WHITE PAPER:

STRATEGIC IMPACT PILLARS FOR ACHIEVING ENTERPRISE COLLABORATION USING MICROSOFT® SHAREPOINT®

IntelliDyne, LLC
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Executive Summary

The purpose of this white paper is to introduce IntelliDyne's Four Strategic Impact Pillars to help government CIOs effectively utilize Microsoft® SharePoint® to achieve enterprise collaboration. As the very nature of the modern enterprise changes with employees dispersed across regions, time zones and cultures, encouraging collaboration and realizing its benefits has become a difficult challenge.

The Federal Government recognizes the importance of collaboration, and a primary mission of the government's CIO Council is to foster collaboration among its Chief Information Officers.[1]

Additionally, the increasing amount of information collected by enterprises further exacerbates the collaboration challenge, since documents and data are typically sprawled across platforms and applications in a wide array of formats and file types. Enterprise leaders, including CIOs and IT management, are looking for tools that can give organization members and partners the information they need when and where they need it.

A comprehensive approach to information and data management also provides the opportunity to improve collaboration, thereby more effectively leveraging the information through a highly utilized knowledge base. All related content is available, from policies and procedures to social media, across even the most dispersed organizations, leading to improved results and reducing waste.

Microsoft SharePoint has evolved to be a powerful Enterprise Content Management (ECM) system that provides extensive capabilities for its users to create, collaborate, find, and use all forms of content. If the questions are, "How can we successfully collaborate to create content and information, and how can we consolidate our data to make it more accessible?" then SharePoint may be the answer.

This paper delineates the four pillars for government agency CIOs to achieve enterprise collaboration using Microsoft SharePoint:

- *Create an Enterprise Collaboration Strategy*
- *Enterprise Governance to Achieve Collaboration*
- *Implement Proper Collaboration Technologies*
- *Find the Right Partner to Help Realize Collaboration Goals*

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[1] CIO.gov. "Fostering Interagency Collaboration." CIO Council. April 2012..http://www.cio.gov/module.cfm/node/peopleorg/
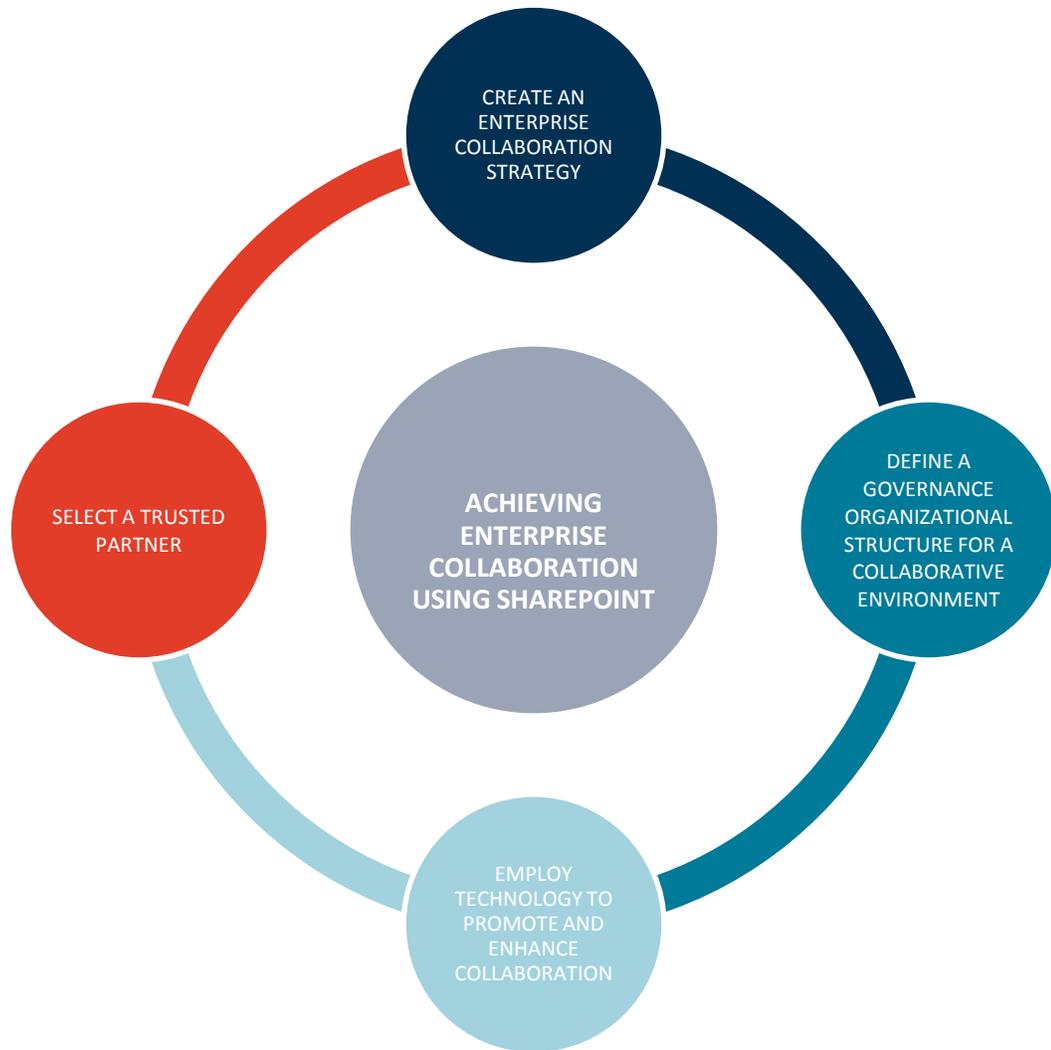
Figure 1: IntelliDyne's Strategic Impact Pillars for Achieving Enterprise Collaboration Using Microsoft SharePoint

