

# NBC Universal Selects Henson Group to Create High Performance Digital Workspace



## Business Situation

NBCU owns and operates a valuable portfolio of news and entertainment television networks, a premier motion picture company, significant television production operations, a leading television stations group, world-renowned theme parks, and a suite of leading Internet-based businesses. As such, NBCU has some unique challenges related to the sharing of information, creative assets, and knowledge management amongst its geographically distributed teams working on programs spanning the globe. With information scattered across multiple, disparate systems, NBCU needed to re-envision the manner in which users collaborate with colleagues, stakeholders and partners. Collaboration though was just one of NBCU's challenges identified in an internal assessment, identifying the following issues:

1. Lack of a strategic alignment for IT systems
2. Limited information availability across multiple internal/external distribution channels
3. Disconnected sites and emergent desktops
4. Inefficient, adhoc use of collaboration tools
5. Overly complex governance policies and inadequate security

Henson Group, a leading Microsoft Gold Certified Partner specializing in collaboration solutions for media and professional services companies, accepted the challenge to create a state-of-the-art collaboration platform enabling NBCU to achieve its vision of a high-performance digital workspace.

## Solution

Henson Group assigned a team of expert Microsoft consultants, engineers and developers to design and develop an integrated digital resource collaboration platform to meet NBCU's requirements. Following a thoughtful evaluation process, including extensive reviews of key stakeholders, Henson Group documented creative, business, technical, security, and financial requirements. The project was led by a senior Henson Group architect in partnership with Microsoft team, producing a recommendation to implement a Microsoft SharePoint-based architecture to provide NBCU with a game-changing platform for centralizing and streamlining its massive digital content inventory.

Subsequent to requirement gathering and solution architecture design, Henson Group initiated a "replatforming" phase - essentially evaluating, updating, and migrating all required applications of the enterprise onto a single collaborative platform. Simultaneously, Henson Group partnered with stakeholders across the NBCU organization to reorganize massive troves of creative content assets.

Henson Group established staging and production environments within NBCU, supported by multiple SQL server instances configured for high availability. Meanwhile, Henson Group's SharePoint team of architects and developers customized the collaboration platform, thereby migrating into the platform integration with updated legacy microsites.

Mapping and innovating on NBCU's existing collaboration processes, Henson Group developers leveraged Microsoft Workflow Manager - integrated tightly within SharePoint to deliver robust capabilities for authoring, hosting, and managing workflows. These workflows within NBCU's platform are designed to run at a high scale and density, and they will support execution in a multitenant environment - running customized SharePoint workflows. The new environment consists of 11 SharePoint Servers, two Outlook Web Access servers, and three Microsoft Workflow Manager servers for each server environment. Three Microsoft SQL instances are configured to facilitate an "always on" support requirement for each collaboration environment.

## Results & Benefits

The search solution implemented on SharePoint provides users with the ability to quickly search and find relevant information in order to be collaborate effectively with internal and external stakeholders, improve the quality and accuracy of information and content, and ensure newfound discipline in compliance and security. Thanks to a technological overhaul, which included website redesign and re-platforming on SharePoint, the system has seen a reduction in complaints, an increase in efficiency, and a dramatic improvement in employee engagement and collaboration. The project was completed within nine months.

The new environment contains an on-premises SharePoint installation, SQL Server Always-On, SkyDrive, host-named site collections and Apps support in single farm, and an integration with office web apps.

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