



Intranets
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Software Intranet & Extranet

Rockwell Technology Group Uses Intranets.com
As A Software Update/Patch Dispenser

The **Rockwell**
Technology Group.inc.
www.rockwelltechnologygroup.com



One Van De Graaff Drive
Burlington, MA 01803
888.932.2600
www.intranets.com

Software Intranet & Extranet



Rockwell Technology Group **Grand Rapids, MI**

Intranets.com is enabling Rockwell Technology Group to instantly deliver custom-designed software updates and patches to its customers.

“As soon as our developers have new custom software ready for delivery, I can call up our customer and say, ‘It’s ready. Go to our Intranets.com location, click on the Guest Folder and the software will be in there under your company’s name. You can download it and you’re good to go,’” says Mark Laws, Chief Operating Officer of the Rockwell Technology Group, Grand Rapids, MI.

Rockwell uses Intranets.com not only as an extranet to facilitate the instant delivery of software, but also as an intranet for project management and customer relationship management (CRM), and to hold online discussion forums and facilitate customer service during onsite visits.

“We couldn’t run our business nearly as efficiently without Intranets.com,” says Laws.

Rockwell designs, builds and implements web-enabled solutions, and provides custom programming services with SoftVelocity’s Clarion® 4th generation language, IBM’s RPG/400 platform and Microsoft’s Visual Basic and C Plus® platforms. Rockwell applications are compatible with the Microsoft Access® and SQL/Server®, Oracle® data management systems, and the IBM AS/400 I-Series DB2 database servers. Rockwell also provides Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), and project management services.

“Using Intranets.com as a delivery vehicle for our software updates and patches saves time and money for us and for our clients. If we couldn’t do this, we’d have to have our developers burn the software onto a CD or DVD and either mail it or drop it off. Intranets.com frequently saves us from having to run to our customer sites,” Laws says.

Rockwell’s customers are spread across Canada, and are also based in Chicago and Detroit - with 65 percent in manufacturing services for the ‘Big Three’ auto companies, and the remainder in management services and insurance.

“Our customers like the fact they are not paying for us to travel to their site to upload the software; it saves them the consultation charges that normally would be involved. For us, the time savings are tremendous. It allows us to service even more clients. So, it’s a win-win solution,” Laws says.

“We just did a specialized shipping label program for one customer and then, when his business expanded internationally, he needed to add a country specification onto his label. We were able to update the program and put it up on our Intranets.com extranet. The customer went into the Guest Folder, unloaded it immediately, and put it on his machine.”

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Intranets.com not only provides efficiency, but security as well.

“In delivering our software this way, we’re not concerned about security,” says Laws, “because Intranets.com offers SSL, and even beyond that, we control the security because we can put whatever security we want on the software program itself.”

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“We have 20 to 25 customers that we allow to jump into our Intranets.com’s Guest Folders, which Intranets.com lets us set up with varying kinds of permissions for access -- read-only, read and add, manage, etc., -- so we can control exactly what people access and what they can do to it.”

Besides using Intranets.com as an extranet, Rockwell uses Intranets.com for its operations intranet.

“We use and appreciate all of Intranets.com’s functionality - particularly the Document Manager, Database Manager, Discussions Forum, Online Calendar and Group Scheduling, and the Task Manager.

Document Manager - Hold the Coffee!

“We keep all of our customer contracts on the Intranets.com Document Manager for easy access, anywhere, anytime. We also keep all our sales literature, and every

single HR document we have on it. There’s times when we’re not in the office, and we still need to get to our documents,” says Laws.

“I remember one time, on the way to an important client meeting, I spilled my coffee all over our proposal for the client. There was no time to drive back to my office, and I didn’t want to have to get to the client’s office, call my home office and ask somebody to fax me another copy that wouldn’t be so presentable either. So, I stopped at the first public library I saw, went in, logged onto Intranets.com and printed out a clean copy of the proposal. I wouldn’t have been able to get that clean copy any other way. Anywhere I can get on the intranet, I am good to go.”

Customer Relationship Management

“We use the Intranets.com Database function to keep track of our current clientele -- what we are doing for them, and what needs to be done next. We set it up so the Intranets.com Database Activity Log keeps track of and pops up the next action date for that client. We never miss anything. We know when we first come into the office in the morning to check it: ‘Oh, there’s 3 things that I need to do today.’”

