



HKI Gains Secure Centralized Data and Eases IT Burden with New Intranet

SharePoint empowers “one-stop shopping” for forms, applications and documentation

Hillsborough Kids, Inc. (HKI) administers the foster care of approximately 2,900 children and teens in Hillsborough County, Florida. HKI's mission is to ensure the safety and permanency of abused and neglected children in Hillsborough County by providing comprehensive services that promote strong families.

Funded primarily through Florida's Department of Children and Families, HKI is the contracted lead agency responsible for managing the provision of child welfare services in Hillsborough County. As such, HKI provides administrative services to its community-based network of partners including financial management, contract oversight, data services, communications, quality assurance, training and diversion services. Thus, HKI's Management Information System (MIS) department is tasked with providing technical and data support to more than 500 people throughout HKI and its partner agencies.

HKI's existing intranet, consisting of ASP pages and disparate applications, was difficult for people to use and posed barriers to their ability to efficiently find information. Security and access rights were especially problematic and an understaffed MIS department had to manage everything on the site, including document uploads. Additionally, due to staff attrition, complete knowledge of the legacy system was almost gone. It was time for a new site that could ease the burden for HKI's MIS department while empowering people to be more self sufficient.

With specific goals of cost savings, enhanced productivity, better communication and workflow, automation of paperwork and secure, centralized information for the organization, HKI decided to utilize Microsoft SharePoint as its platform. After carefully evaluating information technology (IT) resources able to provide expertise and manage the implementation, HKI chose Catapult as their go-to partner.

Implementation

For the new site Catapult implemented Microsoft Office SharePoint Server (MOSS) 2007 with minimal customization. HKI's logo and colors were incorporated into the look and feel of the intranet portal to give it continuity with their brand image.

Because of the sensitive nature of the data HKI houses, it was important that the intranet was very secure while permitting collaboration. This necessitated the creation of variable levels of access within the site for HKI and its partner agencies.

To meet this need and relieve some of the burden on IT, Catapult broke the security model into two subsets. Using active directory accounts, full access was created for certain groups of people while others were permitted access to only portions of the site. An area of SharePoint was designated exclusively for HKI staff with optional views that allowed users to see content for the entire company or just their unit.

HKI also needed to simplify business processes where possible. Catapult integrated InfoPath into the new site, creating new electronic forms to support HKI's form needs and automate processes such as on-boarding and facilities management.

Effective project management was an essential part of this implementation. HKI needed this project to have a quick turnaround as it had many other IT issues to address. Catapult's team took the lead, contacting and training staff internally. According to Pam Norris, HKI vice president of IT, "Catapult's lead consultant was the best part. It was virtually impossible for me to spend a lot of time on this project; he managed it with very little involvement from me and kept me out of the weeds."

“From a sales standpoint it was a very easy process choosing Catapult. They didn’t try to oversell us and really understood our needs, which was a big reason why we chose them.”

Pam Norris | VP of IT

Results

Although the new intranet has been in place for only a few months, HKI is gaining traction on its goals of providing secure, centralized information, better productivity and communication, and automating paperwork and processes.

Document Management:

Required to maintain paperwork for up to 17 years, HKI struggled constantly with document storage. Now, with the ability to centralize its documents, procedures and forms, HKI has gained more effective and efficient categorization and searching of content, which has offloaded some of the burden of storage and document imaging. Additionally, forms are now able to be kept current because they no longer require IT intervention – they can be fully maintained by the document owner in real-time.

Workflow Automation:

HKI reports that automating some workflows has proven to be highly beneficial. In particular, people are now actively using facilities requests for needs such as changing light bulbs or ordering supplies. This used to be a labor-intensive, paper-heavy process; now it is all done electronically and easily.

Efficient Communication:

The new site has given HKI’s MIS department a way to better communicate with end-users. Before, there was no mechanism to notify or update users regarding planned outages or data services that needed to be performed. Now every time a partner logs onto the site they get a status page right away, which has significantly improved communication between HKI and its partners.

Reporting:

HKI is mandated to provide regular reports on the agencies and children/teens they monitor. Before, staff spent days gathering data for reports; now that statistical information is easily found, dashboarded and published.

Site Acceptance:

According to Norris, some people were fearful or unsure about having a new site, so promotion of SharePoint was essential to ensure acceptance. Once that was done people became excited, which translated into adoption across the board when the site went live. “People really embraced the site. Catapult spent a lot of time explaining it to people, which ensured it was well received and an easy transition from the old to the new.”



How can we help you?

Contact us at 1-800-528-6248 or info@CatapultSystems.com