



Fujitsu Teaches Enterprise Knowledge Management Strategy

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Andrew Hill
ICT Manager
General Teaching Council



The General Teaching Council (GTC) for England needed a knowledge management system that was easy to use and access, and would enable Council Members and Officers to work together as a virtual team. The new system needed to provide convenient access to information and resources, without requiring extensive IT skills to operate. Collaborating with Fujitsu and Microsoft, the Council developed a solution that allows people to collect, manage and publish information. The Council has seen many improvements including real-time contributions, faster document availability, automatic change notification, quicker and more accurate search and navigation, internal time and cost savings, and better-informed discussions at Council and committee meetings.

CUSTOMER PROFILE	BUSINESS SITUATION	SOLUTION	BENEFITS
The General Teaching Council is the independent professional body for the teaching profession in England. It registers over 500,000 teachers and has both statutory advisory and regulatory powers. The GTC is accountable to the profession through its widely-based 64-member Council.	The Council needed a simple to use and easy to access knowledge management system that would allow the distributed Council Members to work together as a virtual team. They also needed convenient member access to information and resources – access that didn’t require users to have IT skills beyond the ability to use Microsoft Word and a Web browser.	Consulting with Fujitsu, the Council selected Microsoft SharePoint™ Portal Server which allows Council Members to remotely access Council papers from universities, schools and offices all over England. Users can collect, manage and publish information without the need to understand the complexities of the underlying technology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Real-time contribution ▪ Faster document availability ▪ Automatic notification alerts members to updated information ▪ Quicker, more accurate search and navigation ▪ Postage savings of over 10% ▪ Better-informed discussions at Council and committee meetings

Situation

The General Teaching Council is the independent professional body for the teaching profession in England. It registers over 500,000 teachers and has both statutory advisory and regulatory powers. A public corporation, the GTC is accountable to the profession through its widely-based 64-member Council.

The GTC enables teachers to shape the development of their professional practice and policy, and to set and maintain professional standards. The GTC draws its Governing Council from people dedicated to teaching and to the GTC standards.

The GTC's responsibilities encompass all current and future laws, regulations, policies, and standards that affect education in England, making a solid knowledge management strategy critical. Previously, the GTC used Windows 2000 servers and Windows XP desktops with network shares to store this information, and it distributed documents to members by e-mail. With offices based in Birmingham and London, and members working from multiple English locations, collaboration, remote access, searching, management, and security were complex and manually intensive.

The GTC needed a knowledge management system that was simple to use, with secure resource access from any remote location, allowing the Council members to work together as a virtual team. It also needed to provide members with easy access to information without requiring IT skills beyond the ability to use Microsoft Word and a Web browser. Having experienced strong results working with Fujitsu Services for past implementations, GTC decided to consult with them again to find an appropriate knowledge management solution.

Solution

Working with the GTC to identify the exact requirements, Fujitsu selected Microsoft® SharePoint Portal Server as a solution that would allow people to access, collect, manage and publish information without needing to understand the complexities of the technology.

Requirement Identification

Fujitsu took a partnership-based approach in working with the GTC. They prioritized needs and illustrated alternatives, creating a consensus among the Council Members regarding which options best suited their requirements. This was essential as the GTC's budget limited the ability to change directions once implementation was in motion.

Fujitsu then worked with the GTC to determine the top 5 required capabilities of the knowledge management system:

- Simplicity of use and management, with easy and secure remote access.
- Easy access to large reports for Council Members to review before meetings, and easy access to Minutes for senior GTC staff reference.
- Collaborative report development and publication, ensuring document review and approval before publication out to Members.
- Ability to enable Members to track and contribute to discussions on matters of interest – when they are not members of the relevant committee or subcommittee.
- Ability to advise Members about news, press releases, parliamentary liaison work and publications without bombarding them with paper and without the associated costs of paper, assembly, and postage.

An aggressive one-month timescale was set by the GTC: they wanted to

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demonstrate the solution to Members at the next Council meeting. They would have three weeks to establish detailed requirements, set up the system, and configure for metadata, and one week to store a working set of documents. These steps were achieved on time and on budget.

Infrastructure Implementation

The implementation of the pilot began September 2001 as Fujitsu and the GTC agreed on the final project requirements and a delivery plan. Within the one-month timeframe, Fujitsu installed and configured SharePoint, designed the GTC interface, tested the system, and trained the document authorities. These authorities filed a working set of documents in time to demonstrate SharePoint to the Members at the Council meeting. The pilot program users consisted of approximately 50 people, including the GTC Governing Council, senior GTC officers and internal staff. Once the SharePoint Portal Server system had been approved, the GTC introduced it to all members and staff, increasing the number of users to over 180. Andrew Hill, Information Communications Technology Manager for the General Teaching Council, was thrilled. "We were so impressed with the technology and professionalism of this pilot project that we decided to introduce SharePoint Portal server to all users as the GTC standard document management, retrieval and knowledge management system."

