

Functional Differences Between  
Northern Light SinglePoint and Microsoft SharePoint  
For Strategic Research Portals

Northern Light®

Whitepaper

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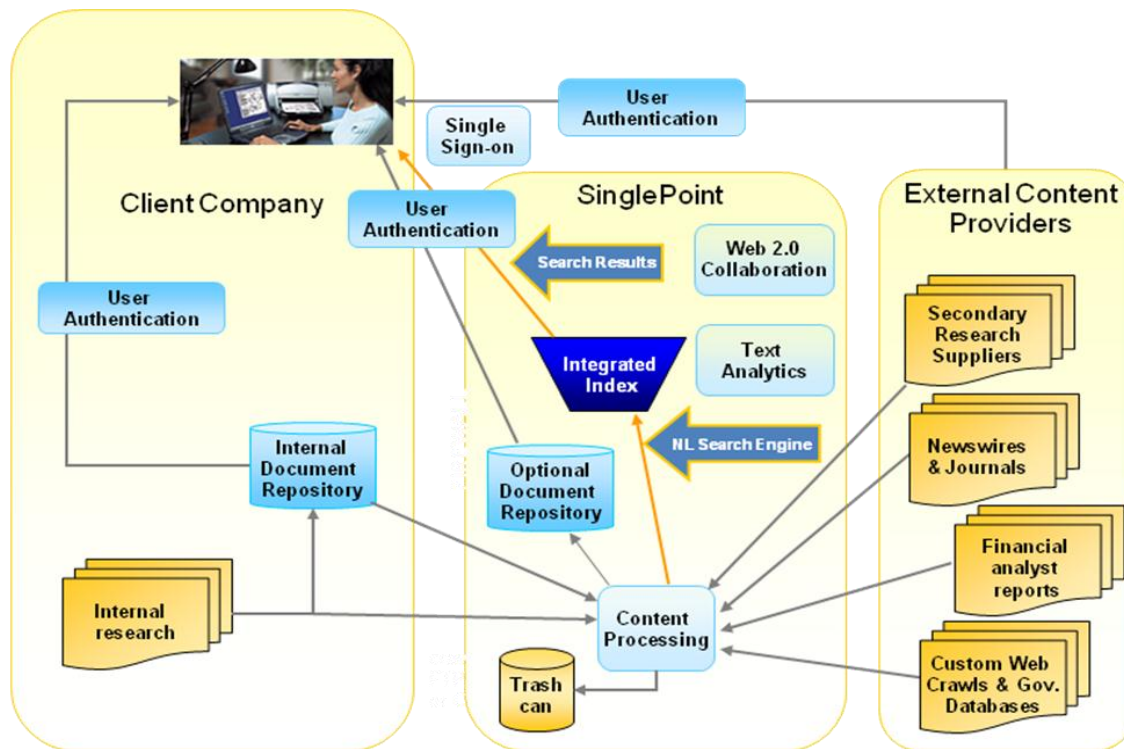
## BACKGROUND ON NORTHERN LIGHT SINGLEPOINT

Northern Light has been providing strategic research portals for market research, competitive intelligence, product development, and technology research to global enterprises since 1999. We call our strategic research portal productline *SinglePoint*, as it provides a single point of access for all of a client's strategic research.

Our current *SinglePoint* portal client list reads like a who's who in technology and industry, including:

Bain & Company ❖ Bank of America ❖ Black & Veatch  
 DuPont ❖ Eli Lilly ❖ FedEx ❖ Fiserv ❖ GlaxoSmithKline  
 Gartner ❖ Hewlett-Packard ❖ IBM ❖ Nokia  
 Nokia Siemens Networks ❖ Research In Motion ❖ Seagate ❖ Sprint ❖ Staples  
 Symantec ❖ USAA ❖ Verizon

*SinglePoint* is a hosted, turnkey solution provided in its entirety by Northern Light. The client licenses or creates the included content, but after that Northern Light handles all other aspects of the portal including development, configuration, deployment, content aggregation, indexing and search, text analytics, collaboration, user management, document security, and reporting. Below is an overview of the *SinglePoint* solution.



