CASE STUDY

cohga
Integration made easy ™

Integrating corporate systems at the City of Greater Geelong

CITY OF GREATER
GEELONG

July 2011

The City of Greater Geelong is one of the largest municipalities in Victoria, Australia.

Located 75km South West of Melbourne, the City is a progressive organisation with published customer service commitments for its citizens. The City prides itself on meeting the residents needs by committed, motivated, enthusiastic and well trained and resourced staff.
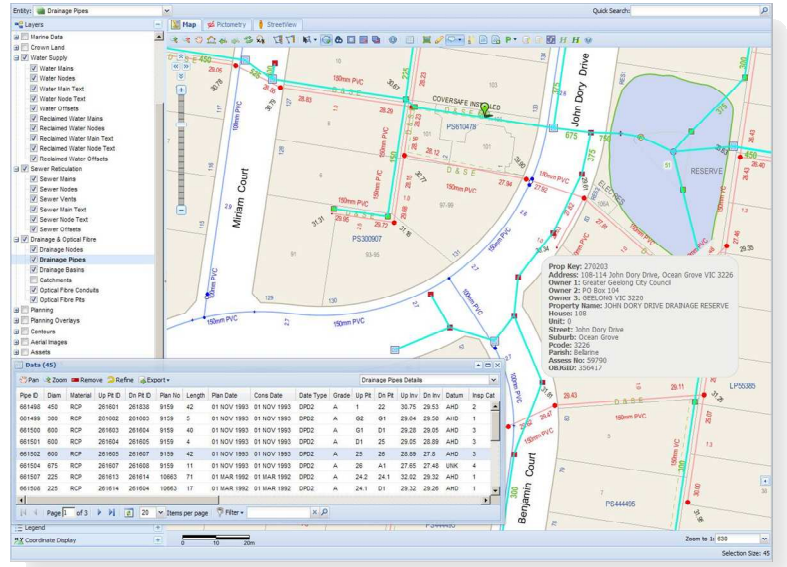
Accessing assets, property and spatial data

Weave is a business integration framework for rapidly combining disparate information systems in an easy to use environment. It is based on open systems technology and it is independent from vendor specific technologies and proprietary application programming interfaces.

Geelong has been using spatial technology to integrate other corporate systems since 1999. Spatially enabled applications now support a wide range of Council business solutions across all departments on the desktop, via web services and mobile GPS applications. All staff, be they a novice or an expert, can access a fully integrated mix of information from the City's property records, asset management, spatial and document management corporate systems using a web browser.

Geelong's spatially enabled information system, known to users as the PLACES (Planning, Land, Asset, Community & Environment Spatial) information system, connects a range of internally maintained and externally provided spatial layers and other data sets to its corporate applications.

PLACES allows Council staff to enter or maintain a wide range of records about property parcel, drainage, road infrastructure, buildings, trees, biodiversity sites, open space planning, asset inspections and condition ratings.

Users can generate and schedule work orders, record property and fire inspections, generate planning amendments and certificates, or georeference subdivision and engineering plans in the document management system. PLACES is integrated with Council's digital elevation model, imagery and 3D modelling environments.

The key component of Geelong's successful PLACES system has been its integration engine and associated web portal, delivering a consistent single interface that offers a wide range of search menus, reports and map views across the PLACES themes and related data sources to over 600 trained staff across the organisation.

With the product underpinning PLACES reaching its end of life, in July 2010 Geelong conducted an open process to replace the ageing proprietary technology with a modern, open, thin client interface. Following an extensive evaluation, the City selected Cohga's Weave product in October as the best option.

About Cohga
Cohga is a company with a focus on the development of systems integration products and the provision of associated professional services. Our philosophy is to use open, state of the art, and vendor independent technology to create products and solutions that meet and exceed client expectations.

