



Ferry Increases Frequency and Speed of Safety Updates for Smoother Sailing

BC Ferries wanted to revamp its manual methods for updating crucial policies and procedures to consistently follow best practices and comply with changing regulations. The company worked with itgroove to implement eFleet, an automated, searchable system based on Nintex Workflow and Microsoft SharePoint Server 2010. The system cost less than one-third of previously attempted solutions, it boosts productivity, and BC Ferries can extend automated workflow processes to other areas of the business for even greater return on its investment. Most importantly, BC Ferries is able to do even more to safeguard its passengers and crew through up-to-date, accessible safety information.

BUSINESS NEEDS

Whether it's for a family vacation or a daily commute, more than 20 million people rely on BC Ferries to get them to and from 47 destinations along the British Columbia coast each year. The company's mission is to provide safe, reliable, and efficient marine transportation services that consistently exceed the expectations of its customers, employees, and communities. Ensuring the safety and security of its customers and staff is a primary concern in all aspects of business for BC Ferries. The company complies with the latest safety regulations and strives to implement best practices wherever possible, learning from previous situations to enhance safety. But maintaining up-to-date printed policies and procedures on its 35 ships and at its

47 terminals presented major challenges. "Every ship had 26 feet of binders full of our policies and procedures—together, those binders would reach the height of the Eiffel Tower," recalls Rob Morrison, IT Manager for BC Ferries. "In addition to taking up precious space, that much paper made it extremely difficult for employees to find information and heightened their risk of being unaware of regulatory changes." Updating policies and procedures involved a laborious manual process of physical sign-offs, rife with version control issues and confusion about who needed to approve which changes. "It was so time-intensive that we only provided updates once or twice a year," says Morrison. "We wanted to remove bottlenecks in the process and have a better audit trail.



Company: BC Ferries
Website: www.bcferrries.com
Country: Canada
Industry: Transportation

Business Situation: BC Ferries had a time-consuming method of manually revising and distributing paper-based process and procedure information to its 35 ships and 47 terminals, which increased the risk that employees would not receive important safety updates in a timely manner.

Solution: The company worked with partner itgroove to implement an automated approval and publishing system based on Nintex Workflow, Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2010, and Muhimbi.

Benefits:

- Greater employee efficiency
- Easy-to-find information
- Fast speed to market
- Cost-effective solution for rapid ROI

APPLYING THE RIGHT SOLUTION

BC Ferries' previous attempts to solve its approval process woes included using native SharePoint functionality and trying a third-party custom-coded product, but neither provided the necessary functionality. Determined to develop a robust, flexible solution, BC Ferries turned to itgroove, an IT consulting firm with a focus on Microsoft SharePoint solutions, for assistance.

"We saw that we could use Nintex Workflow and Microsoft SharePoint Server 2010 to streamline the approval process and that BC Ferries could use the same solution to improve other business areas," says Sean Wallbridge, President and Principal Consultant at itgroove.

BC Ferries and itgroove developed several workflows, the first of which supports the company as it revises and approves new policies and procedures. The workflow includes more than 340 steps and is used by hundreds of document authors and more than 50 approvers. In addition, employees now have a mechanism for quickly viewing only recently updated information, helping ensure that they remain constantly aware of important safety, regulatory, and other changes.

Consultants from itgroove also integrated Nintex Workflow with the Muhimbi PDF Converter for SharePoint tool, which BC Ferries had previously purchased and which includes native support for Nintex Workflow. BC Ferries can use an automated workflow process to combine documents into PDF files. This is particularly important because the company has approximately 90 different manuals that need to be merged and then copied to vessel servers across the fleet for offline access. The solution can process more than 10,000 raw documents in under five hours.

Known as eFleet, the solution went live in January 2012, and BC Ferries and itgroove continue to add functionality to meet changing business requirements.

WHAT WE GAINED

BC Ferries now has a straightforward way to produce and consume key policy and procedure changes, which supports the company's focus on safety for passengers and staff alike.

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Rob Morrison, IT Manager, BC Ferries

"Easy access to current, relevant information and policy is critical to make effective, consistent, and safe operational decisions," says Morrison. "The eFleet system is designed to streamline the old paper-based system and help employees stay up-to-date. SharePoint Server

2010, Nintex Workflow, and our friends at itgroove made this possible."

• **Greater Employee Efficiency** – BC Ferries now has fast, easy access to critical information, and the process for approving that information is less time-consuming than in the past. "Before we implemented Nintex Workflow, we sent out updated information with delays sometimes exceeding six months because of the laborious process involved," recalled Brad Judson, Manager of the Safety Management System for BC Ferries. "Now we provide updates on a weekly basis and can keep our employees fully aware of ongoing regulatory and safety changes."

• **Easy-to-Find Information** – Because eFleet is searchable, employees can use their time more productively now. "Now when a Terminal Supervisor wants to review daily startup procedures at Horseshoe Bay, she just types those key words into SharePoint and is immediately delivered that information," says Morrison.



• **Fast Speed to Market** – BC Ferries was able to launch eFleet quickly, due in part to the ease of development that itgroove found with Nintex. "Having reusable bits to apply to new requirements really accelerates development time," says Wallbridge. "Plus, the sort of 'plug-and-play' workflow capability that is possible with Nintex Workflow is just not possible with native SharePoint functionality."

• **Cost-Effective Solution for Rapid ROI** – Had BC Ferries continued on its previous solution path, the company would have spent three times the amount that was invested in Nintex. "Nintex easily paid for itself within the first month of implementation, and we can use it to automate and improve workflows in other areas of our organization for an even better return on investment," says Morrison.