



Fransmart Case Study

CORASWORKS

WORKPLACE SOFTWARE FOR SHAREPOINT

Franchise Consulting Firm Automates Information Flow, Improving Efficiency and Accelerating Time-to-Value

Fransmart uses CorasWorks Workplace Suite™ and Microsoft® SharePoint® to deploy an integrated business workplace to help improve communications among franchisees

Fransmart is a franchise development company that provides sales, support and systems to emerging franchise companies to grow their businesses by decreasing operating costs and increasing profitability. To better manage the project life cycle around store set-up, Fransmart contracted two services firms, *View360* and *Blue Cotton Technical Services*, to develop a custom web-based system. The resulting system, called *Autopilot*, is built with Microsoft SharePoint and the CorasWorks Workplace Suite. The primary benefit of the system is to improve information flow between franchisor and franchisee, which in turn decreases the amount of time it takes to set up a new restaurant, accelerates royalties to the franchisor and profit to the franchisee.

The Fransmart Challenge

Fransmart receives revenue from two primary sources: franchise fees and gross revenue royalties. Franchisees incur franchise fees when they agree to purchase the rights to a particular geographic area for a given concept. Royalty fees incur once the restaurant (or restaurants) is open and generating revenue. Fransmart has long demonstrated success in selling franchises, but over time, Fransmart recognized that not all franchisees successfully launch their stores. As a result, Fransmart loses valuable royalty opportunities and more importantly, the launch failures tarnish the franchise concept and Fransmart's ability to sell additional franchises.

The Fransmart team has a wealth of practical business knowledge regarding best practices for opening stores and wanted to make this information available to franchisees in order to improve their ability to balance all the variables required for success. The challenge was to find a mechanism or system to distribute this information without overwhelming the team by requiring them to get directly involved in every store opening.

According to Dan Rowe, president and CEO of Fransmart, "We needed a way to create a business environment, accessible to our franchisees, franchisors and our management team that allowed us to integrate our business processes with our critical business information."

A Vision for the Future

Fransmart envisioned a web-based software system accessible over the Internet as the best way to make in-house domain knowledge available to franchisees. The vision called for managing the franchisees through a pre-defined project plan. Franchisees would report status through the system and use the system to help complete the tasks required for success. In the process of fulfilling this vision, Fransmart hoped to strengthen the bond between Fransmart and the franchise itself.

To deliver on the vision, Fransmart worked with CorasWorks partner *View360 Inc.* for application layer consulting and with *Blue Cotton Technical Services* for system software consulting. The *View360/Blue Cotton* team conducted an exhaustive analysis of available software products and technologies that would meet Fransmart's requirements, considering both industry-specific applications as well as technical platforms. In the end, the team unanimously selected Microsoft SharePoint and CorasWorks Workplace



Fransmart Case Study

CORASWORKS

WORKPLACE SOFTWARE FOR SHAREPOINT

Suite, due to the combination of product depth, breadth, flexibility and reliability. Incorporated into this selection were additional system software components from Microsoft – including Windows Server 2003®, Office 2003®, SQL Server®, and SQL Server Reporting Services™. The team felt that the flexibility and modular architecture combined with a deep set of features offered by these products were by far the best solution.

The Results Speak for Themselves

The integrated workplace developed for Fransmart was built delivering a home site for each restaurant concept within which data was further broken down through a management sub-site, franchisee territory sub-sites, and franchisee store sub-sites. Included in all these sites are search, navigation, and reporting capabilities.

The home site for the restaurant concept stores key documents and manuals, contact information, news about that particular concept, logos and graphics necessary for store marketing, and “pointers” for franchisees. Its management site provides a central location for viewing roll-ups of franchisee status. The individual territory sites provide information for franchises managing multiple restaurants, including restaurant contract data, territory maps, and roll-ups of the data for their restaurant. Each restaurant site provides a best-practice timeline of suggested activity, providing franchises with links to documents that support each key activity and help ensure the restaurant’s success.

As a direct result of deploying the Autopilot, built with Microsoft SharePoint and the CorasWorks Workplace Suite, Fransmart is seeing a significant and measurable business benefit. They have seen a 70% reduction in the number of calls to Fransmart personnel, which allows their staff to focus on other aspects of growing their business, while eliminating the need to hire additional staff to support their clients.

Even more impressive is the impact on the amount of time it takes to set up a new franchise restaurant. Due to their deployment of the Autopilot integrated workplace, store set-up time has been reduced from 9 months to 6 months, accelerating royalties to the franchisor and profit to the franchisee.

“Our new Autopilot solution allows everyone involved in the success of our client’s franchised restaurant concept to improve their productivity, driving significant increases in revenue and concrete reductions in cost” said Rick DeMarco, COO of Fransmart.

Fransmart has found that Autopilot, their new integrated workplace, has helped build a stronger business relationship between Fransmart and each franchisor, and has helped each franchisor develop a stronger relationship with their franchisees, resulting in improved customer satisfaction, reduced costs, and increased revenues.