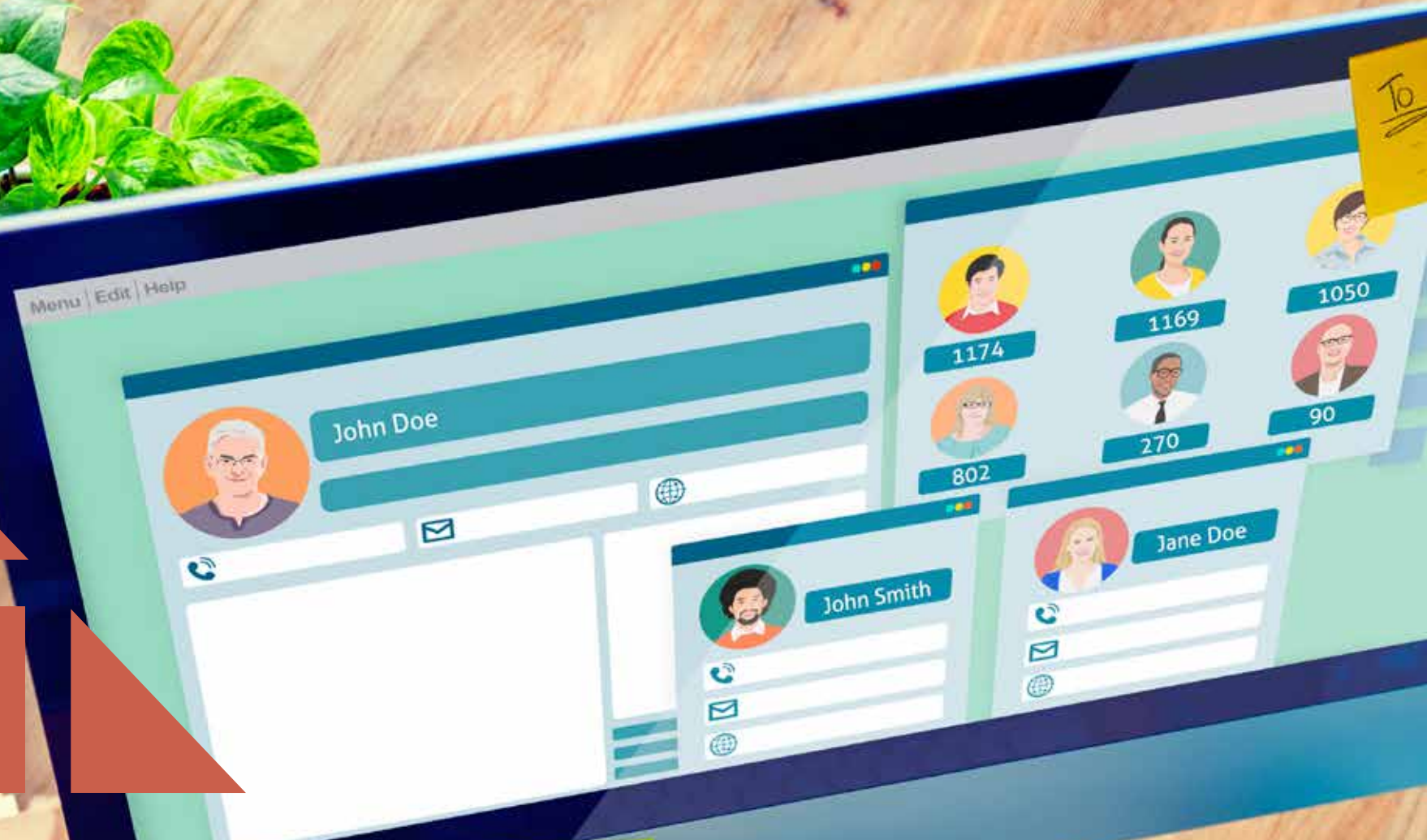




Cloud Productivity
& Collaboration



Using Gamification to Improve the Sharepoint User Experience


Few employees are ever excited about having to use SharePoint. Even fewer are excited about mandatory learning and training. If only there were some way to get people excited about reading and recalling content found on SharePoint.

Gamification is the application of techniques used in game-design to a non-game scenario: specifically, incentivizing certain behaviors and actions with rewards in order to fuel a natural desire for competition and achievement. Once end users begin receiving positive feedback for their actions in the form of points, they begin to repeat the action to earn as many points as possible. This leads to incentivized content being seen repeatedly and increases the chance of users remembering the content. This behavior can also be encouraged by real-world rewards. The points earned by players earn them prizes, which makes playing the game more appealing.


At one particular client, we worked with the Change Management department to implement a gamification system on their SharePoint environment. They were rolling out new software for their embedded system and needed active involvement and input from the future users of the system. This meant not only did they need a way to get users excited about looking at training materials and other documents for an extended period of time, but also needed a way to collect feedback on these changes and on how certain parts of the system should look and feel. A gamified SharePoint environment was proposed as a solution to this situation, as it would not only present the materials that needed to be covered but also give the users motivation to be continuously viewing and recalling the information contained in them.

"The Game," as it is affectionately referred to by the users, took off exceptionally well with the end users. The Game provided users, or gamers, the opportunity to earn points by participating on the discussion board, reading incentivized documents, and taking quizzes. For each activity completed, gamers earned a set amount of points. Gamers can see both their total lifetime points earned as well as their points earned each month. On the landing page for the site, a leaderboard shows the current monthly points and relative ranking for every user that has earned points during the month. At the end of each month, the three gamers with the highest monthly score are rewarded with gift cards and other prizes. Gamers log in often to check the leaderboard and then scour the site for more ways to earn points and move up in position. Some even took it as far as winning not only in monthly points, but made it a personal competition, trying to best each other with the highest lifetime points.

The users enjoyed the initial game so much that they began looking into new ways to earn points and began using the discussion board to suggest ideas of how to further improve the game. This positive attitude towards a gamified SharePoint environment led to the gamification system being used when the department focus switched from the software change to another project.



"The Game," as it is affectionately referred to by the users, was better received than could have ever been expected and took off exceptionally well with the end users.





The content was updated to reflect the new focus, and gamers went on playing the game and digging into the fresh content that needed to be dispersed.

The gamified SharePoint site has been a huge success with the client, having the site visited and used extensively by people within the department on a daily basis. It has gained such a reputation for user involvement that people outside the department have become interested in using the gamification system for multiple departments in order to increase user engagement.



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