CASE STUDY

Córas Iompair Éireann - CIE

Leverages SharePoint to Drive Cross Functional Productivity Gains

Iconic Irish Transport Group, CIE, Transforms Business Performance with SharePoint

Well known for its strengths as a document management solution, SharePoint started life in the CIE Group as a point solution implemented to meet the document management needs of mechanical engineers in the Irish Rail Division of the company. Today it's usage has mushroomed, with the solution now one of the Group's most invaluable IT platforms.

What's intriguing about SharePoint's growth and expansion at CIE is how it spread organically through a steady increase in demand from end users as they experienced the platform firsthand, saw what it could do and understood how it could be applied to their area of the business to help improve performance.

From simple beginnings, SharePoint is now used extensively throughout the Group. CIE Group IT&T use it to manage the full range of IT services support and help-desk functions. From help desk portal, to full end-to-end procurement administration, through to complete project and portfolio management, SharePoint is now the backbone of the IT&T services and support infrastructure.

The growth and expansion of SharePoint has naturally brought benefits; productivity, process improvement and speed are three key areas where the CIE group has gained from the extensive use of the SharePoint platform.

Background
CIE group is a long-standing icon in the Irish public services sector, responsible for providing public transport services across Ireland, the group is made up of four key divisions - Irish Rail, Dublin Bus, Bus Eireann and CIE tours.

Collectively the group employs over 12,000 people whose needs are services by the CIE Group IT&T.

The Early Days
The initial impetus to deploy SharePoint in the CIE group was driven by the document management needs of the mechanical engineers operating in the Irish Rail division.

Responsible for the smooth and safe running of Ireland's network of trains, employees needed a single document repository where they could be assured that the latest, most relevant, accurate information and documentation they required were stored, coupled with smart search capabilities to enable easy and effective retrieval.

Speaking on this initial project Amy Richards, Service Desk Manager at CIE Group stated; *"SharePoint was originally chosen for a proof of concept and from that it became clear it was the ideal solution to deliver on the document management needs of our mechanical engineers. It provided a single place to store all the divisions critical documentation. Our engineers could get what they needed quickly and with the confidence that the information was accurate, up-to-date and authorised for use".*

This early exposure to SharePoint and the emerging understanding of the power of the platform led to its expanded use in other areas of the CIE Group.

Firstly, Group IT&T saw the opportunity to deploy SharePoint as the backbone of its internal help desk portal. After working

> "Two years ago SharePoint was used purely as a document management solution for our mechanical engineers in the Irish Rail Division of the CIE Group. Today it has grown to become one of our most invaluable platforms from which we run multiple business solutions, used by hundreds of people across many divisions. It's a real case of from little acorns tall oaks grown"
>
> Amy Richards
> Service Desk Manager
> CIE

with Storm Technology the team created a one-stop portal for all staff to use. The portal enabled people to report and track IT issues or support requests, it provided up-to-date, accurate information on IT processes, approved documentation along with providing relevant contact details for internal support teams and approved third parties.

"Because people were getting a better service faster using the new help desk portal, it got them thinking about other business processes in the company that would benefit from SharePoint. And they came to us to see if they were do-able" explained Richards.

What followed was interesting - to say the least!

Growth & Expansion
Today SharePoint is widely used across the CIE Group with its growth and expansion driven by the first-hand user experience of the benefits it could bring. The platform is now the backbone for many of CIE's business solutions and is responsible for the automation of manual processes across the organisation.

For example working with the team at Storm Technology, Group IT&T expanded its use of SharePoint from a straightforward IT Help Desk Portal to a full IT Support Site that delivers a myriad of services including;

- **End-to-end Administration for the IT Procurement Process -** from enabling initial end user requests to providing details on approved providers along with all the relevant documentation and the automaton of simple and complex approval processes, SharePoint underpins the many end-to-end administration processes.

- **Server Build Request -** the automation of each stage required in a server build with workflows to ensure the correct steps are followed and approvals sought. Dashboards and reports from SharePoint show the stage of progress for any request and transparency into any roadblocks that might be encountered.

- **Product & Service Deployment** - IT&T deploy SharePoint and project server to manage the end-to-end processes associated with IT project requests that come from divisions across the group. The solutions are the central hub to which all requests are submitted - meaning that at a glance IT&T get a clear understanding of existing and future demands on their resources. Full details of costs, resources and timelines for all standard IT services are provided so that other business areas can see the impact of what they are requesting and set expectations accordingly.

Project server in conjunction with SharePoint provides a central project management hub under which sits a myriad of sub-sites that cover all current projects within IT&T. These sub-sites provide 100% visibility into where resources are being focused and progress against KPI's.

In addition to the expansion of SharePoint across Group IT&T, other areas of the organisation have benefited too. The group's HR and Finance function use the SharePoint platform to

> "For them business the benefits are clear - using SharePoint to run multiple business solutions drives productivity and cost reductions.
>
> Amy Richards
> Service Desk Manager
> CIE

automate certain processes as well as run internal staff surveys.

The platform is used by CIE tours as the portal, document management and interactive discussion board to drive the development of its annual brochure. Workflows govern approval processes and trigger notification and alerts to keep progress on track.

"The SharePoint platform is now critical to our business because it touches so many parts of our organisation. From the simple complex end-to-end management of our entire portfolio of IT projects SharePoint is the platform powering the end solutions" continued Richards.

Where to next?
The CIE Group intends to continue to expand its use of SharePoint to automate processes and provide business solutions to meet the needs of the different areas of the business.

For Group IT&T one thing was key; having a good partner on board for the journey. For them that partner was Storm Technology - technically strong in their understanding of SharePoint and commercially astute in their ability to understand the different business needs of CIE.

"Storm Technology has been involved in the roll out and expansion of the SharePoint platform since day one. We rely on them for day-to-day SharePoint support - so as we can focus on our own jobs - as well as being a trusted partner that can help us understand the best way to use the platform and deploy it to deliver the business solutions we seek

With Storm as our partner of choice, we believe the expansion of SharePoint across the business is an ongoing journey. There are still many areas of our business where SharePoint can bring value - it's the beauty of having a platform versus a point solution" concluded Richards.

Considering updating your existing business operations and technology infrastructure? Or simply looking to maximise return on SharePoint investment? Click here to request a call with a member of our SharePoint team.

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