

# Software for the Agile Business.



## Teamwork makes the dream work for Santos

### Company Profile

Santos is a pioneer of the Australian oil and gas industry. They have a majority interest in the Cooper/Eromanga Basins' oil and gas fields located in Central Australia where they operate production facilities. Santos produces more gas than any other company in Australia, supplying gas to all mainland States and Territories; they are also a significant producer of oil. Santos boasts assets totalling more than four billion dollars and employs around 1,600 people. Over the past decade, Santos has expanded its business internationally and now operates six major business units in some of Australia's harshest and most challenging environments both onshore and offshore, in South East Asia and in the United States. Santos's vision is to be recognised by their stakeholders and peers as a top quartile energy company by 2003. An aggressive program has been put in place to meet these targets.

### Business Scenario

Each of Santos's business units was serviced by its own intranet. These had been developed in isolation and reflected the individual needs of each business unit at the time. In such a geographically large and widely dispersed working environment, this separation between business units raised a number of company-wide communication and collaboration challenges.

It was the arrival of Santos's new CEO, John Ellice-Flint, which drove the company to look for better ways of working. Ellice-Flint's vision was for 'One Santos' – a company where the expertise and experience of its workforce could be best capitalised upon and where the knowledge and expertise of people within the organisation was recognised as one of its strongest assets.

This vision required an effective tool for tapping into the collective intelligence of the organisation, aggregating and sharing that knowledge, and then providing a single point of access to information so that it could empower Santos's employees. It also required better ways for communicating information, and flexible methods for allowing employees to share and collaborate on projects and to learn from each other's experience.

Although each business unit worked well within itself, it was the separation of the business units which made it difficult to share and collaborate, and made whole-company communication awkward. Santos's vision was not being supported with the existing technology infrastructure, and it had become clear that changes would need to be made if the vision was to become reality.

### Business Solution

Santos required a solution which would enable them to remove the barriers between business units, to enable staff to facilitate, access and share information and resources globally. It was obvious that a single

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Jo Brennan  
Knowledge Manager,  
Santos

#### Organisation

Santos

#### Web Site

[www.santos.com](http://www.santos.com)

#### Industry

Petroleum

#### Business Scenario Summary

In line with the CEO's vision, information from Santos's individual business units needed to be merged in order to maximise the value of this information and locate the expertise of their people. Santos wanted a unified environment for their people to publish and trade knowledge, and also provide a means to be able to locate the right people and expertise anytime, anywhere.

access point to all business unit resources would enable employees to share their experiences both within the organisation and to build a working environment where it was possible to share, learn from and support each other.

### **A Portal for All of Santos**

To achieve this, Santos teamed with Microsoft Certified Gold Partner, OBS Ltd, to design and implement an entirely new company intranet. This new intranet would act as a portal for information within the organisation, assuming the key role of connecting people within Santos's overall knowledge strategy. The key technology in enabling this new intranet is Microsoft's Digital Dashboard. It provides a centralised portal which enables the collection of information from multiple sources and presents it in a simple, browser-based format. The result is a next-generation intranet where corporate information can be easily accessed.

The Digital Dashboard solution was developed by OBS and focuses on ease of use. It enables instant publishing where anyone within the organisation with the appropriate authority can easily add content to the company site. The solution has inbuilt facilities for applying consistent formatting so, no matter who adds or edits content, the overall look and feel of the site has uniformity, thereby increasing usability and reducing training costs.

In keeping with the company's exploration and drilling activities, the new intranet solution has been named 'The Well' – a place for exploring Santos's information and knowledge.

### **Exploring The Well**

The Well contains press announcements, company news, announcements from management, reports and planning information. It extends to every business unit in Australia and overseas, so all staff have access to the same information and the same ability to publish and add content. Because of its global reach, The Well is providing powerful 'anywhere, any time' accessibility to mission-critical information. It is proving beneficial to Santos's many teams working across the globe and around the clock. Based on Microsoft's SharePoint™ technology, The Well will provide methods for prioritising and flagging information so it is published in the right place at the right time. The Digital Dashboard concept means information appears within The Well based on users' preferences. However, there will always be huge amounts of information contained deep within The Well, so Santos is working to develop powerful search capabilities for extracting this information.

### **Global Collaboration**

As well as providing The Well as an overall knowledge portal, Santos were also looking for ways of connecting its people, allowing them to capitalise on their shared expertise. The SharePoint technology underlying The Well provides a great deal of functionality to allow for such collaboration. SharePoint Team Services provides inbuilt ability for ad hoc information sharing, team Web sites, discussion boards and surveys. The power of this ability to collaborate is amplified by the fact that all six of Santos's business units are able to participate simultaneously, providing a unique means for all employees to plug into the experience and knowledge of their colleagues.

### **Building the Team with TeamLink**

Of course, people can only collaborate if they can find each other. To address this, Santos and OBS worked together to develop a specialised application called TeamLink. Based on Microsoft's SQL Server™ database, TeamLink is a key application running within The Well and acts as a powerful company-wide directory where employees can create their own personal profiles, add details about their experience,

### **Business Solution Summary**

A custom designed intranet, tying together six global business units, integrating and unifying information sharing across these business units and management streams. The system also provided a means for working collaboratively on projects online, to further assist employees with sharing their knowledge.

Finally, the solution contains an application called TeamLink which acts as a powerful company-wide directory, enabling Santos's employees to find colleagues with certain skills or experience.

expertise, skills and abilities. Since launching five months ago, over 50 percent of staff have added their profiles. This has made TeamLink the key knowledge application, where employees can find each other in order to solve problems and provide assistance. While Santos recognises that TeamLink is not yet complete, more than anything, TeamLink has been about culture change and this is an ongoing process.

