

RDS benefits from easy-to-use software modules

PI Integrated

PI Integrated has led the way in providing easy-to-use plant design solutions for the process and petrochemical industries for more than 15 years.

Its FlexCAD family of equipment layout and piping design software provides highly productive 3-D and 2-D solutions to both owner/operators as well as engineering procurement companies in the design, construction and operations of process plants.

One company that uses PI Integrated's software extensively is Richard Design Services (RDS).

Based in Nederland, Texas, RDS is an all-purpose engineering and design company that offers a wide range of "in-house" and "farm-out" services associated with the petrochemical industry. From consulting and project management to scope development and drafting services, RDS offers full-service engineering and design capabilities.

The personnel at RDS have a broad range of experience in engineering and design. The company's owners have more than 50 years of combined experience in the refining and petrochemical industry. This background served as the basis for the formation of RDS, and many of the company's design team members have extensive knowledge gained from previous careers in plant design.

Adapting to new realities

In addition to working on projects with clients such as Valero, Total Petrochemicals, Motiva and ExxonMobil, the RDS staff is focused on becoming one of the leading engineering and construction firms in the petrochemical industry. To do so, RDS is developing its personnel to be skilled plant layout and piping designers, while at the same time paying close attention to safety, quality and integrity.

Ronnie Theriot, RDS's IT manager, believes the company has an elite staff that is dedicated to delivering "a quality product with the utmost integrity."

"The future of RDS is very bright as we've exploded into the petrochemical industry and

established our name and reputation as being one that companies can count on for any industrial engineering or construction need," he said.

But Theriot also recognizes that RDS will have to adapt to new realities in the future.

"The recent labor shortages, especially as it pertains to experienced engineers and designers, has definitely been something RDS has had to face and will continue to face," he said.

For that reason, RDS places much emphasis on using software that will allow it to bring new employees up to speed quickly so they can make an immediate contribution.

FlexCAD — Accuracy and speed

Theriot attributes RDS' selection of PI Integrated's 2-D FlexCAD modules as a plant layout and piping design solution to the fact that its ease of use has made it a popular choice for many working in the petrochemical industry.

"The benefits are that much of the manpower working in this area is familiar with FlexCAD," he said. "We utilize it on a daily basis on several of our projects. The program is easy to learn and use, therefore making training minimal."

"In just a few days a new user can be up to speed with PI Integrated's software. That means the employee can be productive in a short amount of time. If a person has some practical experience and some basic CAD experience, he can come in and contribute very quickly."

Theriot has made use of many of PI Integrated's software packages since entering the field more than 18 years ago.

He frequently utilizes the IDS-PIPE module when developing layouts, arrangements and piping plans. The fact that IDS-PIPE has a fast learning curve for AutoCAD end-users is a feature that Theriot particularly likes, as it benefits fast-track projects. The intelligence behind the IDS-PIPE module resides in attributed data nodes for standard equipment.

"The program is easy to work with and gives the user quick access to most all of the

valve, flanges, fittings and steel members in the industry," he said.

RDS also uses IDS-ISO, a specification-driven creation of intelligent spool drawings and associated reports.

"We use IDS-ISO extensively to generate bills of material for long-lead-time aspects of our projects," Theriot said. "The package allows you to put together an isometric drawing pretty quickly. The people in the field are ultimately going to get these drawings, and they are the ones who will build based on them. It makes it easy to generate the types of drawings required for production. In the end, IDS-ISO saves us a lot of time."

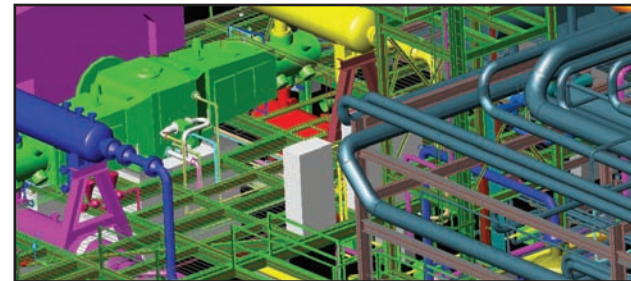
RDS also enjoys the benefits of working with two other software packages provided by PI Integrated, IDS-FLOW and IDS-STEEL.

A complete module for the creation of process flow diagrams (PFDs) as well as P&IDs, IDS-FLOW features in-situ intelligence that resides in attributed data nodes for process and mechanical equipment, process lines, valves and instrumentation. Like IDS-PIPE, this module especially benefits fast-track projects with its 24-hour self-learning curve. And its quick implementation requires minimal IT resource.

The IDS-STEEL module aids in the creation of intelligent structural and civil orthographic drawings of different varieties, including equipment structure and pipe racks. As in other FlexCAD modules, drawing intelligence resides in attributed data nodes for American Institute of Steel Construction (AISC) steel shape members and other structural, civil and architectural components. Included in the IDS-STEEL module are a steel library, equipment and piping representations and routines for architectural drawings.

The piping professionals

PI Integrated has taken a "back-to-basics" approach to process and petrochemical plant design software that reflects the experience



FlexCAD 3DX bridges 2-D ease-of-use and 3-D productivity.

and intuitiveness of a professional piper.

Those are the qualities that show through every time Theriot and the staff at RDS works with PI Integrated.

"We have a good working relationship," he said. "PI Integrated has always been there to assist us. They have always been very helpful with any of our support needs whether it be a FlexCAD issue or even an AutoCAD issue."

PI Integrated's desire to provide superior customer service is evident every step of the way. After the sale, its Houston-based staff makes it a point to provide on-site training for users lacking experience with its software packages. That means customers can begin their next project without delay.

The company's newly designed Web site also contains several features that customers and prospective customers will find helpful. A discussion forum allows individuals to interact with others on any software-related topic. The PI Integrated site also has information related to licensing, a link to receive a 30-day product trial and a Web demonstration that displays the company's line of products.

The site also provides more information about the impressive features and affordable pricing of the IDS-FLOW, IDS-PIPE, IDS-STEEL and IDS-ISO modules, as well as PI Integrated's second-generation FlexPLANT family of equipment layout and piping design programs that augments its 2-D FlexCAD packages with powerful 3-D capabilities.

Join RDS and the 3,500 others that have already experienced the quick-start, ease-of-use and flexible implementation of PI Integrated's industrial design series.

For more information, visit www.flexplant.com or call (713) 862-7242. □

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