

Customer Case Study: AECOM/Dallas County Community College District



AECOM Uses Prolog® Manager to Deliver High Quality Program Management and Controls Services on \$450M Bond Program for Dallas County Community College District

AECOM is a global provider of professional technical and management support services to a broad range of markets, including transportation, facilities, environmental, energy, water and government. With approximately 51,000 employees around the world, AECOM is a leader in all of the key markets that it serves. AECOM provides a blend of global reach, local knowledge, innovation, and technical excellence in delivering solutions that enhance and sustain the world's built, natural, and social environments. A *Fortune 500* company, AECOM serves clients in more than 100 countries and had revenue of \$6.3 billion during the 12-month period ended June 30, 2010.

Since its founding as an independent company in 1990, AECOM, which is headquartered in Los Angeles, California, has become one of the largest providers of professional technical and management support services in the world. The company has grown and diversified through corporate expansion and acquisition activities that significantly broadened the company's business lines and geographic reach. AECOM ranks number one overall on the Engineering News-Record (ENR) Top 500 Design Firms list, ranks number one in multiple categories on that same list and holds several top spots in the ENR Top 150 International Design Firms Sourcebook.

AECOM is one of the largest program management firms in the world and has been entrusted with the management and control of hundreds of major capital programs totaling nearly \$340B across all continents and market sectors. In 2004, when Texas voters approved a \$450M bond package to improve and expand the Dallas County Community College District (DCCCD), AECOM was chosen as one of three program management firms hired to manage the large program. The bond program would improve and expand the DCCCD, which serves a sprawling 860 square-mile metropolitan area with nearly 2.5M residents, to meet the escalating demand of higher education over the next 10 years.

AECOM was hired to provide program management services for the Brookhaven and Richland college campuses, and to provide program management controls services for the entire bond program, which included document controls, financial controls, procedures and reporting. To more easily manage program controls, AECOM suggested Prolog Manager from Meridian Systems. AECOM had been using Prolog for years to support its program management/construction management projects and owned a large number of user licenses that could be utilized for the bond program. Since DCCCD needed consistency across the entire program, and felt that using industry standard software would ease adoption by the large number of contracting firms associated with it, the organization agreed that Prolog was the ideal solution for its bond program needs.

"On a program or project of this size, closeout can be one of the most difficult and time consuming tasks. Having everything we need in Prolog saves us several weeks of time during closeout."

*David Dailey
Program Director, AECOM*

Collaboration Accelerates Implementation

Once Prolog was given the green light, AECOM began looking at ways to configure the software to address several challenges associated with the bond program. Most notably, meeting Minority/Women's Business Enterprise (M/WBE) and other reporting requirements, integrating Prolog with DCCCD's public-facing Web site and training multiple architectural and general contracting firms on how to use Prolog. To expedite the reporting and integration aspects of the software rollout, AECOM sought help from two Meridian Valued Added Resellers, Texas-based Project 3 Technologies.

"As a public entity," explains David Dailey, AECOM Program Director, "DCCCD must track opportunities provided to minority and women-owned businesses. So we developed a process for tracking every contract, invoice and subcontractor payment and identifying which commitments met M/WBE standards. Once we had an accurate system for tracking that information, generating the reports was fairly easy." Custom budget reports were also created to monitor annual budget limits specified by the multi-year bond program funding. AECOM established a method for capturing information by line item to support flexible reporting options, ranging from big picture overviews to very detailed item-by-item breakdowns.

Although integrating Prolog with DCCCD's Web site took effort, it was a valuable way to automate public program updates. Rather than submitting project updates and photos to the public communications department, and waiting for those updates to be posted to the Web site, updates could be posted from the field. "When that programming was completed," Dailey says, "we could run real-time reports that would update the DCCCD's Web site to let the public know the general status of the program and what campus projects we were currently working on."

Benefits for DCCCD

The majority of the DCCCD 2004 bond program projects were completed by February 2010, and the remaining projects are scheduled for completion by the end of October. Looking back, it's easy to identify the many benefits that Prolog delivered to the program.

