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# Corporate Intranet Strategy

## Intranet

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## Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to outline a structure and vision for the Corporate Intranet in SharePoint aligned with regional Intranets and collaboration spaces already implemented as part of the Internal Collaboration Project. This paper will:

- describe the current state of the corporate intranet including significant areas of weakness
- define at a high level the current state, purpose, future structure and corporate intranet vision
- describe a high level plan to achieve the future state

## Corporate intranet overview

The corporate intranet was established in 1996 and has become an integral resource for enabling British Council internal working practices.

Operationally, it is managed by the Information Knowledge Management Team (IKM), a division of Global Information Services (Global IS). Key stakeholders (based upon current investment in intranet resources) are defined by the following business areas; Corporate Communications, Finance and FABS, Human Resources, Global Information Services and Contracts and Projects.

It currently provides:

- an overview of what the British Council does
- a communication channel to staff with the latest news and information about what is happening in the organisation globally
- support and guidance in our areas of work
- policy, standards and guidelines

The intranet contains 31,053 files and hosts 71 top level intranet sites, it is supported by approximately 40 intranet authors/editors predominantly based in the UK (figures do not include regional/country intranet sites hosted on SharePoint and/or associated resources and databases).

## Key issues

Issues triggering the proposal for a new Intranet strategy can be summarised into the following four areas:

1. Information Architecture
2. Governance
3. Technology
4. Culture and Engagement

### 1. Information Architecture

Over 90 percent of information within BCWorld is located within departmental silos; this forms the basis of the global information architecture and site navigation structure. Unless a user is familiar with the activity and departmental structure of the UK it is difficult to locate or be aware of existing/relevant content.

BCWorld contains both UK and globally targeted content. This increases difficulty in locating relevant information for the end user. Time is wasted trying to discover whether content exists and the information architecture and global site navigation is unintuitive and too UK centric.

## 2. Governance

There is no long term strategic plan aligned with global business objectives. This is leading to an under developed and under exploited resource that is failing to deliver its full potential.

When compared to intranets in other organisations with a similar level of maturity, using the 'Intranet Maturity Framework' designed by Avenue A Razorfish, BCWorld is currently considered at level 2, a 'Self Service Intranet'. This is significantly below the expected level of maturity and growth.<sup>1</sup>

There is no clear BCWorld ownership with senior accountability; this is leading to fragmented and disjointed site development with uncoordinated and often competing objectives. For example, the end user must choose between the Finance and FABS site when locating financial related information.

## 3. Technology

BCWorld technical design is over ten years old, employing the same technology since its inception. The platform does not allow the business to respond quickly to change or leverage the investments made in our global IT infrastructure. The intranet does not provide the end user with an 'intelligent' consolidated view of our current systems or integrate easily with existing British Council online resources.

BCWorld does not employ a content management system (CMS). Departments must resource specialist HTML editors to write web pages. Content is channelled through a central publishing team resourced by Global IS. This leads to extra time and departmental cost spent in manually managing and controlling content and increases the difficulty and time taken to publish information and news.

## 4. Culture and Engagement

The emergence of Web 2.0 has raised user expectation, however there are poor mechanisms for user participation, feedback and two way engagements. The intranet is widely used and perceived as an information repository and 'top down' communication and dissemination tool. It is failing to provide a dynamic, interactive and engaging view of the work and life of the British Council.

Although areas of BCWorld are regularly updated, ninety five percent of the total information is 'static' (non-changing). BCWorld delivers corporate communication and information in the form of a weekly news/bulletin update on the homepage. As this is only updated once a week, there is little motivation for the user to visit on a more frequent basis than that and for those who do, there appears to be very little changing or active content.<sup>2</sup>

## MOSS 2007 overview

With the recent acquisition and implementation of MOSS 2007, the British Council also acquired the necessary technology to host a more interactive Intranet, providing a richer experience to BC staff and addressing many of the issues identified.

MOSS 2007 (SharePoint) was initiated as part of the Internal Collaboration Project (ICP) and has been deployed internally to provide global virtual project/collaboration spaces and regional intranets. There are currently over 100 virtual collaboration spaces helping to deliver projects and information/knowledge sharing across the British Council and cross-regional intranets. The project will examine the current approach to collaboration and will ensure that the new corporate intranet structure and information architecture incorporates and/or integrates with the existing design of the ICP in a manner that eliminates geographical and organisational silos.

