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Give your intranet a personality that encourages employee communication and reflects your company's culture, making employees feel empowered!

For large organizations with team members dispersed across the country, providing employees with access to information and resources can be a daunting task. How do you bring employees from different departments and different locations together? Where do you keep the information so everyone can easily find it? And, how do you ensure it is the most current data? With so many options, how do you know what is right for you?

Just ask Waste Connections Inc., the nation's third largest publicly held waste hauler. They gave their nearly 6,000 employees access to company data and resources, such as documents, applications and training material, via an intranet.

Once based in Folsom, California, Waste Connections held the title of the Sacramento region's largest publicly traded company. With 200 locations throughout 31 states, they currently serve more than two million residential, commercial and industrial customers in the U.S. and operates a fleet of 3,000 vehicles, 44 active landfills, 55 solid waste transfer stations and recycle up to 70% of their collected waste.

They strive to provide a work environment where people enjoy what they do and take pride in

their work. Embodying a work hard, play harder culture has become the foundation that empowers their employees to maximize their potential, personally as well as professionally.

It all starts with a vision

In 2004, while experiencing rapid growth, they needed an innovative way to communicate the culture of their company to both new and

of information being updated all the time," Eric adds. Besides being a central repository for documents and important information, the intranet site needed to reflect the personality of Waste Connections and create a common ground for employees that would encourage collaboration and communication.

The beginning of a journey

With this vision in-hand, Eric set off to find someone that could create the intranet site. It was through this journey that 'The Can' was born. Eric purchased an out-of-the-box solution that was able to house a wealth of content.

Each department in the company had their own page which they used to push out departmental information and frequently used documents. "As different policies and procedures are updated, or new programs need to be rolled out, each department uses The Can to publish the information to the entire company," says Eric. The Can

was embraced by everyone and it quickly became the go-to place to find not just the current company newsletter, but it was also where



existing employees, in addition to providing company information in real-time. "The vision was to have a corporate intranet site that would house company information by department," notes Eric Hansen, CIO at Waste Connections.

"We have over 200 districts, with each one operating close to 20 departments, from Government Affairs to Customer Service; there is a lot



employees went to find photos of the newest team members, some being located across the country. It was just as Eric had envisioned; it appeared the time and money that was invested into the intranet project was well worth it, or was it?

Unfortunately, the out-of-the-box solution lacked ease of use and it was cumbersome to add and search for content. "Eventually, the department leads were updating their page only once a month, if that," recalls Doug Mooneyham, Application Development Manager at Waste Connections, "with such infrequency, they were forgetting how to update their page and would email me to update it for them, then, they weren't updating it at all," he adds. After several years, it was apparent The Can needed a major restructuring.

From idea, to ideal

And so the journey continued. This time Eric wanted to find a local company that could create a whole new format for The Can, as well as rebranding it to provide a fresh new look and feel. Eric didn't have to search far. As luck would have it, he received a call from Tiffany Sequeira, Chief Operations Officer at J4 Systems. "Tiffany had been calling me for years, she was persistent and it paid off. I finally had something I needed help with - the timing was right," Eric recounts. He called for a meeting with Tiffany to discuss his vision of the intranet and learn how J4 Systems could bring it to life. Tiffany made sure to bring Jared Roberts, J4 Systems' Lead Application Architect, to the meeting.

While meeting with Eric, Jared quickly realized that the original architecture of The Can had served as a great resource and information repository for Waste Connections,

but they had outgrown the original infrastructure and needed the layout and organization of the data to be revitalized and enhanced so that it more closely matched Eric's vision. Jared knew The Can redevelopment project was a perfect fit for him and the enterprise development team at J4 Systems. They would be able to



create a custom-built application that would accomplish everything Eric wanted, and much more.

In order to accomplish the new look, the J4 Systems developers "created a scope of work which detailed how to take the project through the steps of redesign, restructure, reformat and deployment," explains Eric. To fully understand the goals of The Can, digital mockups were created prior to performing any redesign work.

"The J4 Systems team put a lot of thought into the way they saw our intranet taking shape and worked closely with our departments leads to get their input every step of the way; which ultimately resulted in the success of the project," Doug Mooneyham, Waste Connections.

Waste Connections' intranet now has a contemporary design and layout that offers easy access to all levels of information. The Can utilizes their company colors as well as vision guidelines, with a usability emphasis for main navigation and built to be expandable for future growth. They

wanted the look and feel to be reminiscent of Microsoft Bing, so they change the homepage photo frequently; everyone is encouraged to submit company photos for a chance to make it on the homepage.

A few special features were added by the J4 Systems development team, such as a 'Favorites' link and a 'Most Visited' link letting users bookmark any page and create a customized list of favorites. The backend application even has the ability to monitor user browsing patterns and displays the most recent and visited pages in a list.

The end of a long journey

The Can has reached beyond just departmental pages, it provides employees with access to training resources, safety information, videos and presentations, HR policies, and project management resources just to name a few.

Now based in Woodlands, Texas, Waste Connections has continued to partner with J4 Systems for help with their custom application needs. As Waste Connections continues to grow and evolve, so does The Can, with J4 Systems being an integral part of its evolution. It is through companies like Waste Connections and CIO's like Eric Hansen, that give J4 Systems the ability to turn visions into realities.

About J4 Systems

For over eighteen years J4 Systems has specialized in turning technology into business value for our clients.

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