> Expandability in particular is a great strength of Liferay's. We are succeeding at creating a positive user experience for partners, employees and customers with a comprehensive solution.

Holger Bartholomä
Webmaster,
Putzmeister Holding GmbH

Previous Information Channels

Current Information Channels

Digital Platform Enables Global Cooperation at Putzmeister

The Putzmeister Group develops, produces and sells high-tech and service-oriented machines for placing concrete worldwide. As a leading industry specialist, Putzmeister is involved with large international projects such as the Burj Khalifa in Dubai, the expansion of the Panama Canal, and the new Wilshire Grand Center in Los Angeles. Concrete and other materials that are difficult to pump need to be delivered over long distances at specific times, often to great heights or in large quantities. International cooperation among Putzmeister's groups and partners is necessary for coordinating and mastering these challenges.

With 16 subsidiaries, 12 languages and 3,000 employees, managing communication in a global technology group like Putzmeister is a massive challenge. In order to create a standardized platform that fostered collaboration among all internal and external users, the company needed a flexible, open and user-friendly solution that featured easy login, personalization and decentralized maintenance.

Eliminating International Silos With One Platform

As with many companies that have grown over decades, the processes at Putzmeister were siloed. Many of its subsidiaries used their own intranet solutions, which meant that employees needed separate logins for every system. To really enable collaboration, everything would need to be consolidated into one platform. The new solution would also need to account for the company's global scope, including support for 12 languages and active employees on every continent.

"Again and again, we see that fast action is necessary," said Holger Bartholomä, Webmaster of Putzmeister Holding GmbH. "In order for us to ensure cooperation and speed, we needed to connect our collaboration platforms the world over."

Over time, about 5,000 technical and customer-specific documents had landed on different servers in different languages. The objective of the new intranet solution was to reduce everything down to the essentials: a worldwide, open, scalable platform with decentralized maintenance that employees could access everywhere after signing in once.
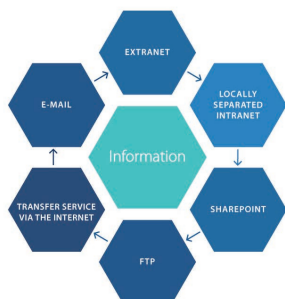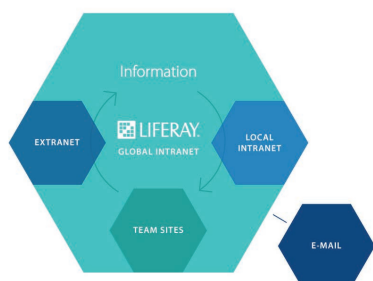
A Decentralized Solution Fueled More Efficient Content Management

Putzmeister created the functional specifications for the new platform in cooperation with edicos, a certified Liferay partner. They made a point of compiling their requirements before looking at any software, as a way to ensure that they truly chose the technology that was the best fit. They compared their requirements to the existing solutions, SharePoint and OpenText, and realized that its functionality didn't provide what they really needed. The Liferay platform was suggested by edicos and it quickly became obvious that this was the ideal solution. "We were convinced because the comprehensive platform already contained CMS and DMS components, as well as workflow, permissions and roles features," said Bartholomä.

Putzmeister saw Liferay as a solid platform for comprehensive online solutions. It met the requirements of providing single sign on and decentralized maintenance, and its flexibility allowed Putzmeister to connect diverse applications, providing support for many sites. It also came with an out of the box content management system, which would help get those 5,000 documents under control.

With the support of certified Liferay partner USU AG, Putzmeister started the platform overhaul by identifying the most important content across sites and used that to build a catalog of requirements. Employees contributed by checking content and adopting it into the new system. This method of familiarizing employees with the new platform while transferring "real" content (rather than demo texts) sped up the training process, which was critical to the decentralized maintenance Putzmeister hoped to achieve.

Internationally Connected for the First Time

The single sign on functionality that Putzmeister implemented proved to be a key feature of the new platform. Every user can now login with his or her usual PC password, and smaller companies that lack a central IT team can register with user accounts. All profile and contact data is saved separately. This way, Putzmeister has access to an accurate contact directory of all employees worldwide.

> Liferay is able to integrate the most diverse applications possible and support many sites, as well as provide an out-of-the-box content management system.

Holger Bartholomä
Webmaster, Putzmeister Holding GmbH

"Now that all employees use the platform globally, we've had some 'light bulb moments,'" said Bartholomä. "Not all colleagues realized how broad the Putzmeister portfolio is."

For the first time, the company's entire range of products, including all variations and country-specific designs, can be seen in one place. Communication within the company has improved, and employees find it easier to stay updated on what's going on internationally. In addition to the international intranet, which all employees have access to, there are eight local intranets for subsidiaries, many team sites that cross company borders and a distributor extranet with personalized access options for users.

Setting a Path for Future Development

The successful introduction of the online platform for redesigning the intranet was just the first step for Putzmeister. An extranet relaunch is imminent, and an after-sales platform for optimized warranty processing will be integrated into the international platform as well. Process integration is another milestone; Putzmeister is currently working on integrating SAP in order to both implement employee self-service as well as enable distributors to see important data online.

"Expandability in particular is a great strength of Liferay's," said Bartholomä. "We are succeeding at creating a positive user experience for partners, employees and customers with a comprehensive solution."

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