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Degenkolb Engineers

Autodesk Buzzsaw Used for Fast and Dependable Communication

Degenkolb Engineers—a leader in the field of seismic engineering with offices throughout the West Coast—worked on a major renovation for San Diego State University. With close communication between architect and engineers so essential to the coordination of design and structural changes, Degenkolb and the architect began using e-mail to exchange project drawings. But frequent e-mail problems led to delays in the project. Degenkolb, already familiar with the online collaboration applications offered by Autodesk® Buzzsaw™, set up an Autodesk Buzzsaw site, and within half an hour communication problems were a thing of the past.



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Chris Smith,
Principal,
Degenkolb Engineers, Inc.

The Situation

Established in 1940, Degenkolb Engineers serves a wide range of clients and has extensive experience providing services to universities and clients in the health care sector. One of the primary functions at Degenkolb includes ensuring that buildings can withstand seismic events. As Chris Smith, Principal and Project Manager with Degenkolb, points out, "When any major building renovation project begins, seismic enhancements are often part of that project so that the life of the building may be extended, with the long-term return of the initial investment ensured." For example, when San Diego State University undertook a major renovation of its chemistry and geology building, the architect on the project turned to Degenkolb to ensure that the latest seismic enhancements were included in the design and construction.

The Challenge

The San Diego State University Chemistry/ Geology (SDSUCG) building project was being managed in Degenkolb's Los Angeles office, where Smith is located, and the core engineering staff and the architect worked in San Diego. Degenkolb and the architect initially turned to e-mail as a means of trading project drawings, but exchanging critical documents proved problematic. "We experienced trouble getting the drawings from the architect into our project files," Smith says, "and, given that the e-mail problem stretched out over several days, it had the potential to cause real delays."

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The Solution

Degenkolb Engineers has a history of using Autodesk Buzzsaw, and Smith felt that doing so in this case could resolve the problems they were experiencing on the SDSUCG project. "After our initial frustrations working via e-mail, we set up an Autodesk Buzzsaw site to allow us to exchange documents. Within half an hour, we had received files from the architect, and he had received files from us," says Smith. Degenkolb and the architect now use Autodesk Buzzsaw to transfer all documents related to the SDSUCG project. They also use the application's automatic e-mail notifications to inform all team members when new files are posted. The Degenkolb team members, no matter where they're located, then retrieve the files through the Autodesk Buzzsaw site and do their work using up-to-the-minute project information.

The Result: Frictionless Communication and Rapid Progress

"Autodesk Buzzsaw is a very elegant information exchange vehicle," Smith says. "It allowed us to communicate with the architect and deliver him our work more quickly—plus it completely eliminated the frustration and downtime we experienced with e-mail. It also enhanced the levels of trust and confidence between architect and our team by helping to ensure that everyone was on the same page and had the latest information. When you put all these factors together, it has resulted in allowing the project to progress more swiftly."

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