

Case Study: City of York Council



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How Technology Assists City of York Council Manage Their Street Scene Activities More Effectively

Desire for a clean city at the heart of York's IT Improvements for Street Scene Management

City of York Council is using pioneering technology, from Exor Corporation, to manage their street scene activities to ensure the historical city's unique charm and character is maintained; and more importantly improved.

With millions of tourists each year, a vital economic contributor to the city, and approximately 190,000 residents, it is imperative York minimises any adverse impact on its environment. With Exor the city council has established a holistic, targeted and proactive approach to managing the city's environmental infrastructure.

Street Scene

City of York Council recognizes their Street Scene is both unique and key to the continued success of the city. It is to this ancient walled city that millions of tourists visit each year to admire the many buildings, streets, castles and museums that stand as a testament to its colorful heritage. Over the years Vikings, Romans, and Normans have all shaped this unique and beautiful city. It would be an abhorrence to residents and visitors if the street scene were considered untidy. They also recognize the community at large underpins the prosperity of the city and it is these factors that have contributed to the council's widely promoted ethos known as York Pride. Working with businesses and the community the council have strived to achieve a pride in the appearance of the city.

Keith Rowan of Highways & Street Operations says, "We can't underestimate the value of tourism to the local economy and the wider area. York has to have comprehensive IT systems in place which will help us manage the complexity of reporting, co-coordinating and implementing the street scene policy."

"One of the first initiatives we implemented to achieve this was to establish the York Pride Action Line. This is a single point of contact where the community and businesses can report any issues relating to the street scene. The action line is currently receiving an average of 1,500 calls each week, so there's no shortage of work for the team."

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An IT Solution offering full data integration and analysis functionality

York Pride Action Line

The action line is supported by a team of Street Environment Officers who supplement the reactive work identified via the action line, with proactive inspections of the Street Scene. Street Environment officers can now carry out Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI 199) Quality Inspection of random transects to grade areas in terms of litter and detritus.

Until the present time, the data collected from these various sources has been stored in a variety of databases. Acutely aware of the potential benefits of all this information, City of York Council sought to secure an IT solution which would offer full data integration and analysis functionality, allowing them to move from providing a predominantly reactive Street Scene service to a more proactive targeted service.

Implementation

City of York officers implemented the Street Scene solution from Exor, incorporating Public Enquiry Manager, Maintenance Manager, and the fully integrated GIS Spatial Data Manager. The application is built in Oracle, and initially deployed in a client/server environment. Rowan further adds, "The next phase will provide the city with a fully web enabled implementation system. The project team and Exor will deliver a fully integrated and tailored solution founded on a National Street Gazetteer (NSG) road network and specific business rules defined by York."

Records of all properties within the city are stored in a database and located against the highway network. Hierarchical data modeling provides access to property and collection unit data from both maps and forms using simple drill down processes.

Hierarchical data modeling

Relating wheeled bins and their attributes to properties allows the building and balancing of domestic and commercial refuse collection routes taking into account the precise nature of the highway network, the number of properties visited and the volumes of materials collected. Similarly, bin deliveries, bulky and trade collections can be scheduled with efficiency. The kerbside collection of materials is managed within Maintenance Manager, as is the management of the council's dedicated recycling sites.

The council's road network has been modelled and fully integrated with the authority's Highway Management system. The council is developing Maintenance Manager to include Cyclic activities such as channel sweeping and gully cleaning which will be scheduled against the network, and contracts managed more effectively using the systems register of assets. A fully holistic approach to street scene management can thus be achieved with up to date data fully integrated from one common source.

Reports made to the York Pride Action Line are now logged into Public Enquiry Manager, and automatically related to the network through intelligent addressing. Requests for service, enquiries and complaints can be related to a property or a geographical area. Using Spatial Data Manager officers can view, interrogate and analyse all types of data recorded, from multiple perspectives. Supplemented by a variety of user defined reports, officers are now equipped to identify trends in enviro crime such as graffiti, litter, fly tipping, fly posting etc, or simply identify clusters and dates of missed bin collections.

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Offering more services over the Internet

Inspections

Rowan further adds, "inspections can now be generated to select a variety of random transects within the city and it is proposed to use this method to grade streets for litter and detritus by the street environment officers. These inspections will then be used for the determination of the BVPI 199 Performance Indicator.

"Incidents of fly tipping are also recorded and categorized within Public Enquiry Manager and reporting tools output a dedicated electronic report ready for submission to DEFRA. As a result the entire abandoned vehicles process will eventually be managed by the system, from initial report, to inspection, the serving of notices, and to the subsequent removal of the vehicle."

Automatic emails to individuals or organizations can be generated in response to specified issues being recorded in the system. Once a problem in the street has been identified, the process is tracked through to its resolution. Document management and production facilities allow the council's staff to automatically generate letters, permits, and reports, and also store-scanned images, photographs and video.

Growth

As a part of this growing project, the council intends to record and manage all their Street Scene assets, including public toilets, litterbins and dog bins. Inspectors will receive map based handheld data capture instruments based on PDAs to use on site for recording and responding to problems in the street. Integration with the Highways Management system will allow Street Environment Officers to

record defects both on and off highway, and download their findings into a single system for action by the appropriate division.

Street Scene contracts and contractors are managed within the system. The Contractor Interface Manager, and Financial Interface Manager again product from within the Exor suite of applications are being implemented to provide efficient data transmission to the council's contractor and finance system, entirely electronically, helping to meet eGovernment targets.

The system will be implemented in a web-based environment, offering more services over the Internet. This will also provide greater access to the system for other council officers without the need for client software thanks to the true web based design within the suite of applications.

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About Exor:

Exor Corporation was founded in 1995 and is the global leader in infrastructure asset management solutions for network centric industries. Exor established its operating base in highways management and is rapidly expanding into other strategic markets including rail, water, power distribution and oil & gas. Based on world-class Oracle technology Exor provides clients with a modular approach to their individual technology needs. Exor Corporation operates worldwide in Europe, North America and Asia/Pacific and in September 2005 was included in the Software 500 list of the world's foremost software and service providers. Exor systems manage 1,000,000 miles of roads with an asset value in excess of \$750 billion (USD).

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