A typical *SinglePoint* has 5 to 15 licensed external research sources, an internal primary research repository, a business news feed, and is used by 5,000 users within our client's organization. Our largest client has 45 external sources, an internal repository, two business news feeds, a collection of financial analyst reports from 300 investment banks, and 70,000 user accounts in the client's *SinglePoint*. Our smallest client has 60 users on a *SinglePoint* portal that houses mostly internal research.

## THIRD-PARTY LICENSED EXTERNAL CONTENT

Content is aggregated from internal and external sources by Northern Light and ingested into the *SinglePoint* system.

Northern Light creates a custom solution for acquiring each content set supplied by a third-party provider because there is no commonality between the publishing systems, website conventions, document repositories, and content security systems of the various providers. These custom content aggregation solutions are worked out in close cooperation with each research provider. Common and easy industry solutions for aggregating content such as crawling the websites of the research providers or indexing RSS feeds of new report announcements do not work because the market research firms do not expose their valuable, proprietary content to crawlers and do not deliver the full-text of the documents in RSS feeds.

The content from these multiple sources is indexed to a single consistent and very high standard creating the integrated index. Northern Light indexes every word of the full-text of every document, records the location of every word in every document (enabling phrase searching and text analytics), and indexes all the metadata associated with every document. There is no more thorough indexing in the search engine industry than that performed by Northern Light for *SinglePoint* clients.

Once Northern Light indexes a collection of content from any particular source, we can either place the content in our optional document repository or we can destroy our copy. *SinglePoint* is indifferent to the location of the document repository for any piece of content and can invoke it for authorized users regardless of where it resides, at a third party-content provider, on the client's corporate network, or in the document repository at Northern Light.

For most third-party content, Northern Light destroys our copy of the content after it is indexed and links users back to the website of the content provider when a document is requested by a user. This process is automatic, instant, and transparent to the users. They just click on a link on a search result and the document appears in a browser window on their desktop. Behind the scenes, Northern Light logs the user into the content provider's website, navigates the website and content repository of the provider, and places the requested content into a browser window. Users need not trouble themselves with the elaborate machinery and complex process occurring behind the scene to make it all work seamlessly.

Delivering the documents from external third-party market research sources is a second point of technical integration with third-party sources. Most third-party market research firms do not want repositories of their content scattered around on many other companies' networks, outside of the control of the market research firm, and have a business policy against establishing such remote repositories of their content. Their willingness to cooperate with Northern Light in creating the integrated indexes our clients require is based in part on the indifference to the content repositories location of the *SinglePoint* platform.

There is no commonality between third-party research providers as to how their systems operate. So just like in the content acquisition phase, each document fulfillment connection to a research provider has to be hand-tooled.

Northern Light currently integrates with over 90 research providers on behalf of *SinglePoint* clients. Thus, with two points of integration with each provider (one to acquire the content for indexing and one to deliver documents to authorized users), there are over 180 individual technical systems to create, maintain, and operate in order to make *SinglePoint* work for clients.

If a client needs a third-party research provider that is not in our universe of over 90 relationships, Northern Light has an established process for bringing new sources into the *SinglePoint* system. Clients will never outgrow Northern Light's ability to integrate content on the clients' behalf.

## INTERNALLY PRODUCED RESEARCH CONTENT

Research content produced internally by our clients is usually included in *SinglePoint* portals. These take the form of market research studies, competitive intelligence analyses, street intelligence, product plans, launch plans, technology plans, and other such valuable material.

There are several ways that Northern Light can aggregate internal content. For research created by research staff the most convenient way to aggregate it is to upload directly to the *SinglePoint* portal using the included upload system. For large internal content repositories, clients will often export a daily copy of the new material to a secure FTP site where Northern Light can pick it up. There are other methods as well.

For research content that is created by our clients, Northern Light can either host the material on behalf of the *SinglePoint* client, or we can direct the user back to an internal document repository, if there is one, for the fulfillment of user requests. Usually, for internal content, Northern Light hosts the material as a cost savings and convenience for our clients. In either the case of Northern Light hosting or the client hosting the internal research material, *SinglePoint* enforces the access rules at the user level for any document a user requests.

