



What is SharePoint Online ?

SharePoint online is used to create shared workspaces, shared file storage platforms and internal websites (or intranets) it provides enhanced collaboration and sharing of files and information beyond a traditional shared network drive.

SharePoint is intended for storing team or project-related documents and is heavily customisable with features and workflows that allow it to address much more than just file storage. Organisations use SharePoint for project-based management sites, human resources portals, blogs and more. Sharing files securely with external users and customers is easy and organisations have control of who in their organisation is able to share files.

Benefits of using SharePoint

Version tracking

With version tracking you're able to revert back to previous versions of a document and see all the history of a document at the click of a button this is very useful when a lot of employees are collaborating on the same file.

Central location

Multi-site organisations can operate easily as all employees can store documents in one shared location.

Improved communication.

SharePoint allows you to include personal profiles about your employees so others can see their interests, who they work with and what their job function is, to improve cross team relations and improve communication.

Anytime, anywhere, any device.

Employees can access files from anywhere with an internet connection, supporting the trend for remote and flexible working.

Ease of access

Many users find it easier to access files on the go, without the need to connect to VPNs or remote desktop sessions which can be slow and clunky.

In the cloud

With files in the cloud you have more resilience you're no longer dependent on the hardware in your server room being available, and it's easy to build in version control, backup and to set rules around who can access, edit and even delete different files.

Why do organisations use SharePoint

SharePoint acts as a great 'shared workspace' for teams to collaborate and share documents and folders, this is especially useful with more employees working from home and offsite. Although its important to note that using SharePoint in place of a file server is a different way of working and users will need time and training to adapt to this, which means SharePoint isn't necessarily the right solution for all organisations

Organisations can configure SharePoint to act as an intranet so users can access SharePoint as a branded company page, managed by an admin, that acts as a dashboard with news, calendar, events etc. Because SharePoint comes as standard with Office 365 it is a low cost option instead of a complex intranet service. It also has a powerful search functionality allowing employees to easily locate files from anywhere in the application. It helps with the environment too as it allows files to be shared and opened digitally rather than masses of paper being printed and thrown away.

Tips for implementing SharePoint

Embracing change



If an organisation is using SharePoint as a replacement for their file server it is important users understand the benefits of using SharePoint for this purpose and the changes they will need to make in the way they work to ensure a successful implementation

Training



Ensuring plenty of user training on the organisations SharePoint will help ensure the platform is fully adopted quickly.

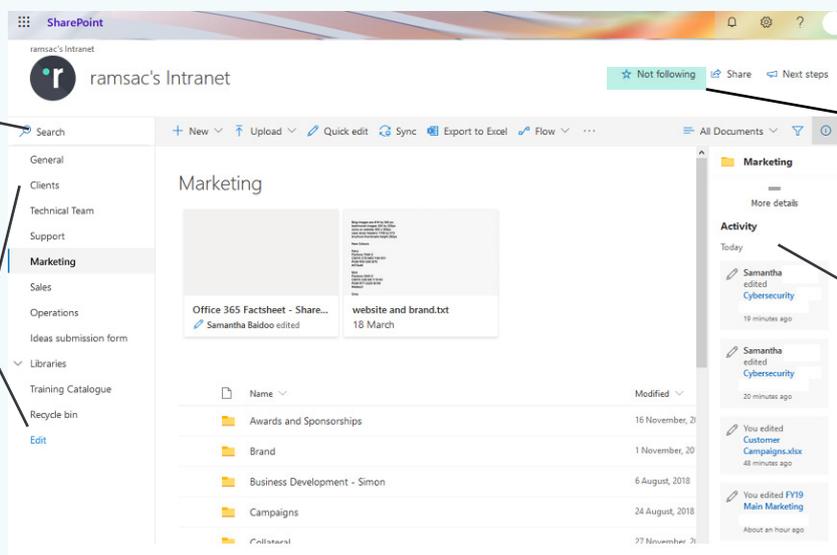
Planning



One of the key points to consider when planning a move to SharePoint is to not just try to replicate the structure of an existing shared drive folder structure. Taking time to work out the structure and permissions before uploading data is critical to a successful implementation.

SharePoint's search functionality is very powerful helping users to locate files quickly and easily.

As an example, at ramsac, we have listed our departments as channels in the left hand panel for easy user access.



Following sites improves you search as it prioritises the content that is most important for you.

In the activity tab you can see who has edited or uploaded documents and when.