

Alesco Corporation

As an Industrial Brands Provider, Alesco Corporation supplies a diverse range of specialist industrial branded products throughout Australia and New Zealand.



Prior to approaching Weblogics in 2006, Alesco underwent a period of rapid acquisition and expansion. In just 5 years, Alesco Corporation consolidated more than 15 new brands, acquiring not only the new companies but also the diverse cultures and processes incumbent in each.

With over 3000 employees across more than 150 sites throughout New Zealand and Australia, Alesco lacked the tools needed to address the growing problem of internal communication and corporate-wide access to 'knowledge' and processes.

THE PROBLEM

Rapid growth. A key challenge was the lack of a proper Intranet capable to extend across all of the new companies acquired under the Alesco name. Koos Joubert, Chief Project Manager, explains the situation before IntraLogic.

"In early 2000 we went through a period of acquisition, with a lot of fragmented small companies joining under Alesco Corporation. From a corporate perspective, Alesco itself had never had the infrastructure to cope with such growth. The new companies we acquired had their own internal communications systems in place, but these systems were just too small and very limited in their capabilities."

Alesco needed a single solution that could manage their existing and newly acquired information assets and a solution flexible enough to help them in their continuing growth.

Previous system no longer useful. Alesco attempted to address the lack of collaboration across the newly formed divisions using an internal intranet, the AlescoNet. This solution however proved incapable of supporting the size and subsequent processes necessary for a smooth transition.

"This tool [AlescoNet] wasn't sufficient to pan across an organisation of this size, because of the limited structure. The companies that came on weren't part of the original design and it was difficult for them to access information due to the security matrix built into the product. It just wasn't designed for use in this capacity and could not expand out to the bigger audience", says Mr Joubert.

Limited accessibility. As a result, Alesco employees faced difficulties uploading documents and employees couldn't access their

- Corporate Intranet
- Document management
- Content management
- Workflow management
- eForms automation

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documents in a timely or efficient way. With no centralised information management, Alesco required a solution to strategically manage their information assets organisation-wide.

Need to streamline business processes. Alesco also needed to streamline & adapt their business processes. As a result of the growth, 4 new divisions were formed alongside the previous Alesco division; each incumbent with the existing cultures and processes of the new companies.

"What we now have are 5 divisions, each with different layers of management. You can't apply to same logic across all divisions. Some are much more complex than the others. We needed a product flexible enough to help us address this", says Mr Joubert.

THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Alesco conducted market research over an 18-month period, including an open tender, selecting and implementing Weblogics' IntraLogic in 2006. Mr Joubert explains the evaluation process.

"We spent the period carefully looking at what was available. We looked at off-the shelf products, in-house development options and Sharepoint. We evaluated different scenarios and options and ultimately decided that the architecture and full integration of IntraLogic was the solution for Alesco. It had what we needed in the one product".

THE IMPLEMENTATION

IntraLogic was piloted in two of its offices across Sydney. After two weeks of evaluation, IntraLogic was opened out to the wider audience,

with implementation across more than 150 sites in Australia and New Zealand. “We found that our employees were really ready to embrace the new solution. They saw the limited functionality of our previous solution and they wanted something new”, says Mr Joubert.

WHY WEBLOGICS?

A fully integrated product. Key to Alesco’s selection of IntraLogic, was its full integration of the design of forms, the management of content and subsequently the management of the workflows.

Functionality rich & easy to use. IntraLogic is rich in functionality whilst remaining simple from a user perspective. Intuitive in design, IntraLogic meant that all users, no matter their technical skill could create, locate and distribute their business information within and across divisions. As an out of a box solution, Alesco could install IntraLogic and roll it out across all its offices quickly and efficiently.

Cost effective. Compared to developing internally, IntraLogic was a more effective solution, in terms of cost and resource allocation. “We felt that our skills were not in web development, and nor did we want to expand our skills in that space. We evaluated the solution [IntraLogic] against development internally. For the amount of development work we are going to do in the web space, we knew it was going to be limited to justify employing a fulltime resource”, says Mr Joubert.

Professional Services. Alesco could benefit from the professional experience of the Weblogics Professional Services Team, who have assessed and developed modifications to cater to their specific business needs. This is an ongoing process between Alesco and Weblogics.

Technical assistance. Although not an initial factor in the selection process, says Mr Joubert “...the technical support definitely adds value to the product. The team at Weblogics make it something more personal. Sometimes you want to just pick up the phone and ask for advice and the Weblogics team is willing to give you that”.

THE BENEFITS

Document collaboration. With IntraLogic rolled out across all its offices; Alesco now has an efficient, secure and coherent system for the publishing of documents organisation-wide.

“The key success factors are document and content management. We wanted people from different offices to be able to access information and create awareness over time. In the past this process wasn’t driven. Information wasn’t distributed correctly and was trapped within the divisions”. With IntraLogic, “Our employees can now publish documents easily, making them available to the wider audience” says Mr Joubert.

Increased access & awareness. With the creation of online communities using IntraLogic “...we also have this standardisation of communities. Everyone now knows what the documents are and where to find the repository for that particular information”, says Mr Joubert. The google search capability in IntraLogic means that users can now search via words or phrases contained within documents, meaning employees can search across divisions according to key words and don’t need any previous knowledge as to the document name or location. The result, increased productivity, employee understanding and overall collaboration, as all divisions gain access to organisation critical information.

Ownership. Each division is now responsible for effective document management within their unit. A Key Content Coordinator has been appointed to each business unit. Using IntraLogic as their tool, it is now their responsibility to upload and organise documents within their division.

Increased security. With each new brand acquisition, Alesco also acquired a different set of security requirements and existing processes,

IntraLogic gives Alesco the capacity to publish information securely across all divisions whilst ensuring that existing security requirements are met. With IntraLogic in place, divisions can now share information organisation-wide, whilst also ensuring that confidential information remains within divisions when required.

Efficiency & compliance. IntraLogic ensures that Alesco meets compliance requirements through the transparent capture and storage of audit critical information.

“The Capex Process is one example of this”, says Mr Joubert. “Normally this approval process is captured in email, which is slow and you don’t have that same audit trail. Using IntraLogic, we have developed a Capex form, with automated processes attached. The form is now officially rolled out into the divisions and it is their responsibility to manage that”.

Capacity to grow.

IntraLogic is a scalable solution, capable to cater to Alesco’s highly dispersed and continually expanding user community.

Flexibility to address changing business needs. Alesco are using IntraLogic to custom build a number of automated workflows across the organisation. Workflows enables them to publish and automate information according to division specific processes. Some workflows currently in use include; Invoice approvals, travel, annual leave, corporate finance etc.

THE FUTURE

Alesco and Weblogics continue to work closely to achieve their business needs and resolve any issues. Alesco plan to use IntraLogic to continue to custom build a number of automated workflows across the organisation. “A year from now it will be a different landscape, we are just getting into IntraLogic and plan to work more with Weblogics to develop workflows that address our specific needs as they emerge”, says Mr Joubert.

Plans also exist to work on Directory Integration. With this customisation, Alesco will be able to maintain all employee details via a workflow in the payroll, resulting in one central repository for managing the information about all employees.



“What we now have are 5 divisions, each with different layers of management, some more complex than others. You can’t apply to same logic across all divisions, as one might have an extra layer that the others don’t have. We needed a product flexible enough to address this”.

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