

Case Study: Wolters Kluwer

Creating Business Value with an Integrated Collaboration Platform

- Created an integrated communication and collaboration platform
- Reduced HR administrative work with SharePoint workflow solution
- Leveraged SharePoint to build revenue-generating Web site

Client Profile

Wolters Kluwer is one of the world's leading publishers and providers of information products and services. Based in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, Wolters Kluwer has operations in Europe, North America and Asia Pacific, and has over 19,500 employees. The worldwide activities of Wolters Kluwer revolve around its professional customers in the health, tax, accounting, corporate services, financial services, legal and regulatory markets.

Wolters Kluwer's mission is to be *The Professionals' First Choice* for information, tools and solutions to help professionals make their most critical decisions effectively and to improve their productivity. Within this vision, Wolters Kluwer builds on its powerful brand and market positions to provide value to its customers through current, accurate and expert information; leading edge technology and software solutions; and excellent customer service.

Business and Technology Challenge

Until recently, Wolters Kluwer operated as a financial holding company for its diverse information publishing companies and had little involvement in their daily operations. However, challenging global market conditions impelled Wolters Kluwer to reorganize to facilitate growth, provide more integrated services and reduce expenses. In 2003, the company began the transformation to a more streamlined organization and standardized many operational functions to speed information flow.

Faced with a multitude of diverse messaging and directory systems, Wolters Kluwer's leadership team recognized the need to restructure its internal business processes. Like other complex enterprises competing in a demanding global business climate, Wolters Kluwer wanted to facilitate more efficient ways for knowledge workers to communicate, collaborate and access critical business communications within an integrated and centralized environment.

In order to meet its objectives, Wolters Kluwer required a standardized enterprise platform solution for all its messaging, communication, collaboration and enterprise application needs. A single environment would expedite the ability to leverage and share knowledge and eliminate the operational and cost inefficiencies associated with working on disparate platforms. With this platform in place, the firm planned several SharePoint projects to enable, accelerate and support business growth.

The PointBridge Solution: A Truly Integrated Communication and Collaboration Platform

PointBridge assisted and played a key role in architecting and implementing the solution that moved Wolters Kluwer from a heterogeneous, multi-platform, messaging and collaboration environment to one built exclusively on the Microsoft platform. The platform included Microsoft Windows® Server 2003, Exchange Server and Microsoft Office SharePoint® Server (MOSS) 2007.

Designed to deliver greater availability, reliability and security, Wolters Kluwer's new communication and collaboration platform enables its employees to gain access to critical business communications whenever and wherever needed. Enhanced collaboration features such as shared calendars, public folders, meeting scheduling, shared contacts and task lists and remote access will improve overall company communication and productivity.

Once the infrastructure was in place, Wolters Kluwer and PointBridge worked to deliver more value from their integrated platform, uncovering strategic ways to use MOSS to procure cost savings, create business opportunities and achieve the "multiplier effect" possible with a truly integrated communication and collaboration solution.

Creating the Infrastructure for an Integrated Collaboration Solution

PointBridge was originally brought into the project as subject matter experts on Exchange and subsequently managed the Active Directory® design. The PointBridge team ultimately included five people who worked closely with Wolters Kluwer employees and other Microsoft partners to design and implement the solution. PointBridge contributed deep expertise in Active Directory, Exchange, SharePoint, clustering, messaging architecture and migration tools and methods.

Consolidating multiple business units (with 14 different, frequently "home grown" mail, authentication and messaging platforms) into a single authentication and message platform represented significant challenges. For example, the team needed to understand and work around existing directories with considerable integration and customization. Additionally, the team was challenged by the sheer volume of decentralized users and the unique business constraints of various business units.

In order to overcome synchronization and deployment obstacles, PointBridge leveraged additional Microsoft products including Microsoft Identity Integration Server (MIIS) and SharePoint. A combination of customized Management Agent "join" rules and VBScripts were utilized to overcome the challenge of transitioning authoritative data sources for MIIS 2003 from Notes and Exchange 5.5 systems to the new Active Directory/Exchange environment—without destroying metadirectory objects or impacting other connected systems.

After the completion of several test and pilot phases, the migration of users was set into motion. North American users were migrated to the platform with assistance and training from PointBridge. The migration phase is continuing in Europe and Asia Pacific.

