

Forest City Enterprises partners with Bennett Adelson

Microsoft Customer Solution Case Study



“The results from our SDPS engagement with Bennett Adelson were just great! We did a level-setting and a deep dive into new SharePoint 2007 features, which really helped us build a business case for moving forward and getting buy-in from within to upgrade to 2007.”

– Matt Ammiller, IT Project Manager, Forest City Enterprises

Business Needs

Forest City Enterprises, with offices located in major cities throughout US, occupies a unique niche in the real estate industry by managing the full lifecycle of real estate, starting at land development and construction and following through managing the properties. In order to stay on top of its diverse business operations, Forest City needed company-wide information systems that got the right information to the right people in little time.

An earlier attempt at connecting the company’s many employees in many locations through SharePoint 2003 led to great success – Forest City staff were creating teamsites to collaborate left and right. However, with little governance, the knowledge and collaboration became unmanageable, and Forest City was looking for a way to reign in the spiraling content without hampering the company’s zest for collaborating.

The solution was in upgrading to SharePoint Server 2007, with its capabilities for governance and metadata that could provide the necessary structure to collaboration, workflows for moving documents efficiently throughout the approval process, and complex surveys for requirements gathering from multiple areas of the company. In addition, Forest City was excited about SharePoint 2007’s integration with Office 2007 applications and capabilities to provide a much-needed company-wide intranet so they could move away from the inefficient reliance on email and shared drives.

However, with the bulk of the company’s technical resources dedicated to other projects, and the lessons learned from their 2003 deployment, Forest City needed a cost-efficient way to assess whether the move to SharePoint 2007 was the right way to go.

Solution

While working with their Microsoft Sales Representative, Forest City learned that they were eligible for a 5-day SharePoint Deployment Planning Services (SDPS) engagement. Paid for through a customer’s licensing agreement, SDPS is one of several Software Assurance Packaged Services and is designed to help organizations plan an effective deployment of Microsoft Office SharePoint Server. Forest City was connected with Bennett Adelson, a Microsoft Gold-Certified and SDPS-Certified partner known for delivering world class technology services to their clients.

Bennett Adelson got to work on the 5-day SDPS engagement, and delivered Forest City exactly what they were looking for. “The results from our SDPS engagement with Bennett Adelson were just great! We did a level-setting and a deep dive into new SharePoint 2007 features, which really helped us build a business case for moving forward and getting buy-in from within to upgrade to 2007”. In addition, Bennett Adelson provided the necessary specifications for Forest City’s infrastructure needs and process for setting up a governing body, governance plan, and company-wide taxonomy.

Benefits

“At end of 5 days we had what we needed to present the overall business case to our decision-makers, and even got the nod from IT to move forward with the upgrade. We’re now ready to take the case to our business units and convey to them why we want to do the upgrade, what it will look like, how much it will cost, and what we will get out of moving to the new platform.” – Matt Ammiller, IT Project Manager, Forest City Enterprises

Bennett Adelson credits the SDPS program’s structure with their ability to deliver their clients so much value in so little time. “The SDPS program has not only validated our process, but provided readily available materials and agendas to minimize preparation time and maximize our value to the client” – Bennett Adelson Consulting, Inc.

“We see this program as providing customers great gains in understanding what SharePoint 2007 can do for their business, and what it would take to move to that platform. It’s a great way for IT shops to put everything in perspective. We don’t have all the time to figure out best practices for servers, infrastructure, etc – we’re spending most of our time supporting the business. We try to be cutting edge, but it was great to have a partner to come in and help us understand the product, how we can use it to further our business objectives, and the best way to implement it.” – Matt Ammiller, IT Project Manager, Forest City Enterprises

“The SDPS program has not only validated our process, but provided readily available materials and agendas to minimize our preparation time, and maximize our value to the client.”

–Bennett Adelson

Customer Overview

Customer: Forest City Enterprises
Partner: Bennett Adelson
Location(s): United States
Industry: Private Sector

Customer Profile

US-based company that manages the full life-cycle of real estate.

Business Situation

- Need to reign in spiraling content without impeding company-wide collaboration
- Needed to further evaluate possible upgrade to SharePoint Server 2007
- Budgets tied up in other IT efforts

Solution Overview

- Forest City had SA benefits
- Eligible for a 5-day SDPS engagement
- Connected with Bennett Adelson through the Microsoft SDPS program
- Bennett Adelson is a Microsoft Gold-Certified and SDPS-Certified Partner
- Bennett Adelson provided a level-setting and deep dive into SharePoint 2007 features to build the business case for the upgrade to SharePoint 2007

Benefits Provided

- Forest City now has the business case for upgrading to SharePoint Server 2007 to take to their business-decision makers, including what it will look like, what it will cost, and what it will provide to the business
- Forest City already got the nod from IT to move forward on the upgrade