



MAJOR CORPORATION SHIFTS TO NEW
SHAREPOINT ENVIRONMENT WITH COMPLETE
DEVELOPMENT, DEPLOYMENT AND BRANDING

INTRODUCTION

In the midst of changing economic and corporate realities, Sunoco realized it needed a radically new approach to internal and external communications, data repositories and collaboration techniques. While the company was using SharePoint 2003, the platform no longer met the needs of the business. The version that employees were utilizing had grown organically across dozens of sites. The environment lacked a cohesive strategy and organizational structure, with little sense of ownership. This created the realization that a modern, cloud-based platform that was more scalable, agile and accessible was necessary. The company also needed to completely revamp the governance system in place for SharePoint. Sunoco decided to move to SharePoint Online and contacted Acrowire to oversee the upgrade, migration and to develop, deploy and rebrand the new environment.

Aside from the shift to the new SharePoint environment, Sunoco underwent other significant changes. The company was purchased and split into two main lines of business with separate organizational structures: Sunoco Inc., which includes marketing, gas stations and race fuels; and Sunoco Logistics, which includes pipelines and chemicals. This required separate approaches for development, deployment and branding.

Working within an extremely ambitious timeframe, Acrowire was able to meet all the deliverables and create the SharePoint environment Sunoco needed. The shift to the new SharePoint environment was so successful that Sunoco has engaged Acrowire on multiple other projects and Acrowire continues to provide thought leadership and guidance for SharePoint 2013.

SUNOCO CASE STUDY

SCALE AND SCOPE

When Acrowire began working with Sunoco on the SharePoint initiatives, the development, deployment and branding all represented significant undertakings. Acrowire was able to cover all aspects of the project within 18 months to accomplish:

Providing both divisions with their own branded portal that features an intuitive, user-friendly and custom experience, through the branding initiative

Launching further projects for the companies after successfully completing the initial assignment

Turning SharePoint into a central and critical resource for thousands of employees



SUNOCO INC & LOGISTICS

Headquartered in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Sunoco is part of Energy Transfer Partners, L.P., a New York Stock Exchange traded partnership owning and operating a diversified portfolio of energy assets.

Sunoco's Retail business, Sunoco Inc., markets its brand of gasoline through approximately 4,900 retail outlets in 26 states mainly east of Mississippi, from Maine to Florida and west to Wisconsin and Louisiana. Sunoco also has more than 650 APlus branded convenience stores that are company-operated and operated by third-party dealers.

Sunoco Logistics L.P. has approximately 7,900 miles of crude oil and refined product owned and operated pipelines and approximately 40 product terminals. Sunoco Logistics is 34% owned by Energy Transfer Partners, L.P.

BACKGROUND

Acrowire was not the first vendor to attempt the migration away from SharePoint 2003. Another vendor had tried previously, but was unable to complete the project within budget and to Sunoco's specifications. A vendor working on a separate project for Sunoco had recommended Acrowire as a company with the proven ability to complete projects of this scale and scope.

When Sunoco engaged Acrowire, the teams realized they needed to begin working immediately to create, launch and brand the new SharePoint site. The goal was to finish the roll out by the end of 2013. Sunoco wanted to move quickly in order to achieve cost savings by migrating to the new environment.

After the launch of the project, Energy Transfer Partners purchased the company and split it into two separate lines of business: Sunoco Inc. and Sunoco Logistics. Along with the deadlines already in place and changes in ownership and organization, the Acrowire team also faced challenges with the structure and content of the current system. The purpose of SharePoint was unclear for employees and they were often confused if it was a portal for information or a collaboration space. There was little sense of control, and it was difficult to determine which employees had ownership of the previous systems and who had access to certain sites. Much of the content on the SharePoint site was outdated, and searching for specific files was also frustrating and futile. Security was also a concern.

Since SharePoint is a Microsoft application, Acrowire had little control of the timing of updates and other changes and had to adapt nimbly when upgrades were rolled out.





THE APPROACH

THE PROJECT ULTIMATELY INVOLVED MULTIPLE PIECES AND SEVERAL PHASES:

Develop and deploy the SharePoint 2013 environments

This involved standardizing approaches, so users across sites and departments could operate easily within the new environment. The goal was to encourage Sunoco users to think of SharePoint as a collaborative platform, rather than a document management system.


In particular, the branding initiative provided both Sunoco Logistics and Sunoco Inc. with their own branded portal, providing an intuitive, user-friendly and custom experience.

The Acrowire team spent approximately 2,000 hours migrating both pieces of the business to SharePoint 2013.



Train and migrate every user

With approximately 4,500-6,500 users across two companies and multiple locations around the world, training needed to be extensive. SharePoint Super Users also required additional training and support.



Convert and update other programs into the new SharePoint environment

Acrowire faced an extensive task with converting and adapting different applications into the new SharePoint site. That included shifting more than 100,000 contract documents from a legacy platform (ARIBA) into SharePoint. This involved creating a taxonomy with contract metadata and developing more robust search capabilities so users could easily find documents in the new SharePoint environment.

The team also needed to adapt an invoice generation system, RightAngle, to flow seamlessly into SharePoint. This required “grabbing” invoices and metadata, validating the information and then publishing them into SharePoint. Sufficient storage was developed in order to retain every contract for the past seven years to meet regulatory requirements.

Acrowire is working with Sunoco to replace the content distribution, Afaria, and introducing new features and programs, such as Workflow with social capabilities. FileNet was also retired which required approximately 2.5 million documents to be migrated.

While focusing on immediate improvements and upgrades, Acrowire kept an eye on scalability and prepared the SharePoint environment for significant future growth.

