Case Study:

Pascall+Watson: Online Access to Technical Building Documents

Pascall+Watson: Online Technical Documentation

As the biggest airport terminal designer in the United Kingdom, this premier architectural firm has enabled all of its employees to easily find and view UK building standards documents online -- anytime, anywhere. The staff can be confident documents are current and saves time previously spent maintaining or searching for hardcopies

Challenge
Develop an online system that provides up-to-date building standards and guidance documents

Solution
Accuris Product Design with The Construction Information Service

Results
• Allows employees to easily find and view UK building standards and guidance documents
• Provides anytime, anywhere access to necessary documents, even when out of the office and at a project site
Eliminates time spent managing and maintaining a library of hard copy documents
• Ensures users are always working with current documents
• Provides personalized, user-specific interface
• Provides access to other documents that are important to architects, such as online versions of Architects Journal, New Civil Engineer, Construction News and Specify-it (a collection of construction catalogues, equipment information and CAD drawings)

Streamlining Access and Information

For over 50 years, Pascall+Watson Architects Ltd. have focused on designing transportation related buildings. With offices in three countries, Pascall+Watson are considered to be the biggest airport terminal design firm in the UK and one of the largest in Europe. They also have designed university buildings, offices, hotels, industrial parks, museums and residences.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Like all architectural firms working on projects in the UK, Pascall+Watson need access to current building standards and guidance documents. So for years, they did what most other UK architecture firms did and kept a library of the necessary documents at its offices. But hard copy libraries take time to maintain and manage. Someone has to make sure the documents are always up to date and has to continually find and acquire the necessary documents.

In the early 2000s, Pascall+Watson began investigating another option: online subscription services. An online subscription lets users access documents directly from their desktops, rather than rely on hard copies. Plus, an onlines ubscription service shifts the responsibility for managing and maintaining the document library from the user to the service provider. There were two options available to the firm: The Construction Information Service and a competitor's subscription service. Before long, Pascall+Watson chose The Construction Information Service.

"At the end of the day, we found The Construction Information Service easier to work with," said Michael Haste, an architect and a Pascall+Watson director. "The other system was somewhat limited."

With The Construction Information Service, members of the Pascall+Watson UK office now have immediate access to full-text copies of current building regulations, standards and technical advice, including Eurocodes, National Annexes and Non- contradictory Complementary Information materials. Developed and managed by Accuris and the National Building Specification (NBS), The Construction Information Service offers approximately 30,000 technical documents associated with building, engineering, design and construction processes. The library of online documents is kept up-to-date by a team of NBS editors.

All technical staff members at Pascall+Watson rely on The Construction Information Service to access construction-related regulations and technical

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information. It's also handy for employees working on site at a project. Rather than bringing along hard copies of documents they think they might need, The Construction Information Service lets them look up information as they need it, no matter where they may be located.

The Construction Information Service also provides access to other documents that are important to Pascall+Watson architects, such as the online versions of Architects Journal, New Civil Engineer and Construction News. Through The Construction Information Service, they can also access Specify-it, a collection of construction catalogues, equipment information and CAD drawings.

Another benefit of The Construction Information Service is how easy it is for users to find the information they're looking for. Pascall+Watson employees not only can quickly find the publications or text they need, but also can save their favorite searches and articles in a personalized, user-specific interface.

Pascall+Watson also has an office in Abu Dhabi. Even though workers there don't usually need to view British and European technical building documents, they do need access to other building standards. They use another Accuris product to accomplish this: Accuris Standards Expert™. With Accuris Standards Expert, they can view and search full-text versions of all the technical standards and specifications they subscribe to through Accuris. As their UK-based counterparts have found with The Construction Information Service, the Pascall+Watson Abu Dhabi employees no longer have to rely on hard copies of technical building standards and guidance documents; instead, they can quickly find the materials they need through their computers.

It's been several years since Pascall+Watson had to decide on which online construction document subscription service was the right choice for them. But now after working with The Construction Information Service, Haste said, "it's become obvious that we've made the right decision."

Design with confidence.