



Rainforth Grau Reforms their Approach to Technology Infrastructure



Firm saves 30% by creating a Revit Team instead of employing a CAD Manager

The Organization

A mid-sized firm specializing in K-12 education architecture, Rainforth Grau Architects is located in Sacramento, California. The award-winning company provides comprehensive planning and design, as well as interior and graphics services. The company produces value-based designs that use materials and other resources to promote sustainable buildings and healthy, stimulating environments for the young minds and bodies that inhabit them.

The Challenge

As early adopters of new technology, Rainforth Grau started using Autodesk's Revit products in 2005. When the software rolled out a significant platform change in 2009, their information technology infrastructure hit the proverbial wall. "We had an in-house CAD manager who was handling the roll-out of the new version. Unfortunately, pinpointing the cause of the incompatibility wasn't easily solved, yet we needed to get back up and running quickly to meet deadlines and stay productive," said Jamison. "After researching several companies, I found that IMAGINiT worked directly with Autodesk products, had a solid working knowledge of Revit and knew what kind of infrastructure upgrades we needed to run the software effectively."

Rainforth Grau contracted with IMAGINiT Technologies to help them build the necessary technology platform. "Initially, we weren't even sure whether it was a software or hardware problem. It was just a technical business problem that had to be solved," said Jamison. "IMAGINiT came back quickly with a comprehensive report that identified we had both video card and processor problems. Basically our computers didn't have the graphics capacity they needed to keep up with the latest improvements to Revit's performance."

The Solution

By analyzing the complete situation, IMAGINiT was able to uncover the root of the issue and prescribe an effective solution. Rainforth Grau worked with IMAGINiT to put in place an infrastructure that would support their immediate needs as well as take them into the future. And later, when Rainforth Grau's CAD manager left the organization, instead of rushing into hiring a replacement, IMAGINiT proposed a unique approach to manage the gap – form a Revit Support Group. Time would show that this wasn't just a short-term solution, but a strategic plan to improve efficiencies and ultimately build a stronger internal team.

The group, comprised of staff within Rainforth Grau, meets monthly to review the status and use of the software infrastructure and make decisions about standards, supplemental training, trends, and new technologies. The meeting summary is shared with IMAGINiT for review and action. The three active users provide a technical support role in house. These team members troubleshoot as well as improve and advance Rainforth Grau's use of the software. When they can't solve the problem themselves, they pass it to IMAGINiT. This extended team of experts fills in the gaps wherever help is needed.

"With IMAGINiT as our software consulting partner and support net, we've gained invaluable expertise that we need to not only maintain the technology we have, but also guide us in terms of future changes that will give us a positive edge down the road."

**— Teri Jamison,
Principal Architect
Rainforth Grau Architects**

“Our culture fosters a close knit, positive and creative workplace, so it was pretty simple to adopt this method of maintaining and reviewing our software and hardware needs” said Jamison. “We’ve saved a lot by not having an IT manager and CAD manager employed onsite and we’ve gained a huge amount of industry and technology expertise by working with IMAGINiT. They are always available, we know they won’t quit until solutions are found and their team of experts know more than anyone in-house could possibly be expected to know.”



Long-Term Benefits and Results

The Best of Both Worlds

Rainforth Grau buys support hours with IMAGINiT on an annual basis. “We get the best of both worlds because we have the people in-house who deal with issues specific to our markets and document needs. Yet we’re no longer carrying any overhead that just relates to CAD management. Our staff concentrates on the work and we rely on our IMAGINiT team for their expertise with Revit and hardware best practices. With this pairing, our staff can focus on the key areas that will help us continue to build our business,” said Jamison.

Escalating Right to the Top

“When the issue is with a function inside the Autodesk software, IMAGINiT works on our behalf to get these kinds of problems dealt with at the source. There’s no question that IMAGINiT is a champion for the customer when it comes to Autodesk” said Jamison.

Custom Functionality

There have also been times when Rainforth Grau needed customizations to Revit that would allow them to maximize the efficiencies of their internal processes. For example, IMAGINiT helped the team harness the power of automated processes by creating a batch software upgrade that also allowed the firm to migrate families automatically – saving time and ensuring accuracy.

Regional vs. Global

Outsourcing can have negative connotations within the AEC industry as globalization negatively affected many US firms during the recession. However, by allowing their team to focus on serving their clients and making the design process more effective for the firm, Rainforth Grau found that IMAGINiT merely became an extension of their own team – not an ‘outside’ vendor. Even though the IMAGINiT team was not geographically close by.

When Rainforth Grau first started working with IMAGINiT there was some concern that IMAGINiT did not have a local office. This quickly became a non-issue because of the high level of service IMAGINiT provided. In fact, it is now viewed as a plus because meetings are more flexible and efficient, conducted using Internet based technologies. Rainforth Grau now enjoys the benefits of a national partner because IMAGINiT ensures they are exposed to larger IT trends and broader market intelligence that may not be surfacing yet in their region, but may impact their ability to compete in the future.



“We plan to work with IMAGINiT over the long run so our team here can concentrate on great design,” said Jamison. “At the same time, thanks to IMAGINiT’s inside track, we harness the best technology as it continues to evolve.”

About IMAGINiT Technologies

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