## USER AUTHENTICATION

Once the integrated index is created, users come into the *SinglePoint* portal by following a link from their corporate intranet. Typically, Northern Light authenticates users with a single-sign-on system, IP validation, usernames and passwords, or a combination of these methods. Users of the portal search all sources in a single user session via the integrated index and find documents that meet their research needs. When a user finds a document that he or she needs, *SinglePoint* authenticates the user for the document and then delivers the document from wherever it resides.

Now that *SinglePoint* has been described, let's discuss the differences with a client-operated Microsoft SharePoint portal that attempts to provide the same benefits.

## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN NORTHERN LIGHT SINGLEPOINT AND MICROSOFT SHAREPOINT

Microsoft SharePoint is a ubiquitous platform in enterprises and is used for creating department and project intranet websites, storing and sharing documents, and collaboration. SharePoint is a generalized portal building application, and it supports web services in the form of webparts that can be developed to accomplish work flow tasks of any nature, including those needed for a strategic research portal. As such, the reasonable question arises from potential *SinglePoint* clients, “Why not use SharePoint to build our own strategic research portal? After all, we already license it.”

Some of the answers to that question are below.

## INVESTMENT IN A RESEARCH-OPTIMIZED PORTAL AND SUPPORTING SYSTEMS

Of course a company could decide instead to invest the money to develop a research portal using Microsoft SharePoint as a platform. Note that Northern Light *SinglePoint* is a research portal solution, ready to be deployed out-of-the-box with only the need to configure it for a specific client. Microsoft SharePoint is not a research portal solution; it is a platform for creating portals of any type and with development effort could be used to create a research portal. However, such a project should not be taken lightly. The systems involved in a market research portal include:

- User interface
- Search forms with rich search options reflecting the unique metadata for each content set
- Personalized home page with content selected for each user
- Document collection systems for automated content harvesting from external sources and from high volume internal repositories.
- Document access authorization system for redirecting users to external content providers' websites for document access, automatically logging them in with individually saved or globally assigned logins.
- Collaboration solutions to bookmark and tag documents, share documents and bookmarks, form groups, and indentify internal experts and collaboration partners.
- Search engine and search technology optimized for research applications.
- Text analytics optimized for research applications.
- Individual search alerts system driven directly from search results
- Public subscribeable search alerts and expert searches for browsing information according to your organizational structure and business needs (by customer, geographic region, or product line for example).
- Security system for enforcing content access rights at the level of individual users and user groups.

- Search alert system for user-created alerts, expert searches, and browsing using browseable topics.
- Portal administration system to grant user rights to material and to manage administrator roles, expert searches, user feedback, and content supplier information.
- User account system for maintaining user information such as logins (permitting individuals with working external market research supplier passwords to enter them directly), user roles, search alerts, home page and search form customization and content permissions.
- Reporting system for tracking site usage, queries, reports used, by user and content vendor (allowing administrators to evaluate adoption metrics and manage subscription costs).
- Maintenance and operation of the portal.

Northern Light has invested over 200 man-years in our *SinglePoint* application suite and the Northern Light search engine that supports it. For a client to come close to the level of functionality of that we provide would require a sizable investment by the client in the portal UI, supporting systems, and content aggregation operations. Clients have shared estimates that they performed of the cost of building a research portal on standard platforms such as Microsoft SharePoint with a subset of the functionality we offer in *SinglePoint*. These estimates have been as much as \$2 million for the project in the first year, and an ongoing maintenance cost for the system that is a substantial percentage of that. Development schedules have been created in these exercises that stretch out for 1-3 years. These costs can be completely avoided by using Northern Light *SinglePoint* and the portal can be deployed in 90 days.

## ABILITY TO TECHNICALLY INTEGRATE WITH THIRD-PARTIES TO INDEX RESEARCH CONTENT

Even if a company did decide that it has the budget and the time to build its own research portal, or if a company decided to do a minimal job and forgo most of the functionality in *SinglePoint* in order to get something going in Microsoft SharePoint, it would, practically-speaking, be impossible to create a market research portal with external third-party content from some of the most important providers. Many research providers will simply not permit their customers to download a complete copy of every report and publication in their research content universe. If they did permit this, the result would be potentially hundreds of copies of their research repositories scattered around the globe, completely out of their control.

