

Marketplace Update

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Maximizing Value for Microsoft Clients - EMC's Services and Solutions for Microsoft SharePoint

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Like most IT solutions, Microsoft's SharePoint has evolved significantly while focusing on a singular goal; to help employees, work groups, departments and organizations effectively communicate, collaborate, and access/manage information and documents. Early manifestations of this approach came in 1998, when Microsoft launched Platinum Exchange, the Tahoe document management platform and local content replication solutions. Over time, advances in user interface, portal, dashboard and web content management technologies seeded the ground for SharePoint Team Services (STS), which supported web-based team collaboration for Office 2000.

SharePoint became the fastest growing server product in Microsoft history, and with good reason. SharePoint is remarkably easy to set-up and manage locally, and its friendly user interface makes it accessible to workers of virtually every sort. But that notable ease of use can also obscure underlying complexities, particularly for organizations contending with challenges, including better managing information infrastructures, containing storage growth and complying with legal and government regulations.

Fortunately, EMC understands the gravity of these problems and proactively developed comprehensive strategies, services and solutions to address them. The company's offerings are anything but one-size-fits-all. Instead, EMC's extensive bench of Microsoft service professionals can tailor engagements to address specific client requirements. These include everything from SharePoint design and deployment to corralling existing environments to operational management to supporting SharePoint assets with EMC's portfolio of tiered, end-to-end infrastructure solutions. Most importantly, EMC's SharePoint expertise reflects the value of its broad, deep 12+ year partnership with Microsoft and the pair's thousands of joint customers.

SharePoint and the Evolution of Distributed Computing

SharePoint arrived at market well into the adoption of distributed desktop and datacenter computing, a point that underscores many of its design features. From the beginning, SharePoint reflected and continues to reflect enterprises' elemental communications concerns. The first of these is the crucial role that information plays in business processes and decisions of every kind. If the datacenter qualifies the heart of IT operations, information represents the blood flowing through a business organism, keeping it viable and healthy.

For many organizations, SharePoint is the mechanism that enables information to be efficiently accessed, distributed and utilized. SharePoint also supports a range of collaboration processes and strategies for individual employees, work groups and entire enterprises. In essence, SharePoint fulfills organizations' desire for powerful yet simple tools to support information-driven processes, from basic application development to business-critical decision making.

But at the same time, SharePoint sometimes allows or reinforces less desirable behaviors and consequences. One of the application's key benefits – its ease of deployment and use –

can contribute to the propagation of isolated information “islands” beyond the oversight of IT and business managers. That lack of transparency – obscuring how information is being used, by whom and at what cost – has obvious practical implications. But it also inhibits the implementation of holistic information planning and growth management strategies.

In addition, though individuals and work groups can easily deploy SharePoint environments, such efforts often contribute to data and IT asset sprawl. This, in turn, makes it difficult or even impossible to institute centralized storage and content management, security and governance processes and strategies, or to provably meet service level agreements (SLAs). These problems can also inhibit the adoption of complementary technologies including virtualization. Bottom line: Despite recognized benefits, SharePoint all too often becomes Ground Zero for numerous information management, storage and content challenges.

EMC’s Best-Kept Secret – SharePoint Infrastructure Services and Solutions

Along with acting as a content and collaboration management server, Microsoft SharePoint solutions can support virtually all intranet, extranet and Web-based business applications, providing workers and executives easy access to information. Additionally, the SharePoint platform offers IT developers and managers the necessary tools for server administration, interoperability and application extensibility.

EMC offers a robust portfolio of services, solutions and technologies that can help customers accelerate deployment and simplify the operational management of SharePoint environments. Though EMC’s capabilities for SharePoint can be finely tailored to meet these and other critical features, they are also designed to address specific areas and challenges. These include:

- **Application development and integration** – As a productivity platform, SharePoint helps organizations connect people, information, and business processes of every sort. To that end, it incorporates features and capabilities that enable the platform to support application development and process automation solutions.