During the course of the project, Wolters Kluwer consolidated over 40 data centers in North America to a shared and centralized data center servicing all of its multiple customer units. This solution will help Wolters Kluwer reduce business and operational risks attributable to multiple

data center operations across its North American Shared Services and achieve the following:

- **Improved communication and collaboration.** Whether at the office, telecommuting from home, or connecting remotely, consistently efficient access to personal business information— independent of network characteristics—enables workers to get their work done more quickly. The SharePoint implementation also set the stage for additional collaboration, workflow and publishing projects.
- **Increased availability, reliability, scalability and security.** Windows Enterprise Server 2003 and Microsoft Cluster Services (MSCS) were utilized to provide high availability and redundancy. Microsoft Identity Integration Server (MIIS) 2003 was utilized to provide a corporate-wide global messaging directory, adding further scalability to the solution. The solution also provides a secure platform for collaboration.
- **Recognized return on investment.** The high degree of server and data center consolidation of this initiative will result in reduced infrastructure, operational, hardware and administrative costs. The reduction of downtime is expected to have a positive financial impact too.

With the communication and collaboration platform operational, Wolters Kluwer was well-positioned to tackle additional collaboration projects using SharePoint that would leverage the firm's Microsoft investment.

"This application will give us the opportunity to streamline HR processes, which have been known to be unclear and unfriendly ... Our goal is to reduce HR administration for business units by 25 percent."

– Diana Christides, Director of HR Source and HRIS,
Wolters Kluwer

SharePoint-based Automated Forms Reduce Administrative Work by 25 Percent

HR Source, part of the Wolters Kluwer Shared Services organization, found itself at the hub of the standardization attempts, because all employees and managers access the company's PeopleSoft employee database. Manual processes engulf nearly all of the human resources (HR) organization, introducing delays and frustration.

For example, when business units create new departments, they update their local financial applications but not always the PeopleSoft employee database. This omission causes problems when charging employee expenses to departments and when hiring and/or transferring employees to different departments; users see error messages saying that the department does not exist.

"We saw a big opportunity to reduce the amount of HR administrative work required of the business units," Christides says. "We estimate that our HR Business Partners are spending 50 to 75 percent of their time on administrative tasks. We are highly motivated to improve operational efficiency to help them focus on more important activities such as workforce and talent management."

Kevin Taylor, Principal Architect in the Information Technology Outsourcing Department at Wolters Kluwer, evaluated the 2007 Microsoft Office system with a special interest in the workflow capabilities of MOSS. Taylor decided to build a proof of concept using the PeopleSoft employee database, because it crossed all corporate boundaries and would serve as a highly visible model for introducing automated workflows across the company.

Wolters Kluwer engaged PointBridge for help in building a prototype solution based on MOSS. The new solution provides a controlled and documented process for new-department creation/deactivation requests, as well as a method for communicating modifications to all affected parties. Financial controllers can request a new department by filling out an electronic form created with the Microsoft Office InfoPath® 2007 information-gathering program. Active Directory service, part of the Windows Server 2003 operating system, controls forms access. A workflow attached to every form guides the user in filling it out and routes it for approval. Office InfoPath 2007 automatically checks availability of department codes and prompts for correct fields. Once approved, the requester and other relevant parties receive an automatic confirmation.

Wolters Kluwer expects that its new database update process will improve the productivity of both HR and finance staffs and alleviate frustrations throughout the organization. Results include:

- **Expected 25 percent reduction in administrative work.** Christides expects that the standardized forms and workflow provided by the 2007 Microsoft Office system will provide significant productivity increases across the organization.
- **Increased data accuracy.** Delivering a tightly synchronized process throughout Wolters Kluwer systems, applications and services will continue to drive more accurate data throughout the company.
- **First step toward HR portal.** This initial proof of concept will serve as a template for improving similar paper-based processes at Wolters Kluwer and ultimately creating a complete HR portal.

"We had previously tried to create a workflow capability ourselves, and it was a nightmare. Having workflow built into [Office] SharePoint Server 2007 saved us an unpleasant and expensive development effort and will give us an infrastructure for making many different online forms available using a standard, repeatable set of procedures."

– Kevin Taylor, Principal Architect,
Information Technology Outsourcing Department,
Wolters Kluwer

The HR Source project provided a clear example of how to use an integrated collaboration solution to improve business processes and institutionalize best practices. As Wolters Kluwer became more familiar with SharePoint Server 2007, PointBridge worked with the company on a variety of projects. One highly innovative project went a step beyond cost saving and helped capture top-line revenue for one division of Wolters Kluwer.

