



Case Study / Downing LLP

Improving employee engagement & communication

wanstor

Downing LLP is working with Wanstor to develop and deliver a new SharePoint site for their intranet

Background

Downing LLP recognised that as a growing Financial Services firm, it had to:

- + Keep staff better informed about events within the company.
- + Offer quick access to relevant news articles and press coverage.
- + Make internal documents easy to find.
- + Give an overview of different departments within the company.
- + Provide a staff directory, including job titles, phone numbers and email addresses.

After an initial internal scoping exercise, the IT and Marketing teams at Downing decided the best way to achieve its employee engagement and communication objectives was to create and develop an intranet site, built on a Microsoft SharePoint platform.

Downing decided that Wanstor was the best partner for this piece of work, with significant experience in designing and deploying a range of Microsoft SharePoint solutions and holds Gold partner status with Microsoft.



The Challenge

The first step in developing the intranet site was a meeting between Wanstor's SharePoint development engineers and Downing. This initial meeting helped detail both the process and methodology required for the successful design, deployment and in-life management of an intranet site built on Microsoft's SharePoint platform.

Scoping

During the first phase, Wanstor worked alongside Downing to discover and document relevant requirements for the build.

Once this initial specification had been outlined, the teams moved on to agree timescales, resourcing, process governance and project costings. With the overall scope, timelines, work deliverables and costings formalised, the project moved into the design phase.

Design

Wanstor's SharePoint developers met with Downing to discuss requirements for site content, the individual user experience and also specific requests from individual business units.

Implementation

Once the design had been developed, approved and tested by both Wanstor and Downing, the implementation phase of the project began. Wanstor's project manager scheduled regular calls to keep Downing updated throughout this phase.

These regular update calls sped up the delivery of the project as Wanstor's engineers were able to gain insights from Downing into its existing IT infrastructure and what to watch out for when testing and making the intranet site live.

“Wanstor has a wealth of experience in designing and delivering SharePoint projects for a number of customers over many years. We have developed a methodology with repeatable processes helping to govern our delivery of such projects. By using Wanstor as an IT partner, businesses like Downing can take advantage of our knowledge, skills and experience.”

Peter Lukes

Managing Director, Wanstor IT

The Solution

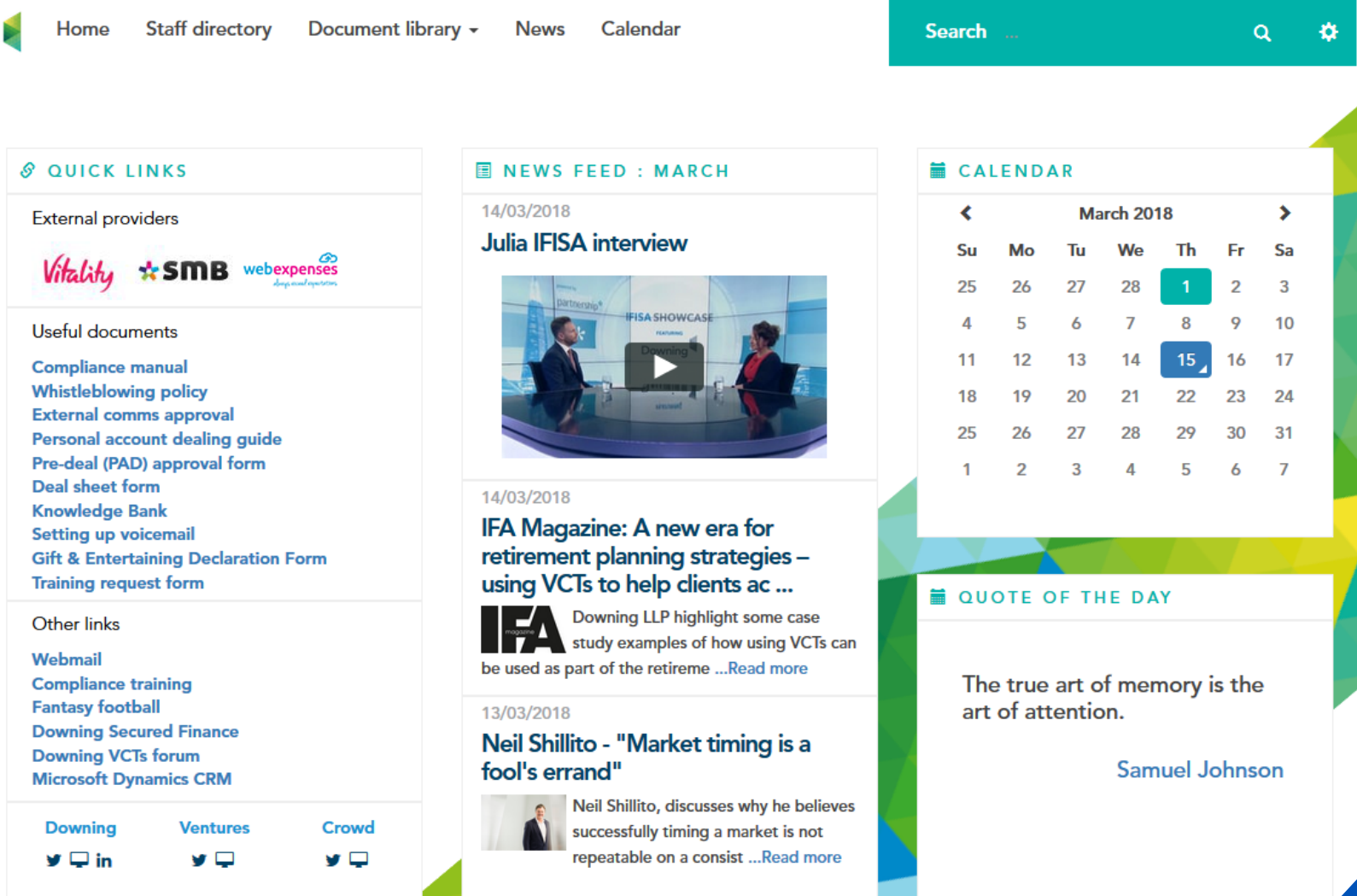
As with any project of this nature, there were hurdles to overcome. These included figuring out how to upload the existing staff database into the new intranet.

