From Binders to SharePoint – Signature Validation in 30 Seconds!

Project Name
From Binders to SharePoint – Signature Validation in 30 Seconds!

Submitter
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Project Team
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UCOP Business Resource Center
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Overview
The Signature Authority Transformation project converted a manual, paper process into an electronic, web-based solution using out-of-the-box SharePoint features. In late 2013, the Business Resource Center unit within the Financial Accounting department contacted the SharePoint team to see if the SharePoint was a viable solution for this. After a series of fact-finding meetings, it was determined that SharePoint did indeed meet the needs of this process.

The SharePoint solution had numerous advantages including the following:
- No cost to business unit
- Fast development time – up and running in 6 months
- Minimal training and support – out of box solution with no customizations

Business Process Summary
- Division heads have authority over and accountability for the funds budgeted for their departments.
- Division heads delegate to subdivision heads, who may also re-delegate authority to department personnel.
- Signature authority may be broad or narrow, depending on the needs of the department.
- Some executive signature authority delegations (for example Presidential delegations) are made by letter or memo rather than by form or are inherent in the authority provided by the Standing Order of the Regents.
- BRC processors must check that there is an authorizing signature before they may proceed with purchase orders, travel reimbursements, requisitions, NPEARs, or recharges. The authorizing signature must match the specimen signature on file.
• The signature delegation process and data is required by UC Policy and are reviewed by internal and external auditors.

What was the Problem?
• **Paper system was difficult to use** as a research resource, and to update when changes were necessary.
• **Two copies of the paper system were maintained in binders** (operating and archive) divided by Subdivision. BRC primarily identifies transactions by Department Code or FAU.
• **Operating paper system was maintained at one central point** rather than at each person’s desk, so added time to transactions and multiple people could not use the same resource simultaneously.
• **Several different types of formats** were used to create and approve authorities and over time departments would use a mix-and-match approach as authorized personnel and programs changed. The differences in formats could cause conflicts in that overlaps and gaps that were difficult to identify, track, and resolve.
• **Paper system could have conflicting information**, if part of a Subdivision was updated but not another.

Solution Development Process
The entire solution creation process was highly collaborative between UCOP’s IT SharePoint team and the business unit – from requirements gathering to design, development and UAT. Due to the nature of SharePoint, we were able to build on the out-of-box features in a real-time fashion during the design and development processes. This collaborative methodology led to a solution that took less time to develop. It also involved little or no rework because development and UAT were combined as the solution progressed. It is important to note that the team allocated time to this project during their normal busy workdays.

SharePoint Solution Diagram
**Digitized Signatures**

Almost 300 signatures are stored in digital format in a SharePoint Picture Library for ease of management and display in the Main List.

**Main List**

The main list displays all the components from the SharePoint site, including the signatures, in an easy to use format that is sortable, filterable and searchable by any column. This is a vast improvement over thumbing through thick binders of paper.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Effective Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aaron McCoy</td>
<td>Senior Associate</td>
<td>Business Administration Service Center (BASCS)</td>
<td>COO</td>
<td>1/1/2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aimee Door</td>
<td>No Limit</td>
<td>through 3/1/14 Academic Affairs also included ARK</td>
<td>COO</td>
<td>7/1/2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ali Cournoo</td>
<td>$1499</td>
<td>Technology Delivery Services (TechGeek)</td>
<td>Chief Operation Officer</td>
<td>2/24/2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alicia Wilson</td>
<td>No Limit</td>
<td>BCR (CFO)</td>
<td>COO</td>
<td>4/21/2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allen Measham</td>
<td>Comments $1500 non-travel $1500 travel</td>
<td>Capital Programs</td>
<td>CFO</td>
<td>12/16/2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arneal Piesco-Smith</td>
<td>Comments $100 travel and $250 non-travel, Do not use funds for BIC expenses</td>
<td>Business Resource Center</td>
<td>CFO</td>
<td>6/27/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angela Huang</td>
<td>$935</td>
<td>Laboratory Manage, US</td>
<td>CFO</td>
<td>12/16/2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Benefits of New Solution

- **Saves time for person maintaining the system.** Only one copy of the data is being kept and the format is the same for each record. More information on the authority limits is included when limits may differ by expense type.

- **Saves time for person seeking information for a transaction.** Searches can be made on multiple fields to find authority by person or department. Multiple individuals can access the same record at the same time. Specimen signatures can be easily matched.

- **Departments and BRC staff can view the database to see what the authorities are.**

- **Facilitates systematic review** to determine the need for and request updates in signature authorities due to changes in personnel and programs is more easily accomplished with this searchable format.

Summary Results

The Signature Authority SharePoint solution has been an unqualified success with rave reviews from both the process administrators and the end users. The site has been live since May 2014 and averages 164 page views per day.

This solution illustrates the following lessons to be learned:

- IT solutions do not need to cost a lot to be highly successful
- IT solutions can be brought to market quickly given the right tool and development process
- Apply creative thinking to leverage tools that you already have in place

User Testimonials

Elizabeth Ellis
BRC Analyst - Business Resource Center

*I can’t tell you what an improvement it is to check signature authorizations now. It took me about 30 seconds to look something up. Thank you for making life easier."

Gemma Reiser
BRC Analyst - Business Resource Center

“Labyrinth – a complicated irregular network of passages or paths in which it is difficult to find one’s way.” This was our signature delegation process before Hank stepped in. He led us through a maze of data and a rather antiquated paper process, making excellent suggestions along the way, to bring us to a surprisingly quick and easy SharePoint solution.

The Signature Authority SharePoint site is intuitive and user friendly. The site allows varying levels of access for different stakeholders, i.e. departments, Business Resource Center Staff, and site administrators; and information through this single online resource is easy to find by all. Site administrators are able to update content and maintain the repository with basic technical skills and minimal IT intervention. Finally, Hank is always available and responsive when we have questions or need assistance.