



Case Study

SRK Consulting



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ROI

- Generate complex reports and proposals in 25 to 50 percent of the time previously needed
- Reduce meeting minute feedback cycle from weeks to days
- Increase collaboration among global offices

Company Profile

SRK Consulting's 500 employees work out of 25 offices on 6 continents. The company provides scientific and engineering consulting services, principally in support of mining and petroleum exploration. Services include site assessment, impact analysis, compliance audits, engineering, detailed site investigation and soil and ground water remediation.

Challenge

Quickly grasp complex water treatment processes at one of the world's largest copper mines, analyze and improve processes and then deliver innovative solution to client. Efficiently communicate complex ideas to and receive feedback from highly trained members of a global organization.

Process Improvement

Mapping water treatment issues for one of the world's largest copper mines

Win new business by thinking fast

Jeff Parshley, a Principal at SRK Consulting, a global scientific and engineering consultancy, remembers his first cold call into the operator of one of the world's largest copper mines. "They expressed some interest in what we could do to help them with a particular mine water treatment issue. But after our team thought about the issue further, we decided that the solution wasn't simply treating water 'coming out of a pipe.' MindManager helped us wrap our arms around the larger question of managing water across the entire mine site. We created a map of our thinking, exported it as a Word document and PowerPoint presentation, and in two to four hours had the kind of proposal that used to take us two full days to create. The client was ecstatic. We had responded quickly, showed that we heard exactly what they were saying – and came up with an innovative solution."

Parshley says that the main reason he added mapping software to his firm's desktop tool set is that it helps his engineers quickly gain and communicate to clients a useful overview of complex topics. "In this case, the department we were dealing with at the mine had responsibility for water treatment, so they were only seeing that part of the problem. By mapping out our thinking about the overall water balance, we were able to come up with ways for them to reduce or reuse a lot of the water so it wouldn't require treatment in the first place."

Harnessing the intellectual capital of global teams

With over 500 employees working out of 25 offices on 6 continents, SRK finds the mapping interface a good way to support problem solving among distributed teams. Typically, remote teams will share a map through the Mindjet® MindManager® Conference Server or e-mail and dial in on a conference line. One person will "run" the map, using key words and concepts, branch relationships and symbols to capture the global team's thinking, due dates and assignments on what are often very complex projects.

The Conference Server supports asynchronous input as well. "If we send around a ten- or twenty-page document like the proposal for this mining company, the response tends to be minimal because it's hard to get people to stop and read a long document," Parshley says. "But with the conference server, a selected group of people open a map at any time, get access to detailed information, and then add their thoughts to the map at a time that's convenient to them. For a company like ours, whose success is tied directly to our ability to access intellectual capital located all around the world, the ability of these maps to significantly increase feedback provides a huge benefit."

Ramping up the efficiency of meetings

SRK used to do real-time problem solving using flip charts – a solution that, while common across many industries, Parshley now finds somewhat cumbersome. By projecting the mapping interface on a screen, his teams can now capture their thinking in real time, making sure projects are organized in a way that makes sense to all participants. Meeting participants see solutions emerge before their eyes, and exit the meeting with a clear understanding of key issues, next steps, timelines and assignments. Parshley likes the way the meeting minutes and any supporting documents hyperlinked to the maps can be instantly "packed and delivered" via email or "one-touch" exported to Microsoft® Office applications, .MPX or HTML to keep team members, senior management and all stakeholders up to date and in the loop.

Solution

Use Mindjet MindManager to identify the mine's existing water usage and treatment processes. Demonstrate methods to reduce treatment alternatives by increasing the effectiveness of water management and reducing water inflows. Use Mindjet MindManager's Microsoft® Word and PowerPoint® exports to create client proposal and presentation in record time.

Product

Mindjet MindManager

Key Features

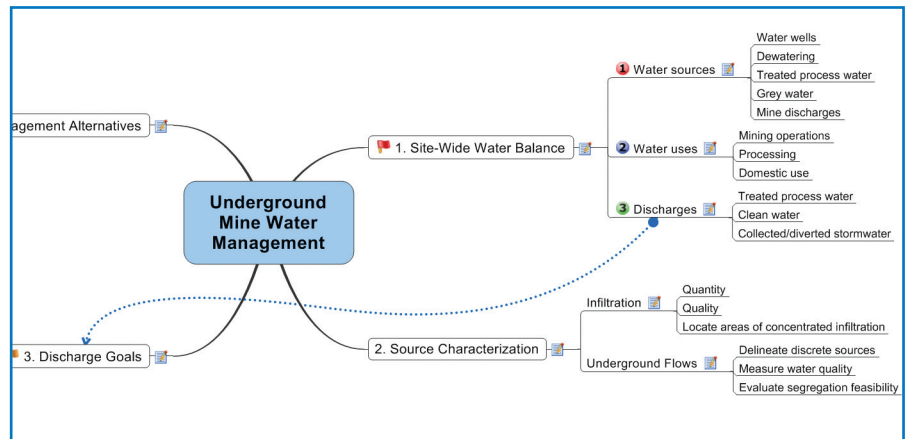
- Enterprise Conference Server
- Export to HTML, Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, .MPX (via add-in)
- Pack and Go Emails

Result

Client was impressed by SRK's rapid and innovative response and contracted with firm to accomplish a range of consulting projects.

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Project planning with Mindjet MindManager

“We used to have someone recording notes for live meetings,” Parshley says. “For each meeting we’d all get an email with 10 to 12 pages of minutes to read through and approve. Board meetings that lasted days would generate much larger documents. It would take a number of weeks before everyone could sign off on decisions that were often key to company operations. Now within 24 hours of such meetings we circulate the minutes in the form of maps. The information is more concise, and we know much sooner if we are all on the same page.”

Parshley also describes how SRK used Mindjet MindManager to facilitate a strategic planning meeting among dozens of representatives of a large South African mining company. “We ran into skepticism of the mapping interface at first,” he recalls. “But within 20 minutes everyone was jumping in, telling us to add this thought to the map over here and move that branch over there. The meeting suddenly became very interactive. Getting people to participate in these larger meetings can be like pulling teeth. But the mapping interface really encourages interaction. Participants see their ideas added to the map in real time for all to see. Everyone understands immediately that their input is heard and valued.”

Parshley says he has a simple test for any new software acquisitions: If he has to crack a manual to understand basic functions, then there is no hope for some of their employees. He took the Mindjet MindManager tutorial and was up and running within 30 minutes.

Saving time, making money

“Our ability to efficiently evaluate what can be very complex problems is what attracts and retains clients,” Parshley says. “Companies hire us because we prove to them that we thoroughly understand the problems they face and can quickly devise innovative solutions. MindManager has given us an affordable and easy-to-learn tool to do both – and to communicate often complex solutions back to the client. MindManager saves us a great deal of time, and time is money.”



To find out how other leading organizations have benefited from Mindjet MindManager, visit www.mindjet.com/casestudies.