

Connecting people with information
when they need it

P O R T A L S



wtg
UNDERSTAND • INNOVATE • ENABLE

The benefits of portals



Do you want your organisation to gain a competitive advantage?

Are you hoping to reduce costs by consolidating your IT applications and ensuring they integrate more smoothly?

Would you like to encourage communication between your staff - and with your customers and business partners - while improving decision-making and performance too?

Better information management and data distribution within your organisation can help you achieve these and many other corporate goals. One step towards such progress involves the introduction of Web 2.0 and other technologies, including web portals.

Portals bring together data and applications, people and knowledge in a single web page or site. You can use these online platforms to connect internal and external users to each other and to allow them access to the information and business processes most relevant to their needs. Portals can make your business more agile and responsive, as well as more profitable.

What is a web portal?

Web portals are the virtual gateways that people use to reach the online world(s) of most interest and relevance to them. In a business context, you can provide different groups of users with their own distinct gateway to your organisation: one portal for your employees, another for your partners and suppliers, and a third for your customers and prospects.

While the underlying technology for these portals can be the same, the content and navigation contained within each can be fundamentally diverse. This allows you to present differently filtered versions of your organisation to separate audiences, depending on their relationship to your business. Three types of web portal are clearly identifiable:

Corporate or Enterprise Information Portals (Intranets)

You can use these gateways to improve employees' access to corporate information and to encourage knowledge sharing and communication. Enterprise information portals will support personalised views of your organisation, nurture collaboration and enable staff to make better-informed business decisions.

e-Business Portals (Extranets)

You can use e-Business portals to extend beyond your organisation's traditional internal boundaries and to

collaborate with partners and suppliers. You may also decide to use such a portal to interact more easily with customers.

Whether you choose a B2B or B2C approach (or a combination of both), reaching outside of the company allows external stakeholders to engage in some of key business processes e.g. ordering, self-service, billing. Using these examples, you would not only reduce the cost of order fulfilment and customer support, but also potentially boost your revenues through online sales and other activities.

Public Portals (Internet sites)

Internet portals are a very cost-effective means of disseminating important information to a worldwide audience. However, many of today's public-facing websites offer much more than an online brochure. Now, they present dynamically changing content based on individual visitor preferences.

Public portals encourage user participation and enhance collaboration between your staff and your customers. By building an online community where each individual's contribution counts, you build brand loyalty and stay in touch with the mood and preferences of your target market.

Where can web portals deliver most benefit?

Any web portal will help you aggregate, organise and manage your previously unstructured corporate information more easily. But by segmenting your online platforms into an intranet/extranet/Internet configuration, you also:

- ▶ Maximise the efficiency and productivity of staff and partners, by giving them access to the right information and right people at the right time
- ▶ Optimise the online experience of customers and prospects, by creating a community where the users control and organise the information
- ▶ Reduce operational costs, by minimising paper-based processes

Since each of your communities has a different set of needs, you should tailor the functionality and look-and-feel of your website, intranet and extranet accordingly. This will encourage user participation, enhance communication within and beyond your organisational boundaries, and help deliver the following advantages:

Better knowledge management and information distribution

Both internal and external portals allow you to index and categorise a wide range of web pages and documents. Add a search facility too, and file retrieval becomes much quicker and simpler - making staff and business partners more efficient, and customers more appreciative of your services. Portals also enable you to distribute press releases and other announcements (both public and internal) more easily and cost effectively than traditional methods.

Extended employee self-service and customer service

Your intranet enables employees to do more for themselves and reduces their reliance upon other staff for information and support. For example, you can put your employee handbook online for general reference and provide individuals with access to their

expense accounts and holiday records. Adding similar self-service options to your extranet can significantly enhance relationships with your customers, who can access information including account details, FAQs, technical support and so on. By improving self-sufficiency, you provide your internal departments such as Customer Services, Finance and HR, the opportunity to work on more productive and profitable activities.

