

# Software for the Agile Business.



## SITA Extranet leads the way in Waste Management

### Company Profile

SITA Environmental Solutions is part of the Suez Group, a global provider of infrastructure services with significant interests in energy, water, and waste services. SITA Environmental Solutions operate in all mainland Australian states and employs some 770 people Australia wide. Established in each of these centres are facilities for customer service, sales and despatch, vehicle and container workshops and washing bays. SITA also operate satellite and regional transport depots, landfills, transfer stations, material recovery facilities and a joint venture composting facility.

SITA's proven waste management expertise in Australia has been recognised in several ways including their 1994 Banksia Environmental Award for Business Management, and their appointment as Official Provider of Solid Waste Collection Services to the Sydney Olympic and Paralympic Games.

### Business Scenario

SITA was recently awarded an eight year waste disposal contract with Brisbane City Council worth \$151 million over the duration of the agreement. Prior to SITA winning this contract, they had shared the recycling collection duties for Brisbane City Council with another company, but the new contract would place the entire waste and recycling collection duties solely with SITA.

Under the previous arrangement, any customer queries or complaints – such as a broken waste bin or a missed garbage collection – were handled by the Council and the two contractors using a manually intensive, paper-based system. When a resident rang Council with a problem, it was sent via email to the staff at one of the two contractors and then distributed out to road crews for attention. This method generated a great deal of email traffic, leading to significant inefficiencies and difficulty in accurately tracking jobs. Because there was so much focus on getting jobs out to the contractors, there was also little attention placed on managing the ongoing status of a job or closing it once it was complete. This disparate communication between SITA and Brisbane City Council made it difficult to provide the high level of service which SITA saw as essential.

With close to a million residents, Brisbane City Council (BCC) is Australia's largest council. When the opportunity arose for SITA to tender for the new BCC waste disposal contract, they realised that an essential part of effectively managing such a large contract was to create a more efficient means of managing enquiries and complaints

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Neil Perry,  
State General Manager, QLD,  
SITA Environmental Solutions

### Organisation

SITA Environmental Solutions

### Web Site

[www.sita.com.au](http://www.sita.com.au)

### Industry

Waste Disposal and Management

### Business Scenario Summary

With close to a million residents, Brisbane City Council is one of Australia's largest councils. When the opportunity arose for SITA to tender for the new BCC waste disposal contract, they realised that an essential part of effectively managing such a large contract was to create a more efficient means of managing enquiries and complaints from residents.

from residents. The notion of trying to manage such a large contract under the existing arrangement was not effective, so SITA were interested in finding a much better solution to the problem.

## **Business Solution**

The solution came in the form of an Extranet website built for SITA by Microsoft Certified Partner, Avanade (formally DCG in Queensland). This website provides a single point of contact where BCC enquiries can be managed, reports can be viewed and documents shared, and by using the Extranet staff at both SITA and BCC can be kept fully informed on the progress of all current jobs. As each job is completed, an update is sent to BCC City Waste Services advising of the status of all closed complaints and enquiries. SITA can manage the complaints and enquiries via the Extranet's task management features, and offer real-time feedback to the Council and its ratepayers.

## **Searching for the Right Answer**

The Brisbane City Council contract is the single largest municipal waste collection contract ever awarded in Australia, and it created a need for a management system that would allow SITA and BCC staff to communicate seamlessly and effortlessly. Commenting on the business drivers for developing the solution, SITA's Queensland General Manager, Neil Perry, says "Before we put a proposal together for the BCC contract, we realised we needed to evaluate, investigate and research our options. By asking ourselves how we could take on such a large project, it really made us think about better ways to manage the whole contract".

The analysis began in November 2001, and the solution was developed by Avanade over a nine week period. The final innovative solution played a key part in SITA being awarded the \$151 million contract. SITA took over the contract and commenced operations using the new solution in July 2002.

## **Tracking Workflow**

The major contract awarded to SITA covers the pickup and emptying of general waste and recycling bins, and there is also a second contract for the delivery of new and repair of old bins within the Council area. Once a Brisbane City Council resident rings with a problem, the call is entered directly into the Council's call centre database and then exported into the SITA Extranet using an XML-based Web Service. Accessed via a web browser, the SITA site provides a number of clever features, including integrity checks on all Brisbane street addresses, enabling SITA staff to manage each query in the most efficient way possible. Open calls can be viewed by status, area, age, date, bin type, customer, etc. Once a new job is entered into the database, its details are viewable by both SITA and BCC, enabling both parties to access up-to-the-minute information.

The types of issues which can be tracked by the system include missed collection services, broken or damaged bins, overturned or spilt refuse, as well as property damage and safety issues.

With 72 waste collection trucks on the road throughout the entire Brisbane City area, the ability to accurately collect, despatch and track these jobs is a key component in providing a quality service to ratepayers.

