

Case study: FM Conway Ltd

Asta Powerproject proves an asset for plant and vehicle planning at FM Conway Ltd



About FM Conway Ltd

FM Conway Ltd is a leading infrastructure services company delivering vital services in transportation, the built environment and open spaces for communities and business. It has more than 50 years' experience in the design and delivery of successful highways maintenance programmes for both public and private sector clients. It helps to maintain, resurface and repair the highways, roads and bridges of London and the South East and as far north as the Midlands.

FM Conway Ltd can, at any time, have between 200 and 500 individual projects either underway or in planning, as it supports customers such as the London Boroughs, Transport for London and the Highways Agency in maintaining the UK's infrastructure. Today it uses Asta Powerproject Enterprise to monitor the assets and staff utilisation across its concurrent projects.

Paul Cerexhe, Business Improvement Manager for FM Conway, wanted a way to track and plan company plant and vehicles better and to share information across the business. Paul had used Asta Powerproject as a standalone product for a while, before deciding that the Enterprise version was the

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only way forward. He explains: “We have a significant number of assets, such as planing lorries, asphalt lorries, grab lorries and JCBs, and we needed a clearer view of what we had and what we might need to buy in the future. We had heard of someone using Asta Powerproject Enterprise to do something similar, so started our own activity.”

He continues: “We now use Asta Powerproject Enterprise to coordinate the assets across our projects; we programme current and future projects and assign our assets to them, to gain a better understanding of what else we might need. Asta Powerproject is also used to plan our staffing on projects to ensure that skills are used appropriately – for example, one person may both be a qualified electrician and an excavator driver, and another a skilled supervisor with a specific professional skill.”

Asta Powerproject Enterprise has brought a level of control and planning. Paul says: “Asta Powerproject Enterprise

is used to keep track of 2000 staff, more than 4000 vehicles and plant for up to 500 projects, which can be of differing durations. Before we did it this way everyone had their own systems to track assets, developing personal spreadsheets and methodologies for doing the same things. It made it hard to share information about this aspect. Now we can take information out of Asta Powerproject, use our own

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formulae to plan and order for projects with greater accuracy and know if we have enough materials, plant, vehicles and other equipment.”

Working on better information

The 13 divisions of FM Conway support each other to self-deliver on customer requirements: for a particular project the Civils team will liaise with the Plant team to order the equipment they need, the Transport division will deliver to site, where a range of different services might be met by the Contractual division or another part of the business. Now almost all of them are using Asta Powerproject Enterprise, which can support multiple planners working in collaboration; they can not only deliver information to each other in similar formats but share live information. Paul outlines this: “We are really still working on what the software can do for us, alongside our other enterprise systems. The more advanced we become, the more the business will realise the benefits. It’s a big programme and involves lots of people to test it and make it work, so it is something of a work in progress at present.”

Elecosoft has been supporting FM Conway as it has explored what the software can do over the past 18 months: “Elecosoft has a technical helpline I can call at any time for advice, and they connect straight to our

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computers and explain how to do what we need. If I can’t get through, they always call me back” says Paul.

Elecosoft also work with FM Conway’s Resource Planner & Programmer Brandon Taggart, who has developed a number of bespoke macros to connect Asta Powerproject with other systems. Brandon picks up the story: “Asta Powerproject Enterprise is really powerful in comparison to some other systems, and it is very scalable so you can grow it as large as required.”

Supporting efficient planning

Brandon explains how Asta Powerproject Enterprise is supporting planning in the Surfacing team: “Its ability to generate reports and output information is one of the main benefits it brings us. We can run the Surfacing programme off

the back of solid information input by the project supervisors about the projects they have programmed – and at least six other departments use the same information to put their own programmes together.”

He continued: “It has definitely made things more efficient and helped to streamline the processes for the Surfacing team. The programme is generated through Asta Powerproject, and the team input each of their project programmes for as far in advance as possible. Then they apply the resources to it – such as traffic management needs, material requirements, the number of lorries required on site, what supervisors and foremen they need, and so on. We then generate a weekly programme which is circulated to all the teams and provides clarity on their weekly schedules/rota. Off the back of that the asphalt plants gets their information, and the traffic management team get theirs. Everything filters through, and Asta Powerproject has given us a much more effective view of each job on a daily basis, by giving us the ability to export just the selected information we need to create a spreadsheet, showing an ongoing programme. In addition we get a daily, weekly and monthly view of the resources required across the business.”



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Asta Powerproject: The power behind successful projects