



Quest Software Turns to Its Own SharePoint Solutions to Easily Manage Environment and Recover Lost Content

Quest Software provides innovative software solutions that help organizations get more performance and productivity from their applications, databases, and Windows infrastructure. Quest uses Microsoft SharePoint as its collaboration platform. Needing to better manage, support, and provide recovery service to its SharePoint sites, Quest turned to its own products: Recovery Manager for SharePoint and Site Administrator for SharePoint.

The First Challenge: SharePoint Visibility

In 2003, Quest launched SharePoint Portal Services 2003 to meet internal demand for a collaboration platform. Since SharePoint was a new product to Quest at that time, the implementation was considered a test. However, the business units quickly took advantage of SharePoint: internal sites quickly proliferated throughout the organization and the number of registered users grew. Support resources were limited; Corporate Information Services (I.S.) was only able to allocate three employees two part-time employees to manage the environment. I.S. knew SharePoint was growing within the organization, but didn't know exactly how much. To get a better handle on how many sites Quest had and how large its management task would be, I.S. ran the discovery tool in Site Administrator for SharePoint, discovering 1,100 sites. I.S. made a strategic decision to directly support approximately 60 "VIP" internal sites with 1,200 registered users, but also had to determine how it would handle the balance of the sites within the organization.

The accelerated SharePoint growth created numerous challenges for the I.S. team. Additional staff was not available to implement sites for the individual business units. Because of this, the company opted for a decentralized administration model for its SharePoint environment. This meant I.S. would simply guide the business units to build and manage their own sites. This would allow users within the units to solve any day-to-day issues without depending on I.S. for support. Although this model relieved the SharePoint I.S. team members from daily maintenance, they still needed to centrally monitor all SharePoint sites and manage their growth. "What makes this especially tough for us is that our users are very tech savvy," said Paul VanderValk, Quest's manager for web applications development. "So they were trying things that employees in other businesses wouldn't consider." By 2007, it was evident that Quest had outgrown its initial SharePoint implementation. I.S. decided to request an upgrade in the 2008 capital improvements budget. This presented yet another challenge. To gain approval for the spend, the I.S. team was required to provide solid justification, including documentation of existing implementations and activity. The team needed to collect data from all decentralized SharePoint sites using existing I.S. resources to justify the upgrade.

The Second Challenge: SharePoint Recovery

Another challenge for I.S. was handling content recovery in the event of a system disaster. A typical recovery situation could involve one document or an entire site that was inadvertently deleted. I.S. found that native tools took a significant amount of time to restore and couldn't provide the granularity that its SharePoint users required. In September 2007, a user error caused the loss of a frequently accessed Legal/Acquisition site. Due to the large number of documents and reports, recovery using native solutions could have taken as long as a week. This was an unacceptably long period of time for a site that had become an integral resource for the teams supporting Quest's acquisition activity.

The Quest Solution for SharePoint Visibility

To make the case for upgrading the SharePoint environment, VanderValk used Quest Site Administrator for SharePoint to quickly gather the necessary documentation. "Site Administrator provided us with the tools for capacity planning and justifying growth," VanderValk explained. "With IT departments looking to spend dollars more carefully, good guesses don't cut it to get budget approval."

Site Administrator for SharePoint provides tools to help understand and manage a SharePoint environment, offering visibility into all SharePoint servers, site collections and sites. Site Administrator allowed Quest to monitor its decentralized SharePoint sites with ease. "We needed a tool to centrally manage real-time activity," said VanderValk. "With Site Administrator, we can see exactly what's happening all within a single console. I couldn't imagine what it would take to get this information manually."

"Once somebody implements SharePoint, it's going to be really evident, really fast, that tools like Recovery Manager and Site Administrator are necessary. For us, SharePoint seemed to grow organically, and these Quest tools gave us the centralized control to stay on top of the growth."

—Paul VanderValk,
Manager of Web Applications
Development,
Quest Software

Overview

Headquarters

Aliso Viejo, California

Services

Software solutions and product support

Critical Needs

Manage and support a rapidly growing SharePoint environment with limited staff resources

Solution

Recovery Manager for SharePoint,
Site Administrator for SharePoint

Results

- Enables centralized management and support of over 60 internal sites with 1,200 registered users
- Quickly restores documents and sites inadvertently deleted from the system
- Provides detailed reports on the growth of the SharePoint environment for capacity planning

The Quest Solution for SharePoint Recovery

For fast, granular content recovery, the I.S. team chose Quest Recovery Manager for SharePoint. This tool is an enterprise recovery solution that provides emergency access to all SharePoint content. It allows any recovered content to be restored to any SharePoint instance or saved to a file system. It also provides granularity for the restore operation; anything in the backup of the content database—individual documents, lists, document libraries, sites, workspaces—can be restored separately. Recovery Manager provided the tool I.S. needed to recover items lost quickly and through the centralized Site Administrator console.

Yaiton Ngo, Quest's supervisor for application architecture, used Recovery Manager for SharePoint to find the appropriate items in the backups to recover from the loss of the Legal/Acquisition site. By using the centralized console in Site Administrator, I.S. was able to restore the most critical content in less than an hour. The remainder of the site's documents and groups were restored a few hours later. Ngo considers Recovery Manager for SharePoint a necessity for successfully managing a SharePoint environment.

"When we first implemented the SharePoint farm, we needed a tool that not only provided full recovery of entire sites and workspaces, but also provided us the granularity to restore individual lists and files separately," explained Ngo. "We view Recovery Manager as an essential tool to prevent downtime, site losses, or costly file deletion due to human errors, hardware failure, or even disasters within the environment."

The Bottom Line

Site Administrator for SharePoint and Recovery Manager for SharePoint are essential tools for supporting Quest's SharePoint environment. "I would say that once somebody implements SharePoint, it's going to be really evident that tools like Recovery Manager and Site Administrator are necessary," VanderValk says. "For us, SharePoint seemed to grow organically, and these tools gave us the centralized control to stay on top of the growth."

Yaiton explains, "Recovery Manager for SharePoint and Site Administrator for SharePoint saved us at least four days of recovery time during the legal acquisition site loss. Without those tools, productivity for both IT and legal would have suffered."

Thanks to the usage information that Site Administrator provided about Quest's SharePoint environment, I.S. is currently planning for the upgrade of its SharePoint environment to Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007 to accommodate increasing internal volume and enable its use for external sites. Both VanderValk and Ngo agree that Site Administrator for SharePoint and Recovery Manager for SharePoint will be the first tools added to the upgrade.

I.S. is confident that with Site Administrator and Recovery Manager they will be able to give users the flexibility they want, and still maintain the necessary control needed to support them efficiently and reliably. This also will allow SharePoint to grow as needed throughout the organization without a significant increase in support staff.

About Quest Software, Inc.

Quest Software, Inc., a leading enterprise systems management vendor, delivers innovative products that help organizations get more performance and productivity from their applications, databases, Windows infrastructure and virtual environments. Through a deep expertise in IT operations and a continued focus on what works best, Quest helps more than 90,000 customers worldwide meet higher expectations for enterprise IT. Quest provides customers with client management as well as server and desktop virtualization solutions through its subsidiaries, ScriptLogic, Vizioncore and Provision Networks. Quest Software can be found in offices around the globe and at www.quest.com.

Quest Software Incorporated. • To learn more about our solutions, contact your local sales representative or visit www.quest.com.

Headquarters: 5 Polaris Way, Aliso Viejo, CA 92656, USA

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