

Success Story

Accessing asset documents with Open Text Solutions

EnCana realizes time savings with Livelink ECM™ – GIS Link

A leading North American unconventional natural gas and integrated oilsands company, EnCana has various regionally-focused business units comprised of geologists and geophysicists who work on prospects and perform data analysis for their region. One of these business units has taken a new approach to conducting their daily tasks by using a document management from Open Text integrated with the company's GIS system.

"One of the initial challenges that made the business case for creating this application was the time it took end users to find the required documents. For example, an engineer would look at a map and realize he needed to find a specific document—be it a PDF, a word document, or a picture. Depending on what the document was, it was sometimes faster to reproduce it or reorder it from the service company than trying to locate it within the organization. The way the integrated solution works is that it allows us to add a new document to the system, store the document in Livelink ECM – GISLink, and also associate it with a particular feature by highlighting it on the GIS map."

Data Analyst, EnCana

involves geologists, geophysicists, and development engineers," states the Data Analyst. "These folks tend to work in a map-based environment, so they use the GIS system on a large scale." Frequently, the maps in use depict various assets, such as wells and pipelines. These assets, in turn, have a variety of documents associated to them—documents that are mission critical.

The challenge was to provide the geo-technical staff with the ability to find these documents at the click of a button and right from the familiar map-based interface. Without a document management system in place, these documents could be anywhere—on shared drives, on someone's computer, or somewhere in hardcopy format. Users would waste hours finding the right information, which could significantly slow down a project and disrupt business processes.

The project team at EnCana set out to create an integrated solution, which involved the implementation of a document management system for the business unit as well as the creation of a link to ArcGIS—the company-wide GIS solution from ESRI. "The staff in our regional units is comfortable with using the GIS system. Instead of presenting them with a GIS system and a document management system, we set out to create a transparent link between the familiar GIS interface and the document management system," confirms the Data Analyst.

Instead of wasting hours on searches for documents that could be stored practically anywhere, geologists, geophysicists, and development engineers the business unit can click on a map in their GIS system and instantly retrieve all documents associated with an area or asset on a map. The solution has meant significant time savings and, as a result, productivity improvements.

Time wasted on document searches

The business case for the change was driven by the amount of time spent searching for documents needed to compile data analysis reports. "Our motivation to take advantage of a document management system was to reduce time wasted on lengthy searches for information stored on shared drives," says the Data Analyst for the EnCana business unit.

"Our work environment within the regional units involves geologists, geophysicists, and development engineers," states the Data Analyst. "These folks tend to work in a map-based environment, so they use the GIS system on a large scale." Frequently, the maps in use depict various assets, such as wells and pipelines. These assets, in turn, have a variety of documents associated to them—documents that are mission critical.

Industry

Energy: Oil & Gas

Customer

EnCana

Business Challenges

- Reduce the amount of time spent on lengthy searches for documents stored on shared drives
- Provide users with a one-stop-shop for documents
- Enable a direct link between the ESR GIS system and a document management system

Business Solution

- Livelink ECM – GISLink

Business Benefits

- Asset documents can be accessed directly from the document management system or by clicking on assets on a GIS map
- Time required to find documents has been reduced from approximately half an hour per person per day to seconds
- Improved productivity and value creation

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Building upon the familiar Livelink ECM foundation

When the business need for the GIS project was identified, EnCana had already been using Livelink ECM from Open Text for an enterprise-wide document and records management system. More than eight million documents were stored in a secure Livelink ECM repository providing EnCana employees with easy document access and information security that comes from retention schedules set by the Open Text Records Management module.

It was an easy choice for EnCana to select Livelink ECM and Livelink ECM – GISLink as the document management system that would provide the necessary integration capabilities to create a link to the ESRI GIS system in use at the regional units.

A one-stop shop for asset documents

Although the assets can be very easily presented in a GIS-type of environment, the challenge was to create a one-stop shop where land administrators, engineers, geologists, and geophysicists could easily view the assets on the map, click on that asset, and quickly retrieve all documents associated with that particular asset.

“The way the integrated solution works is that it allows us to add a new document to the system, store the document in Livelink ECM – GISLink, and also associate it with a particular feature by highlighting it on the GIS map,” explains the Data Analyst.

EnCana is using their own internal taxonomy to classify documents stored in and exploit the inheritance properties of categories and attributes to ensure that documents added to Livelink, using the map-based interface can be subsequently searched and retrieved based on the inherited attributes.

“We have also added a function button that enables an end user to launch the ESRI GIS application directly from Livelink ECM – GISLink. When a user is browsing through documents, they can open up an asset document and click on that button, and the GIS window will open up centered on the asset object with which that document is associated. So if we have a document in Livelink ECM – GISLink and it was associated with a certain well and we click on this button, it opens up the map-based application with the well centered on the map.”

Significant time savings

“One of the initial challenges that made the business case for creating this application was the time it took end users to find the required documents. For example, an engineer would look at a map and realize he needed to find a specific document—be it a PDF, a word document, or a picture. He would then need to ask a technician to go and hunt for this document. Without a document management system, this document could be anywhere, and the task of hunting for the document wasted a lot of time—sometimes it took a day to find it. Depending on what the document was, it was sometimes faster to reproduce it or reorder it from the service company than trying to locate it within the organization,” explains the Data Analyst.

Another benefit of the application is that geophysicists, geologists, and engineers can stay focused on their work. “They can stay in their frame of mind while they are working as they simply click on the map and find the right documents instantly. Not having the right documents in front of you when you’re working on a project or developing a hypothesis can mean a good idea lost as thought processes are interrupted to search for the documents,” confirms the Data Analyst.

The next step for EnCana is extending the solution to other regional business units. “We have seen interest from other business areas at EnCana. The solution creates interest because of its simple user interface—anyone with a Web browser can use it.”



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