

Hunter Water Australia's export-winning risk assessment solutions hinge on MindManager

Hunter Water Australia Pty Ltd (HWA) has developed unique methods for assessing the risks involved in managing the tens of billions of dollars of physical assets owned by its water industry clients in North America utilising MindManager software.

A subsidiary company of Hunter Water Corporation in Newcastle, HWA specialises in optimising the management of existing infrastructure through process optimisation and risk assessment techniques that develop practical and cost effective solutions to water and wastewater issues.

According to General Manager, Jim Keary, use of the MindManager visual personal productivity and collaboration solution from Mindjet to download information from the minds of customers engineers, operators and other experts, plays a key role in company's innovative risk assessment process.

Jim said: In the technical world, experts traditionally assessed the risk for physical assets qualitatively using a ranking system never in hard dollars. We lead the world in assessing the failure risk of water industry assets in dollar terms. Since many issues relating to risk are lodged in water industry peoples minds, we have evolved ways of downloading their knowledge in a systematic way, using the MindManager software solution.

Mindjet visually connects ideas, information and people to save time, solve real business problems, improve business processes, and drive innovation.

HWA's quantitative risk assessment solutions are enabling HWA to grow sales in the traditionally conservative US and Canadian water and wastewater industry markets, winning export dollars for Australia.

The assessment process involves a complex range of GIS, spreadsheet and other applications to build a series of elaborate models. However, critical input comes from customers and other industry experts, which is accessed through MindManager.

We opted for an interactive tool that's people friendly and gives our clients the ownership they want, said Jim Keary. Using MindManager allows clients to see their information being built up and ultimately transformed into our strategies. The credibility of their answers is paramount.

He added: You can buy commercial software to assess risk, but it's all based on qualitative and ranking techniques. Our clients include the more enterprising water utilities in North America that are chasing genuine bottom-line gains and prefer to make hard dollar decisions. Having seen what they are achieving, other industry players have begun to utilise our services too.

According to Jim, the water industry is highly capital intensive, with high capital expenditure and relatively low revenue. Success hinges on good ongoing management of fixed assets, and thoroughly understanding the risks is critically important. A city of one million people usually has assets in water and waste of around \$4-\$6 billion. Running out of water or flooding streets with sewerage have major social consequences and people in these organisations can often be managing residual risks in excess of \$1 billion per annum.

We quantify that risk and develop a range of mitigating strategies to manage them effectively, from improved operations, maintenance and replacement regimes through to better contingency plans, said Jim. Our modern risk management techniques are changing the face of asset management for these clients.

Initially HWA used whiteboards to glean technical input for risk assessment, but MindManager's visual collaborate approach proved to be far more effective. Today he is working on projects with Mindjet specialists in San Francisco to automate the process of accessing technical information from people.

He says: MindManager transcends the boundary between technical processes and people, and that's why it's so valuable. Most organisations use it for people interactions like consultations, but for us it's a technical application with a

people interface. We see enormous potential for MindManager in technical applications.

Jim Keary has used MindManager for years, from version 4 through to the current MindManager8. He encourages staff at HWA to push the boundaries of its use, and says that clients who use it for downloading ideas universally continue to use it for their own internal projects. Jim also uses MindManager as a presentation and interactive tool in his consulting work with great success.

About Hunter Water Australia

Hunter Water Australia Pty Limited (HWA) is a wholly owned subsidiary of Hunter Water Corporation (HWC), an industry leader in the supply of water and sewerage services. HWC supplies these services to around 500,000 people in the lower Hunter Valley area of NSW.

HWA provides the water industry with a one-stop-shop which encompasses a continuum of skills and services from strategic and concept design through to project delivery and subsequent operations management and training. Its operations background provides a platform which enables the team to offer practical and proven solutions to a diverse range of water and wastewater issues that confront the industry.

HWA specialises in getting the most out of existing infrastructure and assets through process optimisation and risk assessment that leads to practical and cost effective solutions to water and wastewater issues.

About Mindjet

Mindjet provides collaboration and personal productivity solutions that visually connect ideas, information and people to save time, improve business processes and drive innovation. Mindjet is the only company to combine a visual productivity application (mind mapping) with a comprehensive collaboration platform. So whether you are driving the sales process, managing a project, building a strategic plan, running a brainstorming session,

conducting a meeting, or simply getting organised, Mindjet helps you succeed with almost any business or personal productivity challenge.

Used by more than 1.5 million professionals around the world in six out of every 10 of the companies listed in the Fortune 100, Mindjet solutions dramatically boost productivity and team effectiveness. Surveys across several industries show that Mindjet can increase productivity by up to 25 percent by making meetings, common communications and project management tasks more efficient and effective. Mindjets software and web-based solutions include the worlds leading visual productivity application, document and file sharing, secure workspaces, web conferencing. Mindjet products are available for free trial or purchase at www.mindjet.com/products/trials or through an extensive partner network at www.mindjet.com/partners. Founded in 1997, Mindjet is headquartered in San Francisco and has offices throughout the U.S., Europe and Asia.

Mindjet distributors in Australia are: Aquion - sales@aquion.com.au; Mindsystems - www.mindsystems.com; and Lifeboat Distribution - www.lifeboatdistribution.com.

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