

Brava![®] Helps South East Water Conquer Engineering Document Management Problem

Vertical Industry

- Utilities

Functional Areas

- Engineering

Company Facts

- 1.3 million people serviced
- 371 water processing stations and plants
- Over 35,000 drawings and schematics

Challenge

- System relied on PDF publishing and lacked important management and collaboration tools
- Indexing did not keep up with changes to documents

Brava Solution

- Offers robust viewing and collaboration functionality
- Provides easy access to information
- Ability to index text in documents and drawings
- Time, cost and quality improvements

Managing a large archive of engineering documents can be a challenge—particularly if the archive is like the one at South East Water, which includes more than 35,000 drawings and schematics.

Located in Melbourne, Australia, South East Water services 1.3 million people and is responsible for the development and maintenance of more than 370 water processing stations and plants. This amount of infrastructure has created a large archive of engineering drawings, electrical schematics, site surveys and building fit-outs.

Big Archive, Big Challenges

Electronic storage, indexing and maintenance of tens of thousands of engineering documents presented a number of challenges for South East Water.

One issue is that not all of South East Water's employees and consultants have access to AutoCAD or MicroStation software. This makes it difficult for users to share and collaborate on engineering designs and plans. South East Water's initial solution to this challenge was to convert drawings to PDF or TIFF. While this let users view drawings it also, unfortunately, lowered the overall fidelity of the original CAD drawings.

Additionally, even though plans could be indexed and available for search in the database, problems would arise when the information associated with a plan was expanded, enhanced or altered. Because of lagging document maintenance not all index options would be available during a search.

"The initial system was inexpensive to implement, but did not address long-term efficiencies or improve the overall quality and speed with which we could process new information," said South East Water Chief Information Officer Marcus Darbyshire. "We looked to a more flexible solution to meet requirements in a constantly changing area of our business."

Finding the Right Solution

South East Water was already using Open Text[®] Livelink[®] ECM as its corporate document management solution. Augmenting its Livelink platform, the utility company deployed Brava![®] by Informative Graphics Corp.

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(Cont.)

Brava gives South East Water the ability to standardize how engineering drawings are version-controlled, audited, viewed and indexed. Brava lets users electronically view, annotate and collaborate on virtually any file format, including MicroStation and AutoCAD drawings. This lets users easily add and share markups and annotations without installing expensive design software.

South East Water uses Brava to manage and consolidate markups from multiple reviewers, so instead of having multiple snapshots of the same plan, annotations are now accessible in a single location. This has increased South East Water's level of confidence that the most current version of a drawing is in use.

Brava also features robust indexing and searching functionality—giving users quick, easy access to critical information. Users can search for and select the file they need in Livelink, and then launch the file in Brava directly from within the Livelink interface.

In addition to being pleased with Brava's functionality, South East Water was impressed with Informative Graphics' responsiveness. "Informative Graphics provided the technical expertise and key-personnel resources to resolve any issues, and were available by phone and email, providing quick response when needed," said Darbyshire. "While there was some initial skepticism amongst key users, prototyping the solution and collecting feedback on the user experience demonstrated that Brava, in combination with Open Text, provided a more than adequate solution."

Results

Together, Livelink ECM and Brava provide an effective way for South East Water to manage, view, collaborate and search its large archive of documents and drawings.

"Time and management efficiencies are actually expected to increase over the long-term because publishing drawings to PDF or TIFF is greatly reduced or even eliminated altogether, which also eliminates the quality issues involved with the rasterizing of the original vector data," Darbyshire said.

Darbyshire said, "Strategically, when it comes to future initiatives regarding our corporate document management system and handling of multiple formats, such as TIFF, PDF and others, including markup, we will look to Brava as a preferred choice."