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<sup>1</sup> Corporate Intranets Best Practice Report: A User-Driven Web 2.0 Perspective, Avenue A Razorfish 2007

<sup>2</sup> 54% of British Council staff believe that they are they "are not informed when something is added to BCWorld that is of interest to them". Intranet survey 2006

It is anticipated that MOSS will deliver the majority of technical and functional components required to support the migration of the corporate intranet and will provide the backbone CMS. MOSS will be employed to take full advantage of the inbuilt social networking features to make it easier to connect with people across the organisation who are knowledgeable about a particular topic and industry. The project will harness the Web 2.0 capabilities provided by MOSS, such as blogs, wikis and personalisation, to provide a more engaging, dynamic and richer intranet. MOSS will also be utilised to replace and upgrade bespoke business processes/applications where MOSS meets or exceeds the current functionality ie. room booking, workflow of forms etc.

### Strategy Aims and Benefits

Anticipated high level aims and benefits can be summarised as follows:

1. **Deliver a global solution for knowledge sharing:** Exploit the full range of functions within SharePoint to change the way we share information and ideas across the whole organisation. Provide a solution that can eliminate the existing silos whether organisational or geographical.
2. **Improve consistency of operations:** Ensure that staff moves between offices do not result in people having to learn to use new systems/ways of finding information, increasing efficiency for members of staff who have recently transferred and reducing training needs.
3. **Deliver staff productivity benefits:** Increase efficiency and smarter decision making by helping staff to locate relevant information easily, helping to find 'known' information as well as find out about 'unknown' information and to connect with other staff who are active or knowledgeable in an area.
4. **Remote and offline working:** Provide offsite and offline access to the corporate intranet and associated resources. Allowing staff to continue to have access to key information regardless of location or internet connectivity. This will benefit staff that work away from the office, without direct access to other colleagues.
5. **Leverage investment in our IT infrastructure:** Provide a suit of intuitive business driven tools with a standard user interface and associated policies/protocols to enable staff to make best use of the tools that are available.
6. **Increase the level of two-way engagement:** Provide interactive mechanisms for users to feed back and participate with senior management and staff at all levels within the organisation. Greater user generated content leading to a better 'understanding' of the organisation.
7. **Improve product development:** Provide better access and awareness to the development process of our global products/projects including clear communication channels to allow staff to participate, understand and contribute to future ideas.
8. **Improve Accessibility:** To deliver a corporate Intranet that is WAI WCAG 1.0 AA compliant to ensure that the British Council is not in breach of the Disability and Discrimination Act.
9. **Attain step 6 of the intranet maturity framework:** In the context of the business requirements for the British Council the intranet strategy will strive to meet the principles of a stage 6 intranet as defined by the 'Intranet Maturity Model'<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> 'There are very few Stage 6 intranets at the moment. These intranets integrate legacy applications, interfaces and partner portals into a single, consolidated dynamic interface for employees. In the organizations where these exist, they're often not even called intranets. They also integrate email, voice (through VoIP), and contextual

## Project approach and deliverables

The project will be divided into two phases;

- Phase one: 'Migration and Exploitation'
- Phase two: 'Personalisation'

The phases have been described and detailed separately to help distinguish between core activities and deliverables along the lifespan of the project however it is the project's intention to start, where applicable, the design and implementation of phase two in parallel with phase one. This approach will allow the project to move more quickly and help to deliver a range of core functions along the project timeline whilst allowing stakeholders to realise the benefits during the delivery of the project.

In order to achieve these benefits, both phases will need to be signed off at the beginning of the project and it is also important to note that phase one is a prerequisite of phase two and cannot be skipped.

### Phase one 'Migration and Exploitation'

Figure one (page 8) provides an overview of the future information architecture framework, how the different components and areas fit together and where information resides. Although the diagram represents the different areas as 'silos of information' the underlying principle is for the content to be delivered to the user based upon their location, position, expertise and personal preference. However, the benefits of this approach will not be fully realised until the completion of phase two.