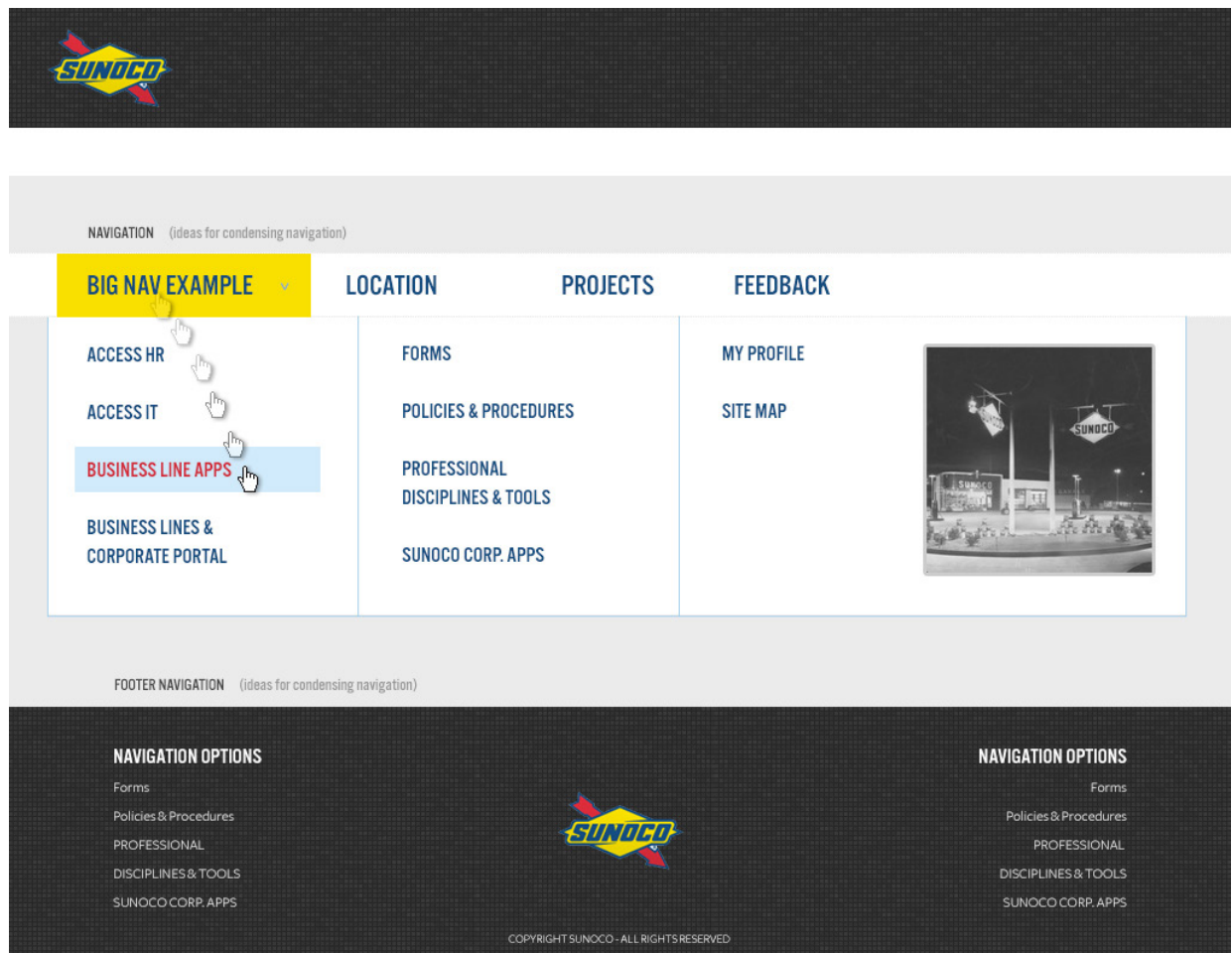
Acrowire continues to provide support and launch new SharePoint initiatives for Sunoco; Sunoco has retained Acrowire to push out OneDrive for Business in the new environment and migrate file shares into the cloud.

ARCHITECTURE

Develop and deploy the SharePoint 2013 environments

Acrowire identified information architecture for the new environment in a logical structure that included separating the two divisions, Sunoco Logistics and Sunoco Inc., and identifying where content would be housed, organized and structured.

It was very important to the client to have a governance model that is applicable to both divisions. Acrowire created a governance structure for the new SharePoint environment, including identifying “rules of the road” and establishing best practices within the Sunoco culture.



OUTCOME

During the design, deployment and branding of the SharePoint environments, Acrowire effectively became part of Sunoco's SharePoint team. Acrowire was able to successfully accomplish the SharePoint project, and the initial engagement expanded into further phases, making it an 18-month project that remains ongoing. Acrowire has covered the ground from beginning to end to make SharePoint a central and critical resource for thousands of employees.

"Acrowire inherited a legacy setup of SharePoint 2003 that was ingrained in both businesses and that broke every single rule there is," said Suraj H. Pandya. "It had become an expensive file share with more than 5,000 sites and no strategy or control as to structure, how it was managed and little metadata standards."

Acrowire was able to deliver for Sunoco, according to Pandya. "I have been impressed with their overall knowledge and approach. I have interviewed countless 'supposed' SharePoint experts, and Acrowire came out on top compared to other vendors we vetted," he said.

CONCLUSION

From a cost-savings perspective, the move from the legacy system to SharePoint 2013 has generated significant cost savings. Sunoco no longer manages the system and storage costs have decreased significantly. Collaboration with partners and other third-party vendors has also become far more efficient and inexpensive.