Northern Light enjoys a unique position in the content industry as the only firm permitted to index the full-text of the entire collections of the research providers. We are a vetted, trusted repository of research content with over a decade of experience working with the research publishers. We index over 30 million research documents for clients worth over \$2 billion if each document were to be purchased at its list price. In our ten-year history we have never lost any research material, left it exposed to the general internet, had content stolen by hackers, or delivered content to the wrong client.

Beyond the business policies of the providers, there would be technical problems with harvesting content from many of the providers that the internal IT departments of clients are not prepared for. IT normally operates in a world in which it controls all aspects of a system. Factors such as content format, publishing schedules, meta-data conventions, platforms, and communication protocols are controlled by IT for all enterprise applications. When

approaching external third-party research providers, IT has no control, nor even say, in how these things are organized by the third-parties. If a dozen sources are in the portal, IT would have to have a dozen solutions to these issues. Few IT departments are prepared culturally or technically for this environment and few have any experience to guide them.

## CONTENT LIABILITY

A typical *SinglePoint* market research portal has an index of 200,000 research documents licensed from outside sources, worth as much as \$1,000 per document in terms of list price. This calculates out to \$200 million in value. If a client chooses to create a research portal using Microsoft SharePoint that indexes this content at the client's location, the client will have to handle, store, and secure the repository. If a copy of the repository somehow found its way outside the client's network (for example, if a careless employee placed a copy on a laptop and did not secure the laptop adequately), the client would be liable for its misuse of this incredibly valuable content set. With *SinglePoint* the client never has to handle the entire collection of research material in one concentrated file or network location. The only copies of the reports that get downloaded to the client's premises are in response to individual users requesting specific content as a result of searches conducted on the portal. By letting Northern Light handle the third-party content collections, the financial liability exposure of the client is largely eliminated.

## DOCUMENT SECURITY CONVENTIONS REFLECTING LICENSING ARRANGEMENTS

Microsoft SharePoint operates within the Microsoft enterprise computing framework. The only research portal features that are permitted in Microsoft SharePoint are those that are enabled by Microsoft for enterprise applications. In general, the security concepts in the Microsoft enterprise environment relate to servers (you are authorized or not to log into a server), application admin (you are authorized or not to change an application), application use (you are authorized or not to use an application), or network directories (you are authorized or not to access a network directory). In the area of content authorization for market research, these Microsoft conventions are inadequate.

The problem is that users of the research application have different rights to different documents based on licensing restrictions. It is common place for two people in the same department, who can both access the research portal, and who both have the same role (e.g., market research manager), to have different levels of access to the licensed research. One person may hold a seat to Content Provider A, the other to Content Provider B. The Microsoft enterprise computing environment has no content security concepts for dealing with this situation.

Even worse, some market research providers have gotten very creative in how they bucket and partition their content offerings. For example, some of the content from a provider might be an enterprise license, but not all of it, and some may be on a seat license. Or the content might be sold with download restrictions. For example, 1,000 copies of a set of reports may be permitted to be downloaded by users, but the 1,001<sup>st</sup> download has to be blocked. Once again, there is no concept in the Microsoft enterprise computing environment for such situations.

As such, research portals based on Microsoft SharePoint cannot accurately reflect the access rights for seat-based, bucketed, or other licensing arrangements. Conversely, Northern Light *SinglePoint* easily handles these situations



as we have created security systems that reflect the nature and structure of content licensing practices and update them as the marketing people at the research providers come up with new and novel ideas for how to sell their content.

## BENEFIT OF HAVING THE COLLABORATION PLATFORM IN A DEDICATED RESEARCH PORTAL

Northern Light *SinglePoint* has a comprehensive collaboration suite we call *SinglePoint Connects*. *Connects* supports bookmarking, tagging, sharing of tags and content, collaboration groups, discussion groups, and other features. Microsoft SharePoint has many collaboration features as well, including the ability to share documents. However, because Microsoft SharePoint does not have document authorization concepts in it that reflect the business rules around content licensing, sharing external market research content in a Microsoft SharePoint portal can be very risky.

