



## Kingston University Case Study

CORASWORKS

THE NEXT STEP IN THE EVOLUTION OF COLLABORATION

### CorasWorks Brings Kingston Closer to Becoming a University without Walls

Kingston University, located in the Royal Borough of Kingston upon the Thames, south-west of London, serves more than 18,500 students and is considered one of United Kingdom's top ranked universities.

As a leading higher-education institution that defines its mission in terms of future possibilities, Kingston University started an initiative to replace an aging intranet environment which did not meet the needs of its expanding student body and university staff. Under the guidance of Ian Mcneice, the University's Head of Technical Services, Kingston sought to cost-effectively leverage innovation to further its position as a "knowledge" institution. One of the keys to this effort was to adopt technologies that could provide for the growing information needs of its students, faculty and governing body.

In its initial evaluation of document management technologies, Kingston encountered CorasWorks®, the leading worldwide provider of application software on the Microsoft® SharePoint® collaboration platform. CorasWorks software products would be used to support Kingston's initial university-wide document and collaboration needs. In addition, the company would become a trusted partner in the University's drive to revolutionize the way its strategic decision making is managed within its committee based governance structure. With CorasWorks at its side, Kingston University is set to leverage virtual collaboration to establish a new standard in the management of strategic decision making within higher education.

### Achieving Better University-wide Information Management with SharePoint

In May 2004, Kingston University began an initiative to deploy a collective document management system that would allow the university to replace an aging intranet environment, as well as offer access to much needed document storage and versioning capabilities. Kingston evaluated several document management platforms, including Novell GroupWise, IBM Lotus Notes and Microsoft SharePoint. Microsoft SharePoint soon became the University's top choice, because it offered greater flexibility with less complexity, as compared to "pure" document management systems. SharePoint also best fit within their existing Microsoft desktop strategy, while providing a significant cost advantage over the alternatives.

Kingston's initial SharePoint deployment went live on September 5, 2005 with the release of a Student Space and Staff Space portal, serving its entire student body and faculty, representing more than 21,000 users. The portal provides each user with personal MySites for storage of personal and university files that can be remotely accessed. The portals are driven by SharePoint's out-of-the-box team site capabilities.

While the initial portal deployment did not incorporate CorasWorks software, the portal's future enhancements would. Pleased with their SharePoint portal deployment, Mcneice could never have imagined what was on Kingston's horizon. In 2006, while university academics were researching how a new collaborative platform could be developed to manage tenders for the Aerospace Defense industry in the United Kingdom, a local enterprise team discovered CorasWorks solution templates as a potential framework.

Due to CorasWorks' promise as a solution foundation for the Aerospace Defense industry, Mcneice was asked to further evaluate CorasWorks for its potential business value to Kingston's university-wide use of SharePoint. Mcneice recognized that CorasWorks could add tremendous value to the University's usage of SharePoint, given CorasWorks unique ability to connect solutions across team sites, and the flexibility it offers for virtual collaboration.



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Using the easy to implement modular software architecture of CorasWorks Workplace Suite, significant enhancements have been made to the Kingston Student Space and Staff Space portals. As a result, users have access to their personal information, as well as shared information from across the university. The University's faculty especially values the ability to access information from remote locations, and the ability to aggregate data from multiple department sites and custom lists. The CorasWorks Workplace Suite offers Kingston a means to continually evolve their portal, quickly and easily adding enhanced value through new collaborative features.

### **Into the Future -- Setting a New Standard in Committee Management for Higher Education**

In addition to extending the functionality of their portal, and enabling custom project management solutions on SharePoint, Kingston is advising CorasWorks in the development of a ground-breaking Committee Process Management solution. This environment will set a new standard for how strategic decision making is done within Kingston's governing committee structure.

Scheduled to be deployed in early 2007, CorasWorks' new Committee Process Management solution for Higher Education will offer Kingston's decision making groups, comprised of hundreds of committees and subcommittees, a new "virtual" committee environment. This new environment will transform the way decisions are made at the University. Whether it is the future of Kingston's learning and research strategies, or upcoming changes to the IT and facility infrastructure, the decisions influenced by and made within the University's committee structure effect all aspects of the University's operations.

Transforming the committee process will save significant time and resources for nearly every stakeholder within the University community. Mcneice predicts that the new committee solution will positively impact 2,500 Kingston staff and associates from partner colleges, benefiting a total community of more than 4,000 people.

"There is no solution like this available today. The time saving is absolutely enormous," said Mcneice. "Each committee will be able to post, share and manage critical information, without the need for numerous email communications and mandatory meeting attendance. The administrative efficiency gains will drive immense business value. This is significant given the transient nature of university work, which makes effective remote access critical."

Without CorasWorks Workplace Suite, the new Committee Process Management solution would require a team of .Net/ASP developers, which would be expensive and time consuming, according to Mcneice. In addition, the resulting custom software would be difficult to maintain and enhance over time. CorasWorks software provides a viable way for Kingston to overcome these otherwise insurmountable hurdles.

With dozens of universities within the UK now considering new deployment of SharePoint environments with the release of Office 2007, Kingston believes that their design of a Committee Process Management solution with CorasWorks will set a new standard for committee management in the higher education space throughout Europe.