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Design Review OBA



The Design Review Office Business Application “OBA” will allow users to easily submit and track comments on a Design Submission. The comments are entered through a custom Microsoft excel template. Once all reviewers have entered comments using the OBA, the PM consolidates and finalizes the comments then routes comments to the A/E through an established workflow. Comments are logged in ePM under the Issues and Logs module within the project.

The Design Review OBA provides a secure environment to capture, organize and track status of design comments. Projects that are now in the design phase are good candidates to consider using the Design Review OBA. Interested parties should contact their Regional System Administrator to arrange permissions, software and training.

Note: This OBA can work offline therefore external reviewers can share their comments also.

ePM Account Recertification Underway... The ePM Team has been diligently working on the recertification process for all ePM users to comply with annual recertification requirements. Please make sure to respond to any requests by the Regional System Administrators to assist in this effort. Recertification is an annual event for users of all GSA IT systems. In the future, we plan to go paperless and automate this process. Thank you for your patience and cooperation during this endeavor.

CASE STUDY: Region 6 Robert A. Young Federal Building

The renovation work underway at the Robert A. Young Federal Building in St. Louis is really three projects rolled into one. The Art Deco structure, frequently called the RAY, simultaneously undertook exterior skin, mechanical system and cafeteria renovation projects. The three subprojects have been conducted somewhat independently, each requiring its own schedule, multiple construction packages, and distinct contractors. “Tracking these three subprojects as one in ePM has been challenging,” according to GSA Project Manager Denise Ryerkerk, “but it’s necessary to provide all levels of detail of the work while allowing the reporting to roll-up as a single project for the building.”



The building, with its 20-story tower, houses about 3000 workers over approximately one million square feet. The overall project is valued at about \$45 million and is one of the largest masonry renovations ever undertaken in St. Louis. In addition to the masonry work there are 2600 new energy efficient windows. The new envelope and mechanical equipment updates are projected to yield a 40% reduction in energy usage.

Denise described that when the project team was introduced to ePM in November 2009, they experienced early struggles with gaining access to the system. An added complexity was the implementation of the recovery project funds and elements, accompanied by their own specific tracking requirements. The project team recognized that instilling an organizational structure to the documents was critical for accurate reporting.



To address the difficulty of tracking documents for three subprojects the team decided to apply their earlier subproject designations in ePM to take advantage of ePM’s sort/filter/view functions. Denise says, “The challenges of keeping data of the three projects, multiple construction contractors, and numerous packages organized in ePM demanded a strong cooperative effort by our team. Setting up workflows in ePM gave us the collaborative setting to establish a disciplined naming convention for all items related to each subproject.” The resulting practice was to use a unique four character designator for each subproject and include it in subject lines and file names. There is another benefit to keeping all subproject documents in ePM together under one project. That is, any documents that pertain to more than one subproject are available to the users who need interfacing information.

The document naming convention is used to distinguish and sort-out submittals, RFIs, correspondence, daily reports, punch lists and more. This is especially helpful when generating

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RAHD User Community Joining ePM

Preliminary planning is underway to migrate documents from the online Recovery Act High Performance Green Building Database (RAHD) to the ePM system. This effort is necessary to comply with PBS CIO requirements on the storage of Sensitive but Unclassified (SBU) documents. This opportunity will bring a new user community to ePM, as RAHD users begin to access drawings to conduct project reviews.

The migrated documents will be uploaded under design documents and will be designated as a RAHD file. Due to the restricted access of the documents, only the GSA project team and PMO RAHD team will see these new documents in their register view.



ePM Quick Tip:

Does it seem that the export/print commands are not working in ePM? Actually these functions work, but they are a little tricky. To export or print please remember to hold the Ctrl key until the print/export window appears. If exporting to excel, continue to hold the Ctrl key until the document opens. This will ensure the command is completed and your document opens in excel.

If you need additional information on this topic or other ePM functionality, refer to the resources that are listed at the bottom of the newsletter.

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punchlists for the eight different mechanical packages because it identifies the unique responsibilities of each subcontractor. Denise continues, "Using the four character designator has been especially useful in ePM notifications, because it immediately allows the recipient to know which subproject is associated with the notification. Since many of the RAY project team members are on multiple subprojects, this helps prioritize work load."

The team's efforts go deeper. They are starting to use the subject line to track the number of RFIs per subproject. For example, the subject line RFI: MECH (55) - CRAC Pkg - Electrical Feeder Size for Multistack Chiller (#00211) tells the reader that this is the 55th RFI on the MECHANICAL project (out of 211 total on the overall RAY ARRA project), and that it's specifically related to the CRAC package.

The RAY building cafeteria was successfully completed and opened last summer, while the skin rehabilitation and mechanical improvements are scheduled to finish in late 2011. The RAY team's concept of a document naming convention gives rise to other ideas on Denise's "wish list" for ePM. She would like to be able to create custom folders in ePM, and the ability to assign sub-numbers to RFIs. These enhancements would give even more options for grouping documents and tracking subprojects. Implementing a naming convention is a sound organizational practice that other project teams should consider on similarly complex projects.

Importing Schedules in ePM

Do you know how quick and easy it is to use the Schedule import tool in ePM? MS Project and Primavera schedules can all be imported into the ePM Schedule module. All of the schedule properties and activity relationships remain intact once imported. The schedules should be loaded without the Activity or WBS codes so that the ePM codes can be assigned. The schedule can then be updated and maintained in ePM, or a new schedule can be uploaded monthly.



If you're not yet using the schedule import utility, we encourage you to try it. The software is available from the GSA software catalog, or from the link within ePM under "File Management > Content Management" for external Contractors. There is a reference guide available with the Schedule Uploader tool that explains the simple steps to export. A guide is also available at <http://insite.pbs.gsa.gov/epm> under "Training and Support > Quick Reference Guides" for internal GSA users. Contact ePM Support with questions on installing the tool.

ePM Resources:

- ePM Login Site <https://epm.pbs.gsa.gov/proliance>
ePM Support epmsupport@gsa.gov
1 (866) 367-7878

- GSA User Resources <http://insite.pbs.gsa.gov/epm>
Training Videos and Quick Reference Guides <http://www.meridiansystems.com/epminfo>

