BIW technologies

CASE STUDY

Supporting Manchester Airport's transport hub

BIW Information Channel was used to collate and manage all the design and construction information for the complex, high profile £60m Ground Transport Interchange at Manchester Airport. The head of development at Manchester Airport plc chose the BIW system for its first "e-project" because he felt its use would facilitate speedy decision-making by reducing bureacracy; attract good people; and promote openness and thus engender trust.

Key benefits

- **Improved team integration through a secure, single, shared source of the latest documents, drawings and other information**
- **More transparency and better accountability by provision of a full audit trail detailing who accessed what information and when**
- **Cost and time savings in printing, copying, distribution, storage and retrieval of information**
- **Replacement of large paper-based archive of as-built information with easily searchable electronic record for operation and maintenance requirements**
- **Lessons learned have been captured electronically and can more easily be carried forward to future projects**

Background

Manchester Airport plc in partnership with Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive and Railtrack commissioned the design and build of a state-of-the-art multi-modal transport interchange to facilitate projected growth of public transport user trips to the airport from current 1.7 million a year to around 6 million by 2005. The project was also part funded by UK Government and the European Union.

Construction started in early 2001, with completion due in 2003. The ground transport interchange (GTI) project was to be delivered as a design-and-build scheme by contractor Skanska (formerly Kvaerner Construction), whose team included Jefferson Sheard, Scott Wilson Kirkpatrick and Silcock Dawson. The client team's leader was Mott MacDonald, and its team included Abbey Holford Rowe, Hoare Lea & Partners, Citex, Vector/W S Atkins and Axis.

International management and construction consultancy Gleeds had previously worked for Manchester Airport on several major projects, and had experience of using project collaboration technology elsewhere. As a result, the client's then head of development chose the BIW system to support delivery of the GTI.

"This is a complex and high profile scheme," commented Andrew Campbell at the outset. "With so many different consultants and other professionals involved, it is vital that we have an efficient information management regime. BIW Information Channel will help to foster the commitment, collaboration and teamwork we need to deliver the project on time." Gleeds was appointed the project information co-ordinator.

The approach

Gleeds supported both the contractor and client teams in using BIW Information Channel to collate, manage and distribute all the technical information associated with the GTI project.

BIW Information Channel is a supply chain integration tool. It provides a secure project-specific website based around a knowledge database. Every team member uses the website for creating and sharing all project data - including drawings, photographs and even virtual reality renditions as well as every type of words-based document - via the internet.

Andrew Campbell, then head of development at Manchester Airport, chose BIW Information Channel for the first "e-project" there because he and his team foresaw eight key areas of benefit. Use of the Channel would facilitate speedy decision-making by reducing bureacracy; attract good people; cause openness and thus engender trust.

The Channel would, they believed, promote collaboration between teams and companies - and discipline, through protocols and standards. It would assist good communications, and enable content management skills to be focused where essential. It would also improve knowledge management. Clients employ BIW Information Channel to capture all the technical information and knowledge associated with the creation of an asset. They then use it further - in operating and maintaining the facility more efficiently, and in promoting continuous improvement in any later projects.

By the time the project was nearing completion in mid-2003, the Channel created for the GTI project had been populated with over 14,000 documents and 5,000 drawings. Some XX users from nearly 30 different companies had access to the system, and they had, in total, logged-on to the Channel over 23,000 times.

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