Gaining the full benefits of SharePoint is no easy task but EMC service professionals provide comprehensive expertise and experience in all components of developing applications on the SharePoint platform. These include .NET skills, user experience, workflow and search, and can help organizations speed integration, improve efficiency and reduce costs.

- **Application migration** – Enterprises often employ multiple platforms, such as IBM Lotus and Microsoft SharePoint to improve employee collaboration. At the same time, they hope to enhance worker and IT administrator productivity with mobile and web browser access, integrated search, portals, office productivity tools, and composite applications. Application migration initiatives can help capture many of these benefits along with significant cost savings but can sometimes spark business disruptions.

EMC can help counter these challenges via application, data and infrastructure migration offerings in which service professionals first rationalize applications by analyzing, categorizing, and prioritizing them, and then perform target architecture planning. As a result, transitioning to new consolidated SharePoint platforms can be completed without significantly disrupting worker productivity or business operations. Target architecture planning

is more effective than porting applications, and can also be used for re-assessing business continuity, infrastructure management, virtualization and storage.

- **Back-Up, Recovery and Archive (BURA)** – Effective back-up, recovery and archiving (BURA) processes are critical to issues, from preserving business information to complying with stringent legal and government regulations. But implementing BURA can be complicated in distributed, complex SharePoint environments where multiple instances of data are all too common. Despite that, granular SharePoint recovery is necessary to maintain application availability and uptime, to manage application consistency and to complete recovery processes within SLAs.

Fortunately, EMC offers a wide range of proven BURA solutions for SharePoint that provide benefits, including a single recovery interface for all Microsoft applications, consistent & coordinated recovery processes, data deduplication and simple/affordable archiving options. EMC can support granular recovery requirements based on both SLA and cost considerations, providing SharePoint users enormous flexibility in achieving business information goals. Finally, the range of EMC storage platforms allows customers of every sort to “right size” their storage infrastructures for optimized BURA performance.

- **Business Continuity** – SharePoint environments can sometimes expose companies to significant risk, particularly where use of the platform has escaped management oversight. This is further complicated by the increasingly strategic role that many companies ascribe to the application. In such circumstances, inefficient or incomplete recovery of SharePoint resources can lead to almost inevitable, often severe business disruptions.

To counter these dangers, EMC offers unified protection for SharePoint and other Microsoft applications, including recovery for both local and remote sites to any point in time and consistency of recovery across federated SharePoint environments. Perhaps most important is EMC’s ability to flexibly support multiple, granular recovery requirements based on both SLA and cost considerations. In short, whatever a company’s Microsoft recovery needs may be, EMC has the solutions and expertise to fulfill them.

- **Enterprise Content Management** – SharePoint’s collaboration and document management functionalities make it an important part of many customers’ information infrastructure. But users may need access to multiple types of content, including business-critical documents, outside of SharePoint to facilitate collaboration and make better decisions. As content volume grows, it becomes increasingly difficult to apply consistent policies for retention and compliance. In addition, SQL Server has noted scalability constraints, long backup and restore times, reduced performance, and high costs when used for long term primary storage. All of this becomes even more complex when information resides in multiple, disparate and disconnected SharePoint sites spread across organizations or the globe.

EMC’s Documentum Enterprise Content Management platform offers a solution to these issues, seamlessly integrating with SharePoint and allowing customers to centrally manage all content types, apply policies for compliance and retention, and reduce the operational costs of disaggregated SharePoint content and sites. As a result, end-users collaborate and share information more effectively and work without disruption, completely within familiar SharePoint environments. By supporting centralized content control, compliance, cost re-

duction and end-user transparency, EMC solutions help extend SharePoint into an enterprise-ready information platform.

- **Security** – The highly distributed nature of SharePoint sometimes results in unintended and unnecessary exposure of sensitive data. Over time, this can erode security controls and governance practices, undermining essential business processes. More importantly, the structure of SharePoint environments can make pinpointing or correcting these problems especially difficult. In essence, you can't fix what you can't locate.

However, SharePoint owners can leverage EMC solutions to efficiently discover information and documents and to identify sensitive data. After discovery mapping has been concluded, IT managers can implement tighter access controls and reporting processes to monitor access to and use of company information, thus ensuring against data theft and inappropriate activities. EMC's discovery solutions can also be used to institute information rights and rights management processes.

