

Project Profile



Data Management

BlueCielo InnoCielo Meridian • Consultancy

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Streamlining CAD Services at Arqiva

The Requirement

To implement a system that would allow the CAD Services team to centralise CAD files, manage revisions intelligently and increase the availability of site information throughout the organisation.

The Solution

Excitech implemented Meridian to deliver the necessary engineering content management needed to improve quality and compliance within the CAD Services Team at Arqiva.

The Result

Arqiva's CAD Services Team is now working to the newly implemented drawing standard with revision issues being eliminated by Meridian's automated drawing workflow. All quality controlled site drawing data is now centralised by Meridian, extending the availability of information throughout the organisation to include internal teams and external stakeholders.

10 different CAD drawings for every new project and equating to an additional three hours of effort per set of drawings.”

There was a data management solution in place at Arqiva but John soon realised that the solution was not robust enough to deal with the CAD Services Team's requirements. John recalls “it essentially was no better than a digital archive. It was taking the team 10 to 15 minutes to bring AutoCAD files to their desktops.”

In parallel to the need for data management, John planned to apply new CAD standards, where a master drawing file is preserved for each site. This formalised structure would contain details of all existing and proposed equipment stored as tabs within a single file. John realised that the system would satisfy all the requirements and decided to implement Meridian in 2007 under the supervision of Excitech's Data Management Solutions (DMS) Team. Excitech's technical experts were able to carry out additional configuration to ensure that Meridian mirrored the standards and processes outlined by John. John added that “Excitech's DMS Team configured the PDF publishing tool; it allows us to make drawings more accessible than ever before and still guarantees that the drawing issued is the latest revision.”

John continued “Excitech even helped us to integrate Meridian with our site address database so this data is automatically added to the drawing block. This simple process ensures compliance of drawing standards; previously different versions of the same site name made revisions a real headache. Now, all the CAD Services team can have complete confidence in the drawing located within Meridian.”

Excitech trained John and other team members to Administrator level, allowing them to make any adjustments. John confirmed “it is a real bonus to have a system that we can maintain within the CAD Services Team, without the need for IT support”.

Arqiva now has around 400 users sharing 80 licences of Meridian; its flexibility allows them to distribute



Image courtesy of Arqiva

licences to those that need access to the vault where all data is securely stored. In fact, the viewer within Meridian allows users to open a drawing for viewing, comment or mark-up, without the need for an AutoCAD licence. John mentioned “we have significantly reduced the use of AutoCAD licences and paper distribution throughout the business; now they simply use the viewer.”

The CAD Services Team are now working to the new drawing standards and revision issues are eliminated by Meridian's automated drawing workflow. Meridian tracks the changes to the drawing, so providing a fully documented audit trail. John added “there is a real advantage for our teams, they now know exactly what previously happened on site and can be confident in the accuracy of on-site equipment.”

Furthermore, drawings can be distributed digitally using the flexible licensing or the PDF publishing tool to issue drawings to external team members. The intelligent searching tools within Meridian find files instantly by site name, drawing number or creation date saving time over the previous system.

John's quality team can now do spot audits by logging in and inspecting master files, preserving their quality standards such as ISO 9000. John concluded “we have greatly improved quality and compliance within the CAD Services Team, Meridian has supported this change and proved to be of real value to the business.”

Arqiva provides much of the infrastructure behind television, radio, satellite and wireless communications in the UK and worldwide. Their clients include major broadcasters such as the BBC, ITV, BSkyB and the independent radio groups as well as major telecoms providers including the UK's five mobile network operators and the emergency services.

Arqiva owns, manages and operates around 9,000 communications structures in the UK. Each of these sites requires a series of CAD drawings detailing the design of the structure, current equipment located on site and elevations of such equipment. John Meads, CAD Services Manager at Arqiva, is responsible for ensuring that the site drawings are accurately maintained and available to internal teams or external contractors on a daily basis.

Upon joining Arqiva in 2006, John set himself serious challenges, explaining “the biggest difficulty that we experienced was controlling drawing revisions. We were fundamentally reconstructing a jigsaw with up to

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