Working Together to Improve Collaboration: The Bentley-Microsoft Partnership

ProjectWise integration of Microsoft SharePoint Products and Technologies turns browser interfaces into AEC project desktops

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Summary: Bentley and Microsoft share a common belief that substantial innovation can be achieved through better collaboration and development using open standards. As such, since the early 1990s the two companies have exploited several opportunities to work together toward achieving more for the benefit of AEC professionals. In 1993, for example, Microsoft launched Windows NT with a public demonstration of MicroStation V5, the first application developed for the new platform.

Recently the two companies have worked together to deliver significant innovation in how technology supports collaboration in AEC/O. Specifically, the integration of ProjectWise and Microsoft Office SharePoint enables professionals to collaborate with ease. With SharePoint integration, AEC/O consumers can connect seamlessly through the SharePoint Server 2003 environment to "drill down" inside CAD files and find the mission-critical information necessary for efficient and effective project management.

Having mastered this integration between ProjectWise and SharePoint, Bentley is the first AEC/O software developer to integrate SharePoint Products and Technologies directly with MicroStation and AutoCAD's compound document environments including full reference file handling. Now anyone, not just authors of AEC/O information, can search through CAD models and drawings and find the information they need, hence the time consuming and expensive irritation of long and unproductive searching is removed.

Thanks to the Bentley and Microsoft partnership, when you deploy ProjectWise and Sharepoint, projects are made simple.

www.bentley.com/projectwise-sharepoint

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Successful AEC/O projects involve collaboration through communication at every level. As an AEC project participant, you are no stranger to partnering with other designers and contractors to deliver the best product possible. Many of your partners contribute to – and complement – the services you offer by collaborating with you. Software development is no different, and software vendors collaborate in much the same way.

Bentley and Microsoft share a common belief that substantial innovation can be achieved through better collaboration and development using open standards. In 2004, Bentley and Microsoft announced an exciting new development partnership. At BE Conference in Orlando, Microsoft VP Chris Capossela unveiled plans to help Bentley make the most of the .NET development platform in MicroStation® and ProjectWise®`.

"You can achieve superior document management and workflow at the AEC level and the enterprise level."

– Chris Capossela
Microsoft

Chris Capossela
Corporate Vice President, Information Worker
Product Management Group, Microsoft
Download the video now. (21mb)

ProjectWise is able to look inside DGN and DWG CAD files to index the text and catalog components contained within them.

Such collaboration between Bentley and Microsoft dates back more than a decade. Indeed, in 1993 when Bill Gates took the wraps off Windows NT with its 32-bit operating system at a launch event, Microsoft demonstrated the power of the NT platform by showcasing the first application ever developed specifically for NT. That application was MicroStation V5, Bentley's flagship desktop software.

Look deeper

Microsoft and Bentley not only share a common passion for innovation, both companies share a history of delivering tangible and measurable benefits through the software they develop.

Bentley and Microsoft continue to develop and integrate technology that addresses the global AEC/O market for engineering authors and professionals across the enterprise who

consume the engineering information created. The most recent technological development collaboration has resulted in the integration of ProjectWise and Microsoft Office SharePoint Services and Portals Server 2003, the result of two years of research and development.

ProjectWise is able to look inside DGN and DWG CAD files to index the text and catalog components contained within them. By integrating ProjectWise with SharePoint, Bentley has taken the AEC project environment, extended it, connected it into the main business IT arena. In fact, thanks to the elegance of the SharePoint interface and the flexibility in which SharePoint Web parts can be selected, positioned, and accessed by users, a browser interface is all that is required to launch your own AEC/O project desktop that is integrated with all other enterprise IT systems on your corporate extranet – placing what matters most to you, in front of you, 24/7/365.

Ultimately, ProjectWise enables any user to search for and – most importantly – find information without the usual anxiety and disappointment associated with traditional non-managed environments. Remember that one only searches to satisfy a need to find. Searching without finding is like traveling without arriving. It is time consuming and pointless, particularly when you have a destination or a document in mind.

