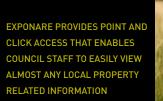**PUBLIC SECTOR CASE STUDY**

Golden Plains Shire Council

"BY USING A SINGLE VENDOR'S SOLUTION, WE HAVE FOUND THAT WE CAN BETTER MAINTAIN THE DATA, EASILY INTEGRATE NEW APPLICATIONS AND BENEFIT FROM A CONSISTENCY IN THE DISPLAY AND VISUALISATION OF INFORMATION."

Tim Warfe, GIS Officer, Golden Plains Shire Council

EXPONARE PROVIDES POINT AND CLICK ACCESS THAT ENABLES COUNCIL STAFF TO EASILY VIEW ALMOST ANY LOCAL PROPERTY RELATED INFORMATION

Challenge

With growing ratepayer and council service expectations, Golden Plains Shire Council wanted to enhance and improve the existing council mapping capabilities and systems. Central to this requirement was the need for easy to maintain data, integration with new and existing applications and a single vendor solution to ensure the consistency in the display and visualisation of information.

Solution

To incorporate the use of Exponare from Pitney Bowes Software across all desktops at Council, allowing officers to follow a direct link from Exponare to MapInfo Professional when there is a need to change existing information or to add new data.

SUMMARY

THE ROAD TO BETTER CUSTOMER SERVICE

The Golden Plains municipality covers 2,705 square kilometres between Geelong, Ballarat and Melbourne. The Shire's rich gold mining history, agricultural success and attractive villages have helped to make the area a favourite destination for families that require access to city employment and services, but who also want the benefits of a rural lifestyle. More recent pursuits including a growing reputation for the production of gourmet foods and wines have also contributed to a thriving tourism industry. Many of the Shire's 17,000-strong population are active volunteers, contributing to community services, sports, recreation and cultural activities.

Responsibility for overseeing regional development and for provision and management of community resources falls to the Golden Plains Shire Council. In 2008/09 the Council had an operating income of $24.6 million and was recognised as one of the top five financially sustainable councils in Victoria.

A COMMITMENT TO SERVICE

For over ten years the Council has been using mapping technology and is now linking to council databases as the starting point for almost every customer query. Tim Warfe, GIS Officer at Golden Plains Shire Council, explains, "We use Exponare across all desktops at Council." Exponare is a configurable enterprise portal, which provides point and click access that enables Council staff to easily view almost any local property-related information.

Officers simply call up a map of the property, be it a road, bridge, government, residential or business property, and receive relevant data from ratepayer, planning, building and other databases.

FASTER RESPONSE TIMES LEAD TO BETTER RATEPAYER RELATIONSHIPS

"It means that we can immediately respond to planning or rate queries by calling up property information and viewing any overlays, zoning data, statutory requirements and so on," Warfe says. The system is also invaluable when responding to council service queries. "If we find a lost dog, we simply search on the animal's tag to identify exactly where it lives. Exponare is our first port of call," Warfe adds.

INTEGRATION BETWEEN EXPONARE & MAPINFO PROFESSIONAL

If a call creates a need to change existing information or to add new data, council officers follow a link from Exponare to MapInfo Professional or other corporate databases. MapInfo Professional enables editing of spatial data and for amendments to be formally recorded on the mapping system. "The great part is that information is open and accessible between the two applications saving council staff time by being immediately able to make modifications to the core spatial data. The link itself is operated by a click of the mouse which does all the work. Moreover, by using a single vendor's solution, we have found that we can better maintain the data,

ASIA PACIFIC/AUSTRALIA

Level 7, 1 Elizabeth Plaza
North Sydney NSW 2060
Australia

+61.2.9437.6255

pbsoftware.australia@pb.com
pbsoftware.singapore@pb.com

pitneybowes.com.au/software

UNITED STATES

One Global View
Troy, NY 12180

+1.800.327.8627

pbsoftware.sales@pb.com

CANADA

26 Wellington Street East
Suite 500
Toronto, ON M5E 1S2

+1.800.268.3282

pbsoftware.canada.sales@
pb.com

EUROPE/UNITED KINGDOM

Minton Place,
Victoria Street
Windsor, Berkshire SL4 1EG
United Kingdom

+44.800.840.0001

pbsoftware.emea@pb.com

easily integrate new applications and benefit from a consistency in the display and visualisation of information," says Warfe.

The Council has also found that any potential correlation issues between Exponare and MapInfo Professional are fixed immediately as opposed to being recorded and acted on later. This has resulted in a greater number of edits being conducted and, ultimately, in better quality data and accuracy.

Warfe points out that the linking "push" procedure between Exponare and MapInfo Professional originated from Nathan Woodrow, a fellow MapInfo user at Southern Downs Council in Queensland and was obtained from the Australian Local Government MapInfo User Group (ALGMUG).

He notes that this kind of trading of tips is typical of the active user group and an important benefit to MapInfo users. "We tend to help each other with advice and suggestions," he says.

EASE OF USE

As ratepayer and council service expectations grow, MapInfo's ease of use has been an important consideration for Warfe. From a development perspective he is often called upon to write new templates for frequently asked questions. At the same time staff also need to be able to enter queries quickly. "With Exponare staff can write their queries in sentences rather than requiring SQL like the older generations of mapping software," says Warfe.

Warfe adds that the software is very intuitive. "The council's training officer and I deliver a two hour training session for new staff.

This gives them all that they need to know to be able to use the system and find the answers to queries."

MORE INTEGRATION

In addition to maintaining and developing the existing databases, Warfe is continually looking for new ways to enhance the council's mapping capabilities. Most recently, he has been working on a document management system that will allow any documents relating to a parcel of land, road or bridge to be displayed along with the maps.

Incorporating documentation for all local properties, roads and bridges, the system promises significant customer service benefits by enabling faster, more accurateresponses to customer queries. It took Warfe approximately a month to write the HTML code and source the answers he needed to begin integrating document management capabilities but the research paid off and the new system is now undergoing user testing.

COST AND TIME SAVINGS

The successful integration and development of Pitney Bowes Software GIS solutions into the existing framework have been successfully deployed allowing Golden Plains Shire to reap the rewards of a simplified configuration, through the migration of data within their existing MapInfo Professional system to the newly deployed Exponare application.

"Using mapping information in this way helps Council staff to make better decisions," Warfe concludes. "It brings all the corporate data together into one place and saves time for our officers and for the ratepayers."

THE PITNEY BOWES SOFTWARE ADVANTAGE

For over ten years Golden Plains Shire Council has been using GIS mapping technology. By using an integrated Pitney Bowes Software solution they can incorporate documentation for all local properties, roads and bridges, resulting in significant customer service benefits by enabling faster and more accurate responses to customer queries.

Every connection is a new opportunity™

:::Pitney Bowes
Software