

MidCoast Water

Customer Success Story

Autodesk® Topobase™
Autodesk Consulting

Autodesk Consulting took the time to sit down with us on-site, in order to understand what we do here, what we needed, and why. Thanks to their efforts, things have turned out exactly as people wanted.

—Neil Hanington
General Manager
MidCoast Water

Water, water, everywhere.

Australia's MidCoast Water improves efficiency with help from Autodesk Consulting.



Image courtesy of MidCoast Water.

Project Summary

Based on the north coast of New South Wales, Australia, MidCoast Water (MCW) has been providing water and sewage services to the Manning and Great Lakes communities since 1997, when three separate water and sewage authorities merged into one. Since then, MCW has had the daunting task of sustainably supplying some 35,000 households spread over 7,000 square kilometers with 11 billion liters of water each year.

Providing safe, high-quality drinking water and managing waste treatment on such a scale leaves little room for error or inefficiency, and MCW relies on the readily accessible information provided through geographical information systems (GIS) to run its day-to-day business. When the company decided to upgrade to Autodesk® Topobase™ infrastructure model management software, getting it up and running quickly was the first order of business. Autodesk Consulting was there to help.

The Challenge

When the MCW GIS team attended a conference in 2008, they already knew they needed to upgrade their GIS system and procedures. Different departments were using different spatial management processes and technologies, and

workflow across the company had become less than smooth.

“We simply weren’t able to do what we wanted and needed to do,” says MidCoast Water’s General Manager Neil Hanington. “The data model we worked with in our previous system was far too simplistic, with attributes and geometries all stored in the same tables. When we decided to upgrade to Topobase, we knew we had a much more complex and robust system, but we also knew it would take some time to figure out how to use it to full advantage.”

To ease the transition, MCW decided to gradually integrate Topobase over six months, running the new software side by side with its basic, but comfortably familiar system.

“It took some time to properly integrate Topobase into our environment and to get it working the way we wanted,” says Hanington. “Our GIS is used by upwards of 120 people and, in a busy environment like ours, people can be nervous about changes in workflow. Fortunately, we were in daily contact with Autodesk Consulting right from the start.”

Autodesk®

With help from Autodesk Consulting, MidCoast Water tailored Autodesk Topobase to fit the needs of its business.

The Solution

Those first six months proved fruitful for MCW. With help from Autodesk Consulting, the MidCoast Water team tailored Autodesk Topobase to fit the needs of its business.

“There was a lot of improvement in efficiency as soon as we started using Topobase,” says Hanington. “We began by significantly improving the drainage diagram component of our process. We supply a plan of the property, including the building footprint and how it connects to the sewer. What was once an A4 linen plan has been upgraded to an A4 CAD plan, but we were interested in exploiting all the capabilities directly from the GIS itself. With help from Autodesk Consulting, we were soon able to use Topobase to export not just a simple screenshot of internal drainage and facility infrastructure, but also pull all the data associated with it.”

The development has been a success, according to the GIS team, and went a long way to convincing MCW’s more sceptical employees that Topobase was the way to go.

Subsequent developments included instituting an active directory that enables MCW employees to simply click an Accept button to use the GIS, avoiding more cumbersome use of separate usernames and passwords. All users are then managed through TBAAdmin, enabling busy MCW employees to more smoothly access multiple groups according to their documented levels of access and permission.

“We’ve made some great steps forward, but we’re not trying to reinvent the wheel,” says Hanington. “Mostly, we are working off of the core functionality already available in Topobase. For instance, we’ve added a selection of parcels in a network trace that helps us to trace any water in any network.

We can now highlight adversely affected parcels and use a simple mail merge to send messages to the people affected. Everything is working so well. We’ve got a much better solution, and support from people we trust. From the start, Autodesk Consulting took the time to sit down with us on-site, in order to understand what we do here, what we needed, and why. Thanks to their efforts, things have turned out exactly as people wanted.”

The Result

With Topobase now having joined AutoCAD LT® and AutoCAD® Civil 3D® software in MCW’s toolset, MidCoast Water’s General Manager Neil Hanington sees a bright future for the company and for its relationship with Autodesk Consulting.

“The relationship with Autodesk Consulting couldn’t be stronger,” says Hanington. “Autodesk Consulting is always up-front, honest, and ready to find solutions. That certainly reduces the stress levels involved in this sort of transition. Things are going really well now because we have a solution that helps us to accomplish what we need and want to do. I see MCW remaining with Autodesk Consulting and software for many years to come.”

To learn more about Autodesk Consulting, visit, www.autodesk.com/consulting.



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