

## CASE STUDY



### Customer Location

Washington

### Industry

Public Sector

### Platform

SharePoint 2013

### Critical Needs

- Automatically publish updates to external-facing website
- Enable content owners to modify website content
- Ensure website content is always up to date

### Solution

DocAve Replicator

**“With DocAve, whenever we make a change in an author site, that change is automatically replicated to our website, which is a much more efficient system than what we had before.”**

**- Dan Murray, IT Consultant,  
Thurston County, Washington**

## Thurston County Saves Hundreds of Hours Per Year Automatically Synchronizing Microsoft® SharePoint® Content Updates to Website with DocAve®

### SUCCESS HIGHLIGHTS

- Automatically synchronized changes made in SharePoint to keep external-facing website up to date
- Allowed content owners to directly edit website content without learning a complex content management system or relying on IT
- Published website updates either in real time or after going through approval processes, depending on departmental need

### CUSTOMER PROFILE

Thurston County is located in the state of Washington. Its county seat and largest city is Olympia, the state capital.

### THE CHALLENGE

Thurston County, Washington’s website is a crucial piece for the government to provide important information for tourists visiting the United States Pacific Northwest and 260,000 residents. Citizens can find contact information for each government department, and visitors have access to resources such as maps and directions. Keeping that information up to date is highly important for the government workers, but implementing changes ultimately fell on the web specialists who were trained to use Microsoft Expression Web to manage static web pages. “Our process for publishing changes to the website was inefficient,” said Dan Murray, IT Consultant at Thurston County. “It was heavily reliant on the web specialists to actually implement the changes, even though requests came from content owners, who worked more closely with the information. As a result, there was a lot of back and forth trying to understand more complicated requests.”

To simplify the process, the county implemented SharePoint as its CMS. IT saw SharePoint as a much more data-driven CMS to make changes to the information. However, there was still a small group of people who could publish website edits. “Even after we switched to SharePoint, our content owners were still removed from the updating process,” Murray said. “We needed a solution that would be easy for all of our end users to learn so they can make necessary edits themselves.”

## THE AVEPOINT SOLUTION

Ultimately, the county came up with a win-win solution – web specialists were no longer the sole party responsible for making website updates, and content owners were empowered to publish the changes themselves. The county set up two parallel environments, one the “author” site collection and the other public-facing. “The author site collection is where our users can manage website content,” Murray said. “It mirrors our public site collection, so our users can navigate pages the same way and make any changes they need to. We set it up so anyone with knowledge of Microsoft Word or a hyperlink can go into the author site collection and edit page content. Now hundreds of employees can use this, and need very little training.”

The key to this solution is DocAve Software, AvePoint’s fully integrated solution for SharePoint management. Specifically, DocAve Replicator allows the county’s users to automatically synchronize changes from author site collection to the live website. “We looked at two SharePoint replication solutions available on the market, but ultimately DocAve was easier to install and worked right away,” Murray said. “With DocAve, whenever we make a change in an author site, that change is automatically replicated to our website, which is a much more efficient system than what we had before.”

With 1,100 users and 4,000 webpages, web specialist requests could really add up for the county. Between submitting and responding to these requests, both the web specialists and content owners were spending hundreds of hours per year updating the website. With DocAve, content owners have the ability to directly apply changes to information they’re very close to. “Typically, users request smaller changes related to documents and content,” Murray said. “Now, it’s easy for content owners to make these changes themselves in the author site, and DocAve publishes them to the live site. We only get bigger requests like creating or deleting a page once in a while, so we can assign those to a select few who have a higher skill set. This is much more efficient and saves us time.”

With DocAve, the county also shortens time it takes to publish any changes. Instead of submitting a ticket, waiting for web specialists to respond, DocAve Replicator allows for real-time replication from site collection to site collection, urgent and even non-urgent updates can be pushed out immediately. For some departments, this is crucial. For others, it’s necessary to

run proposed changes through an approval process. DocAve offers IT the flexibility to offer both options. “Most of our departments will want to update their pages immediately,” Murray said. “Others, like the Department of Public Health – where matters can be life or death – will want to be more careful before posting. With DocAve, content owners have the flexibility to choose either option. On the IT side, we can also set up rules like limiting replication to once every half hour.”

## THE BOTTOM LINE

By setting up SharePoint and DocAve to manage and host its public-facing website content, Thurston County, Washington has streamlined the upkeep of its webpages. Users no longer have to rely on web specialists to modify websites and can instead make changes in SharePoint. DocAve then automatically synchronizes those changes to the live website, ensuring visitors always have access to the most current information. “Since we implemented DocAve, we’ve simplified the processes and steps required to update our website,” Murray said. “Instead of users completely relying on web specialists to publish changes, content owners now have the power to apply changes in SharePoint, which DocAve automatically replicates to our live website. It’s a much more direct approach. This has reduced the volume of IT requests, which ultimately saves us time.”

## ABOUT AVEPOINT

AvePoint is the Microsoft Cloud expert. Over 15,000 companies and 5 million cloud users trust AvePoint to accelerate the migration, management, and protection of their Office 365 and SharePoint data. Founded in 2001, AvePoint is privately held and headquartered in Jersey City, NJ.

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