- With files and projects managed in ProjectWise, this time consuming and expensive irritation of long and unproductive searching is removed.

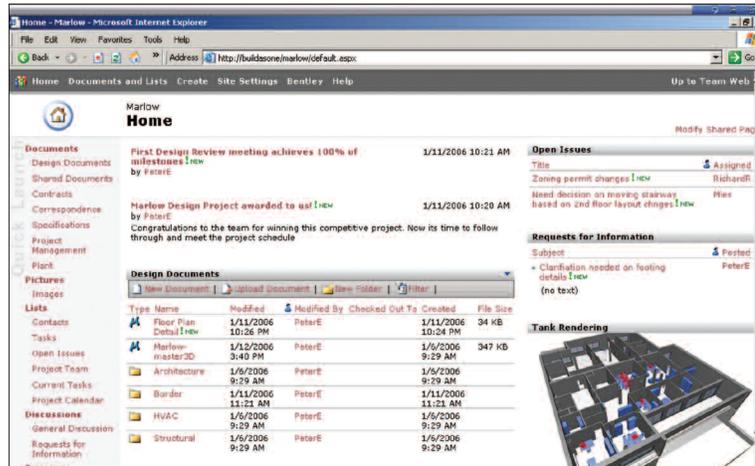- With ProjectWise, projects are made simple for architects and engineers.

The merits of teamwork

When you think about it, the roots of these advances in collaboration stem from what has long motivated both companies. Bentley's innovation in AEC and Microsoft's innovation at the desktop make possible this technology partnership, designed to deliver excellent AEC/O collaboration on the desktop for the entire enterprise.

This separates ProjectWise from all competing data management systems within the AEC/O industry. By taking advantage of the indexed CAD files and their AEC content achieved with Bentley, Microsoft's desktop applications are optimized for use in AEC/O. Working together the two companies achieve more for the benefit of architects and engineers.

Microsoft and Bentley not only share a common passion for innovation, both companies share a history of delivering tangible and measurable benefits through the software they develop.

"With a standardized web services model, AEC organizations can minimize your IT support and software costs and maximize your ability to connect and collaborate."

– Chris Capossela
Microsoft

Demonstration of SharePoint integration
Download the demonstration now. (15mb)

In this way, ProjectWise resides on the Microsoft Windows Server platform where it success-fully integrates with the world's two favorite CAD platforms – MicroStation and AutoCAD – as well as integrating with all leading Microsoft Office applications to organize, manage, and index files for safe storage and fast finding.

Closing the gap on shared information

Having mastered this integration between ProjectWise and SharePoint, Bentley has gone on to be the first AEC/O software developer to integrate SharePoint directly with the MicroStation and AutoCAD environments. The ensuing product – ProjectWise StartPoint– empowers anyone, not just authors, to access CAD models and drawings and mission-critical information.

With ProjectWise StartPoint , Bentley has enabled MicroStation and AutoCAD to locate and connect seamlessly with the SharePoint environment and to drill down into DGN and DWG CAD reference files for efficient and effective project management. The net result is direct and seamless Microsoft Office SharePoint integration with CAD files, complete with full com-pound and reference
file-management capabilities.

This innovative technology exploits the Windows Server 2003 and SharePoint Products and Technologies already in place at many corporate networks. This SharePoint integration unlocks latent functionality already present in Microsoft Windows Server 2003 technology to leverage active Windows SharePoint Services sites in organizations. In this way, ProjectWise StartPoint closes the gap between engineering and design departments and other operational units of organizations.

Thanks to the ProjectWise and SharePoint integration, everyone in an organization is now able to search for and find AEC project data with ease. With ProjectWise, StartPoint, and SharePoint, projects are truly made simple for every team member.

> *With ProjectWise StartPoint, projects are truly made simple for EVERY team member.*