

International FMCG Company

Improving transparency and knowledge management in the legal team

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Tools: Wiki

Technology: Confluence

Number of users: 200

Industry: FMCG

Keywords: wiki, Intranet, legal, knowledge-sharing, transparency, community

Timeframe: 2009 - present

Introduction

The legal team for an international FMCG company sought an efficient method of improving internal knowledge sharing among key staff. Headshift developed a user-centric system using a wiki platform, which supported informal knowledge sharing and know-who alongside formal document management.

Case Study

The company's legal team consists of 80 lawyers, based in 35 countries. The company wanted to ensure that knowledge is spread effectively and efficiently amongst the staff, but this had presented many challenges in the past. They had used formal document management repositories, but found this created a poor user experience and observed that the repository became where documents were sent 'to die.' This meant that the systems were not dynamic and contained outdated information. Additionally, the company relied heavily on email for informal knowledge sharing, which was frustrating.

The company spent some time looking for a more efficient system and asked Headshift to create a system that could be used to both facilitate knowledge sharing amongst colleagues and for managing and storing formal documents.

Supporting an online community

Our strategic consultancy proved to be vital for the project. Initially, we were tasked with reducing the use of email for informal knowledge sharing. However, through the research process, we uncovered a strong desire to have something that could support the team's sense of community as well. This was due in part to an upcoming office move which meant a change in seating arrangements.

Creating a user-centric collaboration system

We built a user-friendly knowledge sharing community based on the enterprise wiki platform Confluence, which was extensively customised to comply with the company's corporate brand guidelines. Our legal domain knowledge meant that we could create a suitable interface and information architecture to match the way the team wanted to work. The wiki platform improved informal knowledge sharing amongst the international team and promoted effective communication. The system we built has the following features:

- ▶ Rich profiles to help identify key expertise
- ▶ The ability to set up open and closed groups to run discussions and post resources
- ▶ Personal walls to allow individual postings outside of a group context
- ▶ A bookmarking system to aggregate key sites and pull in external content via RSS

- ▶ A comprehensive tagging system to allow both people and content to be surfaced using a folksonomy
- ▶ An aggregation system to provide a quick summary of relevant updates on the side
- ▶ Daily email updates to put relevant content in the flow of users' current activities without increasing corporate spam

This project received a lot of support from the the company's senior management. Executives post regularly on the site and and it was nominated for an innovation award, which are usually considered only for external customer facing projects.