



The image shows a screenshot of the eRSA Portal landing page. At the top left is the eRSA logo with the tagline 'Advancing Research Innovation'. To the right is a navigation menu with links for HOME, SUPPORT, USER GUIDES, MAINTENANCE, FAQ, and REGISTER. The main content area features a background image of a desk with a keyboard, mouse, and plant. The text 'WELCOME TO THE eRSA PORTAL' is prominently displayed. Below it are two bullet points: '- Register for an account' and '- Reset password'. To the right is a circular icon representing a user profile. Further down, the text 'COMING SOON' is followed by a list of upcoming features: '- Reporting portal', '- Knowledge base', and '- Helpdesk'. Two white buttons are visible: 'REGISTER' and 'RESET PASSWORD'. At the bottom left, there is a dark teal box with the eRSA logo and the text 'The Digital Embassy' and 'servicedesk@ersa.edu.au'.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

eRSA is a South Australian provider of high-performance computing, data management, software development, and consultancy. They provide an advanced suite of ICT tools to a host of businesses, government bodies, and researchers such as Flinders University, the University of Adelaide, and University of South Australia.

Background

The Digital Embassy was approached to assist with the consolidation of eRSA many website systems, databases and web application services into one central platform and resource. This digital transformation initiative was designed to enable the sharing of data across multiple areas of the business and to streamline business processes in order to deliver workflow efficiencies and additional functionality for users and researchers.

The Portal is not yet live, as eRSA were required to alter other systems, including the Authentication model, and develop their CRM structure to adhere to their business needs. These factors have resulted in a delay of the launch of The Portal, as further development is necessary from The Digital Embassy.

Goals

eRSA's array of existing web-based systems operated completely independent of each other with no overall holistic solution or approach. The structure consisted of a number of independent CMS platforms, data sources, applications, and external components built with separate features and databases.

The integration of all the existing systems to a single portal solution powered by a highly robust CMS platform would greatly simplify operations and reduce management inefficiencies and maintenance costs. The new web portal would allow for eRSA to have a central point of access to multiple data sources across the organisation as well as providing improved user management, content, and reporting functionality.

Challenges

The Digital Embassy's largest challenge in this project was to define and incrementally execute the extensive depth of integration required to achieve the project outcomes.

The integration requirements would also need to support the existing Microsoft-based infrastructure SQL Server in place at eRSA, as well as its ability to accommodate the future adoption of new Microsoft-based systems such as Office 365, SharePoint, and Dynamics.

Solution

To obtain and define a clear understanding of the requirements and scope, it was determined that a digital strategy process provided the eRSA stakeholders with a platform to convey business and process ambitions. This information would facilitate the selection of an appropriate CMS solution whilst enabling The Digital Embassy to forecast key deliverables relating to business development features, marketing initiatives, and workflow processes.

As Kentico Gold Partners, it was established that this CMS would allow a seamless integration with existing user directories and policy frameworks that were already in place within eRSA. This digital business transformation methodology would allow a greater reduction in the manual management of the user details and access functionality, creating instant efficiencies for the client.

The concept for using Kentico for the site was to integrate existing systems such as MS Dynamics, as well as other customer systems and databases built and maintained by eRSA. Kentico authentication APIs were used to do this with Active Directory and provide access to the Portal for users. Implementation of this feature involved users registering with an eRSA pre-existing registration page, which sits outside the Kentico site due to budget limitations, and will eventually be rebuilt in Kentico.

Users were then assigned access via Active Directory and set up in Dynamics CRM. The authentication process then integrated these systems to allow login and access to user/role based content and products or services. Public announcements, FAQs, and Resource Articles are all possible in the future with relevant templates built to support the use of the Portal.

A phased incremental approach was outlined based on project and client priorities to deliver completed elements in an ongoing, agile manner. This was to address the depth of integration and quantity of project outcomes. Utilising Kentico allowed the interactive deployments of features and functionality, whilst eRSA evolved their CRM Structure.

Results

The new eRSA framework will allow for multiple systems, data, and content to live in one holistic solution.

By linking the portal with data from the Microsoft Dynamics CRM and Active Directory, it provides the ability to authenticate users, and align associated projects, services, and products seamlessly for all users, both internally and externally.



Projects, created via the CRM and seamlessly pulled into one central dashboard within the portal, provide a consolidated overview of associated documents, materials, and reportable data. Each project has attributed researchers and collaborators assigned to it, allowing the portal to act as a central resource for multiple stakeholders to track and contribute toward a project.

Data presentation capabilities were also improved as a result of the development, allowing various sources of data from eRSA to provide real information to all stakeholders, including users, administrators, management, and board members as well as potential new users researching the services available.

The portal has increased efficiencies for all users through the automation of previously manual tasks. It will provide the ability for marketing and business development staff at eRSA to have a valuable tool that assists in the promotion of their services in order to help drive more leads.

This unique and industry leading portal continues to provide an ongoing revenue stream for eRSA, along with savings from new efficiencies, which will build upon an already growing reputation for excellent services in the research field.

Key Criteria for Choosing Kentico

At the conclusion of the digital strategy, it was identified that the Kentico EMS would provide the most suitable, and adaptable foundation framework for the creation of the new eRSA portal. This was based on the following:

- Kentico ASP.NET platform integration compatibility with existing Microsoft-based infrastructure SQL Server in place at eRSA
- Kentico Web Part feature
- Login API
- Ability to accommodate the future adoption of new Microsoft-based systems planned for integration such as Office 365, SharePoint, and Dynamics
- The solid basis for seamless integration both initially and in future phases due to being built on the Microsoft.net stack

The Digital Embassy

The Digital Embassy™ (thedigitalembassy.com.au) is an Australian Google and Microsoft Partner transforming digital business. Their team are ambassadors for best practice in [digital business strategy](#), [web design](#), [behaviour-driven software development](#) and [evidence-based digital marketing](#).

For more than 20 years their business has employed local industry-certified personnel to help businesses meet the changing needs of digital users and consumers. They work as your strategic digital partner to develop strategies and build assets that drive organisational change and revenue growth.



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