

Digital transformations. Elcom makes these happen.
See how we transformed the Ascham School Portal.



Ascham is a non-selective, day and boarding girls' school that provides a strong academic program within a friendly, inclusive culture. Through its liberal arts curriculum, the Dalton Plan, and extensive co-curricular offerings, an Ascham girl is supported to develop into a confident, independent, compassionate young woman with a sense of purpose in the world.



THE CHALLENGE

We had worked with Elcom to build the first version of the Ascham Hub 5 years ago. Since then, design best practices changed. The Hub not only needed to better cater to people who use different devices, but give them choices around the type of information they receive and how to view it.

Our goal was to deliver an improved personalised user experience. The majority of the information on the original Hub was quite general and only a small amount of information was specific to our users (staff, students or parents). Our objectives included providing our users with an intuitive dashboard, a central place of communication and a comprehensive source of school information which would enable them to stay actively involved with the school.

In addition, streamlining and automating more of the processes Corporate Services staff manage, was a key objective.

THE PROCESS

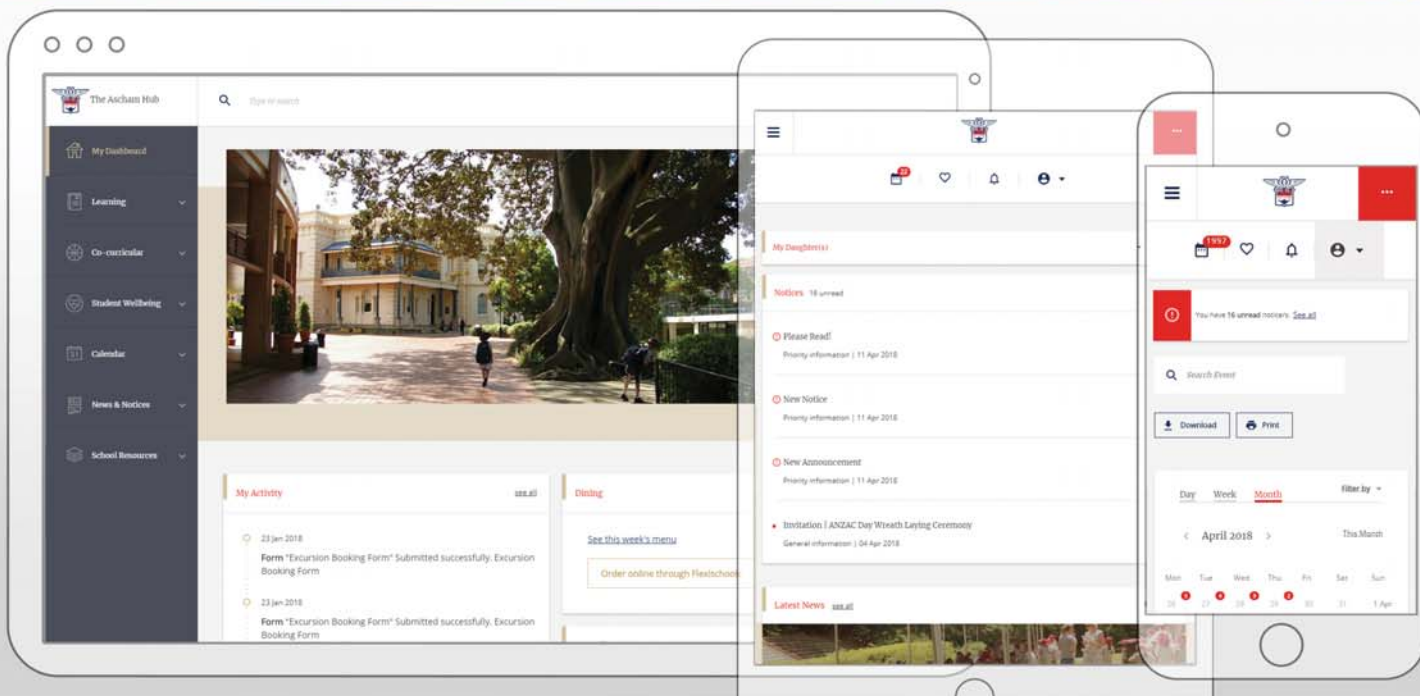
We identified opportunities for improvements that would make a real and positive difference to each stakeholder group through research, focus groups and interviews with users from each group.

We initially engaged our design agency to conduct the UX research and design (IA and wireframes). Elcom then used their expertise to interpret these into a functional intranet. Elcom worked closely with us to understand our exact needs and requirements and implement and develop an Intranet that we are very proud of.

We opted for a phased approach for the new Hub. We officially launched Stage 1 at the start of Term 1 2018, and since then we have scheduled the implementation of new features. This approach means we can complete appropriate UAT and regularly update our community with exciting new features.

"What has really impressed me is Elcom's ability to understand the needs of our school. Their expertise has enabled us to improve on our initial ideas, and has exceeded our expectations in terms of the custom solution that has been delivered. It has been a great collaborative effort."

Jennifer Sharman
Director of Information Technology



THE SOLUTION

With the help of Elcom, the Ascham Hub has transformed into a comprehensive intranet with more than 150 different layouts used across the site.

A key design objective was to provide a dashboard approach for our users. The dashboard enables our users to quickly locate and review school information that pertains to their family. New events, notifications and notices are pushed to their dashboard to alert our users in a timely manner.

The "Events on my calendar" functionality ensures relevant events are not missed, especially by parents. They can view the event in more details and add it to their personal iCal calendar.

The dashboard offers each user choices around the types of information they receive and how they view it. For example, parents can update their preferences to receive notices that we send out regularly to their emails. They can also select the types of notices they want to receive such as general information, priority information and reminders.

From an information perspective, we have been able to achieve integration with our school management system (Synergetic) and push more of our data into the Hub. For example, the medical form is pre-populated with information pulled from Synergetic. When updated, a workflow is triggered and a notification is sent to staff for approval. Once approved, it is updated in Synergetic.

The other significant change for us is the way we are delivering school news to our community. It is now displayed on the dashboard. We easily update news several times a day and this makes it vibrant and relevant so that our users can see activities happening around the school in real-time.

THE BENEFITS

- / Single integrated platform for all our communication and information
- / Easy access to relevant and accurate information
- / Personalised dashboards
- / Reduced administration and increased user engagement

The Hub is now truly reflective of school life and has become the platform for all our communication and information. We are confident that our users can easily find the information they are looking for at any time regardless of their choice of device. We have received positive feedback regarding the improved navigation and dashboard approach. The relevancy of the Hub, in terms of content and processes, has lead to a significant increase in engagement.

We aimed to increase engagement by delivering an exceptional intranet to our users and we are proud of the results.

“The increased engagement from our community and the ease in which we now communicate is evident. Having confidence that we have one central place for all our communication and information is paramount in delivering a best practice intranet for our school.

Myfanwy Stanfield
Director of Enrolments and Community