

Sacramento County Airport System

Customer Success Story

AutoCAD® 2006



"In the last year, AutoCAD has helped us to complete our tenant lease plan processes 25 percent faster, which saved us an entire week. ... We are already looking forward to the next release of AutoCAD and how much more time it may save us."

Donald Wilson,
Principal Engineering Technician,
The Sacramento County Airport System

Productivity Takes Off

The Sacramento County Airport System depends on AutoCAD to save time on crucial design and facilities management processes

Project Summary

The Sacramento County Airport System (SCAS) operates four airports in the Sacramento area: Mather Airport, Executive Airport, Franklin Field, and Sacramento International Airport. As one of the fastest growing airports in the United States, Sacramento International keeps SCAS planning, development, and facilities staff busy with constant building and facilities improvement projects. SCAS' small design staff is constantly juggling those projects with routine undertakings. Fortunately, each new release of AutoCAD helps them stretch their time further. With AutoCAD, SCAS has been able to:

- Complete tenant leasing plans 25 percent faster
- Save \$1.2 million in land-use mitigation costs for a single project
- Create detailed and easy-to-read terminal maps
- Make facilities information available to non-CAD users
- Generate pre-formatted unit-size measurements

The Challenge

Too Little Time

Once primarily an agricultural area, Sacramento County and the surrounding Central Valley of California have seen a boom in population over the last decade. Sacramento International Airport, the area's airport of choice, has enjoyed equally strong growth in the number of passengers served. As traffic has grown, so has the airport's need for waiting areas, parking, and retail infrastructure.

SCAS's planning, development, and facilities department is responsible for ensuring the airport's facilities keep pace with growth and customer expectations. To do that, staff design small projects in-house, manage consultants on larger ones, and track tenant lease and floor plan information. "Our biggest challenge is simply keeping up with the workload while offering the best service possible," says Donald Wilson, SCAS' principal engineering technician. "We have a small design staff, and there are only so many hours in a day. Anything that helps us to work faster and more efficiently is an asset."

Autodesk®

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The Solution

Since 1992, the SCAS has used AutoCAD to help it keep up with its facilities management needs. From parking garages to meeting rooms to retail lease plans, facilities drawings are managed and maintained with AutoCAD by SCAS’ staff of two design technicians. As new projects are initiated, all existing infrastructure details are provided to outside consultants with AutoCAD. When outside consultants create new designs, SCAS’ staff uses AutoCAD to integrate it with other facilities information.

“From planning to operation, AutoCAD is our core design application,” explains Wilson. “We use it for everything, including new projects, historical drawings, and planning routine maintenance. We even use it to create precise ‘You Are Here’ signs to help passengers find their way around concourses. Additionally, because it’s so widely used, AutoCAD allows us to work seamlessly with outside consultants.”

Automated Calculations Save Time

Each year, SCAS must create property plans that highlight the details of every retail and airline tenant lease agreement. The plans are then customized for use by the airport’s property management, maintenance, and security staff. Once created, the plans are bundled into sheet sets for easy reference and printing. Until recently, the process took an entire month to complete, but new features included in AutoCAD 2006 have significantly accelerated the process.

According to Wilson, “With the recent release of AutoCAD, we can customize the way we format the display of area calculations by selecting the appropriate unit of measurement when using fields within a text object or table. That aspect of the process was far more manual before. Because it was manual, it was more error-prone. If something didn’t add up, we had to check our calculations for hundreds of rooms.”

The Sheet Set Manager, first introduced in AutoCAD 2005, has also improved the way SCAS manages and shares sheet sets of leased property. Wilson says, “Before, our designers had to find and print property plans when staff without AutoCAD expertise needed them. Now we can quickly create pre-defined DWF (Design Web Format) sheet sets so that staff can find and print the information,

allowing us to focus on design rather than document retrieval.

Continuous Improvements

New releases of AutoCAD have proved so advantageous to SCAS that it participates in the Autodesk Subscription program. With its subscription, SCAS automatically receives the latest versions of shipping software. Autodesk Subscription customers are also entitled to any incremental product enhancements, personalized web support direct from Autodesk technical experts, and self-paced online training.

SCAS also participates in the Autodesk Beta and Feedback Program, which gives SCAS the opportunity to try new features in a testing environment, a benefit that resulted in a huge cost savings in 2005.

“We were exploring some new measurement functionality in AutoCAD by recalculating a land-use mitigation fee,” explains Wilson. “It turns out the agency that calculated the acreage in question did so manually and incorrectly. By using AutoCAD to spot the error, we were able to get the fee reduced by \$1.2 million.”

The Result

SCAS Completes Tenant Leases 25 Percent Faster

Having used AutoCAD for so many years, SCAS anticipates that the application will continue to evolve. “In the last year, AutoCAD has helped us to complete our tenant lease plan processes 25 percent faster, which saved us an entire week,” says Wilson. “We often suggest improvements to Autodesk, and they respond. We are already looking forward to the next release of AutoCAD and how much more time it may save us.”

For More Information

To learn more, visit:
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