



White Paper: A SharePoint Primer



A Microsoft SharePoint® Primer - What it is and What it Isn't

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What SharePoint Is

Microsoft's website states that "SharePoint® is an integrated suite of server capabilities that can help improve organizational effectiveness by providing comprehensive content management and enterprise search, accelerating shared business processes, and facilitating information-sharing across boundaries for better business insight. Additionally, this collaboration and content management server provides IT professionals and developers with the platform and tools they need for server administration, application extensibility, and interoperability." Wow. Now if that is not technical marketing speak, I don't know what is. You can read that definition five times and still not understand what SharePoint really does or how it solves organizations' content management needs. Maybe a better way to define SharePoint is the following. It is a content management system built on the Microsoft platform which provides ease of use and flexibility for its end users, either as a collaboration tool for projects or departments or as a comprehensive, full featured Enterprise Content Management (ECM) system which has the ability to satisfy the needs for document management, records management, collaboration, search, and more.

What SharePoint Is Not

Although SharePoint has come a long way from its beginnings, it is not the end-all of content management solutions. Even Gartner in its October 15, 2009 Research Note G00170685, admits that "As SharePoint takes hold in an organization, users naturally begin exploring its suitability for a wider range of content management applications and its potential as a replacement for existing solutions. But organizations requiring advanced content management capabilities and process-centric applications will need to augment SharePoint's capabilities with partner offerings or deploy MOSS 2007 alongside an ECM system, rather than as a replacement for it." Some third party applications have made their living on providing functionality, like administrative tools or advanced searching, that SharePoint has lacked.. Other ECM providers like Laserfiche have integrated with SharePoint in order to provide users with the ability to scan, process, and open documents stored in their own system directly from your SharePoint site.

Additionally, although SharePoint serves as a parking lot for many company's information, there needs to be an on-ramp to get paper based document data into

SharePoint. Efficient scanning of documents, capturing of data and images, and indexing and releasing of documents, images and metadata into SharePoint needs to be considered. There are third party products on the market, such as ABBYY FlexiCapture® and Prevalent Quillix™ Capture, which have direct integration from their data capture application into a SharePoint repository. Combining feature rich data

capture solutions like these, which include document classification, email capture, and ICR and OCR capabilities, with SharePoint can make for a powerful end-to-end solution.

Conclusion

There is so much more we can discuss about SharePoint, including the facts and fictions that go along with it. But that is not what this paper was intended to accomplish. This short paper should just serve as your primer, your small appetizer, for what the main entrée' SharePoint is and what it is not. Many more pages could be written on the topic of SharePoint and strategies for using it. But we will leave that for another day and another paper.

About UFC Inc.

UFC Inc is a consulting, integration and solutions firm preferred by clients in the Oil and Gas Industry for our quality, innovation and integration expertise. UFC provides data capture, enterprise content management software, support and integration services - based on a flexible architecture and common set of applications for collecting, classifying, retaining, migrating, securing and accessing information – all at the lowest cost of ownership.

Unlike vendors that deliver generalized ECM products with centralized or consolidated architectures, or support few applications and data types, UFC delivers the most comprehensive solution, specifically tailored for the customer. The distributed nature of the solution along with UFC's extensive expertise and unique approach makes it ideal for the Oil and Gas company with remote offices that have limited storage space, minimal IT infrastructure or technical support. Remote locations realize significant improvement in operational efficiencies, improved collaboration, a reduction in storage costs - without sacrificing centralized control or visibility of information. From capturing personnel information such as fuel cards and human resource forms to capturing and storing engineering drawings and correspondence, UFC provides the Oil and Gas industry the ability to reduce paper transaction costs while increasing their data processing efficiencies.

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