TeamLink has been purposely designed in an unstructured way, to encourage employees to contribute in whatever way makes the most sense to them. Some use a fill-in-the-form approach; some include their CV, others personal photos. The SQL database underlying TeamLink enables data to be captured in a huge variety of formats, which builds an environment of trust between people, puts a human face to the technology, and offers further encouragement for people to contribute to it.

### **Ensuring success with a Microsoft Certified Partner**

Santos chose to work with OBS, a Melbourne-based Microsoft Certified Gold Partner, due to their impressive track record in helping businesses use intranet technology to improve corporate communication. Working collaboratively, OBS and members of the Santos's intranet team worked to prepare, design and implement both The Well and TeamLink within seven months. For both teams, it was an opportunity to trade ideas, capitalise on each other's experience and expertise and to produce a final solution that more than met the expectations of the design brief. The Santos team was exceptionally impressed with the proficiency and skill set that OBS brought to the project. As Jo Brennan, Knowledge Manager at Santos, reinforces, "OBS were excellent. They offered the right technical assistance with support, advice and encouragement".

### **Benefits**

Both The Well and TeamLink have provided infrastructure for moving the company into line with the vision of CEO, Ellice-Flint. They have made great strides in helping Santos achieve its overall knowledge strategy of connecting people.

### **Shared IQ**

As an example of knowledge-sharing, Jo Brennan cites an instance where a Brisbane-based employee had files created by a very specialised software package and was unable to open them and get on with the job of interpreting the data. "These files were quite complex and required someone with experience in using the package to open them," notes Brennan. "This person spent quite some time trying a number of different approaches to opening the files, including asking a number of people in their immediate area, all without success. A look in TeamLink revealed five other people who had experience using the particular software package. One of them was contacted via phone and the files were opened within minutes. Prior to TeamLink, that person would have had no easy way of finding or connecting with the experience of their colleagues. Finding an answer alone would have been far more difficult." On a lighter note, TeamLink was also used to assemble cricket teams for a cross-company challenge. An unexpected but very positive use of TeamLink!

### **Collaboration**

The Digital Dashboard engine driving The Well has allowed a level of company-wide communication and collaboration that was previously impossible to achieve. It has enabled Santos's people to be truly part of the same team, aware of company news and issues, getting the information they need. It no longer matters whether they happen to work in the Adelaide head office, the Jakarta or US offices or the remote areas of the Cooper Basin – everyone has access to the same information. This uniformity is a powerful factor in bringing the Santos

#### **Partner Details**

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#### **Benefits**

Santos can now centrally manage and share information across an international business environment, making it possible to leverage the skills and expertise of their people in a way not previously possible.

team together.

There is a drive to provide relevant and interesting content to populate the intranet. For example, an employee who was leaving the company was encouraged to share some of her knowledge and experiences before she left. The resulting video footage will be available via The Well, providing compelling content, and at the same time, capturing some of her extensive knowledge for the future. It is this culture of valuing the knowledge contained with the organisation that will provide the greatest benefit to Santos.

Brennan sums it up by saying, "These new technologies will enable us to become a more flexible company who will be able find the 'smarts' among the people in the organisation easily".

## Technology

Santos's has traditionally taken a 'best-of-breed' approach to its technology. They are now moving towards minimising the number of systems and standardising where possible. Brian Cook from OBS comments, "The real advantage of working with Microsoft products is the way they integrate with each other. It's the integration between them that leads to a synergy where the overall solution is far more powerful than just the separate components on their own. Combine that with the fact that the server products work so well with the desktop products like Windows® and Office, which everyone already understands, and the overall solution is even more attractive".

It is this synergy between the components that has provided Santos with the simplicity and elegance of the final solution. The combination of Active Directory™ and SQL Server provides a powerful and flexible means for storing huge amounts of data, making it easily accessible to those who need it. SharePoint technologies have simplified the way employees are able to collaborate and work together online; Media Server allows the creation of compelling multimedia content, while ISA Server offers security and performance for the network. All this is made available using the familiar Windows environment, with a single set of credentials.

## Maximising Success

Jo Brennan comments, "Working with OBS gave us confidence and assurance that we were heading in the right direction. They listened to our requirements and collaboratively made decisions with our team. It was this collaborative approach that allowed us to truly push the envelope".

Throughout the development and continuing into the implementation stage, OBS services have provided Santos with ongoing support, helping them to achieve their goals. The two teams meet frequently to ensure ideas and systems run an optimum level and that new ideas are able to be incorporated into future development.

## The Future

Santos knows that The Well solution will continue to evolve in line with the company's strategy. Importantly, Santos is focused on adding ongoing content to the intranet, giving TeamLink depth, responding to user feedback and working on issues around cultural change.

As Jo Brennan states, "While this sort of technology is definitely going to be huge part of our future and this solution is a great foundation. What we've done is build the platform for the company's knowledge strategy. We now have the team, tools and framework to deliver a world-class information and knowledge solution".

### Microsoft Technology

- Microsoft Digital Dashboard
- Microsoft Active Directory
- Microsoft Sharepoint Portal Server
- Microsoft Sharepoint Team Services
- Microsoft ISA Server
- Windows 2000 Server
- SQL Server 2000
- Windows Media™ Server



### For more information

For more information about Microsoft products or services in Australia, contact Microsoft on 13 20 58. To access information via the Web, go to [www.microsoft.com/australia/business](http://www.microsoft.com/australia/business)

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