

## How they evolved their intranet to a Corporate Portal in six months

### The Achievement: “Total business management”

Consulting Engineers, Haswell have implemented Union Square Software's workspace™ Enterprise Portal. Haswell have benefited from a flexible system architecture that can flex their requirements if altered. Currently workspace™ has been progressively rolling out more and more financial data on projects and currently have more than 100 active users.

#### About Haswell

Haswell are a highly successful firm of Consulting Engineers and a major player in the Water and Tunnelling Sectors. They have enjoyed considerable success in securing significant contracts either through framework agreements or high value, long duration commissions. Frameworks exist with Severn Trent Water, Yorkshire Water, Wessex Water, the former West of Scotland Water, London Underground and Network Rail whilst prestigious commissions with Dublin Port Tunnel, Dublin Metro and the Channel Tunnel Rail Link are typical of the work undertaken.



Like many organisations in the sector Haswell are characterised by having several locations separated by significant geographic distance, this includes a head office in Birmingham and a further six satellite offices around Britain and an international office in Hong Kong. Collectively these accommodate the company's 400 staff. Historically sharing both corporate and project data has been difficult for this reason alone.

### The Challenge: “Data integration”

During the late 1990's Haswell became increasingly aware of the existence of corporate intranets and began to hear from peers and competitors about the use of intranet technology as a way of sharing and distributing information and documents across an organisation. During 1999 the company decided to start developing a corporate intranet and employed a web developer to build a site. As Phil Sharp Haswell's Business Development Manager will tell you, it was not a great investment.



**Denton Wharf Project, London**  
Haswell have been appointed as a Civil/structural and Electrical Consultants to the Port of London Authority for the demolition and re-construction of Denton Wharf

“The site was essentially a notice board with content being limited to those who knew something about HTML. It just didn't address our critical business issues and was entirely reliant upon those individuals employed to develop it. When the developer left in the summer of 2000 the intranet as it stood simply died. As a management group we knew that we wanted an all-encompassing intranet but how and where we would find a long-term solution driven by the requirements of the business was unclear.”

Simon Kitrick, who has been Group IT Manager at Haswell's for the last five years, started to believe that what they really needed was an Enterprise Knowledge Portal, which would address a range of issues within the organisation.

“We formulated a shopping list; we wanted a database driven solution that included contact management sales and marketing document management project collaboration and the ability to bind in secure views of data from systems that already existed in the business such as our Oracle based accounting system. The whole thing had to be browser based to enable people to work from home and also allow our partners and clients to access selected elements of our knowledge base.”

### The Solution: workspace™

After a selection process lasting more than a year Haswell's team finally decided upon Union Square's Workspace™ Enterprise Portal as their preferred platform.

David Gutteridge signed off the project to work with Union Square; “ We chose Workspace™ for a number of reasons. Firstly it appeared that the people behind Union Square understood the processes at work inside a project centric organisation like ourselves, secondly they met all the criteria that we had placed on our shopping list, which included a flexible system architecture that could flex our requirements changed, and thirdly they were willing to allow us to control the level of risk that we wanted to expose ourselves to. When, in September 2002, we signed the order we had long-term goals to roll out the system to all 400 employees. However, the initial scope would affect just 50 users. By doing this we knew that if we felt unsure about any aspect of the solution or the relationship with Union Square we could simply “pull the plug” and walk away. It also meant that we could make sure that the system worked properly before giving it to everyone.”



## The Pilot

Haswell formed a steering committee with representatives from different functions within the company, these individuals became nominated champions for use of the system during the pilot. The pilot was broken down into four distinct sub-projects all with their own objectives and their own dynamics and local issues to resolve. Collectively the four sub-projects would form the bedrock of a medium-term strategy which would see the system being used by every member of staff. Broadly speaking the four projects were change initiatives underway at the time. The Enterprise Portal was simply a vehicle to help catalyse that change.

The four initiatives were:

1. Put key financial information at the fingertips of all Project Managers within the organisation.
2. Prove the use of the Workspace™ project collaboration tools on a number of live projects.
3. Deliver browser-based access to the company's quality system through an intranet platform.
4. Provide a centralised contact management system to be used by all personnel.

Stuart Bowmer, Commercial Manager, took responsibility for the first of these and worked closely with Union Square's project manager to develop a range of live and interactive project based reports. "Previously I was a Project Manager, so I know all about the frustrations that one can have when running a project without up to date information at your finger tips, particularly when a client calls and you need to resolve an issue there and then.

"Since October 2002 we have been progressively rolling out more and more financial data on projects and we now have more than 100 active users just for this element of the system alone. The roll-out has been extremely successful and the enthusiasm shown by end users has been like no other system roll-out that I have been involved in."

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**'...workspace™ has enabled us to make significant and positive changes'**

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Haswell's Chief Process Engineer; Steve Page took on the role of championing the rollout of the project collaboration elements of the system. "Workspace™ represents an entirely

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**'...in March 2003 the decision to rollout the system to the whole company was an easy one.'**

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new way of working, it has enabled us to make significant and positive changes to the way that we manage and access project related data. For projects that have been run through the system we have seen substantial benefits. Clearly, when you introduce anything that is new you have to win the users over but once they understood the

capabilities of the system and our reasons for introducing it we quickly gained converts. We do not believe that you can impose any system on a people business; they have to want to use it. This has been one of the benefits of running a pilot; there hasn't really been pressure to make it work, the rollout has worked because the users like it and they tell other users who then want it."

## The Future:

Philip Sharp is pragmatic about how things may develop, "Workspace™ is beginning to touch every aspect of our business and it is difficult to say where we will go with it in the long term. We see it as a management tool, which has the capability to flex as our requirements change. We are biting off manageable chunks at a time and using these wins to continue the ground swell of support for the system. There is no doubt that our people are empowered by the system and making day to day decisions with more confidence. The system is now accessible through our web site for our resident engineers and remote users to access. The next stage will undoubtedly involve bringing our partners and clients into the Portal."

workspace™



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