

Sakata Seed America

Digital Transformation with Compass365

Innovation is at the core of Sakata Seed, a company that has been nourishing people and beautifying our planet with its vegetables and ornamental seeds for more than 100 years. Their journey has taken them from handwritten field notebooks to today, where they endeavor to fully automate their inner working systems. Sakata Seed is all about creativity, germination, and looking to what could be for its distributors, growers, and home gardeners. Sakata Seed is a world leader in breeding and producing vegetable and ornamental seed and vegetative cuttings. Sakata Seed enlisted the Compass365 team to assist with their digital transformation.

THE CHALLENGE

Creating seeds for human beings to plant, grow, and eat requires checks and balances: testing, auditing, and reporting are mandatory. Procedures are sophisticated, well documented, and must be followed to the letter. To continue to meet the demands of an ever-changing world and its regulations, Sakata Seed decided it was time to take a more systematic approach to match their scientists' velocity.

The daily workflow for all those critical documents (document capture, multiple signoffs, add-ons, and reviews) happens across multiple Sakata research stations. SharePoint has been a part of how Sakata Seed America manages its quality management system for over a decade. As a geographically spread business that must adhere to strict regulations, the need to move and migrate processes, workflows, and terabytes of data across all geographies became critical this year.

Migrating large quantities of documents and artifacts from quality management systems and older versions of software can be tricky. Program Manager, Ryan Nagahori took on the job of interviewing and shadowing internal stakeholders with questions like: Where do your files live? What is your daily process? Where do you go for items you need to be answered? Where are improvements possible?

SUCCESS METRICS

Retired legacy technology
Enabled Microsoft Teams adoption and collaboration visibility
Dual usage/replication of technology

INDUSTRY

Food and Agriculture

PLATFORMS AND SOLUTIONS

- Microsoft 365/SharePoint Online
- Microsoft Teams
- Nintex Workflow

"With any technology migration and updated processes, user adoption and engagement are priority number one, and Compass365 ensured our success."

- Ryan Nagahori, Program Manager,
Sakata Seed America

ABOUT COMPASS365

Compass365, an industry-leading IT systems integrator and Microsoft Gold Partner, combines our years of SharePoint and Office 365 expertise with proven methods to help improve the way companies work, operate, and confidently get the value from their Microsoft investments.

THE INVESTIGATION

"We have quality managers and technical managers that report to four separate regulatory bodies that ensure we are adhering to the hundreds of regulations where we must comply. We stepped back to review and found that collectively we are on the same approval cycles, same internal audits, same external audits. Could we look across the geographies and build one way of working together that simplifies our templates and processes for business continuity? And that answer was yes."

- Ryan Nagahori, Program Manager,
Sakata Seed America

The need to bring SharePoint to the cloud, together with an updated all-in-one quality management system, was confirmed by Ryan's investigation.

THE SOLUTION

Compass365 always kicks off projects by working to bring the right key stakeholders to the table and adhering to what goals they find in the assessment phase of running a successful project. The Compass365 team was leveraged to migrate all data from SharePoint 2013 to Office 365, along with Sakata's Quality Management System (BPA Quality) artifacts that included 16 unique BPA applications, 25 Nintex workflows, and three Nintex Component Workflows in four months.

With Sakata Seed's rate of innovation, giving its regulatory compliance stakeholders the ability to navigate compliance documents, repetitive process/task/action with efficiency brings improved risk management, digital velocity, and overall enhanced bottom-line financial savings and results.

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The solution also encompasses a URL redirect to a quality management Microsoft Teams channel, leveraging their migration to Office 365. The new system has become their teamwork communication hub, using the Posts tab for Q&A and a natural community forum. Sakata uses the Files tab in this Teams channel to share best practices and how-to documents.

INNOVATIONS AND IDEAS THROUGH WORKING TOGETHER

Being in business for more than 100 years, Sakata Seed, like many seed companies, uses both online and paper-based seed catalogs to showcase their products to their distributors. The marketing managers needed a new way to manage the inventory and manual distribution of physical catalogs.

This discovery led Compass365 Project Lead Ingrid Camill to suggest creating a Power App with the Microsoft Power Platform to automate the process of mailing and distributing the brochures. Ryan and the team worked with Compass365 to develop and implement a new catalog inventory system called Sakata SHOP on Microsoft Teams and a Power App. But the story does not end there. Sakata Seed has essential workers throughout their distributed workforce. In an effort to increase the efficiency and management of the purchase and distribution of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) across all Sakata Seed America facilities to keep their workers safe, Ryan leveraged the Sakata SHOP platform and Power App to respond to COVID-19.

Innovation and inspiration happen when people work together, looking for ways to improve business processes with technology, then implementing those changes via their company's employees. Sakata Seed and Compass365 partnership is blooming and will continue to bear fruit in an ever-changing landscape of technology by harnessing the power of collaboration.