Bentley College

Datastream 7i Reduces Overhead by Automating Facilities Management Process

QUICK FACTS:

> Over 5,000 undergraduate and graduate students

> More than 30,000 work orders per year

> 140,000 inspection points generated in 2003

> Datastream 7i saves 800 hours of labor per year on inspections alone

Background

Bentley is a business university based ten miles outside of Boston. The school's mission is to educate students to be leaders in business and related professions in a global economy. The campus is home to more than 5,000 undergraduate and graduate students and employs more than 1,000 people.

The Goal

For years, Bentley's facilities management department relied on mostly manual processes to support its operations. To keep operating costs in line while still maintaining a first-class campus, the facilities management department needed to upgrade to an automated facilities management solution.

Ideally, the school wanted to deploy an asset management system that could help automate all facilities-management processes, including work order management and the especially cumbersome dorm inspections. Bentley's facilities management department undertakes annual inspections of 5,341 residential rooms across campus, with an average of 25 inspection points for each room, including checking for broken lights, leaking faucets and more.

If facilities management finds an "invalid" inspection in a dorm room—meaning one of the various points are not met—the department generates a work order to have the item fixed. Bentley needed a solution in place that would help speed up the work order process and create greater efficiencies. In addition, the solution had to help facilities management deal with the thousands of other work orders it generates outside of the dorm inspections.

The Challenge

Each year, Bentley inspects more than 140,000 different points in the student dorms. Historically, the facilities management department logged any invalid inspections on paper, and then the central office would key this data into a computer system and issue paper work orders.

Once repairs were made, an itemized list of repairs would be sent to the residential life office. Residential life would then bill students for the cost of repairs. In total, the process typically took four to six weeks from the time rooms were inspected until students received bills and new work orders were generated.

In addition to being time-consuming, this process often caused friction between the college and students because the timing of the damage bills would coincide with the invoicing for the following year's tuition. Additionally, the department was expending significant resources just on keeping up with the tens of thousands of work orders generated each year. It needed a more efficient way for students to report repair issues, for work to be logged, and for work orders to be processed.

Bentley Annual Savings		Time	Cost ($45/hr)	Annual Savings
Annual Dorm Room Inspections	Manually prepared for inspections	2 people X 25 days X 8 hrs/day = 400 hrs/yr 20 people X 5 days X 8 hrs/day = 800 hrs/yr Total = 1,200 hrs/yr	$54,000	$18,000
	With Datastream 7i	20 people X 5 days X 8 hrs/day = 800 hrs/yr	$36,000	
Input Inspection Data	Manually enter into system	2 people X 27.5 days X 8 hrs/day = 440 hrs/day	$19,800	$18,900
	Datastream 7i interfacing to Banner	1 person X 2.5 days X 8 hrs/day = 20 hrs/yr	$900	
Work Requests	Manually enter into system	14 people X 2,000 hrs/yr = 28,000 hrs/yr	$1,260,000	$110,250
	With Datastream 7i	14 people X 1,825 hrs/yr = 25,550 hrs/yr	$1,149,750	
Function Planning	Manually process requests	1 person X 2,000 hrs/yr	$50,000	$25,000
	With Datastream 7i	1 person X 1,000 hrs/yr	$25,000	
			Total Annual Saving =	$172,150

The Solution

Bentley conducted an extensive evaluation of all the major asset management and facilities management vendors and ultimately selected the Datastream 7i Asset Performance Management solution to automate its facility management processes. Bentley selected Datastream 7i because it delivered superior functionality and usability over competitive solutions, and its Web services foundation enabled the system to be configured in new ways to support more efficient business processes.

“Datastream 7i fit perfectly into our Oracle-based infrastructure,” said Tom Kane, Facilities Administrative Systems Manager of Bentley College. “The Datastream 7i support for Web services enables the system to be configured to offer role-based functionality, so different people in our organization—and even students—can use the system through intuitive, user-friendly interfaces.”

Bentley uses the Datastream 7i Inspection Module to automate the dorm inspection process. When facilities management workers find an invalid inspection point, they enter the information into handheld devices, which transmit the information into Datastream 7i. The system then generates a work order and tracks its progress from cradle to grave.

Datastream 7i has drastically reduced the manual overhead required to process the thousands of work orders issued each year. “We deal with more than 30,000 work orders ranging from preventive maintenance on our equipment to cleaning the rugs, fixing heating systems and more,” said Kane. “Datastream 7i helps us schedule preventive maintenance and automatically issue these work orders.”

In addition, Bentley is using Datastream 7i to allow students and employees to request work orders.

Bentley has configured Datastream 7i so that every person on campus can log-in with a password through an easy-to-use Web services-based interface. When someone notices a repair issue—such as a burned-out hallway light—they can simply log in to their account and request a work order. Facilities management then receives the work order, and Datastream 7i automatically tracks the work order through to completion. The person

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Tom Kane,
Assistant Director of
Facility Operations,
Bentley College

requesting the repair can also log in to see the status of the repair. "This functionality has literally stopped the phone from ringing in our office, and it has drastically reduced the amount of time required to repair damaged facilities," Kane said.

Facilities management is also using Datastream 7i to manage the inventory of parts in its central store on campus. Datastream 7i automatically tracks inventory levels and ties them to specific work orders. This enables the system to replenish depleted stocks, so inventory is constantly kept at an optimal level.

"We were able to receive Datastream 7i functionality very quickly in a limited amount of time. Because of this, we were able to see fast results from the product," said Kane.

The Results

Datastream 7i has generated enormous cost-savings for Bentley College through improved efficiency and lower overhead. As a result, facilities management personnel can spend more time doing value-added work—namely, keeping the campus in tip-top shape—and spend drastically less time on processing paperwork.

Datastream 7i has transformed the dorm inspection process. The former four to six week paper-based process has been reduced to less than a single week, meaning that damage bills are mailed out well before the following year's tuition invoices are mailed. This creates a more logical separation, and reduces potential complaints from students and parents because the damage bills are received at the end of the school year when the inspections are done.

"Datastream 7i has completely streamlined our inspections process and it saves us 800 hours of labor time each year," said Kane. "Since there's never a shortage of work, instead of expending a lot of their time on the inspections, our employees can focus their attention on other issues, so Bentley's campus is always in excellent condition."

By enabling students and employees to request work orders over the Internet through a Web services interface, Bentley also has reduced calls to the facilities management department and improved response times to maintenance issues. Students and employees also feel greater satisfaction, as they are more involved in the maintenance process and can feel confident that their requests are being addressed.

Bentley also built a custom bridge between Datastream 7i and its Banner ERP system. This integration allows Bentley to capture and track the costs associated with each building on campus. This data enables the facilities management team to identify "high cost" buildings and take the steps required to bring them in line with other buildings on campus. Bentley also uses key performance indicators (KPIs) and executive dashboards to provide "at a glance" information on important metrics such as average response time to work order requests so the team can meet its performance goals.

"Datastream 7i is unbelievably flexible which allows us to solve myriad problems on campus," said Kane. "We find new uses for the product all the time. It is truly the platform on which we base all of our operations."

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