

Case study

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Katherine Smith, Image Manager, AS+GG



AS+GG discover the beauty of OpenAsset

Architecture firm Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill (AS+GG) knew they needed a better approach to managing images. When creating reports, proposals and publications, their personnel had been spending too much valuable time manually searching for images. The firm’s collection of digital images was scattered across various machines with little or no categorization. Users were often forced to manually open and inspect hundreds of large files, one by one, just to find a single required image.

The firm realized that resolving these issues was not only a priority for immediate projects – it was also something that could create a priceless resource for the future. A digital asset management (DAM) system was needed.

Katherine Smith, AS+GG’s Image Manager, succinctly connects these experiences to her role. “The partners knew they had to have a system that would enable them to find and utilize the right imagery. They needed a solution which would meet their needs today – and in 10 years’ time. I was working in the marketing department and knew personally how frustrating it was, just trying to find the correct imagery. So I was given the task of finding the best possible solution for our needs.”

Looking for a solution

A key criteria for AS+GG was finding a solution which was easy for everyone to use and that people did not find frustrating. It also had to allow the marketing team to import images quickly and easily into InDesign, PowerPoint and other document formats. Another priority from the IT side was to free up storage space, prevent duplications and reduce the sprawl of folders across the system. Along with this practicality, it also had to be enjoyable and pleasing to use on a daily basis.

OpenAsset: the right choice

AS+GG looked at various systems on the market, but felt that they were quite generic. One of the team had seen OpenAsset at another practice and recommended it. On seeing it for the first

Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill Architecture

AS+GG was founded in 2006 by partners Adrian Smith, Gordon Gill and Robert Forest. Today there are around 100 employees in offices in Chicago and Dubai.

The practice is dedicated to the design of high-performance, energy-efficient and sustainable architecture on an international scale. The firm approaches each project, regardless of size or scale, with an understanding that architecture has a unique power to influence civic life.

AS+GG collaborate with the world’s leading experts – scientists, artists, sociologists, philosophers and thinkers – striving to expand their perspective and generate new discoveries and insights into the world of design.

They prize innovation and experimentation and do not limit themselves to obvious solutions. They build on past experience and knowledge to move forward and develop new methods and technologies.



time, Katherine knew immediately that this was the right choice: "It was instantly clear that OpenAsset had been developed for the needs of architects, and matched all of our requirements."

Successful implementation

AS+GG found the implementation process to be very smooth and problem free. Over 14,000 images were uploaded in the first few months. OpenAsset automatically tags images based on the project. This ensures project images are searchable from day one, and saves the time otherwise required to manually tag images.

Easy to use

Katherine really feels the benefits of OpenAsset when it comes to creating PowerPoint presentations with the partners: "Their time is valuable, so they need to be able to look at a large number of images quickly. OpenAsset allows us to instantly insert resized images into PowerPoint, saving us a huge amount of time."

She continues: "Recently, one of our architects came to me and wanted our best computer-rendered images of lobbies. I was able to bring up all 1500 available renderings in OpenAsset and quickly scan through them, adding only the best images into a new 'Lobbies' album. I was then able to share this album of around 200 images with the architect. This took me 15 minutes with OpenAsset – previously it would have taken days. I could go on and on with similar examples of how OpenAsset helps us."

Another way AS+GG use OpenAsset is as a source of creative inspiration, and a research resource for everyone in the practice. Future projects have the potential to be influenced and enhanced by the connection OpenAsset creates between all of the architects and the images of their work.



Accessibility plus security

AS+GG utilizes OpenAsset's access levels feature to ensure users are given access to relevant content and to maintain the quality of the image library.

The firm's Image Manager has total control over which images the architects can view. Access levels are set using a simple 'traffic light' system. For instance, images tagged with a green marker can be viewed by all users and have been deemed suitable for external use.

Ensuring uptake with training

Axomic consulted with AS+GG and agreed that training the firm's Image Manager was the first step towards rolling the system out. Katherine found the system very intuitive and easy to use: "It's so simple. I was quickly able to upload images on my own. Playing around with the system was kind of fun! Axomic have all kinds of training tools, including videos, manuals and online demos, which make OpenAsset so easy to understand." Subsequently, Katherine has worked in collaboration with the Axomic team, using a combination of small and large group training sessions, to get the maximum benefit from OpenAsset across the practice.

Support and reassurance

As an international firm, AS+GG found no issues dealing with a company situated in the UK. Response to support queries has been very prompt and the time difference has not posed any problems. As Katherine Smith concludes: "The Axomic team have been very helpful and enjoyable to work with. I feel like everyone knows my name, and it's nice to feel like I'm not a number. Having that connection with someone that actually knows you and is so willing to help is very refreshing."



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Image Manager, AS+GG**

Simple licensing at the right price

One key reason for AS+GG's choice of OpenAsset was Axomic's simple licensing model and realistic pricing. All costs are transparent, guaranteeing that the image library can be made available to everyone in the practice.

To find out more about OpenAsset and to view the online demo, visit www.axomic.com
Alternatively call +44 (0)870 850 0435 or email sales@axomic.com

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