THE POWER OF ENTERPRISE COLLABORATION

The greatest resource of an enterprise is its members. Their skills and their knowledge are what make the organization run on a daily basis, but they also remain one of the greatest untapped resources in the enterprise. The collective knowledge of an organization's members is a powerful and positive force if it can be usefully employed.

The problem is that information remains highly siloed. The knowledge and skills of individual members typically only impact the activities and processes in which they directly participate. The knowledge they have, the skills they employ, as well as their lessons learned are rarely shared or employed outside their sphere or silo.

Technology in the workplace has actually increased the isolation and siloing of employees. Technical tools have enabled employees to work more independently and complete more tasks on their own, which have definite productivity advantages. On the other hand, working more independently means less collaboration, reducing the formal and informal networks throughout the organization and significantly decreasing the diffusion of knowledge. People know more about what they are doing, but less about what is going on in other parts of the organization as they work less with other team members.

Collaboration is a positive force in an agency or enterprise. Consider how collaboration can impact an organization:

Expanded Knowledge Base: More people know more, period. Research clearly shows that more people and more diversity involved in solving problems or creating new products and approaches leads to more innovative and effective results.

Knowledge Diffusion: Real collaboration means shared knowledge and experiences. Information is more freely transmitted through formal and informal networks. This leads to improved results and efficiency.

Reduce Redundant Efforts: When an organization works in silos, work is frequently duplicated all over the organization. Without collaboration, no one knows what other parts of the organization are doing, and everyone starts from square one to solve similar or redundant problems, implement related improvements, or improve communication with suppliers or customers. Collaboration means that solutions and enhancements employed in one area are more readily known. Work is more easily shared and built upon instead of completely recreating something that has already been done elsewhere in the organization.

It is apparent that the greater the size and breadth of an organization, the greater the power of collaboration. Given the size and breadth of governmental agencies and bodies, the potential benefits of collaboration are enormous. As more is demanded from fewer resources at commercial and governmental enterprises, collaboration is an untapped potential for breakthrough results.