Increased project collaboration

You can use all three types of portal to help boost the level of interactivity among your staff, partners and customers. In particular, your intranet and extranet will allow internal and external team members to share their documents, schedules and tasks more easily. This will make co-operative working less stressful and time-consuming, yet more cost-efficient and effective.

Improved sales support and additional sales channels

Portals can have a significant impact on your sales and marketing efforts too. Staff can share brochures and other sales information more readily, to ensure that everyone has the latest details to hand. Your teams can also use the portals to distribute competitive intelligence to partners, or even to set up an entirely

new sales channel. By adding an eCommerce application to your internet site and linking it to your online product catalogue and ordering system, you have created the potential for an additional revenue stream.

Enhanced supply chain and financial management

You can get the most from your supply chain by using an extranet to encourage collaboration, to share sales proposals and to help manage your channel partners. Meanwhile, you can use the same site and/or your intranet to improve cost visibility and management, to consolidate your purchasing, and to interface with your external auditors and accountants.

Understand

Our aim is to understand your business and identify where portal will deliver most benefit to you.

Innovate

We will create a flexible portal solution that can grow with your business, tailoring it to your specific needs.

Enable

We have the skills to implement your solution and to provide a comprehensive training and adoption strategy to ensure its success.

WTG: Delivering the benefits of web portals

WTG is a business IT consultancy that offers strategic advice and implementation services around innovative web-based solutions - including collaborative tools for the enterprise.

We have a deep understanding of the importance of effective information management and how portals work best within a business context. We can apply this knowledge to your company and implement effective portal solutions that take into account the needs of your employees, suppliers and partners, as well as customers and prospects.

Our web portal strategy will:

- ▶ Identify your business goals and ensure that every portal supports them
- ▶ Include effective policies for information governance and maintenance
- ▶ Increase your customer service capacity and customer satisfaction levels
- ▶ Improve the productivity of your internal and external stakeholders

After analysing your needs, we will identify how your organisation can select, apply, implement and measure the success of our recommended portal solution(s). Our experience shows that getting the most from your portal strategy involves more than a simple installation process followed by an expectation that people will use what's been delivered.

To ensure that the portals add real value to your organisation, we will work with you to develop a holistic approach that:

- ▶ Achieves the level of organisational readiness you need
- ▶ Integrates smoothly with your existing IT systems
- ▶ Accounts for existing information usage and incorporates improvements
- ▶ Allows you to personalise the portals to the relevant users, as required
- ▶ Optimises the user experience to maximise participation
- ▶ Increases revenues and profitability, via process efficiencies and improved sales cycles



Portals constitute just one of the four spheres of technology in which WTG specialises. While you can accrue benefits by employing any single element, you will gain most advantage by adopting all four.

WTG concentrates on these areas of innovation:

Portals

Web portals can enhance productivity by extending connectivity throughout - and beyond - your enterprise. Use portals to connect multiple users, with differing needs, to the most relevant information, applications and people.

Content Management Systems

An effective CMS enables your teams to access and control the information they need to make better business decisions. A successful CMS implementation can lead to operational efficiencies and reduced costs.

Collaboration Solutions

These solutions increase the levels of communication and co-operation between employees, business partners, suppliers and customers. Extending your organisation's influence through collaborative solutions exposes new opportunities, improves efficiency and raises productivity.

Enterprise Search Technologies

Knowledge is power and your business needs to leverage its essential data more effectively. Enterprise search solutions allow key personnel to focus their efforts on using and exploiting information, not finding it.

More about WTG

WTG is a business and technology consultancy focused on the delivery of innovative web solutions to the commercial and public sectors. After assessing your needs and gaining an understanding of your organisation, we will recommend the technology solutions most likely to help you achieve your strategic goals.

Embracing best-of-breed Portal, CMS, Collaboration and Enterprise Search technologies, our web-based solutions will allow you to:

- ▶ Improve the way your organisation works
- ▶ Connect your newly-extended enterprise
- ▶ Increase the flow of your business data
- ▶ Secure your IT infrastructure
- ▶ Raise your levels of productivity

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