

# Engineers Maintain High Accountability On Fast-Turnaround Projects



Mercy Housing Lakefront Near North Apartments, Chicago, Illinois

## ESD slashes delays by streamlining project information management.

Industry surveys consistently rank Environmental Systems Design among the world's leading engineering companies. One key to the company's success has been its ability to meet client needs quickly.

To find more time for engineering, collaboration and client service, Vice President of Information Technology Mark Andersen sought ways to reduce engineers' administrative burdens. Andersen is an architect by training. His experience working on projects has given him insights into production processes.

"I'm able to see the impediments that IT can place on the smooth operation of the business," Andersen says.

For example, Andersen says it hampers productivity for project files to be scattered across ESD's servers, not to mention having email on a server separate from related project documents. He compiled a list of other goals, and looked for solutions.

Then he found Newforma® Project Center software for project information management.

"The top goals I had set were solved by Newforma Project Center," Mark said.



Chicago-based Environmental Systems Design, Inc., pursues a mission of improving society through the built environment. With a focus on innovation, collaboration and specialized knowledge, ESD strives to improve society by creating designs that not only meet client needs, but provide a safe place to inspire, create and evolve.

## OBJECTIVES

- Cut response times.
- Make project information easily accessible.
- Increase team member accountability.
- Promote team collaboration and integration.

## RESULTS

- Finding emails now takes seconds, not hours.
- All project files are easily accessible.
- Large files are easy to share, with automatic audit trails of who downloaded what, when.
- Project managers save hours each week managing action items.
- Submittal and RFI turnarounds are consistently on schedule, without missed items.



Vice President of IT  
Mark Andersen



Air handling system, high-density computing office, Chicago, Illinois

## Giving everyone in the organization the power to impress

ESD's Tenant Xpress Team is one illustration of the firm's fast, efficient project delivery.

"A project that may take another firm two weeks to do, our team turns around in a week," says Vice President Tony Garcia.

The Tenant Xpress Team serves commercial building tenants who are setting up shop, relocating or renovating. The faster the turnaround, the sooner they're back in business.

"We needed a program that allowed us to search quickly, get the information, get it onto the drawings and get it out of here," Tony says. "When I saw Newforma Project Center, I thought, 'This is what we've been looking for.'"

## Easy file sharing with accountability

"Accountability is key in our business," Tony Garcia says. "People will say, 'I never got the drawings.' With Newforma I can say, 'Yeah, you did. Here's the information we have.' People look at our documentation and say, 'You're right.'"

Mark Andersen describes the Newforma function for web-based file sharing: "You tell it what files you want and what level of security to give it. And boom! It's gone. You don't even think about it again until it reminds you by sending you an email saying everybody's downloaded the file, or so-and-so hasn't downloaded it and it's been seven days. That's the beauty of it: You can track who's downloaded it and who hasn't."

## Finding emails: minutes instead of hours

Associate Scott Stokes describes a time when he had to pick a dozen emails out of a thousand accumulated in the course of a project. He used Newforma's Search functionality to find which archived emails contained the search terms. "I was done in minutes," he says.

## "It's up there with AutoCAD, with Microsoft..."

What's described above are just a few of the functions enabling ESD engineers to reduce time spent on administration and increase time spent engineering solutions and serving clients.

"It solves so many of my operational issues and reduce the effort I need to put into bonehead things," Andersen says. "I told the management team, 'It's up there with AutoCAD, up there with Microsoft® products. We're going to use this every day.'"

As it's shaping up, Andersen's prediction is proving true.

"It solves operational issues and reduces the effort I need to put into bonehead things."



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