Case Study

NICHOLAS O'DWYER

Background

Nicholas O'Dwyer Consulting Engineers has over 80 years experience in the industry. With offices in Dublin, Newry, Sligo and Limerick the practice works across Ireland in both the public and private sectors. Projects span across water, environmental, civil and structural engineering fields, and range in construction value from €1million to in excess of €80 million.

Problem

Although data was stored on a networked system, finding the latest version of a document was proving a challenge due to various naming conventions across the business. Email related to a project was not stored centrally but was kept by the recipient. This resulted in difficulties in finding email files and led to multiple copies of an email being forwarded to different staff members working on the same project. These inefficiencies prompted the practice to search for a solution.

Solution

After investigating what the information management market had to offer, Nicholas O'Dwyer found that Union Square for AEC Professionals was the only solution that could meet all of its requirements.

Union Square could easily address Nicolas O'Dwyer's initial requirement which was to centralise data and give better visibility of project information across the business. The browser-based system stores all information centrally and integrates with other applications, such as Outlook and Word, giving users seamless access to the documents, drawings and information they need. The system's email management functionality integrates emails with contact data, making searching quick and easy.

Company
Nicholas O'Dwyer

Business
Consulting Engineer

Number of staff
70

Solution
Union Square for AEC Professionals

"Finding the latest version of a document was proving a challenge due to various naming conventions across the business."

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Nicholas O'Dwyer quickly realised it could extend the system's functionality to streamline other business processes by bolting on the relevant operational modules. For example, the Project Accounting module captures all fees, invoices, time, expenses and disbursements alongside forecast and budget information to give clear visibility of how individual projects are performing.

Implementation

The company chose a stepped approach to implementation where only new projects were set up on the system, giving staff a gradual introduction over several months. As legacy documents were unlikely to be accessed again, only key information was entered into Union Square with a link to the old location. A combination of formal training sessions and the appointment of 'champion' users in each department ensured all staff were up to speed and could ask questions as and when they needed to.

Once the Dublin office was live the system was rolled out to the practice's three other sites, linking everyone to the same centralised database.

Benefits

Nicholas O'Dwyer has realised multiple benefits since implementing the Union Square system, namely:

- **Increased visibility of a project's financial performance** – with integrated processes saving finance staff valuable time which was previously spent rekeying data and collating multiple spreadsheets.

- **Improved efficiency through document management** – emails, documents and drawings are more accessible and controllable, saving time and confusion when trying to retrieve and work with project information.

- **Greater consistency and improvement in quality** – across all projects, processes and offices with a centralised and standard best practice approach to project administration.

A Q&A with
Richard Crowe,
Managing Director

Has Union Square helped business growth or added value?
It's added a lot of value in terms of operational efficiency. We've used the system for over nine years now and it's embedded in our business processes, saving us time on a daily basis.

How have things moved on since the initial implementation?
We introduced the facility to manage drawings a few years back. We've now started using the product for project cost control and are in the process of rolling that out across all our offices.

Are there any new processes in place?
Not as such. The system has fitted around the way we worked, which was part of the appeal, and is now an integral part of Nicholas O'Dwyer. We are just more efficient than we used to be.

What made you choose Union Square over other products in the marketplace?
There wasn't really anything else in the market that could provide us with the benefits that Union Square was offering. One of the most appealing features was the system's ability to integrate a wide range of data including email.

"With Union Square, project information is linked to clients, allowing a complete view of related documentation."

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