Case Study

Benoy

Background

Benoy has been providing architecture, master planning, interior design and graphic design services since 1947. The practice has grown globally over the years and now employs around 470 staff across nine offices: London, Newark, Abu Dhabi, Mumbai, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Shanghai, Beijing and Hong Kong. The practice specialises in major retail centres such as Westfield London and Ferrari World in Abu Dhabi.

Problem

With projects lasting up to five years and generating thousands of documents Benoy's plans for growth were being hindered by an ever-increasing amount of information. Staff were finding it hard to locate the documents and images they needed for projects and a vast amount of time was being spent searching. Communication between multiple offices was also an issue as new offices opened with different databases and working methods. It was clear that the practice needed a central location for all business information.

Solution

Benoy's vision was for a central information hub that could be accessed from all offices, facilitating shared knowledge and driving greater efficiency. A search of the marketplace revealed various extranets but none of these systems were developed enough to meet the practice's requirements. The business was attracted to Union Square for AEC Professionals for its specific construction industry orientation.

The system centralises project information and contact databases through a user-friendly interface, helping businesses to work collaboratively and reduce paper. The system was also able to interface with Benoy's finance system, and image library, providing increased visibility for the management team and displaying images for project teams.

Company
Benoy

Business
Architect

Number of staff
470

Solution
Union Square for AEC Professionals

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Implementation

A five-strong steering group was created to guide the implementation process over a six-month period.
Working groups dealt with specific issues such as the system's interface, image database, project information and drawing management. Internal trainers were appointed to teach others in similar roles, with admin staff training other admin staff and technicians training other technicians.

Benefits

Union Square for AEC at Benoy has:

- Standardised project administration making QA easier to deliver, follow and manage.

- Freed up time for value adding activities through the automation of mundane tasks such as email management and document control.

- Simplified and reduced the cost of project administration through establishing standard processes.

- Improved intelligence, knowledge sharing and collaboration about key clients and projects across the practice globally.

- Reduced the amount of time people spend looking for documents and more crucially emails.

- Improved collection and dissemination of financial information across the practice.

- Provided a standard way of managing emails.

The company has also reduced risk by introducing standard ways of performing key activities whilst at the same time benefiting from the efficiency gains this delivers, which has ultimately delivered more profitable projects.

A Q&A with
Mike Hassnip,
Director

How have things moved on since the initial Union Square implementation?
To reinforce uptake in our foreign offices we are in the process of re-launching our homepage to encourage increased usage of the system. We've also introduced the Drawing Management functionality as an additional module.

Are there any new ways of working?
The biggest change is to our email filing; we used to have several folders but now there is just email in and email out. The industry has shifted away from paper to digital and Union Square facilitates this.

Did you face any challenges along the way?
We had speed problems in our Eastern offices due to the infrastructure at these locations, which has now improved.

What made you choose Union Square over other products in the marketplace?
Other systems in the marketplace were not developed enough to meet our needs whereas Union Square was orientated towards the construction industry.

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