



Windows 7 Customer Solution Case Study



CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE
PRESIDENCY
AND CONGRESS

Overview

Country or Region: United States

Industry: Non-profit

Customer Profile

CSPC is a non-profit, non-partisan organization that systematically examines past successes and failures of the Presidency and Congress. There are 20 staff and 10 revolving interns with 30 PCs.

Business Situation

Finding and navigating documents while supporting temporary help are three key concerns of CSPC management.

Solution

Features in Windows 7 like Taskbar Pinning and Jump Lists, the Aero® desktop experience, along with tools for managing training and enhancing collaboration, are positively impacting the organization.

Benefits

- Searching Simplified
- Faster Navigation, Faster Editing
- Collaboration Made Easy
- Easier Security and Maintenance Monitoring
- Rapid Training Tool



Workflow Speeds Up for Government Policy Think Tank

“Pinning and Jump Lists make it easy to navigate donor spreadsheets to track fund raising activities. The most recent documents are right at my finger tips in the task bar. I’m instantly productive.”

Emily Shaftel, Coordinator, Communications and Special Projects, CSPC

The Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress (CSPC) is a non-partisan, 30 staff member Washington, D.C. group that thinks strategically about tough policy issues and draws on lessons of history to help the President and Congress reach informed decisions. In order to prepare its briefing papers and publications, the Center must manage its own growing databases plus thousands of documents and publications by others. District Computers, LLC, recommended that the Center participate as one of the first non-profits in the pre-introduction trials of the new Windows® 7 operating system. CSPC has discovered a number of new Windows 7 features that streamline workflow through better navigation and improved search and maintenance tools.



Situation

The Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress (CSPC) is a non-partisan, non-profit organization founded in 1965. The Center staff and policy experts from government, academia and the research and public policy communities systematically examine past successes and failures of the Presidency and relate their findings to Congressional and Executive Branch leaders. Both the Executive and Legislative Branches are highly compartmentalized, and this often poses a challenge to strategic thinking, bi-partisan action, and the best use of U.S. financial and human resources. In addition, the nation remains polarized even though public opinion polls show a desire to break these barriers and face our nation's real public policy issues. Lessons learned from past American experiences offer insights on how to deal with these challenges.

One of the most pressing business challenges for CSPC is juggling a myriad of documents in a more efficient way. As an organization whose major deliverables are position papers and policy briefs, a large portion of staff time is spent in front of a computer. CSPC constantly accesses a large database located on its server to retrieve and store information for a variety of publications. Efficiently locating the right documents is often a challenge.

The organization has approximately 20 full-time staff and 10 interns and an attendant number of PCs. As with any firm that utilizes temporary help, training and knowledge transfer impacts productivity and workflow to varying degrees.

Finding and navigating documents while supporting temporary employees are three key concerns of CSPC management.

Solution

CSPC is finding a number of features in the new Windows 7 operating system that are now helping streamline workflow through better navigation and improved search and maintenance tools.

HomeGroup

CSPC users can quickly connect up to five Windows 7 computers with or without a server to create a mini version of a distributed network. Files, information and devices such as printers can be shared.

Federated Search

This functionality enables the CSPC team to find virtually any type of file whether located on local drives, network or the Internet. Searches are deeper and more comprehensive.

Problem Steps Recorder

Problem Steps Recorder allows CSPC staff to precisely capture and communicate a computer problem. It also enables staff to document fixes, create tutorials or knowledge-based reference materials for customers.

Action Center

Action Center keeps CSPC users informed about PC status without interrupting workflow. It also provides direct links to a large variety of security and maintenance solutions.

Aero desktop experience

The Windows 7 Aero Snap feature allows CSPC users side-by-side window viewing by dragging windows to borders, left and right. Grab and shake the foremost screen to make all other screens disappear. The Peek feature is invoked by clicking the lower right hand Show Desktop rectangle. The desktop is immediately visible to view gadgets and other desktop icons.

Taskbar

Features like Pinning and Jump Lists, conveniently accessed from the taskbar, streamline document navigation. CSPC users have their files move readily available.

Benefits

Searching Simplified

CSPC utilizes a very large database of documents, information and resources to develop materials and publish policy recommendations. However, finding the right documents in an efficient way doesn't always happen. Searching for documents wastes time and spoils productivity. Windows 7 has a powerful new search tool that helps facilitate finding. "Federated Search solves complex searches for policy documents located throughout the network as well as simple searches for the desktop calculator. It's easy to use and gives us powerful results," said Emily Shaftel, Coordinator for Communications and Special Projects, Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress.

While interns play an important role at CSPC, most stay only three months or less. One of the unintended consequences of their temporary status is that documents end up tagged with different names and filed in a myriad of places. Prior to Windows 7 operating system, the permanent staff was left to manage the challenge on their own. This is not the case with Windows 7 according to Sarah Ficenc, Director for Policy and Communications, Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress. "Interns are with us about three months and then disappear. That means some of our files disappear as well. Federated Search allows us to find them again regardless of where they filed."

Faster Navigation, Faster Editing

One of the Center's primary goals is to analyze and propose policy

recommendations. Consequently, the staff spends a lot of time working on their computers. Navigating a variety and volume of documents becomes a daily task. Windows 7 however, provides a number of tools to ease the process. "Pinning and Jump Lists make it easy to navigate donor spreadsheets to track fund raising activities. The most recent documents are right at my finger tips in the Taskbar. I'm instantly productive," noted Shaftel.

Shaftel continued: "As an editor, I'm often comparing two documents side-by-side. The Snap feature makes the comparison set up easy and the Peek and Shake functions keep unused or unnecessary documents out of my way."

Collaboration Made Easy

It is quite common for several CSPC staff members to come together on a joint project. Windows 7 has some features that amplify the team's efforts. "We're just starting to experiment with HomeGroup, but it holds great promise for ad hoc teams that get together on specific projects," commented Ficenc. "It makes collaboration much easier with the simple set up.

"Another exciting feature that we expect will enhance collaboration is Windows 7 Libraries," said Ficenc. "We can deposit links to all of the files we need for a new policy paper in a single Library folder without physically moving the location of the original files. That's very helpful, especially for a staff with a wide range of computer skills."

Easier Security and Maintenance Monitoring

Both Ficenc and Shaftel agree they have a need to focus on work, not computer fixes. Action Center provides detailed information on the status of security and maintenance issues. "Action Center is a great one-stop

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feature for average computer users. It will allow us to see a dozen different security and maintenance status monitors all at once," commented Ficenec.

Rapid Training Tool

Problem Steps Recorder is viewed by Shaftel as a great new solution for temporary staff. "We see Problem Steps Recorder as a possible training tool solution for interns. In less than five minutes, we can capture the sequence for a mail merge and have it as a permanent reference tool."

Windows 7

Faster and more reliable: Windows 7 will help your organization use information technology to gain a competitive advantage in today's new world of work. Your people will be able to be more productive. You will be able to support your mobile work force with better access to shared data and collaboration tools. And your IT staff will have better tools and technologies to enhance corporate IT security, data protection, and more efficient deployment and management.

For more information about Windows 7, go to: www.microsoft.com/windows/business

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