten submissions, we asked the site designers general questions about the site and their design decisions, usability evaluation methods,

³ *Intranet Usability: Design Guidelines from Studies with Intranet Users* is available for purchase at <http://www.nngroup.com/reports/intranet/guidelines/>.

and lessons learned. We then followed up with more specific questions—some exclusive to the company's intranet, and some more generic. For example, the generic questions included:

- What was the business reason for setting up the intranet?
- What does it do and what kind of information does it contain?
- Who had the idea for the intranet (or the revision), and what goals did he or she want to achieve?
- What were the constraints? (For example: Were there time or budget constraints? Did content have to be published in multiple languages?)
- Describe the development process and usability findings.
- Who was involved in the project and what were their roles in the organization?

About the Authors

Kara Pernice is the director of research at Nielsen Norman Group and heads the company's East Coast operations. Since joining NN/g, Pernice has led several intercontinental research studies and wrote associated reports about topics such as intranets, the Web and accessibility, senior citizens, and public relations. She worked on all of NN/g's *Intranet Design Annuals*. She has developed and taught numerous seminars about these topics and about a variety of usability methods, such as the product life cycle, field studies, usability testing, and emotion and design. Additionally, Pernice has worked with clients in many industries. Before joining NN/g, she established successful usability programs at Lotus Development; Iris Associates, an IBM subsidiary; and Interleaf. Pernice chaired the Usability Professionals' Association conferences in 2000 and 2001, was presentations chair for UPA 1999, and was conference advisor for UPA 2002. She is on the editorial board for the intranet magazine, *The Journal of Intranet Strategy and Management*. She has an MBA from Northeastern University and a BA from Simmons College.

Mathew Schwartz (www.penandcamera.com) is a freelance journalist, editor, and photographer based in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He has co-authored three other reports for NN/g: *Ten Best Government and Public Sector Intranet Designs*, *Intranet Design Annual 2005*, and the second edition of *Usability of Intranet Portals: A Report from the Trenches*. Schwartz writes frequently on a variety of topics, including business and technology, and has contributed to such publications as *The Boston Globe*, *Computerworld*, *Fodor's Travel Guides*, *Information Security Magazine*, *The Times of London*, and *Wired News*. He has also profiled the usability practices of such leading organizations as eBay, Fidelity Investments, and Intuit. Schwartz earned a BA in English literature from Cornell University, and an MA in English literature from the State University of New York at Buffalo.

Dr. Jakob Nielsen (www.useit.com) is a principal of Nielsen Norman Group. He is the founder of the "discount usability engineering" movement, which emphasizes fast and efficient methods for improving the quality of user interfaces. Nielsen, noted as "the world's leading expert on Web usability" by *U.S. News and World Report* and "the next best thing to a true time machine" by *USA Today*, is the author of the best-selling book *Designing Web Usability: The Practice of Simplicity* (2000), which has sold more than a quarter of a million copies in twenty-two languages. His other books include *International User Interfaces* (1996), *Usability Inspection Methods* (1994), *Usability Engineering* (1993), *Homepage Usability: 50 Websites Deconstructed* (2001), and *Prioritizing Web Usability* (2006). Nielsen's Alertbox column on Web usability has been published on the Internet since 1995 and currently has about 200,000 readers. From 1994 to 1998, Nielsen was a Sun Microsystems Distinguished Engineer. His previous affiliations include Bell Communications Research, the Technical University of Denmark, and the IBM User Interface Institute. He holds 79 US patents, mainly on ways of making the Internet easier to use.

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