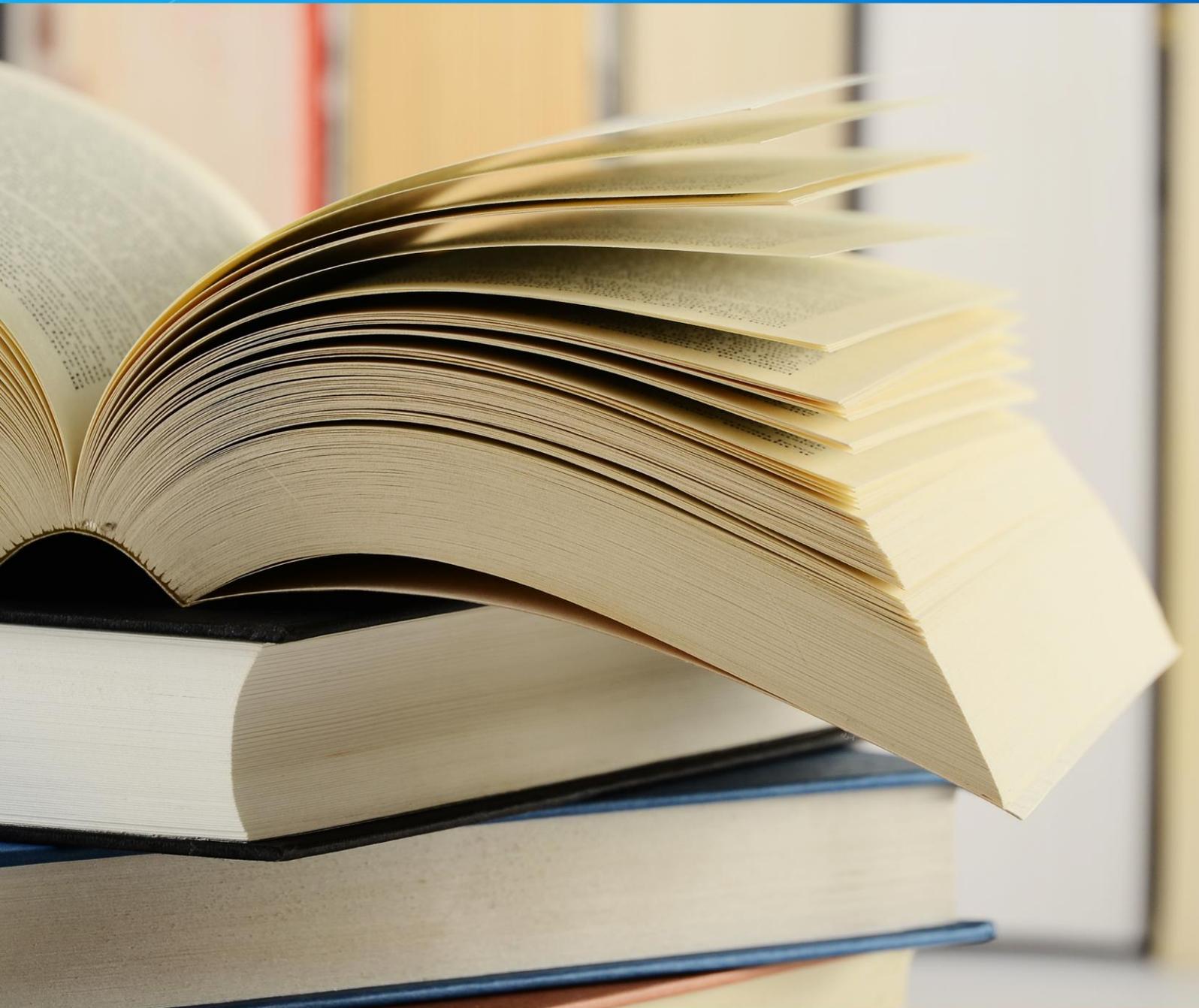




CASE STUDIES

WRDC Gets the ITQAN Enterprise Content Management Treatment





Western Region Development Council (WRDC) plays a key role in working closely with the relevant government entities within the Abu Dhabi Emirate to improve social development, education, healthcare, and infrastructure for the region. It is also the organization's role to promote Al-Gharbia province locally, regionally and internationally to attract investment and tourism.

Seeing the importance of this organization and the crucial role it plays in the country, it needed an Intranet portal to boost employee productivity through enabling collaboration, access to information and resources via the automation powered by workflows and business processes. The portal would also work as a document management system, where documents would be archived and eventually stored, resulting in a comprehensive repository of information.

ITQAN's experience in this domain is unparalleled, with references that cover mostly all sectors. ITQAN is regarded a pioneer in this horizontal in specific, being the first to bring in Open Text Livelink in the region after the agreement they signed in 2005, and together with Microsoft, merged the expertise of both IT gurus to bring about transformational projects. Organizations such as Ministry of Education, Abu Dhabi Educational Council, GASCO, Takreer, Al-Rahba Hospital, Command of Military Work, Etisalat, Abu Dhabi Municipality, and Dubai World, all testify for the rigor and breadth of their enterprise content management systems developed and installed by ITQAN.

The Trigger

In this age and time, IT cannot be a mere luxury or a support tool. On the contrary, it's an indispensable and necessary catalyst for better corporate performance. WRDC, being a relatively fresh organization, realized this very early on, and subsequently called for bidders to propose the best portal solution.

"We are delighted to win the trust of an extremely important organization such as WRDC, who have an extraordinary responsibility of developing Al-Gharbia province, a province that is still green in many areas. We assured them from the start that ITQAN is well and beyond qualified to help achieve this mission, and they granted us their trust to integrate the best IT practices," said Feras Al-Jabi, General Manager of ITQAN.