To address this issue, Wanstor employed 'Active Directory' to populate the new database. A large percentage of the information uploaded was out of date and needed data to be added, so a decision was taken to use a SharePoint list as the main storage repository. This would allow marketing and HR personnel to update the database without having to delegate the task to IT.

With the data on file updated and deployed within SharePoint, Wanstor were able to supplement individual staff profiles with work anniversary dates, birthday information and other relevant corporate and personal data.

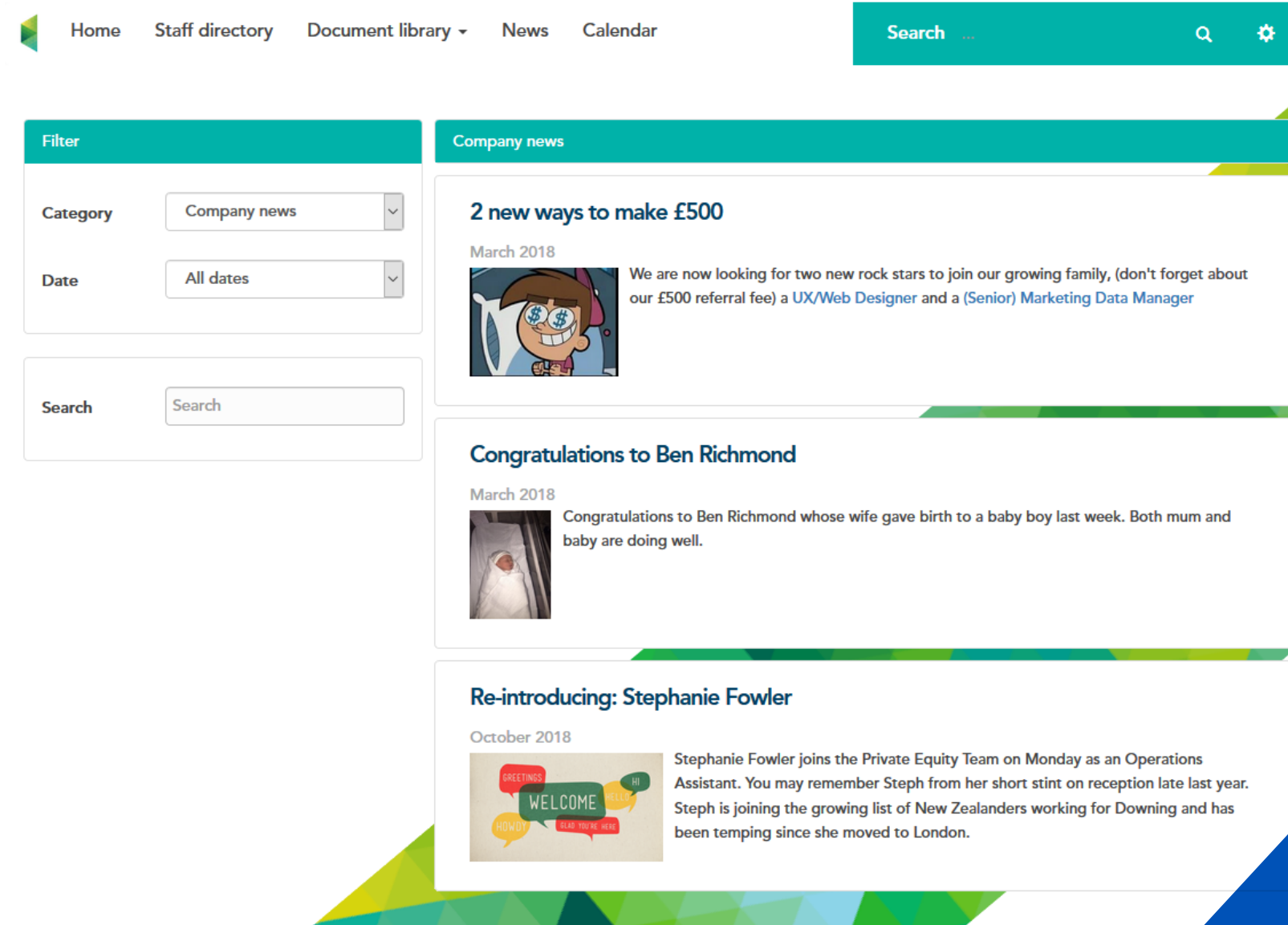
Testing

With challenges to data management addressed, the project moved into testing. This contingency period allowed for the correction of any bugs or usability issues impacting on the user experience. After testing, the project was prepared to go live.



In summary, the Downing SharePoint solution developed by Wanstor included:

- + Scoping sessions with Downing to identify specific requirements for a new intranet site built with Microsoft's SharePoint platform.
- + Mapping a user experience journey which could be applied across the site.
- + Designing defined areas within the intranet including a landing area, departments page, staff directory, document library, Downing news page and an interactive notice board allowing employees to generate posts and provide commentary on the same.
- + Extensive solution testing prior to launch covering usability and bug testing.
- + Training and documents for relevant individuals expecting to use the site



The Outcome

The redesign of Downing's intranet within a SharePoint framework was extremely well received and staff throughout the organisation have voiced their approval.

"The intranet acts as a great channel for firmwide communication. It simplifies the process of sharing key materials and information, and enables everyone to stay up to date with the latest company news."

"The intranet is really useful. It's a one-stop shop for all our press coverage, company news, a useful jargon buster and staff directory."

" I love the intranet! "

"The intranet is great. It allows us to know when to expect birthday treats, and who to chase should they not appear."

"The intranet is an excellent resource. It mixes perfectly essential business processes with fun and engaging content."

Following completion of the project, Downing has maintained Wanstor's engagement with feature requests aimed at extending functionality within the new intranet site.

Wanstor's SharePoint specialists continue to offer training to Downing LLP employees who work with the site. This covers SharePoint basics along with best practice policies around information maintenance.