Andrew Downie, Geelong's Information Services Manager said "*Weave was clearly identified as the best option to meet our functional spec, especially considering essential business continuity requirements and its ability to take the City's Web Map Services development into the future.*"

The full replacement of the existing 10 year old system was implemented, tested and released in a record short period. It included the integration of the corporate systems and provided all the functionality of the legacy system with the added benefit of an independent technology platform that will underpin the integration of future corporate information systems.

"*Our experience with COHGA's support over the past few months and the quality of the Weave solution has definitely confirmed we made the right decision. The most impressive example was COHGA's initial remote connection to our server getting an operational instance of Weave up and running to replicate the functionality of original web services in less than a day.*"
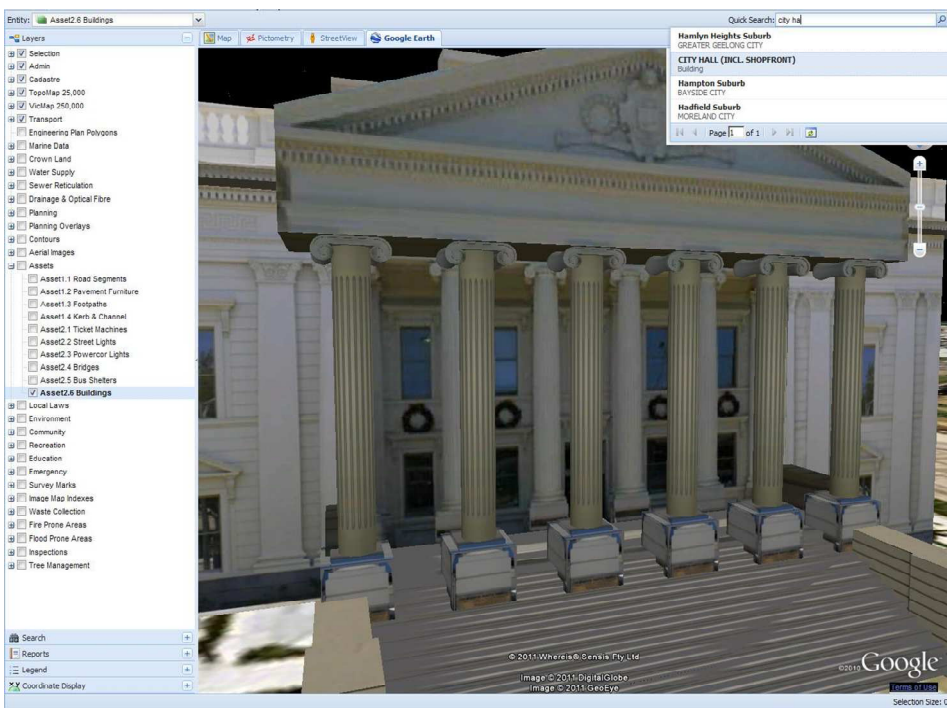
Rick Whitworth, SIS Coordinator at the Municipality commented "*Weave is highly configurable. Its flexibility offers a multitude of options for setting up the user interface. All search field lists are reliably maintained by the server in the background and the ability to modify certain features of the configuration on the fly is brilliant. Users find it easy to use, yet it also offers those high powered analysis functions normally only available in a full desktop package.*"

"*The biggest feature is Weave's robust reliability. It takes the worry out of integration and web delivery of information so that the system administrators can have the confidence to focus more on strategic data maintenance issues at the back end.*"

Weave has opened up access to spatial, textual and other data sources not previously available to staff and users love having direct access to multilayer map views, aerial imagery, Pictometry images and Street View driven by a single quick search index to the City's building, reserve, asset and property addresses. In addition to the traditional asset data, the interface accesses the 3D building models as indexed kml models in Google Earth.

"*In just the short time that Geelong has been running Weave, COHGA have provided a number of enhancements specifically designed to meet our needs. One exciting development currently underway will provide interactive integration with Council's newly acquired panoramic earthmine imagery which will allow real time measurement and data capture directly into the spatial database from either Weave or the earthmine point cloud*", said Mr Whitworth.

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Weave provides interaction with the City's 3D model