

Department Of Correction "Set Free" With WebSphere Portal

Overview

Description

- ✓ Employee Portal

Software

- ✓ IBM WebSphere Portal
- ✓ IBM Lotus Web Content Management

Benefits

- ✓ Exposes the department's assets and centralizes data
- ✓ Provides transparency and accountability of daily operations
- ✓ Information is obtained and displayed through the portal

Client Background

This Department of Correction handles on average 16,000 inmates daily making it one of the largest state correctional systems in the country. In addition to its well-known prison, they have a combined capacity of approximately 3,000 detainees facing or on trial. The Department also operates four other facilities, 16 court detention facilities and three hospital prison wards.



Business Problem

This Department of Correction (DOC) is a culturally complex organization which needs to communicate internally critical issues, such as policies and events, quickly, consistently and effectively — and in accordance with the Mayor's Office mission statement which calls for, "transparency, accountability and accessibility." A top priority for the DOC was to modernize their IT infrastructure in an effort to improve overall processes. With little to no online presence and a lack of centralization of information for its employees (administrative and officers), the DOC relied on daily teletype printouts to relay important policies and procedures. Additionally, without an easily accessible repository of information, the training and welfare of its Correction Officers lacked consistency.

Solution

The DOC's goal was achieved with their first foray into an online presence — an employee portal — which exposes their assets and centralizes their data in "real time." Its IT initiatives are structured by the ability to communicate goals, policies, status, events and management metrics. Portal is the centerpiece to fulfill that key objective.

Previously, such things as their primary indicator reports (KPIs) prepared for their monthly management meetings were "hidden" in spreadsheets. Prolifics implemented WebSphere Portal allowing the DOC to not only make the information readily available, but made them searchable too, increasing overall awareness throughout the organization. These reports included information vital to the analysis of daily operations including number of slashings/stabbings, discoveries of contraband (drugs and weapons) with visitors and inmates, cleanliness of showers, climate control, inmate/doctor response times, etc. By making these metrics visible and standard the DOC is addressing two of the Mayor's Office's mission goals of transparency and accountability — already seen as a real but necessary cultural change.

The portal also provided benefit to Correction Officers who are the agency's frontline. In a position of true power and moral challenges, success is based on their abilities to make the right decisions every step of the way. Consequences are dire with any mistake they make having the potential to

(Continued on page 2)

end their career. With a wealth of policies and procedures required for the job, it is also difficult to maintain retention during upfront training. With a portal, the DOC can now have an online repository of policies and procedures including video tutorials on such matters as how to administer drug tests, why routine inspection tours are important, proper ways to look for weapons and proper way to conduct strip searches. It is of great importance to these officers, who are rotating responsibilities and may not have prior experience in one or more of the procedures, to have access to this information.

Document management via Lotus Web Content Management (WCM) now allows all of the policies and procedures which were previously PDFs and WordPerfect files, sitting in directories and daunting to locate, to be all online and searchable, providing a big step forward in the exposure of their assets. Operations orders are not only searchable, but associated documents are featured with results. Additionally with the power of a content management system, the department's non-technical personnel are able to maintain and post the content to the portal.

DOC's Public Information Office also benefits from the new portal with their ability to aggregate news stories about and affecting the agency and directly post them to the site via WCM instead of emailing the 6 megabyte document of news clippings out daily which would cause a choke on their servers. Again, having the news archive searchable increases access and use of the information.

As a first, but important step, the Department of Correction's portal has been well received and is establishing itself as the "go to" place for information with limitless potential. The portal is being planned for phase two which may include enhancements such as role-based customization of content, integrating a business intelligence backbone using Cognos, a full-featured inmate lookup, knowledge sharing and document retention, and dashboards to relay their primary indicator reports.

About Prolifics, a SemanticSpace Company

Prolifics is the largest systems integrator specializing in IBM technologies. Having garnered awards for its solutions and technical excellence across IBM's entire software portfolio, Prolifics provides expert services including architectural advisement, design, development and deployment of end-to-end SOA, Portal and Security solutions. SemanticSpace, Prolifics' parent company, is a global IT services firm providing application development, testing, application maintenance and outsourcing services. Bringing over 30 years of experience and a strong global presence across the US, Europe and Asia, the SemanticSpace companies offer clients end-to-end services combined with the market's most seasoned and skilled consultants and the dedicated care and attention that comes from a highly-specialized, boutique company. By combining application frameworks, prebuilt components, custom development expertise, a governance framework and a blended shore model, we help organizations decrease risk in complex software development and deployment investments, improve time to market and increase success of business strategy execution.



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