Phase one will concentrate on creating and developing the following priority areas (see figure 1):

- A. Strategy and migration of BCWorld
- B. Creation of a separate UK-only intranet
- C. Creation of department sites (G drive replacement - UK only)
- D. Development and exploitation of SharePoint Search
- E. Creation of new collaboration templates to support our business processes
- F. Personalisation: rollout of MySite including H drive replacement (UK only)
- G. Collaboration with external partners

#### A. Strategy and migration of BCWorld

A primary deliverable of phase one is the migration of BCWorld from its existing platform onto MOSS 2007. BCWorld will be radically over-hauled with greater emphasis on helping the user to discover what is 'going on' within the organisation and how to contribute and add to the effective delivery of our programmes and products. The Web 2.0 elements offered by MOSS 2007 will be fully utilised to provide intuitive mechanisms for feedback, content creation, communication and collaboration.

Social technology will allow for a major shift in how content is created and captured within BCWorld. The creation of a BCWorld wiki(s) will allow any employee to add, edit or create content easily for the benefit of others. BCWorld wiki will be a significant component of the new intranet and will grow organically to support the dynamic needs of the organisation. This shift in how content is created and communicated will empower staff to help change the culture of how the organisation views and uses the intranet, as ownership of information will transcend departmental based barriers to become user-led and user-generated.

Controlled content such as global procedure, policy and process will be managed and monitored closely. In order to reduce and rationalise the amount of content for migration, the project will work with key stakeholders to identify 'primary information types'. The information layer will be further streamlined by identifying core areas that will be designed and created specifically to help staff to get their work done. The new areas will be based around user

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tools—in other words, every digital artifact in a company is presented through a single interface'

activity rather than departmental structures and content will be controlled by SharePoint's content management system (CMS). The CMS will allow authorised staff to update, workflow, edit and apply version control easily using the inbuilt web editor and advanced CMS features. The CMS will also ensure consistency of navigation and design across all areas and will negate the need for intervention from the 'intranet administration' service before pages are published to the live environment.

It is expected that only ten percent of the current 36,000 pages will be migrated and the project will establish a small working group of core stakeholders to manage and make decisions over the new areas and future structure/navigation of BCWorld. The project will work with Corporate Communications and the core stakeholders to examine how best to utilise the web 2.0 features (blogs, wikis and forums) to encourage and generate communication that flows around the organisation 'as it happens' rather than in the form of a weekly bulletin update. The working group will create and own the principles of the overall strategy.

### **B. Creation of a separate UK only intranet**

In order to differentiate between information for a global audience and information for a UK-only audience, the project will create a new area specifically for the UK. Although the British Council does not recognise the UK as a region (in the same way as LAC or MED) the project will utilise the regional templates (rolled out with the ICP) and will adopt the same approach to identify UK requirements, content authors and content owners.

The UK intranet will allow for a greater level of distinction and clarity over where information will reside and who should be accessing it and through the exploitation of SharePoint, the project will examine processes that will receive efficiency benefits from a transition to an online environment (e.g.room/video conference booking, staff leave requests).

The UK intranet will also provide a clearer mechanism for UK-only communication and will offer an alternative to 'UK all staff' email announcements such as core service outages and scheduled downtimes. A UK-only intranet will help encourage a shift in the culture of how the UK perceives and views its operations and services as divided entities. A 'joined up' space will help build a greater understanding between departmental sectors and UK-only targeted communication will help increase the awareness of how the UK operates collectively.

### **C. Creation of department and sector sites (G drive replacement - UK only)**

UK department sites will be established to replace and upgrade the current G drive structure. Content will be rationalised and, where applicable, migrated onto SharePoint. The basic document management features in SharePoint will be used to establish an interim Electronic Document Records Management System EDRMS which will provide greater governance and control over the growth of our documentation. This approach will establish the foundation and principles to allow for a move to a full scale EDRMS which will be undertaken as part of a larger programme on information management (The IKM programme)

In addition to the document management functions, the department and sector sites will benefit from simple SharePoint features such as shared calendars and department announcements and news areas. These features will allow departments to have a collective understanding of its priorities, events and administration.