## **Business Solution Summary**

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## Ensuring success with a Microsoft Certified Partner

The solution was developed by Microsoft Gold Certified Partner, Avanade. Avanade is the global technology integrator for Microsoft solutions in the enterprise. Its technology infrastructure and .NET application development solutions have underpinned hundreds of customer projects worldwide. Avanade is a joint venture between Microsoft and Accenture.

SITA's Perry is full of praise for the work carried out by Avanade. "The team from Avanade seemed to really understand what we needed. They had plenty of good ideas and suggestions to make our basic concept work even better, and the final solution provides us with far more than we originally envisioned."

Avanade's Practice Director - Enterprise Collaboration, Ben Shapiro, is also particularly pleased with the SITA solution, especially the way the site's sophisticated features were achieved with a relatively small commitment of development resources by utilising Microsoft's .NET development tools. "The .NET framework's enabled us to create a well designed, clean and highly functional solution in a very short timeframe", says Shapiro.

### Benefits

According to Perry, the Extranet solution has enabled significant improvements in the way communications are handled between SITA and BCC. The Extranet differs from a conventional website in the way it is able to relay data directly from the BCC call centre database, and then manage and maintain it in a real-time fashion, providing feedback to both SITA and BCC staff at every step along the way.

### Providing Better Service to Customers

The previous system was time consuming and inefficient. "It involved having people at both ends actively tracking jobs all day," says Perry. "It meant constantly monitoring the status of open jobs, emailing back and forth all day, trying to make sure that all the necessary communications were passed through in a timely manner. Although it might have worked alright in the good times, but it was a terribly inadequate system when it got busy. And of course, under the old system, it was difficult to accurately track jobs so they often did not get officially 'closed', leaving BCC's City Waste Services in the dark about the final status of jobs."

"The Extranet solution has improved the workflow process by systematically closing enquiries and complaints once they have been dealt with by SITA's road crews, thus completing the lifecycle process at the BCC call centre, and providing a better quality of service and response for Brisbane's ratepayers" says Brian Hilton, Manager, BCC's City Waste Services.

### Inbuilt Reporting and Document Management

Another important feature of the site is its document management and reporting facilities. Predefined reports are dynamically generated by the system on request, enabling SITA or BCC staff to access key information progressively throughout the month simply by logging in to the SITA Extranet. Information can be viewed in a variety of ways, so staff can dig into the data to spot trends or problems. "Any persistent problems are recognised within the system, so, for example, customers experiencing ongoing problems with waste pickup or missed collections can be identified and a SITA rep can visit them to help resolve the

### Partner Details

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The system also generates a range of static reports which provide information back to the BCC outside the complaints and bin repair contract. SITA publish these reports regularly and the BCC can view these reports via the standard interface.

Finally, the Extranet site’s administration system allows SITA to create document categories and upload relevant documents for sharing and collaboration with BCC staff. “The document management and reporting built into the solution is excellent,” notes Perry.

## Technology

The solution was built using ASP.NET - part of the Microsoft .NET framework - primarily by Avanade’s Solution Developer, Jarrod Jones. To have an application of such sophistication built essentially by a single person over a nine week period is an outstanding testament to the rapid development times made possible by using .NET.

From an application perspective, the .NET framework provides developers with the ability to properly plan and execute their projects with reusable, individually coded objects, leading to cleaner, more efficient output. Jones estimates that the .NET approach to software development only requires around 40% of the resources and time demanded by more conventional approaches.

The SITA backend uses Microsoft SQL Server 2000, and utilises Microsoft Data Transformation Services for seamless data transfer between the BCC call centre and the SITA Extranet.

## Maximising Success

In developing this solution SITA always maintained a big picture approach. Although the solution is only currently being used with Brisbane City Council, it has been designed and built to enable easy deployment to any future customers. As such, the SITA Extranet forms an integral part of SITA’s business process management to all their customers, starting in Southeast Queensland and potentially Australia wide. This approach provides excellent Return on Investment for SITA as they are able to reuse the same core technology with a wide range of future clients.

In the case of a systems failure of the BCC call centre, BCC staff can log complaints and enquiries directly into the SITA Extranet, providing extra security and an increased level of service to their customers. “With the Extranet solution now in place, we have a much more reliable and systematic method for handling queries, enabling us to provide a consistently high level of service to our customers”, says Perry.

## The Future

The solution developed by SITA is the first of its kind, and positions SITA Environmental Solutions as an industry leader in providing information to its customers, and exceeding their expectations. The SITA Extranet is a tool that will grow and adapt to customer’s requirements so SITA can continue to be one step ahead of their competition.

### Microsoft Technology

- ASP.NET
- SQL Server 2000
- Data Transformation Services
- Internet Information Services



### For more information

For more information about Microsoft products or services in Australia, contact Microsoft on 13 20 58. To access information via the Web, go to [www.microsoft.com/australia/business](http://www.microsoft.com/australia/business)

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