



## SUMMARY

### The Challenge

Enterprise Solutions Delivery Services (ESDS), a new organization within Cisco Systems, was responsible for providing implementation and support services to Cisco's enterprise customers. Divided into seven distinct groups, the organization quickly realized that it needed to implement a system to facilitate communication and the sharing of expertise between the geographically diverse groups. ESDS foresaw the increasing costs and potential productivity loss without an easily accessible shared knowledge resource.

### The Solution

VisionCor designed, developed, and deployed a knowledge portal that provides each of the seven groups with a single source for their learning, performance support, and ongoing knowledge sharing needs. This portal enables the groups to share role-specific resources, including project and technical overviews. As a result, they can minimize critical response time and truly leverage their vast organizational expertise.

# A VisionCor CASE STUDY

## KNOWLEDGE PORTAL

### Cisco Systems Enterprise Solutions Delivery Services (ESDS)

### The Client

As the leading supplier of high-performance internetworking products, Cisco provides the infrastructure for the Internet. With over 40,000 employees and a record growth, the need for quick and easy access to information is vital to Cisco's ongoing success.

To manage costs and practice what they preach, Cisco runs a significant amount of internal operations on their corporate intranet. While this technology is very useful in many areas, its role in customer support is critical.

### The Challenge

Exemplary customer service ranks high in the minds of Cisco employees—starting at the top. John Chambers, CEO, spends up to 40% of his time listening to customers and personally reviewing all critical accounts every night.

Like many other large companies, ESDS faces a variety of challenges consistent with maintaining its focus on providing high caliber services to its customers. ESDS is divided into seven distinct areas, based on geographic region and customer type, which enables the organization to provide the delivery of custom and project-based implementation services, regardless of geographic location, to US Enterprise customers. Although a necessary design, based on the size of the group and the broad customer base, the existence of distinct areas makes it difficult to share knowledge, ensure consistency in deliverables, and facilitate communication across the organization.

A secondary challenge was in establishing an organizational identity. After a split from the Professional Services group, ESDS was still associated with the previous group's name and needed to establish itself as a distinct organization within Cisco.

### The Business Objectives

In an effort to address the inconsistencies across the organization and to create a brand image for the newly created organization, Cisco needed a comprehensive solution that provided "one stop shopping" for solution information and clarified the new organizational role and contacts.

Since many members of ESDS work directly from the customer site, short download times and easy access to solution and organizational information was critical. In order to meet these needs, ESDS had several primary objectives:



**Increase operational effectiveness.** Provide members of ESDS with accurate performance measurement statistical information as a benchmark for improvement and increased efficiencies.

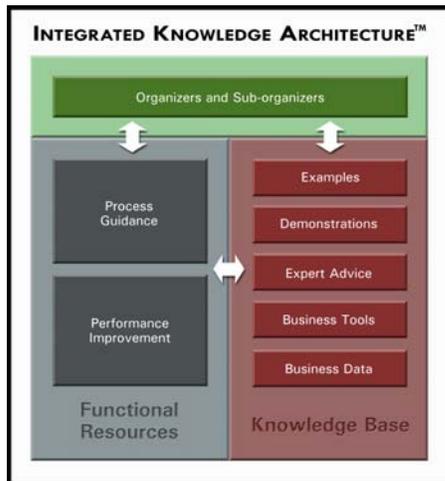
**Maximize performance and sharing of knowledge assets.** Provide task-oriented information to specific roles within ESDS, such as organizational standards, templates, and examples to ensure consistency in deliverables, summaries of current and completed projects, and new solution information.

**Foster learning and ongoing communication.** Provide a communication vehicle within Cisco’s large, geographically diverse work environment to disseminate organizational information from management and to encourage the sharing of information, experiences, and professional accomplishments with other team members.

**Establish a new organizational image.** Provide a concise overview of the newly established organization to facilitate an understanding of the services provided and the role of ESDS within Cisco.

## Why VisionCor

For Cisco, an Internet-centered company, a web-based resource was essential. Sigrund Shoemaker’s (Director, ESDS) decision to partner with VisionCor was based on VisionCor’s experience in researching, analyzing, and organizing complex environments and the overwhelming success of the SSA project.



## The Integrated Knowledge Architecture™

The Integrated Knowledge Architecture™ (IKA™) is VisionCor’s innovative approach to creating highly accessible and usable information resources to support business operations. The IKA is a proven, object-oriented approach to organizing content based on how the content is used. The IKA provides a guide for organizing information, learning, and knowledge into smaller pieces called knowledge objects and building meaningful relationships between these objects. As a result, the end user can more quickly and easily locate the critical information needed to improve productivity and performance. The IKA is technology-neutral and can be used to leverage the capabilities of any portal or web-based KM application.

