Using SharePoint to manage and disseminate fusion project information: An ITER Case Study

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The ITER Organisation, in common with many other fusion laboratories, has a web site devoted to the diffusion of information to all its staff and remote collaborators, authenticated by ITER account name. In 2007 and 2008 the users of this site have expanded by more than a factor of ten with over 3000 registered users at present. In parallel the project management of the organisation has been put in place.

A decision was taken to move the web platform from simple HTML to the Microsoft SharePoint platform and to integrate the web into the many utilities and data bases (data “farm”) used for ITER management. This decision has been well justified by the power and extensive flexibility provided by SharePoint, for example permitting different groups to publish their own information and to collaborate, and to consolidate disparate spreadsheet data in linked SharePoint lists to improve quality and maintainability.

This paper examines the use of SharePoint at ITER: Why it was selected, what benefits it brings to both the local and remote ITER community. Some active case studies are presented. We also look ahead at what future benefits to ITER this platform offers, and review the type of information that the site can profitably publish. We also highlight some of the limitations, and constraints of the platform, and the problems of integration into the ITER systems, and discuss its adaptability for scientific organisations.