

## Microsoft Office System — Case Study

*"Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007 holds great promise for us. It offers data preservation while promoting the flow of ideas and information in a way we never thought possible."*

— Harvard DEAS

### Harvard DEAS creates living knowledge base with the 2007 Microsoft Office system

#### Situation

The Harvard Division of Engineering and Applied Sciences (DEAS) is committed to educating across disciplines while balancing theory, experimentation and practice. In pursuit of this goal, the DEAS looks to improve efficiency in research and education with technology.

The DEAS faces several challenges as it promotes collaboration and data preservation in its labs. Currently, the flow of information in lab groups is often disjointed. After a paper is published, revisions, notes and lab data are often lost or inaccessible. Existing solutions are typically homegrown, lack platform independence and require costly customization and support. This not only creates inefficiency but also impedes the flow of ideas.

The DEAS will overcome these challenges by allowing researchers to work effectively, while improving collaboration and communication with fellow researchers.

#### Solution

As a participant in the Microsoft® Rapid Deployment Technology Adoption Program, the Harvard DEAS is deploying the 2007 Microsoft Office system. With Microsoft Office SharePoint® Server 2007, the division will create a centralized portal that will revolutionize the way research data is sourced and shared. The solution will allow researchers to create a living knowledge base by leveraging collaborative tools and searchable data for discussion and brainstorming.

The Office SharePoint Server 2007 portal will allow research groups to share their findings, propose and discuss ideas, solve problems, comment on and revise drafts and share multimedia files such as lab

experiments with the academic community. Researchers will be able to build communities around ideas and watch them grow while research papers are being developed. After a paper is published, all background information will remain on the portal for future reference.

Office SharePoint Server 2007 will also provide a framework for collaboration with academics outside the DEAS. It will include index and search capabilities, information flow support, customizable content access options and discussion boards. Students with no previous experience with Windows Server will be able to manage projects and create web parts in only a few days.

Student groups such as the Harvard Black Student Association will be able to use the solution to create websites and develop forms that will be accessible online. The association will use automated forms created with Microsoft Office InfoPath® 2007 for activities such as event registrations and surveys.

The solution will be developed almost exclusively out of the box, requiring limited customization. The platform-independent, Internet-based solution will benefit all users, accommodating the division's heavy use of Firefox and Safari browsers as well as UNIX. The Harvard DEAS believes the solution could extend across the university, so that anyone in the Harvard community can create a project portal.

#### Benefits

- To foster collaboration by creating a framework for idea generation, discussion, problem-solving and data sharing
- To preserve important data by creating a centralized Internet portal
- To potentially improve collaboration across the university, extending the solution to other departments and student groups

### Fast Facts

**Customer:** Harvard University **Web Site:** [www.harvard.edu](http://www.harvard.edu) **Country/Region:** United States **Industry:** Education

#### Customer Profile

Founded in 1636, Harvard is America's oldest university. It offers a curriculum of 3,500 courses, the world's largest university library system, a renowned faculty, and state-of-the-art research centers, laboratories and museums.

#### Software and Services

- The 2007 Microsoft® Office system
  - Microsoft Office SharePoint® Server 2007
  - Microsoft Office InfoPath® 2007

#### Business Situation Summary

A constant challenge for the Harvard DEAS is adapting academic processes to accommodate new technology which will improve collaboration and data preservation.

#### Microsoft confidential

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