For example, Northern Light was told of one example in which an employee of a company posted a link to a market research report that had been downloaded on a single-seat license in a Microsoft SharePoint portal page accessible by everyone in the company. The market research vendor learned of this, and invoiced the company \$450,000 for that single report. (They multiplied the number of people in the company times the per copy price of the report.)

Had that same report been linked to or bookmarked for everyone in the company in a *SinglePoint* portal, the unauthorized users who tried to download the report would have been unable to do so because *SinglePoint* enforces the business rules around each document. The company in question would have had zero liability for the posted link. Placing the research collaboration solution in a *SinglePoint* portal that has knowledge of the business licensing rules for research content is greatly preferable over having the research collaboration solution in a portal such as Microsoft SharePoint that does not know about or have concepts to support those business rules.

## INDEPENDENCE FROM THE IT BACKLOG

Many of Northern Light's clients have IT departments that are heavily backlogged with pending projects. Getting on the list of priority projects that actually get done can be very difficult and unpredictable. Also, once deployed, internally developed applications, such as a Microsoft SharePoint portal, have to be supported by IT. This means that the ongoing operation of the portal requires annual budget and project priority negotiations with IT. Even seemingly small changes to the Microsoft SharePoint portal can result in substantial budget requests.

Another issue that derives from depending on the IT department has to do with capabilities and features. Companies using Microsoft SharePoint are not able to utilize portal features not supported by the company's IT department. For example, at one company we are familiar with, the market research department wanted their Microsoft SharePoint portal to have custom metadata that related to their market research documents. The IT department at the company told the market research department that as a policy the company was not going to support department-level metadata because if they did so over time the corporate data dictionary would become unmanageably large and perhaps inconsistent. The IT department had to forgo the custom metadata which meant that users could not search the market research reports in the most effective way .

*SinglePoint* clients have Northern Light as their captive IT support arm. All ongoing support and maintenance is built into the budget and no additional funds are required. Northern Light also builds in the expectation that there will be ongoing routine enhancements to the portal and these are provided without additional budget requests. Northern Light is snappy on requested changes, and can accomplish almost all client requests in one week to a month from the initial request. All features needed by a client for the *SinglePoint* are rapidly implemented with no “policy” restrictions.

## NEXUS OF RESEARCH PORTAL BEST PRACTICES

Northern Light’s *SinglePoint* clients are recognized leaders in their fields and they are the most innovative, research-driven organizations in the world. All together, there are over 150,000 individual users of our strategic research portals at companies like the ones above in functions such as market research, product marketing, competitive intelligence, sales management, purchasing, IT, technology research, and new product development.

A typical *SinglePoint* has 5 to 15 licensed external research sources, an internal primary research repository, a business news feed, and is used by 5,000 users within our client’s organization. Our largest client has 45 external sources, an internal repository, two business news feeds, a collection of financial analyst reports from 300 investment banks, and 70,000 user accounts in the client’s *SinglePoint*. Our smallest client has 60 users on a *SinglePoint* portal that houses mostly internal research, with only one external licensed source.

Northern Light’s clients are using their *SinglePoint* portals to guide their corporate strategies and to invent the future that we are all going to live in.

Because of their huge scale, global operations, and research commitment, these companies are the most inventive and aggressive users of strategic research portals. As a result, Northern Light has become the nexus of best practices in research portals. Northern Light helps brainstorm new research portal ideas, and is also the implementer of those ideas that get tried out in settings with real users. We see a wide range of research portal practices, can observe which practices are effective and which are not, and we distill this insight into our *SinglePoint* Best Practices User Interface. This is a significant advantage for a new client because the new client can leverage the massive and decade-long collective experience of Northern Light’s entire client community of strategic research portal users.

## ADVANCED TEXT ANALYTICS

Northern Light *SinglePoint* portals include *MI Analyst*, a completely unique text analytics solution optimized for business research. With *MI Analyst*, the search engine “reads” all the research reports and articles returned on a results list, identifies what is in them, suggests the concepts and issues are that they report on, and directs the researcher to ones that are most interesting - not from a search *relevance* perspective, but from a *meaning* perspective.

