

CASE STUDY

Bezirksregierung
Münster



Customer Location

Münster, Germany

Industry

Public Sector

Platform

SharePoint 2013

Critical Needs

- Publish updates across SharePoint farms from a single point
- Recover deleted SharePoint content at the item level
- Easily copy SharePoint templates for annual use

Solution

DocAve Backup and Restore
DocAve Content Manager
DocAve Replicator

“Using DocAve to synchronize our SharePoint content means we’re only updating information in one spot, we are less prone to error, and have consistency between the two networks.”

-Manuel Scholl, SharePoint Administrator, Government Office for Münster Region

The Government Office for Münster Region Ensures Consistency Between Intranet and Extranet by Synchronizing Microsoft® SharePoint® Content with DocAve®

SUCCESS HIGHLIGHTS

- Synchronized SharePoint content across farms, ensuring information accuracy and continuity in both the intranet and extranet
- Granularly restored SharePoint content in just five minutes
- Quickly copied SharePoint sites across farms with full fidelity, enabling teams to work within the sites they needed in a timelier manner

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Münster is the cultural center of the Westphalia region in Germany.

THE CHALLENGE

To better facilitate organizational transparency, communication, and collaboration, the government of Münster adopted SharePoint. The organization found that a combination of SharePoint Server and SharePoint Foundation was the best solution to launch both an intranet and extranet.

While the intranet on SharePoint Server is reserved for government employees to share information about projects, maintenance, and department updates, the extranet runs on SharePoint 2013 Foundation and holds public-facing information relevant to other government agencies. In maintaining both networks, the organization’s IT team experienced challenges associated with updating information in two different locations. “In order to publish an update to share with the public, we needed to maintain that information in two places – the intranet and the extranet,” said Manuel Scholl, SharePoint Administrator at Government Office for Münster Region. “There was always the chance of forgetting to update it in one place. To save some time, we built workarounds using PowerShell, but it still took time to ensure consistency in both environments.”

The government also used PowerShell code in combination with native SharePoint capabilities to run backups. This proved to be inefficient and laborious. Instead, IT looked for a solution that would allow it to quickly respond to requests for accidentally deleted items and also restore the entire intranet in case of a disaster. “If users delete something and realize months later that they still need that item, we need to be able to do that quickly and granularly,” Scholl said.

In addition, the organization had trouble working with its SharePoint templates. Policy requires IT to recreate certain sites for every new calendar year. “We used SharePoint templates to make copies, but if there was ever an issue with the template, any copies would go to waste. We needed a solution that was more reliable and flexible.”

THE AVEPOINT SOLUTION

The solution to the government’s SharePoint management needs is DocAve Software, AvePoint’s fully integrated platform. “We very much appreciate that we can manage various aspects of SharePoint in one platform, from only one interface,” Scholl said. “Once you get to know the interface, finding your way around is pretty easy.”

The first issue IT decided to tackle was replicating SharePoint content across the intranet and extranet. With DocAve, IT can input updates in the intranet and automatically synchronize them to the extranet. They can also easily tag internal only updates (such as promotion announcements) to prevent those from being replicated and shared externally. “Using DocAve to synchronize our SharePoint content means we’re only updating information in one spot, we are less prone to error, and have consistency between the two networks,” Scholl said. “Our day-to-day work has gotten much easier. DocAve saves us lots of time keeping our records consistent. With just one click, the update is done. So far, we’ve synchronized 10 megabytes, but already have a lot of requests coming in.”

The organization also saw value in the ability to replicate the other way – from the extranet to the intranet. “For projects involving other government agencies, we copy lists and their contents from the extranet to the intranet,” Scholl said. “After editing the content, the results are then replicated back to the extranet so that all project members can access them.”

The government also uses DocAve to manage SharePoint backup. They previously used custom PowerShell code to run jobs, but found that the solution was overcomplicated. With DocAve, they set up automatic full backups for both SharePoint Foundation and SharePoint Server on a daily basis, so there’s no need to handle anything manually. “With DocAve, we are confident that, in case of a disaster – which luckily hasn’t happened yet – we would be able to put our entire intranet back up in no time at all,” Scholl said.

IT also gained the ability to perform SharePoint content

restores at the item level, which is not possible with native functionality. This is extremely beneficial for the IT team, as it can more quickly resolve user requests to retrieve documents they may have accidentally deleted. “We can easily restore items back for our end users,” Scholl said. “With DocAve, it only takes five minutes.”

Lastly, DocAve allows the organization to copy SharePoint content with full fidelity – meaning any site or site collection can become a template. In some cases, IT needs to copy sites and create new versions for each calendar year. Where SharePoint templates sufficed in the past, it was still time consuming to reconfigure settings like permissions. “DocAve lets us duplicate existing sites with just a few clicks,” Scholl said. “It has helped us spin up sites faster so people can start working with them immediately.”

THE BOTTOM LINE

With DocAve, the government of Münster’s IT department has been able to significantly reduce time spent updating the same data in two SharePoint farms, managing backups, and creating new sites. DocAve’s replication capabilities allow IT to synchronize information between its intranet and extranet, cutting the time it took to make changes by half. The organization now also has the ability to schedule automatic platform backups according to its needs, and the peace of mind that it can easily restore content whenever needed. “DocAve gives us more independence and flexibility to manage SharePoint the way it needs to be run,” Scholl said. “We have definitely saved time and money with the ability to manage multiple aspects of SharePoint with one integrated solution.”

ABOUT AVEPOINT

AvePoint is the Microsoft Cloud expert. Over 15,000 companies and 5 million cloud users trust AvePoint to accelerate the migration, management, and protection of their Office 365 and SharePoint data.

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