# Community Encourages Reuse of IT Solutions

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| United States of AmericaCustomer ProfileThe Digital Preservation Network, managed by the Washington State Digital Archives, is dedicated to creating a community focused on preserving digital records and publications of government. http://www.digitalpreservationnetwork.org SituationFaced with managing growing volumes of data, Washington State Digital Archives needed a way to more effectively share and collaborate around IT solutions and best practices focused on digital preservation.SolutionWashington State Digital Archives created the Digital Preservation Network, which leverages the Microsoft Solutions Sharing Network and includes a centralized portal for collaboration built on Microsoft® Office SharePoint® Server 2007.Benefits • Increased productivity through reuse of information• Generation of new ideas with easy collaboration• Acceleration of decision-making capabilities by accessing a centralized portal • Decreased IT costs with availability to IT standards• Improved compliance and risk management with government mandates | “DPN is utilizing SSN for a specific need, taking a turnkey solution based on Microsoft® Office SharePoint® Server 2007 to create a community-based site with the purpose of sharing IT solutions worldwide."— Joshua Wall » Managing Consultant, InfostratTo share best practices and collaborate with organizations around the world, Washington State Digital Archives created the Digital Preservation Network (DPN), an online collaboration environment focused on preserving digital records and publications of government organizations. SituationWashington State Digital Archives and other public sector organizations worldwide are faced with ever-growing volumes of data that need to be preserved in digital form. This data can include anything stored in a digital medium, such as documents, pictures, videos, or audio recordings. In fact, according to a study done by the University of California, Berkeley in 2003, print, film, magnetic, and optical storage media produced about five exabytes of new information in 2002. To better understand the enormity of this information, five exabytes is equivalent in size to the information contained in 37,000 new libraries in the Library of Congress book collections.Digital archivists and other data experts across the globe are discovering new ways of managing this content, such as updated methods for indexing, retrieving, and presenting data, or which IT standards and data formats work best for classifying and sharing digital records. |
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| “The Digital Preservation Network is taking advantage of the latest in SharePoint technology.  The custom SSN community components have enabled us to create a global internet community dedicated to preserving digital content.  We are using the Microsoft Shared Source Licenses to make available source code for three tools that we have developed for Digital Archivists. This nonrestrictive license agreement will increase the pace of innovation and digital preservation for archives and libraries worldwide.”— Steve Excell » Assistant Secretary of State, State of Washington | The need for digital preservation is also being accelerated by legislation like Sarbanes Oxley in the United States, in addition to other government mandates that demand increased data transparency and reporting capabilities. While experts are developing new IT solutions and best practices to more effectively manage increasing volumes of data, they lack the ability to share their discoveries with colleagues across the globe. Without a mechanism for collaboration or a central point of access for sharing new ideas, public sector organizations are constantly reinventing the wheel.One of the government entities making important innovations related to digital preservation is the Washington State Digital Archives. Focused on digital data management as part of its “100 Year Program,” the organization is addressing guaranteed access and preservation of electronic files. Its main goal is to help solve key IT issues associated with digital preservation and establish IT standards for long-term storage. Recognizing a need for a more effective way to share its best practices and collaborate with other entities across the globe, the organization set out to create a digital archival community and turned to Microsoft for help.SolutionWashington State created DPN, a community dedicated to bringing together experts focused on the issue of preserving digital records and publications of government. DPN leverages the Microsoft Solutions Sharing Network (SSN), a program created by Microsoft to drive the sharing of IT solutions and best practices within public sector technical communities—in this case the DPN community.Microsoft Gold Partner Information Strategies ("Infostrat") helped make SSN a reality by building capabilities tailored to community and collaboration needs specifically for the public sector. Infostrat created membership features to enable SSN participant organizations like Washington State to generate community accounts, automate membership requests, create sites in one or two clicks, and manage passwords and memberships in a streamlined process. Additionally, Infostrat worked with Microsoft to deliver the critical capabilities of SSN that enable sharing of code between developers and participant organizations.Building on work initially completed by Planet Technologies, Infostrat is now working with Washington State to implement a centralized DPN portal built on Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007. The DPN portal functions as a repository for the exchange and discussion of ideas, research, strategy, and documents that can be used by other community members. The portal is hosted and managed by Washington State, which grants access to licenses for members and strives to make the portal a central access point for content  |
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|  | sharing and expertise related to digital data preservation.Washington State makes its intellectual property available to the worldwide community via the Microsoft Community License (Ms-CL). This type of license is commonly referred to as a reciprocal code license and carries specific requirements if DPN members choose to combine Washington State’s Ms-CL code with their own. The Ms-CL allows Washington State to maintain control of their applications and the direction of code text while providing community members read-only access to the code. With the ability to view the code Washington State has created, DPN members can more easily create their own customized applications. When building the DPN portal, Washington State chose to leverage “out-of-the-box” features in Office SharePoint Server 2007 like document management, which includes functionality such as versioning, check-in/check-out, document locking, and role-based access. Office SharePoint Server 2007 includes important features DPN needs to enhance community collaboration, such as support for wikis and discussion boards. DPN also leverages enterprise search, allowing archivists to quickly find information they need to be productive. Enabled by SharePoint technologies to facilitate the moving of content and the sharing of ideas, Washington State has created a flourishing community focused on digital preservation. DPN has also built customized features using Office SharePoint Server 2007, such as a method for backing up files and a “what’s hot” section that highlights popular information at the top of the DPN homepage. DPN also leverages other key elements of SSN, including community development activities like panel discussions or roundtables with subject-matter experts to share best practices associated with digital archival. The growing DPN community is being used by more than 300 digital archivists worldwide—including government entities such as the Library of Congress, British Library, Utah State Library, and the National Archives of Singapore—to share new content, code development, and other innovative ideas regarding digital preservation.BenefitsIn its first year of use, growth in the DPN has exceeded expectations. Membership has grown to more than 300 users, the volume of content managed on the portal is growing exponentially, and public sector organizations continue to make inquires around their digital preservation needs.Experts like Washington State that are developing new IT solutions and best practices now have the ability to collaborate and share discoveries with colleagues around the world. DPN functions as a collaborative focal point for |
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| For more informationFor general questions about Solutions Sharing Network, please email getssn@microsoft.com. Visit http://solshare.net, an online community to share public sector IT ideas and best practices. Visit the Digital Preservation Network at http://www.digitalpreservationnetwork.org or e-mail digitalarchives@secstate.wa.gov.  | capturing new ideas. The initiative has mobilized intellectual property related to digital preservation across local, state, and even international governments. The portal functions as a one-stop-shop for IT solutions and best practices, encouraging reuse and innovation throughout the public sector. Central access to information allows resources at member entities to be more productive, ensuring they don’t reinvent the wheel and can leverage their colleagues’ hard work.DPN is quickly setting IT standards related to data formats and digital classifications and, in doing so, is facilitating the development of new IT solutions. With the DPN, community members:• Increase productivity through reuse of information.• Generate new ideas quickly with easy collaboration.• Accelerate decision-making capabilities by accessing a centralized portal.• Decrease IT costs with availability to IT standards.• Improve compliance and risk management with government mandates.ConclusionUsing DPN, archivists and librarians worldwide can find information, exchange ideas, and share knowledge related to digitizing and archiving information. By leveraging SSN, a program that assists governments in developing thriving communities focused on sharing IT solutions and best practices, DPN has enabled a thriving global community of more than 300 members. As a global resource for digital data management, DPN is setting the standard for the future of digital preservation. |