WRDC needs can be grouped into the following:

- Easy to use web interface that allows end users to view targeted content and easily navigate using either organizational or functional page taxonomy.
- Provide system administrators with the ability to secure content to groups, organizations, and individuals.
- Provide both a rich-text content management system that allows system administrators to deliver content and a WIKI environment that allows end-user to create their own page content
- Provide a single search interface that allows users to search for content that is target to their account based on assigned permissions

- Provide content creators (both in the CMS and WIKI environments) the ability to review content additions and comments if they choose to enable the feature or a workflow tool that allows content to be reviewed and approved prior to publication.
- Provide a customizable portlet or widget-based interface that allows end-users to customize their experience.
- Provide portal administrators with a flexible design and administration interface that allows administrators to create page templates that standardize on some page elements (e.g. header, navigation and mandatory portlets).
- Provide analytical reporting that details usage activity, content quantity, and hyperlink status (e.g. number and location of broken links)
- Provide the ability to integrate with existing enterprise applications such as Business Portal (Moss 2007), Time Reporting system, IT Helpdesk system using a Services Oriented Architecture.
- Provide end-users with the ability to create custom application and information widgets that can be shared across the enterprise.
- Allow users to easily share updates with others on their work through personal status updates
- Allow users to create and manage groups/networks that can collaborate through a WIKI interface or a discussion forum interface. Users should be able to store and review documents as attachments within these groups. Users should be able to collaborate and version these documents and the applications should maintain an audit trail.
- Allow users to create custom events and invite users and groups to those events. Individual and group events should roll up to a common corporate calendar that displays events to users based on their permissions and group memberships.
- Allow users to share digital media including photos, audio files, and video files. Users should be able to collaborate and version these files and the application should maintain an audit trail.

To meet those needs, ITQAN utilized Microsoft's prized solution, SharePoint 2007. Seeing that a document management system was required alongside the portal, ITQAN collaborated with Websio for the scanning and archiving component of the project. The main Websio product used in this implementation was SharePoint Scanner Plug-in 2010, which is a tool for scanning documents right into a document library. The plug-in uses advanced compression technologies to enable best document quality with the smallest file size. SharePoint Scanner Plug-in 2010 Professional also includes option to convert image to text (perform OCR): scanned documents may be saved as searchable PDF.

The Benefits

This implementation actually came about after WRDC were exposed to a highlight in ITQAN's resume of portal implementations, which is the portal for Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC). WRDC was greatly impressed with the ADEC portal, which prompted its partnership with ITQAN for this IT venture. There were particular customizations that caught WRDC's attention in ADEC's portal, and wanted their replication in this portal, such as the surveys feature, weather forecast, prayer times, event focus, employee search, and specific e-services. Two of these e-services include a suggestion box, which aims to encourage the

employee's role in bringing innovative ideas to the table and allow his/her voice to be heard. The other e-service pertains to the employee's periodic appraisal, which serves as a reminder for the appraiser and automatically lands in the employee's inbox for review.

Besides possessing the functionalities of a portal in terms promoting collaboration, creating automation and easing access to information, WRDC's portal contained a uniquely comprehensive and advanced document management system that encompassed the following features:

Document Digitization

After a document is converted to electronic form, several digital versions may be required for each item, of different resolutions and formats, and all these are stored and named so that they can be retrieved when required and linked to their category records. Any metadata entered during the digitization process is stored directly and automatically, so that no duplication of work or incompatibility of data arises.

Records management processes

The system receives, classifies, stores and controls the use of records which may be subject to access restrictions or which will be dealt with in accordance with a retention and disposition schedule. The system has to manage both physical and electronic records.

Document Exchange

The system imports and exports data in standard formats, thus allowing interchange of data with other organizations. A report generator is also integrated to allow configuration of the output format both for data exchange and to produce human-readable output.

Maintenance of authority files

The system creates and maintains comprehensive, structured, authority files of people, organizations, places and subjects, closely linked to the cataloguing and searching software.

Interfaces for internal users

There is a selection of interfaces available for internal users, specifically designed for each operation, showing only those fields that are required but with the ability to expand and repeat fields when necessary. The user interfaces, working in both English and Arabic, are based on standard software such as a web browser, without needing special client software. There are also controls on the format of data and validation against authority files and thesauri where appropriate, with a convenient way of browsing these files and submitting candidate terms. Response times are also configured to be short enough not to interrupt the flow of a user's work; if any operations are requested that take a significant time, a progress bar should be shown allowing the user to estimate the time that will be needed, and there should be provision to interrupt the operation at any time.

Storage management

The system essentially manages and archives records, and handles electronic material, as well as additional issues concerning file formats, storage, testing, refreshing and migrating material to respond to technical developments that may require specialized software.

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When electronic content comes on stream in volume the special integrity checks and storage security processes needed in electronic archiving environments to ensure data remains uncorrupted and available are implemented and supported by the system.

Dissemination

Dissemination refers to the ability to search categories either singly or together, obtain sets of retrieved items and then to deliver the items and their cataloguing information in various forms (printed and electronic) to those authorized to receive them and respecting user rights and permissions. The system implemented by ITQAN permits dissemination processes to be conducted in either Arabic or English.

The system maintains statistics on the data stored and on the operations performed. It also identifies the date, time and person responsible for each change of data, to allow the resolution of queries and checking and supervision, particularly for inexperienced cataloguers. For practical reasons this may be by showing "last modified" information for each record rather than for each data item. A log of changes to the system configuration or parameters is kept as well.

The complete document management provided in this portal surely improved the level of efficiency in WRDC, allowing the users to accrue their efforts into more productive and worthy activities. The portal is also integrated with Microsoft Active Directory, and this integration enables the employee search function that is included in the portal.