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4 Best Practices for Maximizing SharePoint ROI

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With SharePoint, organizations are able to build intranets storing, searching and managing documents in a central location. In addition to facilitating better collaboration, SharePoint reduces emails and duplicated work while increasing employee engagement.

However, when it comes to maximizing their SharePoint return on investment (ROI), many organizations—such as those in the healthcare industry, for example—are only scratching the surface and lagging behind other industries.

To help, we've compiled a list of four key tips and best practices for those looking to reduce SharePoint total cost of ownership, efficiently operate complex models, utilize the tool beyond a content store, and use SharePoint efficiently without the risk of compromising security or violating regulations. Although especially useful for healthcare organizations, they're also pertinent to many industries where SharePoint ROI lags.

1. Save up to 40 percent by consolidating or eliminating legacy systems, dead websites and duplicate documents

The ease of access to content that SharePoint provides can also lead to the development of bad habits when it comes to routine maintenance and cleaning out the system.

Keeping sites that are minimally or no longer in use, content that is no longer utilized and items that are duplicated is simply wasting space and forcing redundant work from the SharePoint tool. By identifying unused sites and addressing data redundancy, organizations can save up to 30-40 percent in level-1 disc space — a significant costs saving for any organization.

2. Get to know SharePoint's built-in functionalities

Apart from being a content store, SharePoint offers several functionalities for enterprise content management, collaboration, search-driven application creation, social engagement and business intelligence. Key functionalities that support richer utilization of the tool include:

Portals – Portals simplify access as a single gateway to enterprise applications, allowing the creation of a virtual desktop which can be accessed from any device, at any location.

Enterprise Search– With Enterprise Search users can not only sift through content within the SharePoint repositories, but also documents and external content stores. It can even be extended to include external applications.

Dashboards– Dashboards allow users to expose reports, key performance indicator metrics and other analytics in a simple manner to improve the visibility of performance indices, providing the key ingredient to an improvement feedback loop within the organization.

Workflows– While the built-in configurable workflows are fairly simplistic, by utilizing commercially available third party add-ons, the power and utility of workflows can be greatly enhanced to enable the creation of complex business process applications such as Case Management and Clinical trial management.

By leveraging the built-in functionalities provided by SharePoint, organizations can reduce the number of custom applications – along with the time, effort and cost for their development and maintenance -- while improving and standardizing user experience and greatly simplifying the enterprise technology sprawl.

3. Create a centralized SharePoint “control center”

While SharePoint’s flexibility sets it apart from other development tools, it also can make it difficult to manage.

Organizations should have a centralized team capable of providing infrastructure, application development and maintenance support, along with an operating unit level analysis, training and administration team to support departments and projects.

SharePoint governance must span the entire spectrum of expertise from hardware and infrastructure to content management. These hyper-focused “SharePoint champions” and managers provide a cost-effective operational team that continues to address business needs and administer the environment.

4. Deploy a compliance policy reinforced by auditing and monitoring tools

All too commonly, we see users inadvertently accessing and uploading documents containing sensitive data, which in healthcare can include patient data or protected health information.

This violates security and audit requirements mandated by HIPAA and ultimately will get an organization into legal trouble.

As part of the control center mentioned above, a person or team must be dedicated to designing and enforcing a compliance policy and best practices that ensure the system is managed efficiently and run in accordance with regulations.



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Coupled with customizable reactive audit and proactive monitoring solutions, the SharePoint compliance governance must be supported by a tactical, technically competent team in order to implement the policies to keep SharePoint up and running.

By eliminating wasteful systems and files, utilizing built-in functionalities, creating a dedicated control center and deploying a compliance policy, organizations can reap the full benefits of their SharePoint investment.

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