

Rangitikei District Council Enhances Information Management, Security, and Accessibility with M365

Information Leadership's expertise and guidance helped maximise impact with minimal resources.



Overview

In early 2022, the Rangitikei District Council (RDC) began its journey towards adopting a new modern digital workplace that would support its staff in creating, maintaining and getting the most from Council information.

The initial scope was to migrate data to SharePoint Online creating a single source of unstructured information. It was intended that this would boost efficiency, increase knowledge, improve security, and implement more effective working methods.

During the project, RDC identified new opportunities and, with the support of Information Leadership (IL), were able to swiftly adapt to incorporate these into the project.

The augmented project delivered enhanced information management, security and accessibility all while maximising the use of existing resources and minimising costs to Council and ultimately ratepayers.

Challenges

RDC faced several challenges that meant that they needed to make a change:

- Finding a cost-effective solution to manage information efficiently
- RDC's on-premise SharePoint 2013 repository was reaching its retirement

- RDC needed a consistent and efficient approach to managing information while meeting PRA and privacy obligations
- Enhancing security and accessibility for field and remote access to information was essential
- And leadership and staff recognised that they had a significant opportunity to innovate and introduce modern working methods.

Solution

Recognising the importance of well-managed workspaces (to support current needs and potential future AI opportunities), the project evolved from a simple migration to a complete redesign with PRA compliant workspaces.

CHALLENGES

Limited resources: small organisation with limited budget.

Legacy system: on-premise SharePoint 2013 nearing retirement.

Information risk: lack of information governance causing security concerns.

Lack of process: no automated processes and workflows for document control.

Single source of truth: need to integrate systems to better manage information.

Ways to work: in need of modernisation.



With the help of Information Leadership, we were able to adapt and incorporate new opportunities into the project without adding significant costs.

They helped us to leverage tools like SharePoint Online, M365 Teams, and the integration of the MagiQ property database to achieve our project goals.

– Karin Cruywagen, Manager Information Services, RDC



SOLUTIONS



Working with RDC's project team, IL and RDC assessed systems and processes as well as leveraging IL's extensive experience in delivering M365 solutions for New Zealand councils. The solution included:

- Migrating from SharePoint 2013 to SharePoint Online
- Deploying M365 Teams to enhance collaboration
- Integrating the MagiQ property database
- Developing a SharePoint Kiosk for public access to digital property records
- Implementing document retention and disposal rules
- Setting up an External Guest Management system for onboarding external users and assigning permissions.

Implementation

The project was delivered in phases, with continuous feedback loops to ensure that the needs of the Council and community were top of mind and the project stayed on track and within budget.

IL provided in-depth training for RDC's IT team so they could take a leading role in project delivery, successfully migrating data and completing simple site builds, and reducing costs. Key steps included:

- Reviewing and designing new Enterprise Content Management (ECM) workspaces before moving data.
- Setting up a new digital workplace tailored to RDC's needs:
 - **New Intranet:** Connects team to news, guides, and reference materials.
 - **Workplace Architecture:** Automated metadata integrates workspaces and improves search.
 - **Activity Workspaces:** Centralises documents and content for better collaboration.
 - **Secure Site Solutions:** Manages confidential files, contracts, and Council information securely.
 - **Team Management Workspaces:** Streamlines administration, planning, strategy, and reporting.

- **Enterprise-wide Search:** Uses metadata for searches across the site.
- **New Tools:** Workflows, forms, and Microsoft PowerBI enhance business processes and reporting.
- **Document Management:** Enables file retention, disposal, adoption, and bulk actions.
- **Microsoft Teams:** Standardises communication, file management, and collaboration.
- **Universal Content Accessibility:** Allows secure access to content from any device, anywhere, including offline via OneDrive for Business.
- **Database Integration:** GoGet and MagiQ databases now integrate with SharePoint Online.
- **Team Training:** IL trained RDC's IT team to handle the project, reducing costs for RDC and hence the community.

Results

The project led to significant improvements in information management, system integration, collaboration and creating a single source of truth for property records. Key benefits included:

- Enhanced collaboration and communication through Microsoft Teams
- Secure access to content from any device, anywhere, including offline via OneDrive for Business
- File retention, disposal, and adoption processes
- Streamlined administration, planning, strategy, and reporting through Team Management Workspaces.

Conclusion

RDC's successful implementation of a new modern digital workplace is an excellent example of collaboration and innovation, and efficient use of existing resources. Working with IL, the Council achieved enhanced benefits for both their workforce and the community. By leveraging IL's expertise, additional requirements were able to be incorporated while still completing the project on schedule and on budget.

Senior Consultant, Lydia Crowe, who was the Project Lead for Information Leadership comments: "The partnership approach adopted by RDC meant that more benefits could be delivered than anticipated and the combined project team derived huge satisfaction from the project."

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