



## Global mineral firm Lhoist launches Office 365 and ShareBox

Supplying industrial minerals to diverse customers in many domains since 1889, Lhoist is no stranger to international collaboration. To take its digital workplace to the next level with delaware's guidance, the firm chose to migrate 40 to 50 TB of data from its servers to the cloud and introduce an intranet for knowledge sharing and collaboration based on Office 365, SharePoint online and delaware's Sharebox 2.0 solution.

Before launching an RFP and carrying out a market survey to identify the most suitable platform and implementation partner, the Lhoist executive committee had already defined a collaboration vision founded on three pillars: sharing knowledge, enabling better communication and empowering collaboration.

### 1 A future-proof foundation for the digital workplace: SharePoint Modern

"We analyzed how employees were collaborating and what systems were available, and revealed a scattered landscape," explains Raphaël Vander Auwera, Director Business Solutions & Intelligence at Lhoist Belgium. "We selected Office 365 as the ideal foundation for our collaboration approach because it has a strong reputation, its tools are familiar to our users and it offered the best cost-value ratio."

To kick off the project, delaware's digital workplace team implemented Lhoist's intranet platform, called Connect, which is based on SharePoint. "At the beginning, we were developing the system using SharePoint's classical webpage foundation," elaborates Benoît Loffet, digital workplace and innovation manager at delaware. "But in the middle of the project, we consulted with Microsoft and introduced the idea of moving to Microsoft's new intranet page standard – SharePoint Modern."

The support of both delaware and Microsoft convinced Lhoist that they needed to take this step to ensure a future-proof digital workplace. Benoît: "It's a forward-thinking choice that very few companies had made at that time, since it lacked certain functionalities that a global intranet requires. We evaluated the pros and cons and presented our conclusions to the Lhoist team. SharePoint Modern turned out to be the preferred option in all aspects. It introduces easy mobile responsiveness and lots of out-of-the-box integrations that the old standard didn't offer. It's also the future of Microsoft, since they plan to stop adding new functionalities to the old standard."

### 2 Communication, knowledge sharing, collaboration

The Connect intranet platform allows different Lhoist entities and users around the world to publish information, communications, events and news aimed at different audience groups. But most importantly, the system proposes default new items targeted to users based on their locations and roles, and introduces a strong balance of personalization and automation without requiring configuration changes.

In addition to these communication-boosting efforts, delaware is currently helping Lhoist migrate its old knowledge bases from its SAP portal and Lotus Notes to the new Connect platform. "These knowledge bases contain company-specific information about a





responsibility or task, or engineering processes that a limited number of people need to know,” Raphaël goes on to say. “By moving them to our Microsoft intranet, the right people have access to the right information via any device – with zero VPNs or server issues.”

On the collaboration side, with SharePoint Modern and delaware’s ShareBox solution for automated collaboration space governance, Lhoist has brought intuitive employee interaction into the cloud.

### **3 Empowering users without enabling the growth of a “jungle”**

“Our biggest fear in implementing SharePoint was creating a jungle of files and teams,” asserts Raphaël. “ShareBox – particularly its dashboard – offers important advantages because it brings governance and basic rules into the picture to facilitate collaboration. It’s not too heavy, it offers a structured framework – and its strong integration with the Office 365 suite is a key asset.”

“Around 1,200 ShareBox spaces have already replaced legacy on-premise file systems, and it’s just the beginning,” says Benoît. “[ShareBox automates the process of monitoring creation and access](#) rights of collaboration spaces, leading to big relief for both users and the IT department – any user can create a ShareBox without having to go through IT.”

A newer aspect of the project is the introduction of Power Apps, MS Flow and Power BI, [low-code development services offered by Microsoft 365](#). This service allows the quick and easy creation of mini mobile apps within the Intranet platform to meet Lhoist’s IT and business needs.

Benoît: “The use case was the rapid development of an app used by employees to gain access to hardware, software and services. It standardizes business requests and channels them to the right people, saving time and resources for the IT team.”

### **4 Change management as a central project element**

Because of the sweeping impacts of the digital collaboration project, change management and a robust communication strategy have been key elements since the very beginning.

Benoît explains: “delaware’s digital workplace technical team collaborated very closely with the delaware’s change and communication team to make Lhoist’s vision tangible – in fact, 15% of the hours delaware spent on the project were contributed by the change and communication team.”

Together, the technical and change experts of delaware helped define the KPIs needed for Lhoist to measure the success of the project and propose strategies to keep it on track. Moreover, the change experts helped build the ambassador network at Lhoist: 100 people around the world involved in spreading the word about the benefits and use of Connect.

“Working with delaware on the change management aspect of the project offered significant value,” Raphaël says. “They came in with a refined approach, well-developed communication methodologies and tried-and-tested templates. There was no guesswork or ‘reinventing the wheel’ – delaware’s large team already had broad experience with global implementation projects.”

