



Industry

- Software Engineering

Products

- Microsoft BPOS Suite
- 2007 Microsoft Office System
- Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007
- Microsoft Visual Studio
- Windows SharePoint Services

Challenge

The Linc Group employees lacked easy access to pre-approved, standardized content and had to cobble together proposals from previously created documents.

The company needed an affordable, accessible document creation solution for its geographically dispersed field sales and operations teams.

Solution

In less than two months, Neudesic designed a custom solution called Office Canvas, which allows employees to use products in the 2007 Microsoft Office system that are installed on their desktop or portable computers and easily access pre-approved document fragments from a SharePoint Online library.

Benefit

- Reduced sales cycles
- Rapid deployment
- Time and cost savings
- Enhanced development
- Increased employee efficiency

Office Canvas

The Linc Group provides integrated facilities management, HVAC and building systems services, lighting and electrical solutions, sustainability programs, energy efficiency solutions, EV charging stations and other support services to thousands of commercial, government, and residential clients worldwide. As a premier provider of comprehensive green solutions, the company helps commercial clients attain LEED and ENERGY STAR certification, while helping residential clients lower their energy usage and utility bills through its GreenHomes America network. The Linc Group provides end-to-end integrated facility management services that improve operating efficiencies, reduce energy consumption and lower overall operational costs of critical facilities, installations and buildings in the government, commercial and residential markets.

Now that we can enforce document consistency across the enterprise, we expect to see an increase in efficiency as well as in the number of proposals that we win.

*Greg Lush
Vice President and Chief Information Officer
The Linc Group*

Project Highlights

- The Linc Group's geographically dispersed sales force and operational teams had difficulty generating concise, professional proposals and contracts because lacked easy access to pre-approved, standardized content
- The Linc Group turned to its long-time IT partner Neudesic for a solution.
- Neudesic designed a custom solution for The Linc Group called Office Canvas, built on top of the Microsoft Business Productivity Online Standard Suite
- To design the solution, Neudesic used Web services in Windows® SharePoint Services, Microsoft Visual Studio® Team System 2008 Team Suite, which includes Visual Studio Tools for Office
- Neudesic hosts Office Canvas "in the cloud", meaning that all of the information captured by the solution resides on servers housed in Microsoft data centers



Office Canvas

The Challenge

The primary business challenge for Linc Group's geographically dispersed sales force and operational teams was the ability to generate concise, professional proposals and contracts. Because employees lacked easy access to pre-approved, standardized content, they had to cobble together proposals from previously created documents, or gather information from a variety of file shares, e-mail messages, and internal information portals. The process was redundant and time-consuming, and the documentation was often inconsistent and prone to errors, which in turn led to lengthy, four- to six-week legal reviews.

The Solution

In less than two months, Neudesic designed a custom solution for The Linc Group called Office Canvas. Built on top of the Microsoft Business Productivity Online Standard Suite—which includes Microsoft SharePoint Online, Microsoft Exchange Online, Microsoft Office Live Meeting, and Microsoft Office Communications Online—employees use products in the 2007 Microsoft Office system that are installed on their desktop or portable computers and easily access pre-approved document fragments from a SharePoint Online library. And because SharePoint Online is Web based, users can access this information anytime and from anywhere that they have an Internet connection.

The Benefit

Because Document Canvas is a Web-based application, deployment is quick and easy. “One of the many virtues of cloud computing is this: if your browser works, then you're ready to work,” said Greg Lush, Vice President and Chief Information Officer for The Linc Group..

The Linc Group continues to migrate international offices from the company's internal environment to Microsoft Online Services. “As a mostly domestic company with probably 25 to 30 percent of its workforce abroad, we're going to continue expanding into international markets,” Lush says. “We want software-plus-services solutions because they run in a centralized cloud-based environment, which is much easier to set up and maintain remotely. And,

The Benefit

we can purchase inexpensive computers because hosted solutions require much less memory to run.”

The Linc Group also estimates that using the Office Canvas solution will increase employee efficiency by at least 20 percent. “Now that we can enforce document consistency across the enterprise, we

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expect to see an increase in efficiency as well as in the number of proposals that we win,” says Lush. “In addition to further time studies, we want to examine all of the proposals that we lost over the years to determine how much business we forfeited because our proposals were sloppy or the document looked unprofessional. If we take even five percent of that number and can increase new business by that amount—now we're talking about some real return on investment.”