For example, with *MI Analyst* a market researcher could conduct a search on a product line and have the search engine zero in on the reports that describe threats to market share or pricing strategy. Or the researcher might run a search and have the application tell them who the innovative new companies are that might emerge as

threats or acquisition opportunities in the future. *MI Analyst* can analyze the tone of the market research about companies, and highlight which reports and research analysts have positive sentiment and which ones have negative sentiment about Fujitsu and its competitors.

*MI Analyst* combines the power of Northern Light's best-in-class free-text searching and industry-leading best practices research portal platform with advanced text analytics developed specifically for business research. *MI Analyst* features these capabilities:

- Business Strategy Concepts: Business Issues, Companies, Venture Funded Companies, Government Agencies, Global Markets, Industries, Job Titles, Business Scenarios
- IT/Telecom Concepts: IT /Telecom Technologies, IT/Telecom Markets
- Pharmaceutical Concepts: Drugs, Diseases, Medical Devices, Clinical Trials & Phases, Proteins, Enzymes, Genes, Cells, Diagnosis & Therapeutics, Human anatomy, Pharma Markets, Business Scenarios for Life Sciences Companies, Life Sciences Research Scenarios, Sources
- Agribusiness Concepts: Agricultural Equipment, Chemicals and Fertilizers, Agricultural Products, Farms and Farming, Food and Human Nutrition
- Government Opportunity Concepts: Government Markets, Government Procurement Characteristics
- Relationship identification between entities:
  - *MI Analyst* discovers relationships between companies, technologies, markets, and business issues discussed in search results documents. For example, what IT technologies are on a company's product roadmap, or which diseases are related to each other and to which drugs in a literature search?
- Meaning Extraction
  - *MI Analyst* identifies business and research issues contained in the documents on the search results. For example, the search engine can reveal the strategy that a company is following in a specific market segment.
  - *MI Analyst* suggests the threats and opportunities regarding products, market share, pricing, new technologies, marketing partnerships, and business strategy.
- Sentiment scoring and sorting by sentiment score:
  - *MI Analyst* calculates a summary sentiment score (document author's positive or negative tone) for each company in a search result.
  - Users can sort documents by sentiment from most positive to most negative and from most negative to most positive.
  - Users can view documents with individual sentiment scores.

Microsoft SharePoint has nothing like *MI Analyst* available in it. Microsoft's enterprise search engine, FAST, can extract company names, place names, and people names, but it has no ability to identify concepts like market

share, pricing, brand loyalty, corporate strategies, or the thousands of other business and technology concepts in *MI Analyst*.

## FOCUSED SOFTWARE PROVIDER THAT EVOLVES THE TECHNOLOGY

Northern Light has a laser-like focus on strategic research portals. This makes us hyper-responsive to the evolving needs of clients that need the service that we offer. By contrast, Microsoft SharePoint must serve the broad and generic needs of every portal user at every company around the world that needs a departmental portal. Microsoft has to reduce the supported features to a lowest common denominator. And Microsoft cannot recognize the unique requirements of research portal users; they have to support first and foremost the more commonplace and generic portal applications.

There are myriad examples in *SinglePoint* of features that Northern Light has developed over the years in response to client needs for research portal features and capabilities. Some of these include the items highlighted in the discussion above:

- Third-party content acquisition and document authentication systems.
- Document authorization systems that support the licensing practices of research content providers.
- Text analytics for business research.

And there are many others we have not discussed, such as duplicate suppression for republished news stories, proximity operators in complex Boolean Expressions, subscribeable expert searches, user personalization of the home page, and more.

Because Northern Light is focused on research portals, and because we develop and control every aspect of the technology, we evolve *SinglePoint* continuously in response to client needs. If you need a new feature in Microsoft SharePoint, who do you call? What chance do you have in your planning horizon (or lifetime) of seeing Microsoft change its enterprise computing platform to accommodate your specific need? With Northern Light, you can call your client program manager, make a request for a new feature in the technology, and we will make it happen for you.

## SINGLEPOINT INTEGRATION WITH MICROSOFT SHAREPOINT

While all of the above argues for use of Northern Light *SinglePoint* over Microsoft SharePoint for research portals, the two systems can actually work together.