Integrated Collaboration Solution Used to Generate Online Revenue

Wolters Kluwer Health, a division of Wolters Kluwer, is a leading provider of information and business intelligence for students, professionals and institutions in medicine, nursing, allied health, pharmacy and the pharmaceutical industry. Based in Conshohocken, Pennsylvania, Wolters Kluwer Health's major brands include traditional publishers of medical and drug reference tools and textbooks, electronic information providers and pharmaceutical information providers.

PointBridge developed the AudioBooks Web site for Wolters Kluwer Health using Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007. AudioBooks is a customer-facing, revenue-generating Web site that offers best-selling medical education books in audio format. On the Web site customers can read about the different text books and listen to samples from these educational books before deciding to purchase. Once purchased, customers download the files in the convenient MP3 format. Customers can then listen to these books when and where it is convenient for them, providing an alternative method for "on the go learning."

"We are excited about the opportunities the SharePoint Server 2007 platform provides for Wolters Kluwer Health in terms of both its core features and the overall customer experience. We were able to go to market quickly and bring an innovative product to medical professionals that enables a world-class experience of consuming digital audio content."

– Rich Biborosch, Director of Technical Architecture,
Wolters Kluwer Health

AudioBooks is an example of how to leverage SharePoint Server 2007 to change the way people both work and learn. It is one of multiple projects that PointBridge is working on with Wolters Kluwer Health to differentiate the company's go-to-market strategy and enhance its customer-facing sites. Downloadable MP3 files that can be played back on any device give health professionals and students a new avenue to study the most up to date content. To see the SharePoint-driven site in action, visit the site online at <http://audiobooks.lww.com>.

The new AudioBooks Web site demonstrates how the same technology that solved internal workflow problems for the HR department is being used to power an external, revenue-generating Web site for an entirely different division. It's an example of how an integrated communication and collaboration solution allows you to do more, much more, with the same technology. This is "the multiplier effect."

The Results: One Integrated Collaboration Solution, Many Examples of Business Value

As the three highlighted pieces of this project indicate, there is a multiplier effect when an organization moves to a standardized and integrated, collaboration platform. As Wolters Kluwer begins deploying solutions such as the HR workflow solution and the AudioBooks Web site, the company is just starting to realize the power, reach and business value achievable with its integrated platform.

For Wolters Kluwer the multiplier effect is three-fold. It has improved its infrastructure and the ability for employees to communicate and collaborate in a secure environment. This helped Wolters Kluwer to become a much more highly productive workplace, while at the same time reducing the very real cost associated with maintaining disparate systems.

"Wolters Kluwer's integrated approach to communication and collaboration strengthened its infrastructure, is providing time and cost savings, and is now being used to generate top-line revenue. If there ever was a solution that demonstrated a multiplier effect, this is it. The results Wolters Kluwer is seeing now are just an indication of what's possible and what's to come."

– Ethan Matyas, Director of Professional Services,
PointBridge

With the deployment of an integrated platform, Wolters Kluwer opened the door for solutions such as the HR workflow project that will use SharePoint to streamline processes, resulting in significant time and cost savings. These savings are sustainable because they lock in best practices, creating technology-enabled business solutions that institutionalize operational excellence.

Best of all, Wolters Kluwer has found a way to leverage SharePoint to accelerate the creation of business value. When Wolters Kluwer uses the same platform in innovative ways, such as the AudioBooks site, across a variety of functions and business units, the company provides a clear example of the multiplier effect in action.

About PointBridge

PointBridge, headquartered in Chicago, is a consulting company that connects people to people and people to information. The company builds award-winning collaboration and business intelligence solutions with Microsoft technologies including, SharePoint, Exchange, Office Communications Server and SQL Server.

PointBridge is a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner and was recently named the 2007 Microsoft US Central Region Partner of the Year. PointBridge was also honored in 2005 as the worldwide Microsoft Partner of the Year for Advanced Infrastructure Solutions and won the Microsoft Exchange Solution of the Year award.

POINTBRIDGE™
pointbridge.com

PointBridge - Chicago
One North Franklin, Suite 2470
Chicago, Illinois 60606

Local: 312.334.1900
Toll Free: 888.585.7845
Fax: 312.334.4789

PointBridge - Wisconsin
200 South Executive Drive, Suite 101
Brookfield, Wisconsin 53005

Local: 262.789.2779