- **Tiered and/or Unified Storage** – Not surprisingly, Microsoft SharePoint development closely follows the evolution of storage technologies. As robust, low cost direct attached and network attached storage (DAS and NAS) devices were deployed by work groups, departments and remote offices, they often became SharePoint repositories. Such solutions can certainly be beneficial but they tend to create challenges for companies attempting to consolidate storage infrastructure assets or establish common information management processes. Even more problematic, meeting performance-related SLAs in these environments can be difficult or impossible.

Fortunately, EMC offers numerous proven, highly scalable, cost-effective and easily managed storage solutions for virtually any SharePoint environment or business use case. In fact, EMC can help customers ensure that they are supporting SharePoint with appropriate tiered storage components, from robust primary storage for business critical applications to cost-effective back-up and archiving solutions. Along with well-established and regarded storage platforms, EMC provides clients tested, documented best practices specially designed or adapted for SharePoint.

- **Virtual Infrastructures** – Over the past five years, virtualization has fundamentally changed the way that IT works and delivers business value. Server, storage and network virtualization have helped businesses realize badly needed improvements in infrastructure TCO, as well as enhance system utilization over widely dispersed IT environments, including those supporting SharePoint. Virtualization can also help improve system flexibility and business process reliability, allowing organizations to establish and deliver on SLAs.

EMC is notable in its recognition of and support for virtualization solutions of every sort, including Microsoft's Hyper-V and VMware's vSphere. In fact, the company is delivering or developing virtualization-ready versions of all its solutions, helping customers capture enhanced TCO and server/storage utilization, lower energy costs, improved infrastructure availability and system mobility. Given the critical role virtualization plays in x86-based environments, EMC's solutions can provide particular value to organizations utilizing Microsoft SharePoint.

Thorny Problems Need Proven Solutions

It should come as no surprise that EMC offers a remarkably robust family of proven infrastructure solutions and services specially tuned for SharePoint. Leveraging the company's deep expertise, best practices and integrated technologies, these solutions are designed to help clients:

1. Quickly identify and address SharePoint challenges
2. Reduce risk and uncertainty
3. Accelerate and maximize SharePoint's business value

To that end, EMC's professional services organization employs thousands of Microsoft specialists with years of experience in thousands of business engagements. In addition to EMC's Consulting experts, customers can engage resources from EMC's Global Solutions Practice, as well as experts at EMC's Proven Solutions Centers. These solutions and resources certainly represent EMC's longstanding commitment to help clients gain maximum benefits from their SharePoint investments. But they also reflect the company's longstanding relationship with Microsoft, and the two companies' dedication to customer service.

Summary Analysis

Microsoft's fastest growing server product, SharePoint's enormous popularity is due, in part, to its simple local set-up and management. Its friendly user interface makes SharePoint a favorite among employees and work groups for communicating, collaborating and accessing/managing information and documents. As a result, SharePoint is being used strategically by companies of every sort and size. But SharePoint's notable benefits can also obscure underlying complexities, particularly for organizations hoping to better manage information resources, contain storage growth and comply with government and legal regulations.

Fortunately, EMC's SharePoint consulting services and robust information infrastructure technologies offer customers a range of holistic strategic and tactical solutions to address these challenges. EMC's industry leading Microsoft service professionals can address everything from initial SharePoint design and deployments to supporting SharePoint assets with EMC storage solutions. EMC's SharePoint expertise also reflects its broad, deep 12+ year partnership with Microsoft and the pair's thousands of joint customers.

Enterprises that want or need help dealing with their SharePoint environments would do well to consider EMC for its ability to align SharePoint requirements to the most appropriate technology options. Overall, the company's deep consulting services and information infrastructure capabilities make EMC the partner of choice for Microsoft SharePoint customers.

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About Pund-IT, Inc.

Pund-IT emphasizes understanding technology and product evolution and interpreting the effects these changes will have on business customers and the greater IT marketplace.