ICF Jones & Stokes

New tools
bring the future of library management to a top environmental consulting firm

BUSINESS PROFILE

Industry
Environmental Consulting

Geographics
Western Unites States

Organizational Initiatives
Socializing and expanding libraries and collections

Inmagic Solution
Inmagic *Library Suite*

Benefits

- Easy-to-use Web interface.

- Products not "modulized"

- Provided all the needed functionality without a large amount of costly bells and whistles

- Inmagic's familiarity with the library industry

Sharon Hoepker, Corporate Librarian at ICF Jones & Stokes, has been ahead of the technological curve since the early 1990's, when she foresaw that information technology and library science were "on a collision course". She set out to make the most of this by learning all she could about the technology.

ICF Jones & Stokes is a leading environmental planning and natural resources management consulting company. As Ms. Hoepker puts it, "As consultants, our product is information." The organizing and archiving of that information, maintaining a usable inventory of the company's products and intellectual property, is crucial for its continued productivity.

The Search

When Ms. Hoepker came on board, one of her first projects was to acquire library automation software. Previous to this the library's holdings had all been catalogued in an Access database which, though accessible on an Intranet, was not widely used. Ms. Hoepker's previous position had included spearheading a large software evaluation and acquisition project for the military, so she was comfortable evaluating the choices that would suit Jones & Stokes' particular requirements as well. She did a lot of research on the kind of system she was looking for, as she had always known she would be growing the electronic collection.

Library Suite's Advantages

She liked the fact that Inmagic doesn't "modulize" its products. The other packages she looked at priced added features/ functionality in separate packages, leading to price creep and more decisions when the functionality turned out to be needed. She also liked Library Suite's easy-to-use Web interface.

Inmagic, as the "middle of the road" candidate price-wise, provided all the functionality she needed without a large amount of costly bells and whistles that she wasn't going to use. The look, feel, and feature set stacked up well in her given budget range.

Though Library Suite was a new product, I felt its serials management was strong- which is one of the harder problems to solve in this type of software. They're also looking to the future and thinking about what features will be coming out next."

Setup and Training

Jones & Stokes opted for remote installation of the Library Suite software. Their IT staff were able to deal well with it, and setup went smoothly. "The training phase went really well. The fact that the person who came here had library experience, was key. Our styles meshed and she made great use of the training time to concentrate on what we needed most."

The Catalog Goes Digital

The Jones & Stokes library collection includes some 25,000 hardcopy items, chiefly an archive of all the reports generated by the firm over its 35-year history. This is used internally for information, and also there are frequent requests for reprints by agencies and the public. There is also a library of topical hardcover books and scientific periodicals important to the industry, and now a growing digital collection of PDF versions of the company reports , on a document server.

The library is accessed by internal staff, most of whom are scientists and technical specialists. Remote users include the staff in 16 branch offices in the western U.S.

"The more appealing web interface enables us to take the collection and show its value to the company." Requests and library usage via the Web have been increasing compared to paper and in-person loan requests.

Looking to the Future

Further equipping the office with new information tools, Sharon has lately been experimenting with WIKI software. By doing a search in Library Suite and copying the link to a shopping cart result, she has found she can generate a reading list for any topic and simply copy the link into the WIKI page. This can propagate information in a standard format with very little work, and then can provide a way of keeping track of frequently-requested materials and their usage statistics.

Other plans involve going on the road to the company's 16 branch offices, to add staff level of access to Library Suite in the firm's branch libraries there. Local staff will soon be able to manage their own labeling and check in/out.

Ms. Hoepker is looking to the future as usual, including awaiting the new features and improvements planned for future versions of Library Suite.

About Inmagic

For over 25 years, Inmagic has been a recognized pioneer in creating advanced information and knowledge management tools and applications. More than 5,000 organizations around the world have placed their trust in Inmagic software to actively manage both physical and virtual assets and gain extraordinary insights from them. Inmagic's two decades of solving information management challenges for many types of organizations, along with its advanced technology and superb implementation and support, make it an ideal partner to help organizations with their information and knowledge management initiatives.

INMAGIC Enabling Social Intelligence

For more information on Inmagic® DB/Text® Library Suite:
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