### **D. Creation of new collaboration templates to support our business processes**

New collaboration space templates will be created to support our key business areas. A 'project specific' collaboration space template will be established to allow users to share information and ideas quickly and easily in a purpose built environment. The project collaboration spaces will provide ready made Project Initiation Documents, Communication templates, predefined document management structures and collaboration tools to allow staff to move more quickly through the project creation process. The template sites can be configured to support the commissioning and product development process and can also provide Key Performance Indicators to allow the business to monitor progress and targets for each project or programme.

Additional templates will be created and developed in line with business requirements and the project will establish a process for engaging with 'the business', assessing the requests and coordinating the management of resources needed for this activity.

#### **E. Development and exploitation of SharePoint Search**

SharePoint search will be exploited and developed to ensure that information searches are relevant and current. In phase one, search will be a significant mechanism for finding and retrieving content and the search engine will need considerable development and careful management to ensure that users feel confident and assured with this function.

#### **F. Personalisation: rollout of 'MySite' including H drive replacement (UK only)**

'MySite' has the potential to change radically the way in which staff, communicate, collaborate and interact with other members of staff. The 'MySite' function within SharePoint provides the British Council with an opportunity to introduce an enhanced staff directory with built in social networking features (similar to FaceBook) at no extra cost. All staff will have access to create their own 'MySite' which will contain their individual profile including their current skills, projects, staff picture and area of work. Staff will be able to search across all other staff for a particular skill or expertise and the inbuilt 'suggest a colleague' feature will automatically match staff together based upon their personal profile and area of work.

The 'MySite' features are considerable and include the ability to view colleagues you're linked to by activity, the creation of personal blogs, wikis and working spaces which will allow staff to invite other colleagues to collaborate around an area of work or on a particular document. The project will roll out a 'MySite' build with standard features and will assess relevance and applicability for additional features as required. This approach will allow the project to assess the 'take up' for this type of technology and will ensure that staff do not become overwhelmed by too many features.

For the UK, 'MySite' will replace the current H drive (private drive) and will provide a defined quota for storage which will allow better governance and monitoring of documents for each user. The H drive replacement will be rolled out as an additional feature and will be thoroughly assessed before considering a possible global release.

#### **G. Collaboration with external partners**

Partners and consultants will be provided with secure, password controlled access to internal collaboration spaces whilst still allowing a single, consolidated, view for staff.

This will enable our partners to work with the British Council using all the features and tools available within SharePoint which will allow for a far greater level of collaboration and engagement on projects and programmes than was previously achievable.

External collaboration spaces will only be made available to partners, consultants and incumbent outsourced services (e.g. Logica and Global Crossing). The project assumes that the Online Transformation Programme will provide solutions for engagements with our external customers.

