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We really feel that Buzzsaw is the right solution for our clients.

—Christopher Goble, AIA,
  LEED® AP
  President and
  Chief Executive Officer
  SGA Design Group

All in the families.

SGA Design Group uses Autodesk Buzzsaw collaboration software as a service to streamline huge projects.

Image courtesy of Alexis Balbontin.

Project Summary

Founded in 1995, SGA Design Group (formerly Scott&Goble Architects) is a multifaceted architecture firm offering architectural building programming, prototype development, management and maintenance, architectural forensic analysis, and sustainable design services to a wide variety of high-profile retail clients. The firm's services include helping clients move to more efficient ways of working. Frequently, that transition has led clients to Autodesk® Revit® software for migrating existing documents and creating new content, templates, prototypes, and other data resources.

In more recent years, SGA realized its need for a comprehensive software package that would help it better develop, manage, and distribute those data resources, one that would simplify the creation and maintenance of content while making it easier to share it with often distant and distinct users. For SGA, the solution has come with the adoption of Autodesk® Buzzsaw®, a cloud-based document, design, and model management solution for centralizing and more securely exchanging architecture, engineering, and construction (AEC) project information across companies, disciplines, and locations.

The result is a solution that helps minimize data management efforts, reduce data duplication, and enables the firm to focus on the needs of its clients.

The Challenge

In assisting some of the best-known names in the world of retail commerce, SGA often handles voluminous amounts of data, all of which is distinct and proprietary to each different client. In such an environment, the need for comprehensive organization and analysis is paramount. With many software services and systems, unwieldy amounts of unfiltered data exists in constant danger of emerging incomplete or intermingling with other private client data.

"This content is owned by our clients, not by us," explains Chuck Dodson, Senior Application Developer at SGA. "There has to be a very tightly defined partition between information and clients. When we receive folders and families of information from clients, we need a clean, clear method of combing through information to ensure there is no overlap, nothing is missed, and there is minimal confusion or time wasting."

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SGA Design Group provides research and development into technologies that help manage architecture information.

Ivan Dubikovsky, AIA, LEED® AP, Building Information Modeling (BIM) lead at SGA, compares the use of Buzzsaw to using a less-clear and less-efficient FTP site: "Once you find a family on an FTP, you still have no idea what information is within the family types until you download and open it," he says.

"Buzzsaw provides an external database with all the metadata available, and a much more clear and comprehensive file structure, and that has been extremely helpful. You can readily search for a more particular parameter, without having to download, open, and review all the information. That in itself has made our process much more transparent for our teams."

The Solution

As part of its commitment to keeping data as comprehensive as possible when sharing with clients and collaborative partners on a project, SGA has also devised an ingenious way of taking full advantage of the efficient Buzzsaw catalog structures. Writing proprietary software code to work between spreadsheets and Buzzsaw, the SGA team is able to ensure that project information is as complete and comprehensive as possible.

"We enter our on-hand information into an Excel spreadsheet dedicated to a particular client project," explains Dodson. "Our application actually reads through the spreadsheet information and compares it to the Buzzsaw catalog folder structure, then finds the most relevant information from Buzzsaw and populates the spreadsheet with any data that is within those families. Any families found within Buzzsaw not found in our spreadsheet are automatically added to our spreadsheet along with all the types and other relevant data. We anticipate there will inevitably still be some holes in the information, so we can fill in the gaps with

the correct information, which is then automatically sent out to the family files, so everything remains current and up-to-date. We've presented this system to many of our clients, and they are really excited about it."

Throughout the process of transitioning to Buzzsaw, Autodesk Consulting has provided process consulting to smooth the transition.

"We are enthusiastic problem-solvers here," says Dodson. "We haven't needed a whole lot of support from Autodesk Consulting, because there have been few problems. That said, the group has been fantastic when we have needed them, and have been really supportive and responsive. They've done such a good job that, when we found it necessary to build a second Buzzsaw site, we didn't need any input at all."

"When we've presented the Buzzsaw catalog system to clients, they caught on pretty quickly to its potential and power," says Chris Goble, President and CEO at SGA.

"These companies manage a huge amount of prototype information—hundreds of families, a multitude of options, associated with each—which is all sitting in simple file folders. They are accustomed to having to swap all these folders between large groups of people. Being able to better manage all this change really helps us do our job better. We really feel that Buzzsaw is the right solution for our clients."

Doug Tayrien, a Principal at SGA in charge of large client accounts, provides an example: "In the last three years, we have changed curtain wall vendors three times for one client. If you can imagine having to go back in manually and update all your families with new model numbers, new finishes, and all the other information, you can understand it would

Image courtesy of Jon Peterson.

be tedious and time-consuming. Being able to use Buzzsaw to more completely populate the spreadsheets, then simply push the information back to the families, as opposed to having to crack each and every family open, is just huge for us. This business is just constant, constant, constant change."

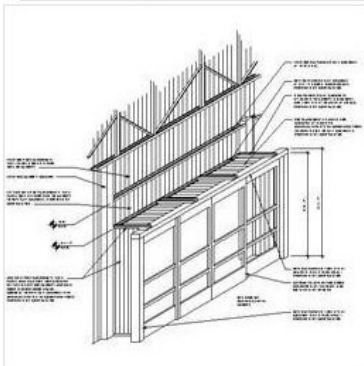To learn more about Autodesk Consulting, visit, **www.autodesk.com/consulting.**

Image courtesy of SGA Design Group.

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