

Dawson Architects Boosts Efficiency And Reputation



Dawson Architects' focus on efficiency, economy and functionality extends to its office fit out.

Dawson Architects Managing Partner Michael Dawson wanted to eliminate impediments to his firm's productivity. His goal was to turn around tasks faster, spend more time on creative work, and secure new business.

Dawson knew the drawbacks of operating without leverage: "In my previous practice, we didn't actually have any document or office management systems and relied entirely on manual issuance of information."

After trying a single-purpose email management system that addressed part of the issue, Michael sought an integrated solution that could address all of his core challenges.

CHALLENGES

Boost staff efficiency and turnaround times.

Previous tasks that dragged down productivity included searching for items in a sea of project files and emails.

Dawson also saw too many manual steps in handling and tracking RFIs and submittals; he hoped they could be automated. In just six months, the projects in the office generated over 20,000 emails and triggered over 500 submittals and 255 RFIs.

Dawson also wanted a digital markup tool that integrated with the submittals and RFIs processes, client communications, and the project record.

Eliminate the need for a document controller.

Previously, Dawson used a full-time document controller to assemble, collate, and transmit drawings, and maintain the document register. Dawson sought software easy enough for architects to use that they could avoid that hire altogether.

Avoid disputes through a communication audit trail.

Pre-automation, Dawson had encountered situations where recipients could claim not to have received drawings or communications. In the new system, Dawson wanted

DAWSON ARCHITECTS



Dawson Architects, a 12-person, Dubai-based firm, specialises in the design and implementation of bespoke projects for select individual and corporate clients. Projects include hotels, villas, and commercial buildings.

CORPORATE INFORMATION

REGION: EMEA, UAE

HEADQUARTERS: Dubai, UAE

EMPLOYEES: 20

FOUNDED: 2014

PROJECT LOCATIONS: UAE

www.dawson-architects.com

PROJECT TYPES

Commercial
Educational & Institutional
Hotels & Resorts
Residential
Sports & Leisure

to easily transmit emails, drawings, and files while maintaining a robust audit trail and avoiding disputes over information dissemination.

THE SOLUTION:

Integrated software to manage project information

Dawson selected Newforma Project Center to automate all the processes involving project information:

- Capturing a reliable complete record makes all project emails, drawings, files, and file transfers searchable.
- Streamlining RFI and submittal processing saves time and maintains the schedule.
- Marking up drawings as part of the RFI and submittal workflow saves time and contributes to the complete project record.
- Automating the document register saves time assembling, collating and issuing drawings; and assures that everyone is working from the most recent files.

RESULTS:

Fewer disputes.

The Newforma way of communicating with other parties increases accountability. "It is possible to see if a recipient has received information and whether they have downloaded it or not," Dawson says. "For us, it's a major benefit."

Indeed, Dawson rarely hears of information dissemination disputes now, "which is also worth its weight in gold, because recipients know that Newforma tracks information flow at all times."

Greater efficiencies.

Dawson was also pleased to "save the money of not having to appoint a document controller to push paper in and out. The architects are also happy to use the system and issue all the drawings themselves because the system is easy to use."

Dawson describes how the software saves time: "You don't have to do document transmittals, drawing registers, or collate and assemble the drawings because Newforma will do this for you. For the architects, that's definitely a benefit."

The automated RFI process and markup capability saves, reports Dawson, "70 to 80 percent of the time we used to spend."

Quick information searches are another benefit of a complete, electronic project record. "It's been a great help to be able to track down emails you know you sent a year ago," Dawson says.

The business has a firmer foundation for success.

Efficient operations and an absence of disputes strengthen Dawson Architects' brand. "Being organised makes the right impression on customers. Newforma certainly helps us there," Dawson says. "And the time Newforma saves goes to getting new work and improving office efficiency. These are some of the key drivers of a successful practice."

"The time Newforma saves goes to getting new work and getting the office running more efficiently."



"Being organised makes the right impression on customers. Newforma certainly helps us there."

Challenges?

- Reduce turnaround times.
- Boost staff efficiency.
- Avoid contractual disputes.

Results?

- Averted disputes by demonstrating receipt of files.
- Avoided hiring a document controller (as the architects can easily complete the issuance of documentation).
- Reduced file transfer and tracking labour by 80%.