

## 12d Synergises land development and engineering consultancy

Land development and engineering consultancy, GPR Consulting, has mobilised and empowered its workforce by migrating project data to the 12d Synergy software platform. This gives employees real-time access to critical project files anytime, anywhere, and enables team collaboration.

12d Synergy is a project collaboration and data management system by Australian architecture, engineering and construction (AEC) software developer, 12d Solutions. The specialist software solves problems around document management and transmittals, task allocation, email correspondence, and importantly, management of data created using geospatial data design platforms such as 12d Model.

With a small team of six – comprising design engineers, drafts people and project engineers – GPR has operated a “high attentive” and quality services model to differentiate itself from much larger companies. Since it was established in 2009, GPR’s directors have complemented the standard of its land development and engineering services with close relationships with clients to maximise ongoing value through project lifetimes. Despite the quality of its services, GPR was constrained by a reliance on manual processes to track documentation and manage workflow which reduced the productivity of its employees, particularly when working away from the office.

“As a relatively small operation it comes down to finding new and improved ways to deliver the best possible outcomes for our clients,” said Geoff Pratt, Design Manager, GPR Consulting. “That not only means better design, but being quick to respond to and deliver on customer requests.

“We did that by becoming more agile and proactive. However it was nearly impossible to access project data while away from the office. If I was at home, I’d have to use a virtual private network (VPN) and that was too slow to be useful.”

Due to the large amounts of data GPR uses – often in excess of two gigabytes per project – the VPN resulted in a poor response rate. Even a 10MB file would take several minutes to open, and then that much again to save.

“I tried to get around that the old fashioned way by copying projects onto my hard drive each day before I went home, working on them while at home, and then copying them back onto the server the next day,” said Pratt. “That took up one hour per day, so it became less and less viable as our business grew. Another drawback was that I couldn’t easily ensure that the data on my hard drive was in synch with everyone else’s in the office.”

With 12d Synergy, data and documents are cached on the local computer when first accessed. If there are no interim changes, 12d Synergy will work off the local copy of the data on the computer without having to download it again from the server; working off a local copy is faster and reduces the traffic between the computer and the server, resulting in a better user experience. 12d Synergy also ensures that users will always be working off the latest data.



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In addition to enabling remote access capabilities, GPR is leveraging 12d Synergy's revision and version control to create project and data audit trails; GPR is now able to quickly make "what-if" changes and rewind these on demand without impacting project delivery timelines.

Also, thanks to integration with Microsoft Office and Outlook, GPR's workforce is able to collaborate more effectively.

"Communication is key in managing projects," said Pratt. "We wanted everyone to be aware of client instructions, design changes and project status with easy access to all correspondence relating to the project."

With 12d Synergy, all email correspondence, task allocation and job lists are contained in a central repository, granting staff granular visibility on the status of all projects. GPR management is able to determine who can access and edit data to ensure confidentiality and integrity of projects.

"GPR has made major leaps in adapting and evolving its workforce since implementing 12d Synergy," said Joel Gregory, General Manager, 12d Solutions. "Although it is a small company, GPR is competing with the industry giants by using a data management platform to enable its employees to work efficiently regardless of their location. This means client projects and unexpected requests can be addressed quickly without jeopardising quality."

12d Synergy is also providing GPR with its renowned and locally-based support to advise on best practice and offer new ideas to optimise the consultancy's use of the software.



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