



storm  
technology

# CASE STUDY

## Commissioner of Irish Lights

*Digital Transformation with M365*





## Helping Irish Lights Navigage Its Digital Transformation Journey

***With a legacy spanning over 200 years, the Commissioner of Irish Lights is committed to ensuring safe navigation at sea. Responsible for Maritime Aids to Navigation under the Safety of Life at Sea Convention, Irish Lights' unique remit includes the provision and maintenance of over 340 general aids to navigation (lighthouses, buoys, beacons etc), the superintendence of approximately 3,500 local aids to navigation and marking/removing dangerous wrecks around the coast.***

One of the most open economies in the world, Ireland is heavily reliant on trade and around 95% of our imports and exports are carried on ships. Each year, over 30 million tonnes of goods, almost 4 million passengers and more than 1 million containers pass through Irish ports. Aids to Navigation are a critical element in this transport chain, with the work done by Irish Lights to safeguard these aids, essential for the economy and public safety.

### A Vision for the Future

With a strategic focus on the provision of next generation navigation and maritime services, continual innovation resulted in the adoption and reliance on technology, data, and information systems. This combined with ongoing strategic and structural changes, process improvements and new service offerings, led to a cross functional review of business operations. The result, a multi-year Digital Transformation project that would leverage the Microsoft 365 platform to positively impact and benefit all employees through the enhancement of communication, collaboration, and knowledge management at Irish Lights.

Furthermore to support the long term success of this initiative and maximise the benefits of the system, people and culture were identified as key non-technical project deliverables, with change management a critical component of the OGP tender process.

Following initial market analysis and a detailed procurement exercise, Storm Technology was appointed as the implementation partner of choice to assist Irish Lights on the digital transformation journey. Speaking on this decision, John Burke, Director of Information & Communication Technology at Irish Lights stated, *"Storm has significant experience and a proven track record in delivering projects of this nature (from both the technical and business transformation perspective). They demonstrated significant knowledge and experience in the key factors for success including the collaboration and communication platform (MS Teams), Intranet and document management system development/deployment, change management, knowledge management, governance, and training."*

### Knowledge Management for the Modern Business

Underpinning communication and collaboration across the organisation, a review and redesign of the existing information architecture proved an essential first step. With the existing information architecture primarily tied to business departments,

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John Burke  
Director of Information & Communication Technology  
Irish Lights

evolution in the business structure over time had added complexity, something the new solution would seek to address.

To ensure the new information architecture would meet the existing needs of the organisation and future-proof knowledge management in the years ahead the new architecture was designed around business function. Reflecting the way Irish Lights works rather than the business structure, a functional based approach ensures the information architecture would remain unaffected as the business structure evolved. Storm's Business Analysts completed a series of workshops with the various business functions. During these workshops Storm's team gained an in depth understanding of existing processes and workflows, including how employees currently collaborated, created, shared, and published content. As part of the project delivery, Storm helped business users work through the desired outcomes to establish an optimal information architecture going forward.

Leveraging this information architecture, the new document management solution built on SharePoint ensures the elimination of information silos within the business. SharePoint's enhanced search capabilities ensure faster identification and retrieval of information while version control and co-authoring enable real-time collaboration, regardless of physical location.

Accessibility challenges were addressed with the application of more modern and appropriate security and clear guidance and controls designed around document security and governance going forward. *"Previously if you did not know something existed you couldn't find it, therefore what we ended up with were multiple iterations of the same content. If you were not put into a specific security group, you couldn't see data or information created or stored by previous colleagues. Now everyone can see the information available via a clear hierarchical information structure, similar to File Explorer. You might not have access to all the files, but you can see it is there and request access."* explained Denise Beardmore, Business Solutions Manager at Irish Lights.

### Enhancing Communication & Collaboration

With geographically dispersed teams, including some working at sea with limited accessibility, Irish Lights as part of their M365 Digital Transformation initiative sought to further enhance collaboration and communication across the organisation. The Lens, an intranet built on SharePoint, provides Irish Lights with a central solution for all corporate communications, providing an alternative and reducing the dependence on emails while enabling employees to stay connected regardless of physical location and across multiple devices. Similar to the document management system, clarity around governance ensures the longevity and integrity of the solution, with Orchestry, a best in breed governance management solution added to re-enforce and report on governance going forward.

To further boost communication and collaboration both the document management and intranet solutions were integrated to Microsoft Teams, to provide a centralised portal for day-to-day interactions. *"The fact that all systems are integrated ensures you can work seamlessly, you can fire up Microsoft Teams or M365 in the morning and then work in the DMS directly within these environments. You don't have to jump*

*"The fact that all systems are integrated ensures you can work seamlessly, you can fire up Microsoft Teams or M365 in the morning and then work in the DMS directly within these environments. You don't have to jump between systems or open legacy data sources, you can simply work across all applications within Teams."*

Denise Beardmore,  
Business Solutions Manager,  
Irish Lights

*between systems or open legacy data sources, you can simply work across all applications within Teams"* commented Beardmore.

### Keeping People at the Heart of Digital Transformation

Running in parallel to the technical and business analysis streams, there was a third stream, one focused on navigating the human side of technical change. Speaking on the importance of this stream Burke stated, *"We viewed the project as a digital transformation initiative, so it really is a journey. We wanted to bring all employees with us on this journey. Almost everyone in the organisation was involved in the information architecture review, so it wasn't a top-down imposed solution. We knew it wasn't just a matter of technology, although obviously it is a central aspect, we set out to really maximise the benefits of the system for our employees and the organisation and we knew the human and cultural side of business change would be essential for project success."*

In line with the emphasis placed by Irish Lights on employee engagement as part of their tender process, a 6-week roll out cycle for the DMS was deployed, keeping user adoption and change management to the fore. While weeks 1-3 focused on raising awareness and the facilitation of populating the staging area, week 4 focused on data migration, including clear communications around content migration deadlines. Weeks 5 and 6 centred on solution go-live, validation of data migration and provision of hyper-care and drop-in clinics to support the training programme. This approach not only ensured clarity for employees at all stages of the project roll out but also provided an opportunity for employees to gain exposure to the new information structure and become familiar with it prior to migrating to the new document management solution.

With the completion of the Information Architecture redesign and the introduction of M365 solutions, Irish Lights are set to embark on the next stage of their digital transformation journey, with the adoption of increased process automation to deliver enhanced operational efficiency and improved employee experiences.

***Looking to unlock the potential of digital transformation within your organisation. [Request a call](#) with one of our solution specialists.***

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