



Department Listing

Room 4.218	Room 303	Room 346	Room 3.595	Room 827	Room 4.591	Room 1.422
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Total Area 15,177

Floor Number: 01

NOT TO SCALE

Printed Date: 4/1/2004

Drawing Name: 11101

Assignment By Department

"Using our old system, we had one person who color coded floor plans manually to help us see how much revenue each room was generating. She took approximately three to four weeks every quarter to get this done. Using Autodesk FMDesktop, she's taken that down to less than one week. We believe that the time saved in producing this single report from FMDesktop has already paid for the system."

James Niles
University Space Manager
Virginia Commonwealth University

Get the facts.

Virginia Commonwealth University standardizes on Autodesk® FMDesktop software for quick access to real-time reports and impressive productivity gains for FM staff.

The Challenge

At Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), the Facilities Management staff has its hands full. "VCU is broken into two large campuses," says James Niles, University Space Manager. "One is the Monroe Park Campus, and the other is the Medical College of Virginia Campus (which includes the VCU Health System). In all, about 45,000 students and employees study and work in roughly 172 buildings scattered across the two campuses." The Facilities Management – Planning & Design (FM) staff is responsible for tracking all those buildings and providing the up-to-date information senior management needs to make informed decisions about the space. "It's no small task. There are more than 200 different departments and 28,500 individual rooms spread across 680 floor plans." Until 2004, VCU had been using a home-grown space management system built on SQL Server. Because the system was unable to dynamically link the floor plans and the database, reporting was limited to tabular reports and static floor plans. And each time the FM staff changed the database, they had to manually update the drawings—a process that was both time-consuming and error prone.

The Solution

"Here at VCU, we've looked at many different computer-aided facilities management (CAFM) systems," says Niles. "They all seemed too complicated to use—and too expensive. But when I came across Autodesk FMDesktop, I knew we had to have it. We bought five licenses." With that purchase, VCU standardized on an SQL Server version of FMDesktop for all its space management needs.

Get Started Quickly

"Right before buying FMDesktop, we had just migrated all our data from Microsoft Access over to SQL Server," says Niles. "Once the fields were mapped, I uploaded the data into FMDesktop and was creating usable, customized reports within a week. Within the first thirty days, I had about thirty buildings and their drawings linked to the corresponding databases."



“At VCU, we have long- and short-term leases with the VCU Health System on campus. Before using FMDesktop, the lease renewal process typically took three to four months. Using FMDesktop, we were able to cut that process down to several days.”

James Niles
University Space Manager
Virginia Commonwealth University

Minimize Tedious Manual Tasks

“Before using FMDesktop, we would constantly get requests for information on square footage from the different departments,” says Niles.

“We had to manually calculate everything and then color code the plans by hand.” FMDesktop makes that process easy. “Now, when the math department calls and wants to know how much square footage it has and where it’s located, it just takes two or three clicks to get the information.”

Reduce Time-Consuming Methods

Because FMDesktop dynamically links the building drawings and the database, keeping track of changes to either one is easy. “For example, at VCU the School of Medicine controls its own space inventory. That meant on a yearly basis I had to reconcile their room-by-room listing and square footage with my numbers,” says Niles. “There were always 400 or 500 rooms that didn’t match. I used to have to reconcile it all by hand. But with FMDesktop, whenever they make a change, my numbers are automatically updated. It saves a lot of time.”

Generate a Rapid Return on Your Investment

One of the first steps the Facilities Management team at VCU took after acquiring FMDesktop was to link it to a research grant award database built in SQL. “We needed to produce graphical reports on floor plans that would help us allocate space to researchers based on how much funding they received,” says Niles.

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Achieve Unheard-Of Accuracy

That same report has also helped VCU recover additional funds. “The federal government and other organizations fund our research, and on top of that will reimburse us for any associated indirect costs, such as upkeep of the rooms,” says Niles. “That comes to about \$30 million a year. A good chunk of that is tied to the accuracy of our space management database. FMDesktop enabled us to pull all that information from the software and link it together in one report. It basically saves us eleven weeks a year—not to mention the employee’s salary for that period.”

The Result

Since standardizing on the software, the FM team at Virginia Commonwealth University has achieved significant facilities-related time and cost savings, as well as improved credibility with senior management. “Purchasing FMDesktop was really a no-brainer,” says Niles.

To learn more about Autodesk FMDesktop, visit www.autodesk.com/fmdesktop.