

New intranet drives effective knowledge sharing among 10,000+ employees worldwide

Summary

SCHOTT is one of the leading international technology groups in the areas of specialty glass and glass ceramics and active in the household appliances, pharmaceuticals, electronics, optics and transportation sectors.

In Brief

INDUSTRY:

Manufacturing

COUNTRY/REGION:

Headquarters in Germany, offices worldwide

USE CASE:

Employee Portal, Intranet



Experience has shown that we made the right decision when it came to choosing Liferay. We have achieved all specified objectives and have managed to do this within a significantly shorter timescale than originally planned.

Andreas Beeres, CIO, SCHOTT AG

Results

- Cost savings of 60 percent using Liferay standard modules for development
- Time to market on project cut in half to three months
- Improved user experiences with mobile responsive sites
- Knowledge sharing among 10,000 employees so far in 35 regions
- Intranet module for 120 innovation managers to develop new ideas

A Need for Improved Communication Across Regions

SCHOTT maintains its competitive advantage globally by developing and launching innovative products to the market quickly. To do this, they are reliant on effective communication between staff in 35 regions worldwide. Deeply embedded in their corporate culture are these fundamental components: dialogue, exchange and the transfer

of knowledge. They started looking for a new intranet solution because their former intranet was lagging, was limited in distributing information to the right groups at the right time, and lacked interaction functionalities.

SCHOTT conducted a comprehensive analysis interviewing and surveying each group in the organization. The result was a list of requirements of over 80 categories. Liferay was chosen out of 78 competing software applications.



After a detailed evaluation, Liferay stood out as the most suitable platform for us,” said Andreas Beerers, CIO of SCHOTT AG. “The feature set was perfectly suited, and the open source concept and transparent development of the platform fit well with our company.

“And thanks to the high level of flexibility of the Liferay solution, we are able to respond to requirements which cannot be fully planned in advance. All of this makes Schott well prepared for future changes.”

Old Intranet Replaced Completely

In order to completely replace the old intranet, all inventory data was migrated to the Liferay solution by a specified date. More than 12,000 pieces of data content from the old intranet was transferred within a few hours using a sophisticated import/

export mechanism. Blogs, personal profiles, networking opportunities, the internal job portal and an innovation platform were also implemented to the new intranet.

The IT service provider PRODYNA, which was charged with implementing the project, designed SCHOTTnet as a central portal solution with global access for all locations. This in turn guaranteed consistent communication and cooperation across different sites for the globally operating group.

Cost Savings of 60 percent, Time to Market in 3 Months

The company divided its intranet into different core application areas, including company information, document downloads and collaboration. For every SCHOTTnet section, the responsible parties determined whether they wanted to “make or buy” each section. They thoroughly investigated whether it was possible to meet the requirements using applications available on the market. Although solutions existed, many economic factors supported the ‘make’ alternative. Development using a combination of Liferay standard modules as a basis always ended up being more cost effective. Compared to buying and implementing a dedicated solution, the savings amounted to more than 60 percent. In addition, using Liferay to deliver the system shortened the project time to market from six months to three months.

Mission Accomplished: All Staff Involvement

Today, more than 10,000 staff members are working worldwide on the new intranet portal. More than 2,000 people exchange dialogue on a broad range of subjects in over 35 communities. Furthermore, an emphasis on usability has led to user acceptance of the portal.

The company has provided its staff with an opportunity for exchanging information whenever they consider it to be necessary.

“SCHOTTnet has also injected a new philosophy into our intranet,” Beeres said. “Previously, the articles had to go through an approval process, which is now no longer necessary. Each staff member can get involved and there are only a few rights and role restrictions in place. This concept also inspires us in other areas and helps to handle information openly as well as promoting a culture of sharing.”

New Intranet Already Leading to New SCHOTT Projects

SCHOTTnet’s pipeline module allows more than 120 innovation managers from all group divisions to develop, discuss and evaluate new ideas that lead to new projects. This occurred two months after the platform launched with a team of 14 people across different disciplines, geographies and hierarchy levels who were able to work together virtually on a new idea that is already eligible for patent protection. With SCHOTTnet’s job module, recruiting efforts also have been improved through integration of external online recruiting systems, leading to a consistent process from the inside to the outside and vice versa, without any media disruptions or duplicate efforts.

Further Investments in Mobile, Employee Participation

SCHOTTnet is a good example of a solution on Liferay that starts with a classic intranet and adds greater functionalities over time.

“Experience has shown that we made the right decision when it came to choosing Liferay. We have achieved all specified objectives and have managed to do this within a significantly shorter timescale than originally planned,” Beeres said. “In future, we will continue to invest in SCHOTTnet and provide additional modules that make the Liferay Portal available for those on the go. In addition, we will integrate other systems to provide our business and service units with an optimal digital working environment. The next major steps are to extend our market intelligence platform in SCHOTTnet, adapt to mobile use and, above all, integrate staff that are not included in the company-wide network.”

MORE INFORMATION

The SCHOTT technology group is present on the market in 35 countries and active in sectors including the domestic appliance industry, pharmaceuticals, electronics, optics and transportation. With more than 15,000 members of staff, the group generates sales of almost two billion euros. The parent company SCHOTT AG is headquartered in Mainz and 100 percent owned by the Carl Zeiss Foundation. SCHOTT promotes sustainable projects for employees, society and the environment.