Successful enterprise collaboration takes more than just technology. It requires an organizational culture derived from a clear strategy and proper governance that encourages and values collaboration.

STRATEGIC IMPACT PILLAR 1: CREATE AN ENTERPRISE COLLABORATION STRATEGY

Rarely does anything positive happen in a large organization by accident. It takes planning and clear strategies to achieve positive results. This is certainly true for enterprise collaboration. Collaboration that leads to better results achieved more efficiently is usually the result of a collaborative culture that is fostered and enhanced by the organization's leadership.

Collaboration strategy includes finding the way to fulfill general collaboration benefits in agency- or organization-specific ways. Strategy begins with a comprehensive assessment. This requires asking important questions and clearly understanding what currently happens in the organization. What collaboration currently takes place? Are there examples of the lack of collaboration leading to poor results? Is similar work being repeated in different places in the organization?
After it is understood where the organization currently stands, another critical component in strategy is setting goals for collaboration that delineate where the organization should be in the future. Most goals are based on how collaboration can bring value to the organization, such as taking advantage of opportunities or addressing weaknesses.

Once current and future positions are known, a pathway can be charted between them. This calls for specific actions, including fleshing out the remaining three pillars with specific action plans of their own.   Strategies should also include the following:

- Specific milestones that are clearly communicated
- Metrics and analysis across a spectrum of processes
- Well-defined responsibilities
- Training, oversight, auditing, and rewards

STRATEGIC IMPACT PILLAR 2: DEFINE A GOVERNANCE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR A COLLABORATIVE ENVIRONMENT

Enterprise collaboration cannot be achieved unless you have strategically planned effective IT governance. After all, the interaction between managers, users, technology, and business processes inside and outside the enterprise are all based on the ability to entrust specific managers with the supervision, monitoring, control and direction of the entity. How your enterprise collaboration governance methodology is applied will have an immense impact on whether the agency will attain its vision, mission or strategic goals.

The organizational values are clearly established by how organizational leaders spend their time and how they implement their resources. If very little of their efforts are spent promoting and encouraging collaboration and fostering a collaborative environment, then collaboration will not be a priority throughout the organization.

Through the strategy, internal structures have to be in place to ensure collaboration is a priority across the enterprise. This requires establishing internal systems and processes that utilize it. These typically include clearly defined responsibilities for the enterprise leadership; policies and procedures, training, and regular activities for the user community; and metrics, as well as analysis, oversight and auditing procedures for the system owners all to ensure the organization stays on the pathway to reaching collaboration goals.

Like all governance activities, it will take time and attention from the leadership for it to take hold. Members of organizations take their cues from the organization's leaders. When the leaders provide the methods, the goals, and the means and are then active in pursuing them, employees will also see collaboration as a priority.

To apply the proper strategic governance principles, consider integrating the following:

1. **Develop a high-level framework.** Define the role of leadership, as well as the processes, responsibilities, information requirements and organizational structures necessary to ensure your enterprise collaboration program is aligned with the overall strategies of the agency.

2. **Conduct a third-party independent assessment**, in the form of internal or external audits (or reviews), in order to provide your stakeholders with timely feedback about compliance of IT with the agency's policies, standards, procedures, and overall objectives. These audits must be performed in an unbiased and objective manner, so that managers are provided with a fair assessment of the enterprise collaboration project.

3. **Benchmark the availability and quality of your enterprise's resources** through ongoing assessments, to ensure that the collaborative effort has enough capable and well-organized resources to meet the agency's demands.

4. **Identify the governance risk-management factors** that are embedded in the responsibilities of your agency to ensure that the agency and key stakeholders regularly review and report IT-related risks and organizational impact.

5. **Maximize visible accountability in the governance process** by enhancing performance management reporting including accurate, timely and relevant portfolio, program, and enterprise collaboration reports to senior management. This will enable you to provide a thorough review of the progress being made towards the identified objectives of the enterprise collaboration process. Through this review, the agency can assess IT performance in terms of which deliverables have been obtained, and what shortfalls need to be addressed.

