

University of Texas Medical Branch

Through technology automation, UTMB now performs electronic surveys of campus space utilization in a fraction of the time it took to do it manually.



The University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) is dedicated to educating health science professionals and researchers, caring for patients, and advancing human health through research. Established in 1891, UTMB now includes an 84-acre campus with four schools, two institutes for advanced study, a major medical library, a network of hospitals and clinics that provide a full range of primary and specialized medical care, an affiliated Shriners Burns Hospital, and numerous research facilities. UTMB is a component of the University of Texas System.

As a major academic health center, the University of Texas Medical Branch must prepare annual data submissions and reports for a number of internal and external entities, including federal and state agencies. Accuracy of the data is critical since this information determines the levels of governmental reimbursement the organization receives for its services. Historically, the process of developing this data was excessively manual and tedious and involved sending a survey packet, including printouts of floor plans and instructions, to each department on campus. With 395 departments on campus, this was a monumental task. Surveys were filled out by hand, and manually processed. In 1998, UTMB embarked on a mission to automate these and other critical processes.

During 1998, the Facilities Operations and Management (FOAM) group at the UTMB conducted a redesign study within their department. Among the areas of focus was the need to more closely manage their portfolio totaling over 6 million square feet. To this end, the need for enhanced Facility Management (FM) technology, state of the art computer equipment and more efficient FM processes became apparent as the redesign study progressed. Enhanced FM technologies and processes at UTMB were deemed essential for the maintenance of necessary facilities data; support of UTMB's strategic initiatives and mission; improvement of the quality of the campus building information; and streamlining the outdated FM workflow processes.

The conclusion of the FOAM redesign effort led UTMB to the realization that a best-in-class Computer-Aided Facilities Management (CAFM) tool and an experienced organization to implement a CAFM solution were vital if the university was to meet their redesign objectives. The University chose ARCHIBUS/FM® software and Business Resource Group (BRG) as their solution. ARCHIBUS/FM was chosen in part because of its modular design, ability to interface with other applications, and the fact that the system provided most of the necessary core functionality right out-of-the-box.



Field verification of the CAD drawings of the campus' 100+ buildings revealed significant amounts of unaccounted space. Additionally, UTMB found they had approximately 5-8 percent of space that could be reassigned or recoded to make better use of it, and receive additional reimbursement, clearly underscoring the value of accurate space information.

Once the physical space was accurately documented, a Web-based space survey application was developed to interface with the CAFM system to reduce the time and effort spent detailing UTMB's space usage across the campus. With the Web survey, 80% of the work the manual survey required has been eliminated.

The Facts

- Industry: Healthcare & Education
- 6M+ SF of Space
- 1,600 Faculty & 2,800 Students
- 169 Buildings

Needs

Technology tools and processes that could simplify the management of state-of-the-art medical facilities; a service provider with technical expertise and experience in the industry

BRG Services Provided

- Requirements Analysis
- Solution Design Consulting
- CAD Standards Development
- Multi-module implementation of ARCHIBUS/FM CAFM Software
- Implementation of PDA Solutions
- Development of a Web Portal
- End user training and support

Technology Solutions

- ARCHIBUS/FM Modules - Space; Strategic Master Planning; Furniture & Equipment; Overlay for AutoCAD
- PALM PDA-based Data Management
- ColdFusion-based Web Portal

Benefits

UTMB can now provide timely and accurate data to management and affiliates. As such, strategic decisions can now be made in regards to land, building envelope, and space usage within buildings. The data is also essential to the University's vision with respect to master planning, construction, renovation, maintenance, and institutional reporting. Also, the University's Cost Reimbursement Department can now directly access critical reports and export needed data. This vital information is used in preparation of Medicare Cost Reports and the University's Facilities and Administrative Cost Proposal for federal contracts and grants - ensuring that reimbursements to the institution are maximized and remain uninterrupted.

Technical Details

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Facilities Web Portal

Through Web browser access on the Enterprise Intranet, users access departmental reports and drawings on the Web, and enter space survey data using a Web-based Wizard interface.

Built on top of the ARCHIBUS/FM database, the Web portal has expanded the reach of the CAFM data and streamlined the management of mission critical data by distributing the maintenance of this data to an enterprise user base.

Based on user permissions, differing levels of access are available to end-users. Workflow processes including email notifications add an additional layer of control over these automated processes.