Document Migration

Because SharePoint allowed the GTC to structure content into meaningful associations using metadata and taxonomy methods, the organizations content management capabilities progressed far beyond the potential of a simple search. The structured content enabled users to find documents quickly and to manage the content efficiently.

The content structuring process involves setting up a basic prototype system and

working through business processes within discussion groups, using actual documents. By adapting the prototype structure in response to these business processes, the team created an optimized system which was acceptable to everyone.

Working with the staff and Members of the General Teaching Council, Fujitsu designed a simple but robust taxonomy to provide easy access to committee papers, meeting schedules, contact details, press releases and breaking news stories. Procedures were then set up for storing documents and for checking them in and out. With the new content structure in place, existing committee papers were transferred into the managed SharePoint Portal Server environment.

Content Structure

The GTC SharePoint knowledge portal consists of two servers and four document stores. The extranet document store for the Members lives on one server and the three intranet document stores for internal staff are on the other server. The intranets are:

- **GTCi** - information for use by all staff including GTC publications, newsletters, HR procedures, finance procedures, and contact information. Each team manages their own part of the GTCi document store, determining which information to share with colleagues.
- **Registration** - letters to and from teachers regarding registration issues, used by the registration help desk/phone line to resolve queries quickly and efficiently.
- **Professional Standards** - used for case files to support hearings before the Standards committee when there are allegations which could lead to a teacher being suspended or removed from the Register. The contents of this workspace are confidential and are made available only to professional standards case workers.

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The Registration help desk intranet was the most difficult to establish because it was not initially obvious which types of problems would give rise to registration queries. Furthermore, it was critical to be able to answer questions while teachers were on the phone, since their classroom schedules meant they were not easily reached with return phone calls. After three months receiving feedback about the new help desk intranet, Fujitsu adapted SharePoint to improve the way letters are captured and to enhance the filing structure to make locating letters even faster. Now e-mail, documents, spreadsheets and scanned paper/fax images can all be searched and listed immediately for teachers over the phone.

Benefits

For the GTC, the new SharePoint knowledge portal has delivered a number of important business benefits. Members are now able to work as a virtual team, and to provide timely information that is easy to access and manage. “Working in partnership with Fujitsu to define our requirements, we established an ideal solution that has been eagerly adopted across our whole organization,” says Hill.

Working as a Virtual Team

Providing access to all GTC information to all Members has led to improved knowledge management across the organization. In addition, it has led to better informed discussions at Council and committee meetings, and has enabled Members to track and contribute to discussions when they are not part of the relevant committee or subcommittee. Furthermore, Members are now able to work together in real time whether in the same location or working remotely.

Easy to Use and Manage

With SharePoint’s simplified publishing process, GTC documents are now available

in one to two days rather than several weeks. Previously, internal staff manually e-mailed and tracked multiple copies through the approval process, then collated changes and published the results. Members received the results within several weeks. Now the author simply adds a single source document to the system, and the document automatically moves through the approval process based on internally defined rules. The automated process ensures that members see only approved reports.

With central “check in/check out” management of source documents, users are confident that they have access to the most up-to-date versions – they save time which may previously have been spent tracing document versions or duplicating efforts. Access to source documents means Council Members contribute in real time to official GTC policy discussions during committee meetings or working group sessions.

Because all Members have remote access to relevant documents, there is no longer a need for staff to print, collate, assemble, and mail requested documents. The time and cost savings have had a tremendous impact: GTC staff save hours of time, and paper, toner, supplies, and postage costs are significantly lower. Postage costs have dropped approximately 10% and continue to decrease as Members optimize their use of the system.

Simple to Access Remotely and Securely

With SharePoint documents accessible from anywhere with Internet access and a Web browser, document delivery via postal mail is seldom necessary. Large documents can be delivered without e-mail inbox size constraints or e-mail delivery speed presenting obstacles. These improvements have markedly simplified the tasks of making large reports available to Council members before meetings and providing reports and minutes to senior GTC staff.

They have removed the stress of posting all relevant documentation relating to the work of the Council and committees by a certain deadline. In addition, by adjusting the SharePoint group policy settings for different groups, specific documents are accessible only to their intended audiences; Members can securely view confidential information on the system.

Providing Appropriate and Timely Information

Users have the ability to search and navigate around all information, quickly and accurately allowing them to be effective and efficient at any content related task. Because finding information is now simple, the GTC staff is saving time

by not having to help Members find information or resend lost documents.

Keeping Members apprised of news, press releases, parliamentary liaison work, and publications without barraging them with information and without unreasonable expense has been a challenge. Now, users can select topics which interest them and receive updates via the SharePoint automatic subscription notification alerts. This saves the cost of mailings and reduces the paper flow – the risk of losing documents in the mail is eliminated. As a management tool, this feature saves a tremendous amount of time by simplifying the time required per person for content monitoring and maintenance.

Software and Services

Microsoft® Windows® 2000 Server
Microsoft Windows® XP
Microsoft SharePoint™ Portal
Server 2001

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