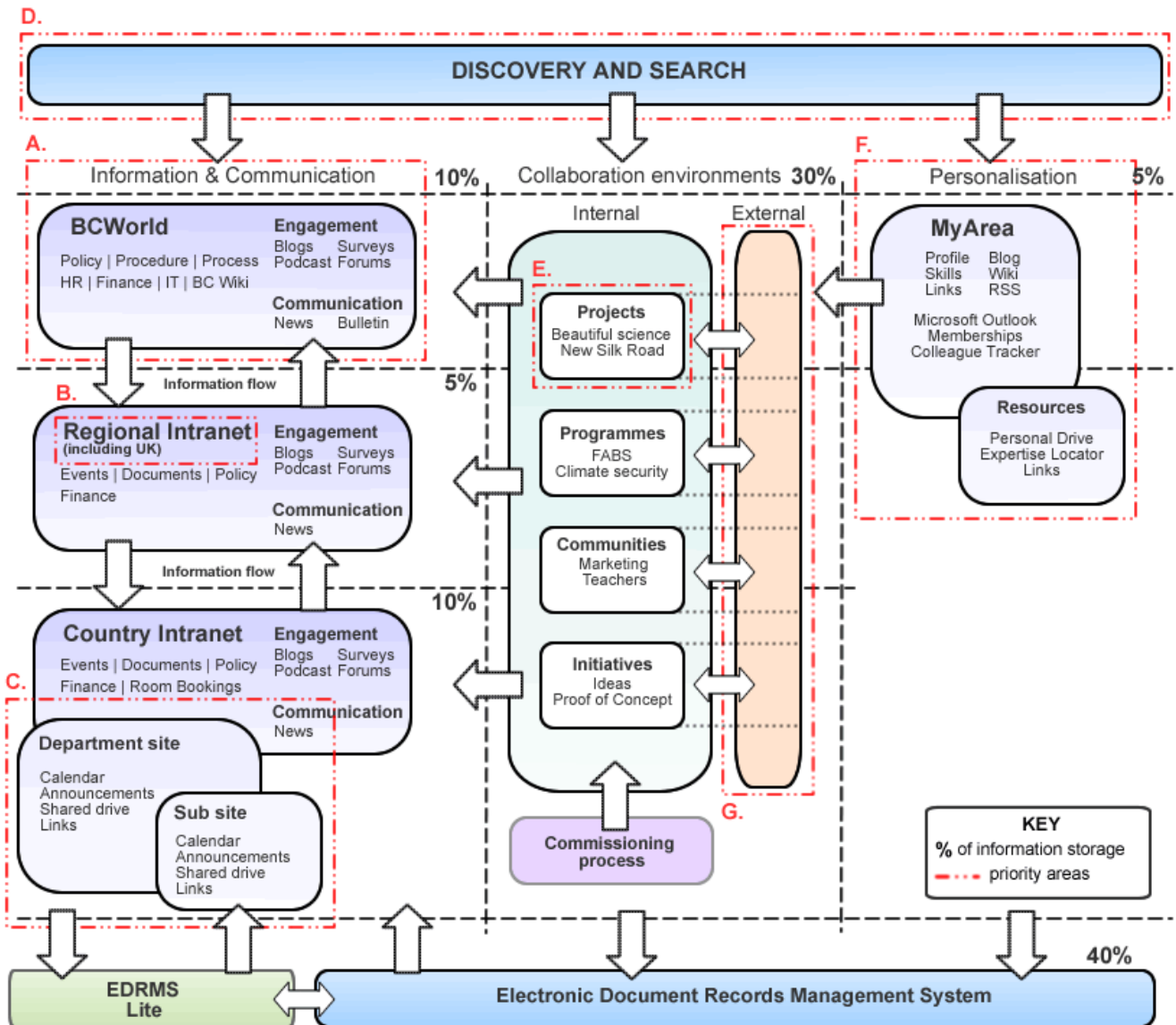
Allowing external partners and consultants access to selected internal collaboration spaces will provide the following high-level benefits:

1. Any exploitation and development made to the internal platform will also directly benefit partners and consultants.
2. Having one integrated corporate solution for engaging with our partners will provide greater visibility and control of our information. This will allow for better compliance with our Data Protection policies and more effective handling of our Freedom of Information (FOI) requests.
3. A managed external collaboration solution run as a 'corporate service', with defined templates and corporate branding will help enhance the credibility and reputation of the British Council with our partners.

4. Supports better collaborative working with our external partners

The project will establish a quick and simple process for managing the access requests for external partners and consultants and will establish an external customer service facility to provide guidance and technical support when using the collaboration solution.

Figure 1. Information architecture framework



The information architecture model is a high level visual representation of key information types and information areas. It is not a technical diagram and does not describe the technical infrastructure or necessary mechanisms needed to implement this design however SharePoint is expected to deliver most of the core functionality (SharePoint will need to be assessed for EDRMS scalability).

