

Top Six Features for Power Users in SharePoint 2010

Ken Efta, Allyis Inc.

SharePoint 2010 Beta 2 was recently previewed at the SharePoint Conference 2009 in Las Vegas, and we're really excited about improvements to features and functionality for power users who help to design and deliver solution in their organizations. Our favorite features are:

1. **Enterprise Wikis:** Wikis are now based on SharePoint Publishing features so they can be fully branded and deployed with custom page layouts. In addition, users have better wiki editing interface and can drag and drop Web parts into editing area so that allow for a richer collaborative view of both Wiki content as well as video, Silverlight, and any other Web part.
2. **SharePoint Designer 2010 Workflows:** SharePoint Designer 2010's workflow capabilities take a big step forward. Features include:
 - a. Visual representation of workflow status with Visio Services
 - b. Import and Export of workflows as Windows SharePoint Solution Packages (.wsp)
 - c. Reusable, portable workflows that can be attached to other libraries and lists, and even other site collections
 - d. "Association columns" that ensure that any unique columns on which a workflow depends are created when attached into another list or library
3. **Note Boards, Ratings, and Tagging:** social computing features now appear in almost every part of the SharePoint interface. Note boards allow users to leave comments on pages, ratings allow users to weigh in on the value of pages and documents, and tagging allows communities of users to build rich, descriptive folksonomies and tag clouds.
4. **Activity Feed and User Status:** SharePoint 2010 can now audit users behaviors, publishing key actions to an activity feed so others can see when users add pages to wikis, add new documents, or perform other actions on SharePoint sites. Additionally, users can broadcast status into their Activity Feed so others know what they're thinking and doing.
5. **Improvements to the Content Query Web Part and the Data View Web Part:** these two tools are critical for aggregating and surfacing data on SharePoint sites, and they get some solid improvements in 2010. Content Query Web Parts can now accept Query String values to use as parameters to aggregate, filter, and display data to users. The Data View Web Part now has better visual tools to allow power users to present data joined from various SharePoint sources--or external sources--in a SharePoint interface.
6. **Business Connectivity Services and External Content Types:** use external content types to display Line of Business data in your SharePoint site. For instance, users could connect to a SQL database, and from inside of SharePoint, have full Create, Read, Update, and Delete (CRUD) permission to modify those SQL records from within a SharePoint list interface. A great evolution of SharePoint 2007's Business Data Catalog.