Public access to information goes online at Sedgemoor District Council

hp

"The wider availability of information in and around the authority has been the most impressive advantage {of using HP TRIM Software}. The ability to gain access to the right information, by the right people at the right time is having a very positive impact on service delivery to our customers." Craig Wilkins, IS manager, Sedgemoor District Council
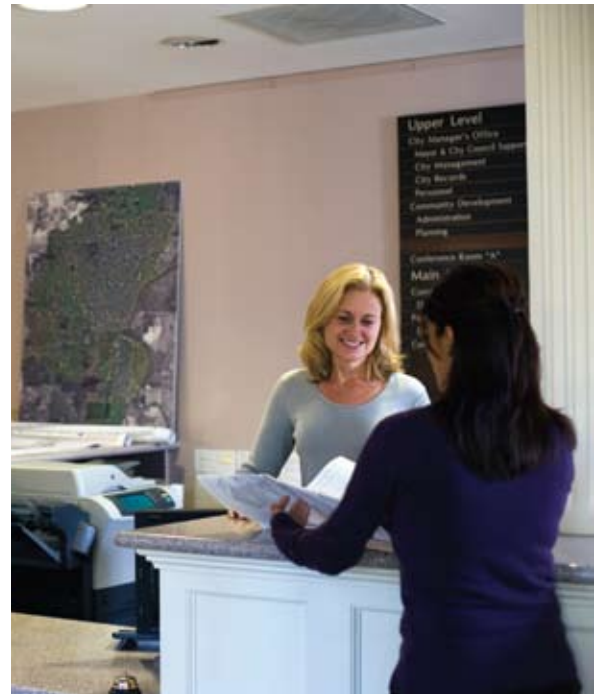
Objective:
Sedgemoor District Council, servicing 45,000 households in rural Somerset wanted to create and manage electronic documentation and provide online access to information.

Approach:
• The Council implemented HP TRIM Software, an Electronic Document and Records Management (EDRM) suite integrating with (EDRM) suite integrating with The Council's website (Intelligent Content Management software (iCM)) and Adobe Livecycle.

Business outcomes:
• The Council can now offer better public services and efficiencies associated with managing and retrieving information.

• Sedgemoor District Council has reduced costs associated with managing information and reduced time associated with information management.

Sedgemoor District Council looks after the heartland of rural Somerset. With three main towns – Bridgwater, Burnham-on-Sea and world-famous Cheddar - the council currently provides services to around 45,000 households and a population of approximately 110,000. The Council covers an area of over 56,000 hectares via one main administration office and sub-offices, and is also one of the largest employers in the district, providing employment for approximately 630 people.

The challenge
Like the majority of local councils, Sedgemoor's administrative processes had been paper-based and there was an increasing need for documentation to be stored and managed more efficiently. In parallel to that, and in accordance with their own priorities on efficiency and improving customer service, they also recognised the need to comply with emerging

national guidelines on electronic government and service delivery. The national e-Government and e-service delivery guidelines require that citizens are able to enjoy a good customer experience across all channels of contact with their local authority.

In recognition of an increasing move towards online council services, Sedgemoor decided to meet the 21 critical steps laid out in the 2005 Pendleton Report, which aims to assist public access to online local planning information. To meet these, the council required a system to create and manage electronic documentation and publish and maintain a large proportion of it on its own website.

The solution

HP TRIM Software was selected to meet this challenge with its Electronic Document and Records Management (EDRM) suite. Identifying a suitable EDRM system was relatively straight forward for Sedgemoor as the package was the only solution available which was capable of meeting their stringent performance criteria.

"We planned to integrate HP TRIM with our website management package to assist in making council information – notably planning documents – available via our website," commented Sedgemoor District Council's IS manager, Craig Wilkins.

Sedgemoor had already been working with Enterprise Content Management (ECM) solutions company GOSS since 2003 and planned to use GOSS' Intelligent Content Management software (iCM) longside Adobe Livecycle to publish documents stored in HP TRIM, on to the Council website.
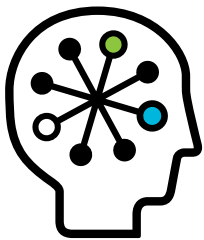
"The ability to create and maintain a high quality website in a structured, and controlled manner using a minimum of resources is an essential requirement for us," continued Wilkins. With approximately 4,000 pages to maintain, iCM takes the hard work out of managing a site of this size - enabling the small web team to focus their attentions on other issues."

 To date, Sedgemoor has trained over 80 people to use the iCM software and despite a wide and varied range of knowledge and experience within the council's user base, Sedgemoor has found that iCM could be quickly picked up by and adapted for even the most novice of PC users.

As for HP TRIM, approximately 300 users have been trained and deployed throughout Sedgemoor District Council's various departments and offices in line with the council's longer term transformation programme. As the roll-out continues, the benefits continue to emerge.

The outcome

Although originally Sedgemoor's EDRM initiative was mostly driven by regulatory and compliance issues, it is now delivering great benefits in other areas. The integration of HP TRIM, Adobe Livecycle and iCM will support the growth of public access to council information services. This is due in no small measure to HP TRIM, Adobe Livecycle and iCM's ability to dynamically integrate previously paper-based back office information into real-time, customer-facing services. The result is a holistic approach to the creation, storage and presentation of council information which offers a better service to the community; reduced costs associated with managing information and reduced time associated with retrieving information.

Technology for better business outcomes

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