STRATEGIC IMPACT PILLAR 3: EMPLOY TECHNOLOGY TO PROMOTE AND ENHANCE COLLABORATION

Microsoft SharePoint has become the standard for enterprises and governmental organizations that want to eliminate the wasteful activities often associated with content management like searching and rework, as well as improve collaboration to take advantage of the organization's skills and knowledge base. Additionally, beyond being a powerful tool for content management and collaboration, SharePoint is:[2]

- Configurable
- Compatible

SharePoint can work with a variety of vendors for databases, business intelligence, and customer relationship management applications, and it can be employed on-site or on the cloud.

Microsoft SharePoint was developed as a way to make document and content collaboration easier. With SharePoint 2010, however, it has evolved into not only a powerful collaboration tool, but also a comprehensive content management tool that addresses the issues modern enterprises face in the information age.

SharePoint provides the tool to achieve collaboration goals through:

- **Connecting Coworkers:** More effectively leverage the knowledge in the organization by making it easy to connect with coworkers who have needed expertise or skills.

- **Sharing Data and Information:** Directly import data and documents from a variety of platforms and applications for easy sharing and access. Connect or associate data to enterprise activities, projects, processes, products, and customers.

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[2] Microsoft Corporation. "Evaluation guide for SharePoint Server 2010 (white paper)." Microsoft SharePoint Products. May 12, 2010. http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/cc262881.aspx

- **Stopping Endless Searching:** Quickly find and access the information and documents needed from a variety of repositories and locations saving time and frustration, as well as empowering employees by supplying the information they need in a timely way.

- **Informing Decision-Making:** Improve business intelligence by combining and using information from a wide variety of sources, including structured and unstructured data. Gain insight into the organization with better analytics.

- **Standardizing Content Management:** Managed through one platform, finding, sharing and using content has a similar look and feel for users throughout the organization in a familiar Office format.

- **Improving Compliance:** Revision control, configuration management, and recordkeeping become less of a time drain and much less of a concern. Staying compliant is much easier with a comprehensive document and content management tool like SharePoint.

- **Enhancing Project Management:** Collaborators and teams can work from the same shared workspace and calendar making planning, scheduling, and monitoring easier.

Enterprises that have employed SharePoint not only achieve specific goals for collaboration and content management, but they also realized additional unexpected benefits, ranging from better employee satisfaction to discovering competitive advantages.

STRATEGIC IMPACT PILLAR 4: SELECT A TRUSTED PARTNER WHO UNDERSTANDS YOUR ENTERPRISE AND HOW TO MEET COLLABORATION GOALS

The mandate for federal CIOs is to use technology to better utilize the Federal Government's resources. Like all enterprises, this means finding ways to do more with less by improving efficiency, eliminating waste, and being innovative in applying resources. All of these are potential benefits of collaboration.

Even large enterprises and government agencies do not have the in-house resources and expertise to achieve complex goals that range from business intelligence and information security to data management and collaboration tools. It takes trusted partners to bring in additional expertise, skills, and knowledge that can be intelligently applied in your unique organization.

There are numerous technology consultants that make all kinds of claims. Choose a partner wisely, with due diligence. Assess their experience and skills as a solution provider to ascertain their match to your organization's needs. With the right collaboration partner implementing the right collaboration technologies like SharePoint, goals will be most efficiently and effectively reached.

*Microsoft and SharePoint are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries.

About IntelliDyne, LLC

IntelliDyne, LLC is a consulting firm that enables better business performance through innovative technology solutions. We manage public sector programs that deliver higher operational efficiency and measurable value to clients. We advise, develop, and execute effective solutions in Cyber Security, Cloud Computing, Application Development, Mobile Computing, Business Process Management, Data Center Consolidation, Enterprise Collaboration and Enterprise Infrastructure Management.

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