

case study



CLIENT:

Dublin City Council

BENEFITS:

- All forms of documentation throughout the technical departments are managed by CAB-i-NET.
- CAB-i-NET has enabled the linking of existing GIS systems to provide powerful searching and presentation of all data.

KEY QUOTES:

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“The problems within the departments using CAD systems were the same as those of any large organisation faced with managing the creation and distribution of project documents.”

tsaADVET CAB-i-NET was originally implemented within Dublin City Council specifically to address CAD drawing management issues; but the system has proven so intuitive to use that it is becoming the de facto standard for the management of CAD and supporting project documents



Dublin City Council is among the largest employers in the Republic of Ireland, with over 6,500 staff and an annual budget approaching 2 billion Euros. With over 500 distinct business functions, the Council has to manage many extremely complex systems and processes in order to continue to deliver cost-effective services to the population of the city and surrounding areas.

In the face of ever-increasing legislative and regulatory requirements, managing documents and information across any large local authority is a major issue. Up-to-date information from all kinds of sources needs to be made available not just internally across departments, but also increasingly to the general public. Dublin City Council is responsible for major engineering concerns such as city roads and water supply infrastructure, so has a very large and diverse user base of CAD systems. Every department had its own standards and processes in place, from design templates to publishing systems and archiving and retrieval. With the Council sometimes required to take part in legal proceedings, it is crucial for them to be able to demonstrate due diligence with regards to all aspects of document management.

The Council’s City Architects had an established CAD project management solution originally supplied by Dublin software company IMGS. As the Irish distributor for tsaADVET systems, IMGS specialises in integrating mapping (GIS), asset and document

management solutions. Ciaran Kirk of IMGS describes the situation at that time: “This initial basic solution gave some control over what projects were in progress, but wasn’t able to offer any overall control over documents related to those projects. As existing users of Falcon, tsaADVET’s original document management software, the Council recognised that CAB-i-NET, its successor, offered a potential way forward for more effectively managing all forms of documentation throughout the technical departments.” The intention was to implement one integrated solution that would address the Council’s three main areas of concern: efficient administration and management of project documents; standardised systems for drawing production and management; and easy access to project documents.

“The problems within the departments using CAD systems were the same as those of any large organisation faced with managing the creation and distribution of project documents” continues Kirk. “We commonly see inconsistencies in filing, drawing styles, revision control systems, numbering and file-naming methodologies in the organisations we work with.”

This scenario can lead to deeper information management problems: For example re-use of information can be almost impossible as people simply cannot find work that others have done. Dublin City Council’s approach to this problem was to first agree an overall corporate CAD

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Standard with enough flexibility to accommodate the requirements of each department. They then used CAB-i-NET to apply this standard by use of templates, structured file naming and file storage.

The next stage was to manage not only drawings, but also related documentation such as mail and standard office documents. Incoming post and faxes are now scanned and email is integrated into the document management workflow. Existing GIS systems already in place are utilised to provide the capability to conduct special queries in the metropolitan area and return information on project documents stored in CAB-i-NET. This allows senior management to get instant management information via the GIS system interface – by simply clicking on the relevant part of a map, they can see an update on the projects in progress at that point, supplied via the CAB-i-NET back end. This allows project managers to see at the touch of a button not just GIS information, but also related data such as aerial photography, planning documents and correspondence, and even utility supply data for any given location. “It was crucial that the folder structures and filing standards were set up to be as intuitive and straightforward as possible from day one,” comments Kirk,



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Currently, every hard copy document that comes into the City Architect’s division by mail is scanned by an administrator, whereupon it is



passed to the relevant team member with a request for action: if it is junk, it can be instantly deleted, otherwise it is filed in the relevant project folder where it can be easily found and accessed by any appropriate team members. Individual departments can easily set up their own standard searches to make it easy for them to always find any and all documents related to their own workloads. Meanwhile other Council divisions continue to recognise CAB-i-NET as a very effective model for their own document management aspirations, with new users being added almost daily. Future plans include greater use of emerging web technologies to facilitate remote working by both Council staff and external contractors, as well as continuing the wider roll-out of CAB-i-NET throughout other departments and functions.

“The term ‘paperless office’ has been used for the last ten or fifteen years without any real meaning,” enthuses Kirk, “But in Dublin City Council it is rapidly becoming a reality. And because of the intuitive interface, they are finding – in the City Architects and across other departments – that they are using the CAB-i-NET system for all sorts of non-CAD documents as well. Because of the easy-to-use search and other utilities, it has been rapidly adopted by administrative staff and knowledge workers as their standard document management tool.”



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