

PUTTING MyThomson TO Work

By Greg Seitz

In the past three years, MyThomson has become a critical tool for colleagues across the business. Employees are using the portal to communicate and collaborate, finding creative ways to use the site's tools to do their jobs better. *Inside Thomson* talked to these "super users" about how they're putting MyThomson to work.

Creating a Dialogue

Everyone likes to get answers to their questions. At Thomson Financial, the employee communications team saw an opportunity for MyThomson to make it easy for employees to ask questions and get the best answers possible.

The "On Your Mind" page on the Financial community allows employees to submit questions, comments or suggestions to leadership and view the responses to questions that other employees have submitted.

Employees can view or submit questions on a wide range of topics, such as Human Resources policies, technology, facilities and billing ... even grammar. The Thomson Financial employee communications team then routes the question or comment to the appropriate leader, and posts the response as quickly as possible.

Missy Stewart, director, employee communications, says, "So far, it's been a valuable tool for employees and leaders alike as it helps create a dialogue between employees and senior management, and contributes to our culture of open and honest communication."

Recognizing a good thing, the employee communications team has leveraged the database behind "On Your Mind" for other projects, including a MyThomson tip form, where employees can offer ideas or their expertise for future MyThomson content.

An Evolving Tool

When Tax & Accounting undertook a rebranding program, they



Program Manager and MyThomson guru Cheryl Lesser at work.

Photo by Jeff Ferguson and Deb Shoemaker

knew they needed to reach every employee and customer touchpoint in the business. MyThomson played a big part in every step of the process, from planning and project management to employee engagement and communications.

Adam Schair, vice president, Branding, says that coordination was key to the effort's success. "When you launch a new brand, inclusion is a critical factor. However, with higher levels of inclusion, you need much greater coordination." With real-time sharing, version control and granular security models, MyThomson's Collaboration Projects were the perfect tool for the task.

The team first created a MyThomson community as a secure tool for members to exchange information and ideas about the best way to organize the rebranding effort. It played a crucial role in keeping team members informed and moving in the same direction. As the project progressed, the team changed the community to "Brand Central," an e-newsletter that kept

employees up-to-date on the initiative and how it affected their work. After the new brands were launched, the team created a second page – “Download Central” – where employees could download logos, templates, guidelines and samples. The final step was to engage employees and help make an impact on two important customer touchpoints: voice mail greetings and e-mail signatures. The team used the Tax & Accounting site to support

a contest that encouraged employees to change their greetings and signatures, supplying employees with guidelines and allowing them to submit their entries online.

Centralizing Information

In a large organization with teams at multiple sites, making sure that everyone has access to the resources they need is a top priority – and sometimes a significant challenge.

West’s Content Operations group built a new MyThomson community to address that challenge, and ended up with a highly used site that made it easy

for employees to find and access information.

“Because MyThomson is accessible from any computer with an Internet connection, team members in any of our locations can access the information they need,” says **Linda Moore**, senior education consultant.

When designing the community, not only did the team face the challenge of making content available to many employees at many locations – they were up against a lot of content. They took more than 120 online communities and 200 pages, and built one community with 13 pages. To organize all that content and make it available via a minimum of clicks, the community uses “accordion portlets,” a tool deployed in the fall of 2006. “The

accordion portlets helped us centralize, organize and maintain information like forms, documentation and procedures, so employees could find the most current information easily,” says **Tracy Gubrud**, consultant, Quality Assurance. MyThomson is now the first place members of Content Operations go when they need tools or information to do their jobs.

Collaboration and Conversation

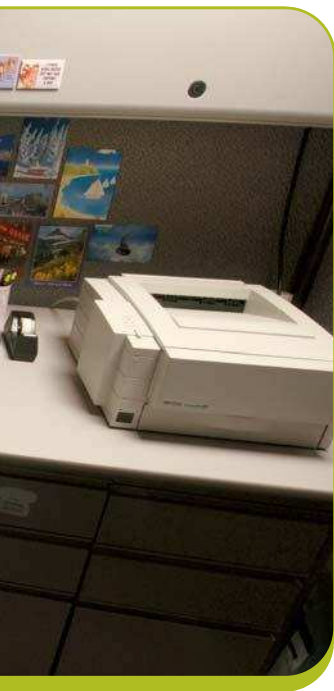
One of MyThomson’s most popular features is Collaboration Projects, which lets employees manage and share documents, discussions, task lists, calendars and announcements. At Healthcare, a team led by **Emily Ehrlich**, knowledge management specialist, used Collaboration Projects to move a “dysfunctional e-mail list” to MyThomson.

Among the most important and widely used aspects of the project are the discussion forums. Here, colleagues are asked to post questions in predefined topics. Expert administrators are assigned to the various topics and are responsible for answering questions on a daily basis, but any colleague can answer questions based on his or her own perspective and experience.

Healthcare employees have taken advantage of several upgrades to Collaboration Projects that were implemented in the fall of 2006, including:

- The ability for all employees to create new projects
- WebEdit functionality that makes checking out, editing and checking in documents much easier
- E-mail notification customization preferences

Tony Donofrio, vice president, development, says MyThomson projects have been essential for him to stay abreast of the progress and schedules of up to 15 projects at a time. By using the new summarized e-mail notifications, he says, “I quickly learn when a document I am tracking has been edited and I can link directly to it from my e-mail.” ■



Where Are We Heading?

New tools and features on MyThomson are in the works. Blogs, wikis and other interactive tools are scheduled to roll out later this year and into 2008. Check out *Inside Thomson* online for an interactive tour of the projects and tools featured in this story.