**Phase two: 'Personalisation'**

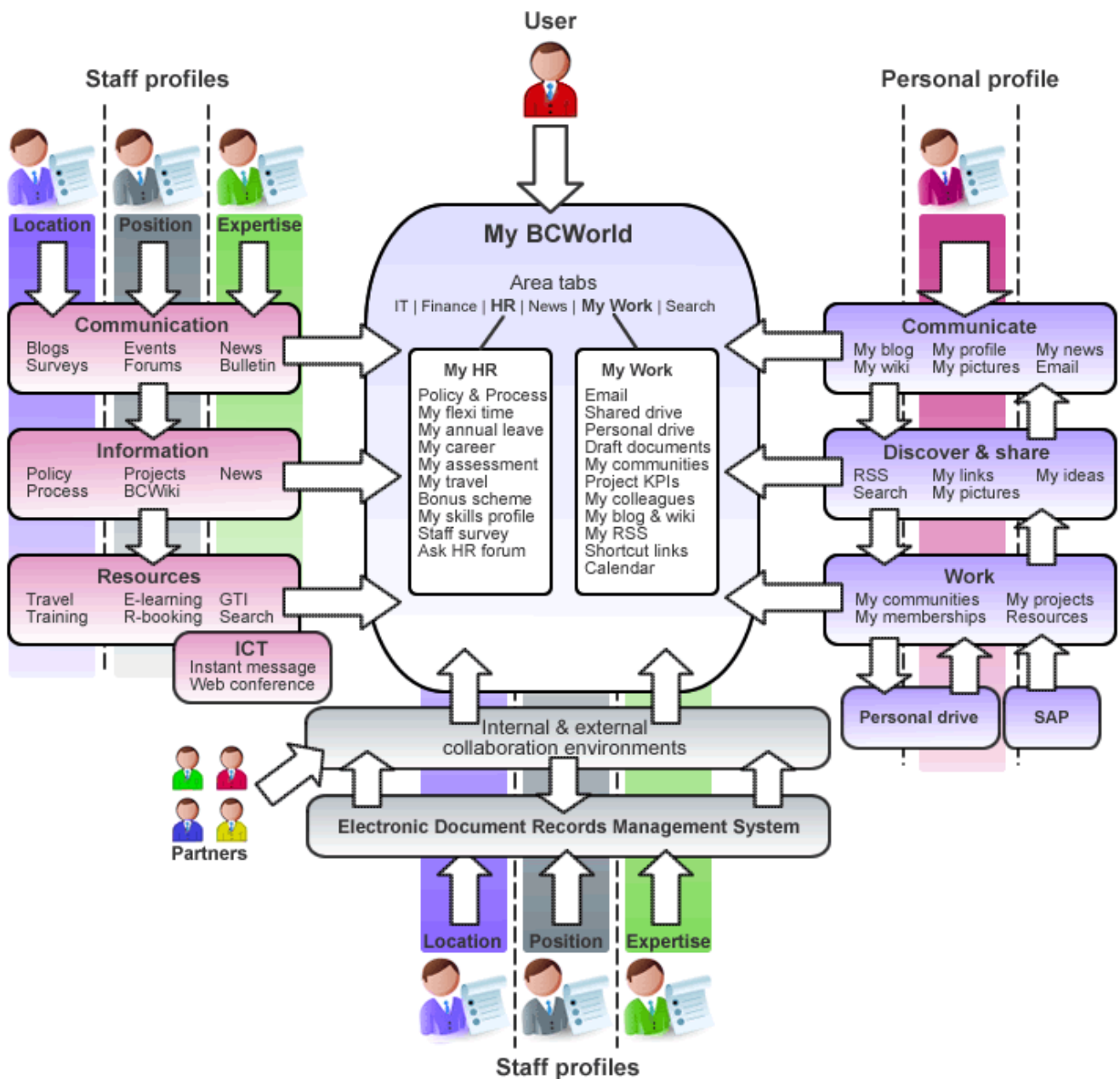
Figure two (below) provides an overview of how information and communication will be automatically channelled to the user based upon their physical location, position within the organisation, area of expertise, professional interests, and personal preference. The principle for phase two is to provide every member of staff with quick and easy access to the right information, communication channels, collaboration tools and online services using an intuitive interface that removes information silos and navigational barriers. In terms of information access, this phase will remove departmental, regional and navigational silos of content.

It is expected that the underlying information architecture deployed in phase one will remain largely the same and phase two will build upon this foundation to provide the 'behind the scenes' system 'intelligence' which is needed to deliver a personalised experience to the user. This approach is achievable by exploiting the full potential of the technology currently available within SharePoint and using the Global Technology Infrastructure platform in a smarter way.

In order to achieve this future state phase two will concentrate on creating and developing the following areas:

1. Clean up and exploitation of the Global Address List and Active Directory groups
2. Establish and deploy audience profiles and target audience maps
3. Establish and deploy metadata framework for key information types

Figure 2. Personalisation Model



### 1. Clean up and exploitation of the Global Address List and Active Directory groups

A cleanup of staff information presented through the Global Address List (GAL) is a fundamental first step in helping to achieve a level of personalisation and automated information/communication flow to the end user.