“ Our new intranet site built for us by Wanstor has been a real success story. Staff have commented on how the new site makes their lives easier by giving them access to the information they need, when they need it ”

Dara Reynolds

Digital Marketing, Downing LLP

About Downing LLP

At Downing, we aim to make a difference in the lives of our investment community. We design & manage investment products that help investors look after their financial wellbeing, while our investment partnerships support businesses in their ambitions.

In uniting the two, we build lasting relationships that become the foundation of our investment community, learning how to develop these as we continue to evolve. We value flexibility, transparency and integrity in everything we do.

Since our story began in 1986, we have been like a family, as we endeavour to do the best we can for our investment community. Our ethos of doing the right thing is shared with our investors, advisers and investee companies as we aim to strike a balance between minimising risk and maximising growth for all parties involved.

Over 35,000 investors have been a part of what we do, and we are proud to have raised over £1.7 billion into businesses that make a difference - including renewable energy, care homes, health clubs, and children's nurseries. Along the way we have built a vast wealth of experience and expertise, which drive our ability to create value & growth for our investment community.

About Wanstor

Established in 2002, Wanstor are a trusted IT services and solutions provider that helps a range of businesses and financial services organisations to transform their IT environments with highly available and secure services that are designed to scale with ease.

Businesses of all sizes across the UK benefit from our skills, knowledge and capabilities as we deliver complete, end-to-end IT solutions that are designed to meet their IT needs, both now and in the future.

Wanstor takes the cost and complexity out of IT. The services we provide include IT support, Managed IT services, Cloud solutions, Data Centre and co-location services, Networking and Security infrastructure and Business Voice services, all delivered by accredited and knowledgeable people.

Wanstor has the commercial understanding of how technology can improve business performance and lower IT and business operating costs. Our IT Solutions help businesses to change and innovate, giving them the flexibility and advantage that they need to focus on and excel in their areas of expertise.