Northern Light *SinglePoint* is enabled with an API that permits client developed front ends to access the backend services of *SinglePoint* such as content, search, and document authorization and fulfillment. Many clients use the API to embed portal features in Microsoft SharePoint departmental portals throughout the company. Microsoft webparts send requests via Northern Light's API to the client's *SinglePoint* and receive back responses such as headlines, document summaries, and links to documents. For example, a common use is posting targeted news and research headlines to sales departments, product marketing groups, and general audiences within the company. In this way, users do not have to change their established routines of visiting a product or departmental portal on a regular basis in order to use the content and search resources of the *SinglePoint* strategic research portal.

Northern Light also can supply a set of SharePoint web parts that the client can install to access the content and search resources of *SinglePoint* from a SharePoint installation.

In this way, clients have the best of both worlds, the advanced capability of *SinglePoint* for the users for whom research is mission-critical, and the ubiquitous Microsoft SharePoint distribution of portal content resources enterprise-wide to more casual audiences such as sales departments.

Below are two examples of Microsoft SharePoint portals with embedded webparts accessing a *SinglePoint* portal for headlines and content. The example is from HP (they call their *SinglePoint* MarketVision), and the examples are included here with HP's permission.

In the first example, there is a webpart with a search box in the upper right hand corner of the page outlined by the red square. This webpart accepts user queries and sends them the MarketVision (*SinglePoint*) search index via Northern Light's API and then invokes a search results page.

The screenshot shows the TSG Market Intelligence Center website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the HP logo and a search bar. Below this, the main header includes the site name and a welcome message. The left sidebar contains various navigation links such as 'View All Site Content', 'Discussions', and 'Recycle Bin'. The main content area features a banner with a photo of two people and the text 'TSG Market Intelligence Center' and 'hp'. Below the banner, there are several sections: 'RSS Feeds: Check Latest IT Headlines & News', a navigation menu with 'MIC Talk' highlighted, a welcome message, and a 'Need a Research Expert? Ask Us!' form. The form includes fields for 'Topic', 'Please Describe Your Request', 'Your Name', and 'Your Email'. A red box highlights the 'MarketVision Search' field in the top right, and a red arrow points to the 'Top 20 MarketVision Reports' link in the 'Hot Topic Seminar' section. The right sidebar contains a 'MarketVision Search' field, a 'Research Quick Finder' section, and a 'Newsletters' section.

In the second example below, there is a link to a research report headlines in a Microsoft SharePoint webpart. The webpart sends a query specific to this product group to the MarketVision (*SinglePoint*) portal and gets back targeted research headlines, which you see below. The webpart is annotated in text using red typeface.

The screenshot shows an HP internal portal with the following elements:

- Header:** HP logo, PeopleFinder search bar, and a main search bar with a LOG OFF button.
- Navigation:** A menu bar with links: Home, Reports, Wins & References, News & Research, Collaborate, Tools, Knowledge & Skills, Sales Library.
- User Profile:** Richard E Gee [preferences]
- Featured Sites:**
  - ALIS (Account List Information System)
  - Manager's Information Gateway
  - Corporate Account Related Links: License To Practice, Master CA List, WW CA Home
  - Global Industries
  - Contact SIG Team: Contact Support, Provide Feedback
- My News & Research for Customer, Partner, Marketing and Industry Information\***
  - Search bar with a Search button.
  - Filters: Company Name, Industry Keyword, Executive Name, News/Press Releases.
  - Tools: Build Company List, Hoover's In-Depth, D&B Basic, D&B In-Depth, D&B International, Build Executive List, Target IPO Companies, StockScreener.
  - Hoover's Registration and Training: How to Register for Premium Hoover's Access, Hoover's Usability Guide, Hoover's Training Center, Hoover's Help, Hoover's Feedback.
  - Services: Saved Searches, Watch Lists, E-Mail Alerts, Newsletters.
- MarketVision Syndicated Research:**
  - Benchmark 2008: Forecast Growth Of Devices And Access In The US (PDF)**: A wide variety of digital technologies pervade the lives of US consumers today. More than half of US households now have broadband..... [Posted on 2008/07/25]
  - Benchmark 2008: Forecast Growth Of Devices And Access In The US (Spreadsheet)**: A wide variety of digital technologies pervade the lives of US consumers today. More than half of US households now have broadband..... [Posted on 2008/07/25]
  - Benchmark 2008: Forecast Growth Of Devices And Access In The US (Spreadsheet)**: A wide variety of digital technologies pervade the lives of US consumers today. More than half of US households now have broadband..... [Posted on 2008/07/25]
  - IPTV-enabled 50-inch Plasma from Panasonic Debuts**
- MarketVision Internal Research:**
  - Research Summary - PSG DigEnt - June 2008**: Summary Reports, published monthly, are sponsored by HP Analyst Relations. ASG reviews research published by selected analyst fir..... [Posted on 2008/07/01]
- Right Side Widgets:**
  - HPQ 44.71 +0.58 (Updated: 1:52pm ET July 30, 2008)
  - News links (Edit): Hoovers Login, Harte Hanks/Customer Intelligence Database, Learn how to add Links here
  - MyTeam News & Research (Edit): PSG News, TSG News, IPG News, HPNow News, @HP News, Dun & Bradstreet, Factiva, Harte Hanks / Customer Intelligence Database, Hoovers, MarketVision