Using Prolog to standardize construction processes and reporting allowed DCCCD to oversee the bond program, provide its board of trustees and constituents with regular updates and generate the detailed M/WBE reports that were vital to the program.

Although DCCCD has a separate accounting system,

the strong financial tracking functions in Prolog's Cost Control module provided an extremely useful way to verify the accuracy of the accounting records. "When you're handling a large sum of public money, you are accountable for how you manage that money. Budget overruns and the misallocation of funds are simply unacceptable," Dailey explains. "Prolog helped DCCCD mitigate these risks by breaking the large budget down into consumable parts and by providing a redundant and transparent financial tracking system."

In addition to Cost Control, DCCCD utilized the submittal, requests-for-information (RFIs) and meeting minutes capabilities within Prolog's Document Management module. According to Dailey, these functions also mitigated risk by supporting collaboration between the client, program managers, architects, contractors – and even the subcontractors. At the program's peak, DCCCD had over 200 users in its system. "Prolog really helped keep everyone on the same page," he says, "and gave us the ability to be proactive rather than reactive. We were able to get requested information to the contractors quickly so they could continue doing their jobs."

Regularly logging, distributing and reviewing meeting minutes kept everyone on task during the entire multi-year program. Capturing information in Prolog throughout construction has streamlined the closeout process to-date because everything needed is already in the software. "On a program or project of this size, closeout can be one of the most difficult and time consuming tasks," Dailey says. "Having everything we need in Prolog saves us several weeks of time during closeout."

Benefits for AECOM

According to Dailey, Prolog helped AECOM deliver the highest quality program management and controls services to DCCCD. "Bringing Prolog to the table states that you intend to run an organized program," he explains, "which allows the owner to minimize the amount of resources they have to put toward the endeavor. There are many features in the software that save time, like having contacts readily available and instant access to transmittal logs."

Meridian Partner Profiles

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AECOM adheres to the standards and guidelines relating to quality management systems established by the International Organization for Standards (ISO), and many of its operations around the world are ISO:[9001] certified. Prolog provides the underlying architecture to help AECOM follow ISO protocols, such as keeping documents in a secure and controlled environment. The Document Management functions in Prolog are very conducive to the ISO standards because, after uploading a document into the software, an organization can be confident that the record is not going to be deleted or mishandled.

A Strong Program Management Solution

"One thing that I really like about Prolog is its ability to be deployed quickly. You can hit the ground running in about two weeks if you really need to," Dailey concludes. "Out of the box, Prolog is fantastic construction project management software. The system's flexibility, and recent enhancements that allow you to manage multiple projects using dashboard functions, make it a very useful solution for program management, too. And from a budgeting standpoint, I don't think there is any package stronger than Prolog."

AECOM/Dallas County Community College District Program Profile

Dallas County Community College District 2004 Bond Program Located in Dallas County, Texas

The Dallas County Community College District (DCCCD), which serves a sprawling 860 square-mile metropolitan area with nearly 2.5M residents, adds value to lives by preparing students to become productive and responsible members in communities that are increasingly diverse and in a world that continues to change. DCCCD provides students with academic, technical, work and life skills, as well as the self-confidence to be successful in the workplace, community and in other endeavors. On May 15, 2004, Dallas County voters overwhelmingly approved a \$450M bond program to improve and expand DCCCD in order to meet the escalating demand of higher education over the next 10 years.

DCCCD Main Campuses

- › Brookhaven College
- › Cedar Valley College
- › Eastfield College
- › El Centro College
- › Mountain View College
- › North Lake College
- › Richland College



Key Program Goals

- › Expand capacity and update classrooms and laboratories at all seven DCCCD colleges to meet students' needs now and in the future
- › Address safety issues at older facilities
- › Ensure that the district can meet the educational development and training needs of this rapidly growing and diverse county

Program Management Firms

- › AECOM
- › Aguirre Roden + Parsons
- › Austin Commercial/Con-Real

Results

The majority of the DCCCD 2004 bond program projects were completed in February 2010, and the remaining projects are scheduled for completion by the end of October. Successful completion of program gives DCCCD five new community centers and has made numerous improvements at the College District's educational facilities.



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