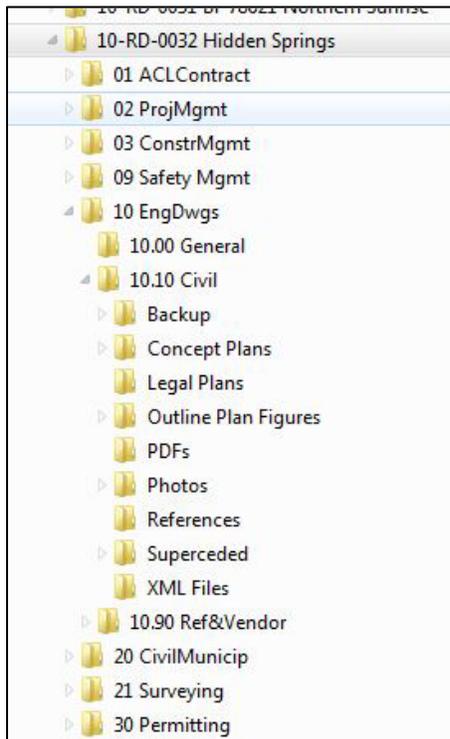


Shared Network Drives: Decreasing Productivity One Folder at a Time

July, 2015
William Huh, Consultant
OnPoint Consulting, Inc.

Have you ever struggled to find that one document you're sure has been saved somewhere? Shared network drives are familiar and widely accessible repositories utilized throughout many organizations. However, most shared network drives are riddled with ambiguous or outdated legacy folder structures which have contributed to a decrease in worker efficiency. Whether an organization is actively collaborating or just starting, a much more efficient and effective alternative is Microsoft SharePoint, which provides enormous value with its out-of-the-box feature set.



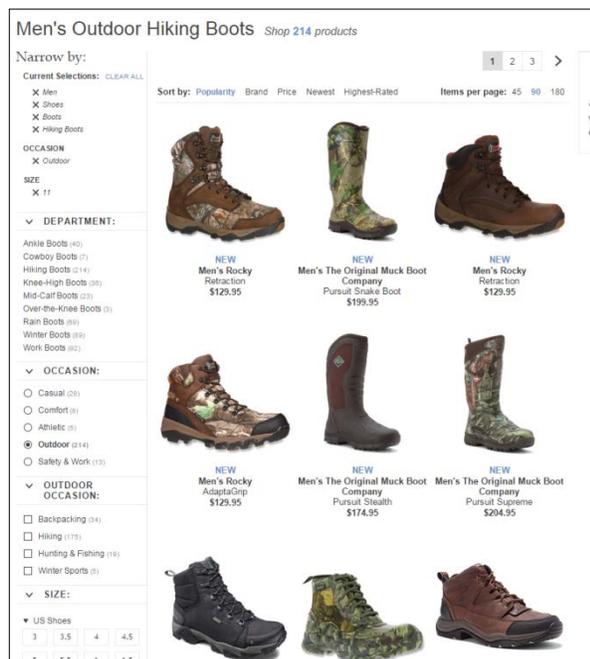
When one begins to understand that everyone organizes documents uniquely, it becomes easier to see why shared network drives do not promote a productive workforce. When users are left to freely create folders to house documents based on their personal needs, this becomes a concern. Many times, these structures can become confusing and vague even to the individual that constructed them. This often results in more time spent searching for documents and in numerous cases, recreating documents that already exist but have been misplaced*. In 2014, Synata conducted a survey where 89% of respondents said they'd accidentally duplicated work and 19.44% of that number stated that they "often" duplicated work. These results align with findings from an IDC report** which discovered that "an enterprise employing 1,000 knowledge workers wastes \$5 million per year because employees spend too much time duplicating information that already exists within the

enterprise." Within that same report, the researchers found the typical knowledge worker spends about 2.5 hours per day searching for information.

SharePoint is an often under-utilized collaboration platform that has the proper tools and features to allow users to manage documents effectively. Some of those features include: document check out, metadata, tagging, versioning, retention policies, etc.

A little goes a long way when it comes to document management. Start by having users define values for common metadata useful to your office such as Fiscal Year, Status, Due Date, or Department/Office, each time they upload a document. Try to aim for 3-5 metadata fields. That number seems to be the sweet spot for helpful data: it allows the user to utilize any combination of sorting, grouping, or filtering to quickly find documents, while minimizing the burden of data input. Additionally, SharePoint automatically records data such as who uploaded the document, the last person to modify it, and the date/time it was updated.

SharePoint also enables document versioning, which allows users to revert to previously saved versions of documents. For example, if someone unintentionally overwrites a working document, SharePoint allows a user to restore a previously saved version. SharePoint can also be configured to automatically move or reclassify documents based on your organization's internal document retention policies. These are just a handful of features SharePoint offers to better manage enterprise documents, which a shared network drive does not.



Visualize the following example: You're looking for a shoe on a website which allows you to refine your search terms, but it's how they think you want to search – clunky and counter-intuitive. Now think of your favorite online merchant. Products are properly categorized and you can filter based on key data - size, color, style, brand, etc. This allows customers to quickly find what they're looking for.

Hopefully this begins to paint a picture of document management best practices and how it benefits the search experience.

OnPoint is helping the United States Government implement and utilize SharePoint,

properly! Enhancement of operational efficiencies and cost effectiveness are just some of the reasons our Government turns to OnPoint; stay tuned for future white papers outlining our SharePoint capabilities.

OnPoint is committed to providing our customers with the best solutions to fit their unique requirements. This allows our clients to work as efficiently as possible, while adhering to industry best practices and techniques. OnPoint is equipped to tackle your organization's greatest challenges.

About OnPoint

OnPoint Consulting, Inc (OnPoint) is a cybersecurity and technology firm delivering secure IT infrastructure, enterprise systems, and classified solutions for the U.S. Federal government. Our specialized strategy, cyber and technology capabilities are changing the way our clients improve performance, effectively deliver results and manage risk. OnPoint holds ISO 9001:2008, ISO 20000:2011, ISO 27001:2013 certifications and a CMMI Maturity Level 3 rating. OnPoint is a wholly owned subsidiary of Sapient Government Services, a global consulting company part of Publicis.Sapient.

Follow OnPoint on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#).

* <http://www.synata.com/blog/2014/11/17/do-you-duplicate-work>

** <http://www.slideshare.net/PingElizabeth/the-hidden-costs-of-information-work-2005-idc-report>