“We use it the same way with prospective customers. A glance at the Intranets.com Activity Log tells me what’s been done and what needs to be done next. If that something happens to be ‘my baby,’ but I can’t do it, I can call John or Bernie and say ‘We need to do this with so and so, go in and look at the record and follow up for me.’ And they can pick up right where I left off, without a hitch.”

“So, with our Intranets.com Database Manager, we can facilitate a seamless progression for customer service and call back activities -- which looks good for the company. Our



customers or prospects will say, 'Wow, a call from two different reps and everybody's on the same page and nothing fell through the cracks.' It makes our company look great!"

Facilitates Client Visits

"We also keep all information about client hardware and software - client profiles -- on our Intranets.com Database Manager and it's fantastic to have all this information at our fingertips online, when we're at a client site. Most client locations have wireless in their facilities, or a place where you can plug into Internet access, so you can update and retrieve this information easily."

"Before we subscribed to Intranets.com, our client database was stuck on a desktop, so we only had access to it when we were in the office. This was a very cumbersome database too; we had 3000 fields of information in it. We were able to take all these fields and easily import them into one of Intranets.com's prefab databases, where we added an Activity Log to better manage the information."

Meetings On The Move

"We frequently jump on the Intranets.com Discussion Forum to hold 'meetings' remotely and it saves us a lot of driving time -- easily 10 or 15 hours a week. Two of us live 45 or 50 minutes from the office and the rest of us live 10 to 15 minutes away."

"It's nice because Intranets.com's Discussion Forum keeps a record of our comments. If one person's not able to be there online, because they are out making a service call, we just drop him or her an email off the discussion board with a link on it and say, 'We're discussing such and such topic. Here's the link. Just stop in when you are finished with your sales call and make any comments you like.' Just in that one instance, we've saved the driving time it would take to get us all in one place."

"We also hold conference calls with everyone looking at their laptops, logged onto the same Intranets.com page."

"I tell you, we'd get the job done, but we'd be much less efficient without Intranets.com. We've never tracked exactly how much time it saves us, but when you think about how many different meetings we have to keep everybody up-to-speed, you can see why Intranets.com really saves us time."

Online Calendar and Group Scheduling

"We use the Intranets.com Online Calendar and Group Scheduling quite a bit - again, since we're not all based in the home office. We want to make sure we don't double-book ourselves for customer visits."

"For instance, I can call a customer to set up an appointment for John -- first looking online at John's calendar to make sure I'm not double-booking him -- and then send him an email saying, 'I've scheduled you to go see so and so.' I can check off the switch

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that he has to respond to me to let me know he’s seen the message. Then he or I can set up a two-hour prior reminder of the event. This works out really well.”

Task Manager

“For project management, we use the Intranets.com Task Manager extensively. Our President, John, usually sets up and assigns all the tasks and he’s able to monitor progress online as tasks are completed.”

Expense Reports

“To keep track of billable customer hours, we use the Intranets.com Expense Reports feature. It works like a time card for each one of our consultants at different client locations.”

“All around, Intranets.com is a natural fit for us. It’s the backbone of our business. Our industry is information intensive and keeping track of information is mission critical for us. We have millions of gigabytes stored on Intranets.com. If one of our computers crashes, we don’t have to worry about losing any data; we just go to another computer and get on our Intranets.com intranet and it’s there.”

“Before finding Intranets.com, we had searched extensively for an intranet solution, and we had even started to create our own intranet. Then we found Intranets.com and realized we didn’t have to invest the time in creating our own solution; there was one that already worked.”

“We began using Intranets.com when it was free, and then when Intranets.com started charging for the service, we said: ‘So what?’ It was worth whatever we had to pay, because it was so easy to use, but so powerful that it did everything we needed it to do. So we’ve used Intranets.com for a long time; we’ve seen it evolve and add new services.”

“We’re very happy with what Intranets.com is and how it runs. It’s been really good for us, and as a result, we’ve also become an Intranets.com Reseller.”

Reseller

Laws explains how that evolved. “We really backed into reselling Intranets.com, not realizing at first that we could do that. We had picked up an independent insurance company whose specialty is insurance services for low-income people -- health and dental benefits packages. The company needed something to keep their five offices -- in Grand Rapids, Florida and Houston -- all on the same page. We advised them to subscribe to Intranets.com, and that’s what prompted us to think: ‘Maybe we should be reselling Intranets.com.’ Now we are very pleased to be reselling it, as well as using it so extensively ourselves.”