As the GAL will provide searchable staff details and the mechanism for identifying personalised information, it is imperative that the information contained within it is accurate and reflects our current staffing complement and details staff location, job title and line management responsibilities.

A review of the GAL in 2006<sup>4</sup> showed that it contained over 28,000 records, of which, 11,227 were staff, 758 were duplicates and 17,180 were either distribution lists or service accounts

<sup>4</sup> British Council GAL review 2006 Hitachi Consulting

for technical operations. The review also showed that globally, over 48% of fields (e.g. Job title, Office, Country) were incomplete (13,476 fields).

The project will clean-up and rationalise the information contained within the GAL and review and revise (where appropriate) the process of how information is created, maintained and updated.

## **2. Establishing target audiences**

In order to provide effective delivery of information and communication to staff via SharePoint, (based upon individual needs and roles) it is first necessary to understand and map-out the different requirements and roles within the organisation at a broad level. To help understand these requirements the project will create a series of internal target audience profiles, similar to the target audience profiles used to describe our external customers (e.g. T1, T2, T3).

The target audiences will be based upon an individual's physical location, responsibility within the organisation and area of expertise. The project will work with core stakeholders to identify the different communication, collaboration and information channels required for each target audience along with identifying the correct tools, processes and levels of engagement available to ensure that the intranet remains closely aligned to the individual's needs.

To create a level of transparency and understanding, the internal target audience maps will be made available through the intranet. The maps will allow staff to see where they fit into the organisation, how the organisation understands the way in which it works (rather than how it is structured) and the type of communication, collaboration and information channels available. The project may also examine the possibility of expanding the internal target audience model to include other forms of communication such as email and distribution lists.

## **3. Establish and deploy metadata framework for key information types**

Metadata will be deployed across key information types and all corporate intranet pages. The application of metadata is an important step towards providing good information governance and will allow staff to understand how we describe and use our information in a broader sense. Metadata will also help enable better personalisation within SharePoint and will dramatically increase the relevance and accuracy of information retrieved when using the search engine.

The addition of metadata will provide the following benefits:

- Enable staff to discover more accurate and meaningful information through browsing
- Enable more accurate search results using the advanced searching mechanism
- Help enforce a greater level of compliance and information governance over the use of key information, therefore instilling a greater level of information understanding within the organisation
- Ready the organisation for the use of a 'full blown' EDRMS
- Facilitate the archiving process, allowing for a smoother migration of information to the chosen EDRMS

## **Timeline and project governance**

The Project will be delivered over two years by the IKM Team and will be subject to the Global IS Project Portfolio management process. This process will allow the Executive Board to monitor and assess the investment needed for the successful completion of this project in relation to other Global IS initiatives and spend.

As the remit of the project is broad and will touch upon many business units, the project will establish a working group comprised of UK and overseas representatives. This will ensure a greater level of consensus and understanding of the scope and interdependencies whilst ensuring that the project delivers tangible results that are directly aligned with business needs.

The project will be governed using Prince 2 methodology and a project manager will be assigned from within Global IS.

It is anticipated that the Chief Information Officer will be appointed SRO and will actively support the intranet strategy and future direction.

### **Cost**

To guarantee the highest return on investment the project will utilise the current MOSS 2007 environment with exploitation of the GTI platform. It is expected that MOSS will provide most, if not all, of the technical functionality straight 'out of the box'. Additional functionality and customisation will be built within the MOSS 2007 platform. It is anticipated that the mainstay of the cost for the corporate intranet and personalisation components will derive from the use of external consultancy to develop the information architecture, produce the target audience maps, and configure SharePoint.

The IKM team have already secured budget to enable the completion of the corporate intranet and personalisation components for the first year.

The external collaboration solution (for partners) and offline solution will require additional funding. This is largely required to bolster the current SharePoint platform and ensure that the appropriate level of security is in place. A proposal containing an analysis of the available technical options, with relevant costings, will be produced at the beginning of the project.