## The Solution

VisionCor assigned a team of consultants that included expert content developers, information architects, and a project manager. The team used VisionCor’s unique knowledge management methodology to develop a project plan. Status reports, project schedules, and conference calls kept the VisionCor team in Charlotte in sync with the Cisco team in San Jose.

After a complete project and role analysis, the project was organized into two distinct phases:

**Initial Development.** Through interviews with the executive sponsor and key members of the ESDS organization, representative of various job functions, the VisionCor team gathered, analyzed, and organized the information needed by the various and distinct audiences that the site needed to address.

VisionCor built an overall site map and detailed content plan. The look and feel of the site was designed based on content, audience analysis, the existing intranet, and the SSA site previously designed by VisionCor. Information was then converted into web format.

With site navigation, graphics, and an initial round of content in place, VisionCor conducted a usability test to ensure an intuitive site structure and meaningful content. Experienced members of ESDS, representative of various job functions, tested specific scenarios to ensure real usability. In addition to providing feedback, the usability tests promoted user acceptance of the site—a vital part of any successful knowledge management project.



**Core Development.** Once the initial content was in place and tested, development and coding of further site content began. During the first two months of core development, the initial site underwent significant changes, including the redesign of the home page based on the business requirements of ESDS and the evolving technology industry, the addition of substantial amounts of new site content, and the sharing of engagement and project management process expertise.

## The Results

Today, Cisco is working with VisionCor to leverage the knowledge and benefits gained from both the SSA and ESDS projects into other areas of their organization. Although record-breaking growth and razor-sharp focus on customer satisfaction could be chaotic, the focus of VisionCor’s knowledge management expertise coupled with Cisco’s commitment to customer satisfaction, enabled VisionCor to build on the success of the SSA knowledge management site. Based on the efforts initiated by the SSA project team, VisionCor was able to provide a 50% development savings to the ESDS organization. This savings allowed VisionCor to create a powerful solution that put valuable learning and knowledge resources at the fingertips of ESDS and established a brand image for the new organization.

“As an organization,” said Sigrund Shoemaker, “we needed an easily accessible medium to keep our field-based team up-to-date on information, including news items, financial reporting, and processes. Our new web site gives us all that and more.”

The screenshot shows the ESDS portal website with the following content:

- Navigation:** HOME, ABOUT US, EM RESOURCES, PM RESOURCES, PE RESOURCES, PROJECT EXPERIENCES, NEW TECHNOLOGIES
- Blazing the Technology Trail**
- What's New?**
  - Welcome Letter
  - Release Notes
  - Site Guide
- ESDS Calendar**
- Policy Tips**
  - Paid Time Off at Cisco
- Executive Announcements**
- QTD Performance**

Customer Satisfaction	100%
Revenue Complete	100%
Work Complete	100%
Average Expense per Person	\$93
Total Realization	100%
Time Tracker Compliance	100%

updated 3/29/01
- ESDS Headline News**
  - Read the latest ESDS news details: [ESDS Receives 11 More High 5 Customer Satisfaction Scores](#)
  - Members of the ESDS Organization Celebrate Their Service Anniversaries
  - Submit News
  - News Archive
- Frequently used Resources**
  - RAC Requests
  - Cisco Product Finder
  - Meeting Place
  - Metro (Expenses)
  - Order Zone
  - PAF Archive
  - PAF Template
  - Project Archive Tool
  - Time Tracker

Footer: Cisco Systems, Inc. Internal Use Only. Submit feedback to owner: [The ESDS Content Team](#). Last Modified on 04/03/2001 15:28:53

*“The ESDS portal provides the group with a single source for all of their information and knowledge sharing needs.”*

## About VisionCor

VisionCor is a 12 year-old, consulting firm based in Charlotte, North Carolina dedicated to helping companies provide their employees with the information, education, and knowledge that they need to work smarter, faster. VisionCor focuses on creative highly accessible and usable information, education, and knowledge management resources including learning and knowledge portals, training, and performance support applications. VisionCor has worked with many leading organizations such as Bank of America, Cisco Systems, and Wachovia Corporation. VisionCor experts are frequently invited to speak at national knowledge management and e-learning conferences. For more information, visit their website at [www.visioncor.com](http://www.visioncor.com).