



Constructing a Digital Transformation with SharePoint and Office365

Mainbrace Constructions implements a self-service portal to improve onboarding and optimise work done on the job.

Mainbrace Constructions is one of Australia's leading and most experienced retail builders, with over 1,300 jobs completed since the company was established, and a repeat client rate of 85%.

With over 200 employees across three states—New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland—Mainbrace wanted more effective ways to work and communicate across the business. A “war on emails” was declared internally and Angus Greenwood, Systems and Innovation lead at Mainbrace, engaged the services of Professional Advantage to implement a new self-service portal in SharePoint Online (Office 365).

This new employee self-service portal, affectionately named as MILA (Mainbrace Intranet & Learning Area), is now the place where employees start their day: an online portal to access company news, corporate calendars, standard documents, and employee self-services—a knowledge database.

The connections created by the ability to share knowledge also help to drive the notion of the Mainbrace family, ultimately aiding with employee satisfaction and retention.

“Drawing on inspiration from Apple’s Siri or Microsoft’s Cortana, we wanted a platform that had a personality and is part of the team.”

But Mainbrace achieved more with MILA than just improved communications and increased efficiencies; the portal has also aided in a cultural shift to a digital workplace within the business.

MAKING NEW STARTERS EFFECTIVE FROM DAY ONE

A key aspect of this solution was to improve the process of staff onboarding. MILA houses everything a new employee needs to know, including where to order uniforms or stationery; how to connect with both IT and mental health support; and administrative tasks such as applying for leave or submitting a timesheet.

“From a training point of view, from day one of working within Mainbrace, an employee can move around, finding out who’s who, what we are working on, and how to work.” Angus Greenwood, Systems and Innovation, Mainbrace.

The self-service portal was a real focus, and now new starters are connected with the right people and information from the beginning, greatly improving the efficiency of staff orientation. This is a big win in an industry that employs sub-contractors and other temporary staff, and where resources need to hit the ground running otherwise budgets can be affected, timelines missed, and financial penalties applied.

BRINGING ABOUT A DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Housed in the cloud, important resources to help Mainbrace teams do their jobs are accessible from anywhere, and MILA is the ‘one-stop-shop’ for all key information and working documents. This includes site drawings for jobs, allowing them to be viewed when on site by management and contractors alike.

“MILA is facilitating a cultural shift to a digital workplace, specifically with site-based engineers and their ability for them to access project references and drawings. We don’t have to head back to the site office to find the paper copies anymore.” Angus Greenwood, Systems and Innovation, Mainbrace.

A labour force traditionally regarded as manual have evolved their work habits with the arrival of MILA, bringing about a digital transformation within the team.

The business impact is more significant than just how staff access content. This real time access to project information means fewer mistakes and rework, which reduces the risk to project budgets, and ultimately this will always have a positive impact on client satisfaction.

MILA ENSURES VERSION CONTROL

MILA is the central store of information and ensures a single source of truth when it comes to documents and files. The importance of version control within construction cannot be denied, as Angus elaborates:

“There is nothing more dangerous than a subcontractor working on our site off the wrong drawings. Now we have a platform that provides us absolute certainty that all subcontractors are looking in the same location.” Angus Greenwood, Systems and Innovation, Mainbrace.

Working with the right content the first time is a key benefit of SharePoint, as well as the ability for co-authoring on documents, and tracking and managing content changes.

RELEVANT TO ALL THE BUSINESS

The implementation, and adoption, of MILA has met the key deliverables set out between Mainbrace and Professional Advantage. It has become a key part of the Mainbrace team, providing a service to the whole organisation from information workers, to labourers and subcontractors on the ground, and to back office staff and management.

The journey continues for Mainbrace, and the success to date only encourages further expansion of the concepts introduced. Building upon this success is one job that’s assured.

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About Professional Advantage

Professional Advantage is an international IT consulting and solutions company, with 30 years of experience in helping organisations achieve more by improving their business systems through industry leading software solutions.

Originating in Australia, it is one of the country’s most awarded solutions providers. The 250-strong team covers seven offices across three continents, and has successfully worked with over 1000 organisations.