MarketVision Web services consumed to return user's personal home page search results

In both of the above examples, a *SinglePoint* portal is working with a Microsoft SharePoint portal and webparts to provide the benefits of both.

## IN CONCLUSION

Northern Light *SinglePoint* and Microsoft SharePoint are both portal platforms that can provide a strategic research portal for market research, competitive intelligence, product management, and technology research. But there are significant differences between them:

- Using *SinglePoint*, companies can take advantage of a well-developed suite of portal applications and systems while avoiding the seven-figure investment required to duplicate *SinglePoint's* capabilities in Microsoft SharePoint.
- Microsoft SharePoint has no innate ability to integrate third-party licensed content into a research portal, while Northern Light *SinglePoint* can integrate content from any third-party a client needs.
- A company that hosts the entire collections of third-party content providers in concentrated directories on the enterprise network incurs significant financial liability for the safeguarding of that material. This liability is avoided if the company alternatively uses Northern Light *SinglePoint* because Northern Light handles all of the content from the third-party suppliers and company employees only download one document at a time to their laptops.
- Northern Light *SinglePoint* has a content authorization system that reflects the nature of licensing arrangements for the content. Microsoft SharePoint shares the security concepts of the Microsoft enterprise computing environment, which provides security for servers, file directories, and applications, but does not support the notion that a given document might be available to some users but not to others independent of where the document resides in the server/network/application space. Also, Northern Light is constantly evolving our transactions systems to stay in step as content vendors change the structure of their content licensing plans.
- There are significant benefits in terms of avoiding liability for misuse of licensed research to having the collaboration solution for research material be in a portal like *SinglePoint*. By putting the collaboration solution in a portal that can enforce content access rights, a company need not worry about documents being shared in a manner that violates the licensing rules for the documents. Microsoft SharePoint cannot perform this role.
- *SinglePoint* clients have a responsive and flexible partner in the form of Northern Light for research portal maintenance and enhancements. Users of Microsoft SharePoint are dependent on their IT departments and must compete for IT priority and budget with all the other projects their companies need to have IT execute.
- Due to the scale, sophistication, and research-commitment of our clients, Northern Light is the nexus of best practices for research portals. This expertise is reflected in *SinglePoint* and is not available to Microsoft SharePoint users.
- *SinglePoint* portals include advance text analytics optimized for business and technical research, whereas Microsoft SharePoint has no such capability.



- Northern Light is a focused, boutique shop with total control of the *SinglePoint* portal technology and underlying search engine. Northern Light can extend the technology in any way required to support a client need. With Microsoft SharePoint, a company cannot reasonably expect any change to ever be made in the portal or search engine in response to that company's specific needs.

Lastly, it need not be either or. Many of Northern Light's clients use *SinglePoint* for content integration, search, document authorization, and for the research portal user interface, but also use Microsoft SharePoint for embedding the portal's content and search resources around the intranet in useful places like product group and departmental homepages. This permits a "best of both worlds" solution.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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