Case Study

RIDGE
Property and Construction Consultants

Background

Established in 1946, Ridge is a multi-disciplinary construction and property consultancy. Following consistent growth, the business now operates from eight UK offices, providing services such as quantity and building surveying, project management, architecture and legal support to a wide range of industry sectors.

Problem

Supporting collaboration between various project teams, across multiple offices, is a challenge for any organisation. Ridge was using a Windows folder structure to organise documents, with a separate server for each office. Teams were free to add their own customisations to the standard structure, which made information sharing difficult, especially where projects spanned different disciplines, departments and offices. Time was being wasted searching for documents, there were issues with version tracking and the system was vulnerable to user error. As the business grew so did these issues.

Solution

A criteria was drawn up detailing ten essential requirements for a new system, the top three being an ability to host the system internally, a function for managing incoming and outgoing project emails and a way of handling incoming data in all standard formats. With this specification of requirements Ridge was able to shortlist five potential options. One of which, Union Square for AEC Professionals, was the only system which met all of Ridge's requirements and provided extra functionality that would benefit the business.

Union Square provides a centralised approach to information management in a project-centric environment. The system is construction-specific, so it's based on a best practice approach to common industry processes, allowing businesses to operate much more efficiently.

Company
Ridge

Business
Construction Consultant

Number of staff
325

Solution
Union Square for AEC Professionals

"Union Square for AEC Professionals was the only system which met all of Ridge's requirements and provided extra functionality that would benefit the business."

UNION SQUARE
FOR AEC PROFESSIONALS

Implementation

Management at Ridge were keen to get the project moving quickly, opting for a 'big bang' approach to implementation. Such a large change programme needed careful management, so the business wanted all employees to be working towards the same goal.

Each Ridge employee received training from the Union Square team, ensuring everyone was aware of the system and its benefits. Various people were chosen as 'super users' of the system and trained to a higher level, allowing them to resolve any internal issues or queries on a day-to-day basis.

Benefits

Ridge has realised significant benefits since implementing Union Square, including:

- Effective knowledge sharing – the centralised, web-based system has allowed users to access the latest version of all data and information. This knowledge-sharing environment has brought teams and disciplines closer, promoting a truly integrated way of working.

- Time savings – comprehensive search functionality has greatly reduced the time it takes to find documents. This time can now be reinvested into more value adding work.

- Improved QA procedures – standardised data capture and document version history has increased traceability. A tab for managing the QA procedure has been built into a project record, doing away with paper processes and Excel spreadsheets, making it much easier for people to comply with.

- Flexibility – having the ability to customise the system easily, to suit the changing demands of the construction industry, has allowed Ridge to be more flexible as a business and react quickly to changes in the environment.

A Q&A with
Roger Sandell,
Partner

How have things moved on since the initial implementation?
We've implemented more of Union Square's core functionality and done more of our own development too. Realising the full potential of the system, we have requested bespoke reporting functionality, giving us a much more sophisticated view of the business and enabling quicker more informed decision making.

What challenges did you face along the way?
There was a bit of initial resistance from staff. Old ways of working stick with people and it's a challenge to get them to change. We just had to make sure they realised this way was better!

Are there any new ways of working?
The process of managing enquiries is now more streamlined. Our documents and workflows work together much more efficiently too.

What are your plans for the future of the system?
We are keen to look at adding the Project Accounting functionality that Union Square has developed. Doing so would give us a full picture of how our projects are performing and where our resources are being applied.

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Your knowledge. Together.

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