



EQUATIONS: Who Benefits from Tourism?

EQUATIONS is a research and advocacy group that envisions forms of tourism that are non-exploitative, where decision-making is democratized, and access to and benefits of tourism are equitably distributed. They believe in the capacity of individuals and communities to actualize their potential for the well-being of society and works toward justice, equity, people-centered and movement-centered activism, and dialogue.

Challenges

EQUATIONS has a legacy of 30+ years and has worked with several grass-root communities across the country. Consequently, they have massive amounts of content in their repositories. However, there were a few major challenges faced by them:

1. They spread all the content collected and created across personal laptops and google drives.
2. The data capturing and storage processes followed were ad-hoc.
3. There was no centralized unit or method to manage the vast amount of data

Being a SMART™ level 1 organization due to the organization's processes being disorganized, uncontrolled, reactive, fragile, and inflexible in nature, EQUATIONS had to enable itself to move to a state where its processes were standardized and streamlined for scalability.

Solutions

After thoroughly examining the data, we devised and deployed a solution:

An M365 based intranet was proposed. SharePoint provides features that helps in storing content confidentially and also enables collaborative content development. The intranet also has features that can be used to capture data, show data in dashboards, and automate processes.

Outcomes

The intranet helped in giving a common platform for all the employees to store content in the organization. SharePoint's access management settings enabled managing confidential content. Also, it leveraged several features of SharePoint to automate a few processes and build dashboards. The different stakeholders of the programs were able to see the progress of the programs easily and cull actionable insights from them.

Up Ahead

A brand new, well-structured SharePoint system takes care of data management and centralization. However, this is only the beginning, and there are more things that EQUATIONS can do to become a SMART™ organization:

1. The SharePoint system can aid in more process automations to make communication more efficient
2. Dedicated SharePoint sites programs can help streamline and categorize data storage and data presentation
3. A dedicated SharePoint communication site can help in keeping all the employees and volunteers up to date about the newest announcements
4. Using Power Apps and Power Automate, the organization can create employee directories, leave management trackers, inventory management trackers, invoice generators and processors, and other kinds of supporting applications that can be built into SharePoint.

Conclusion

The organization, which for 30 years, worked in a system with distributed document storage found itself in a well-organized and centralized document management system. Additionally, the content was now easily accessible and tracking older project data, which was previously difficult to track, became a breeze. Data management became easier and stakeholders could see progress easily, avoiding the need for multiple emails for communication.

Due to the apt usage of SharePoint, EQUATIONS has better streamlined, sustainable, and scalable processes. As a result, they have grown from SMART™ level 1 to level 2. They are growing faster towards having managed streamlined programs, and they are another step closer to being a SMART™ organization: one that can continue creating steady and diverse impact at a much faster rate.

Do you have similar challenges in your organization? Take your first definitive step towards creating better and faster impact.

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