

## Clicks make bricks

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### Online collaboration is increasing in the building and construction industry

The use of online collaboration technology tools on building construction sites is on the increase across the globe. This case study looks at an Australian solution that is making inroads and providing real benefits to the building and construction industry. The solution allows all parties from the architect to the building regulation body to the builder to share information in a timely, efficient and secure manner.

### Managing vast volume of information

Aconex is an Australian web-based information management and collaboration system. To manage the vast volume of information generated on construction and engineering projects, the Australian company, Aconex, helps replace the use of paper documents by allowing users to store project information including drawings, documents, and correspondence online in one central site.

For the individual company using the system, the results are saving time through quick and easy information access, reduced costs for couriers, printing and stationery, and reduced exposure to risks such as information loss, disputes and litigation.

Aconex's uptake has doubled every year for the past five years, though as with e-commerce and online banking, it hasn't changed standard industry processes. Rather it has used the power of the internet to make these processes electronic rather than manual.

### Exchanging information shortens project lifetime and increases productivity

Users of the system include builders, contractors, architects, project managers, engineers, subcontractors, quantity surveyors and consultants. The tool facilitates the exchange of information between these users.

For example, instead of an engineer making a change to a building plan then mailing the paper document by courier to the architect who then makes his revisions and sends it to the builder, the tool enables all three parties to meet together online and simultaneously make revisions to documents in real-time. This shortens project timelines and increases productivity.

### **Usage of collaboration technologies is increasing**

Aconex has achieved rapid uptake in markets such as the US, the UK and Australia. As for future growth opportunities, the main potential resides in emerging markets such as China, India and the Gulf region.

In general, collaboration technology solutions are being used by approximately 20% of the Australian market and 50% of the UK and US markets. In the thriving construction markets across the Middle East and Asia, collaboration technology is being used by less than 10% of the industry. This represents growth opportunities for all providers of collaboration technology solutions.

### **Assisting Exporters**

Aconex links organisations using the web, making it easier for companies to communicate with one another as they don't have to be on the same physical project site. For example, an architect in Melbourne can quickly and easily transfer drawings and files to an engineer in Dubai without having to fly to the project site. By creating this possibility, and making the international collaboration process easier, companies may be more likely to work on projects in different countries, which is a good result for export.

For more information visit [www.aconex.com](http://www.aconex.com)