



FirstEnergy Selects Autodesk to Modernize Utility Distribution System

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Autodesk Helps Operator of Nation's Fifth-Largest Investor-Owned Electric

System Realize Enhanced Utility Network Design and Management

SAN RAFAEL, Calif., April 26 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Autodesk, Inc. (Nasdaq: ADSK) today announced FirstEnergy, the operator of the nation's fifth-largest investor-owned electric system, has chosen to expand its use of Autodesk's geospatial products and services to create an enhanced platform for utility distribution network design and management. Building on existing Autodesk investments that allow for the integration of geographic and design data, FirstEnergy will deploy a new web-based solution to more effectively create, manage, and share geospatial data from its utility distribution system throughout the enterprise. As a result, FirstEnergy expects to gain competitive advantage through improved customer responsiveness and satisfaction, increased system reliability and reduced operating costs.

(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20050415/SFF034LOGO>)

Based in Akron, Ohio, FirstEnergy provides retail energy and related services to 4.4 million customers in Ohio, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. The company has been using an Autodesk(R) Geographic Information System (GIS) for ten years that is recognized as one of the most successful enterprise GIS implementations worldwide in terms of stability, scalability, and performance. Over 20,000 new design projects are created in the system each month by its 2,000 users. It is also the system of record for all FirstEnergy distribution system physical infrastructure and circuit connectivity models and several critical downstream systems depend of its availability, including work management and outage management.

While the current system is recognized for its industrial-strength back-end, FirstEnergy needed a modernized front-end user interface for its designers and a more efficient way to share its rich geospatial information with non-technical users. To facilitate a safe and rapid deployment, a global team from Autodesk(R) Consulting will work closely with FirstEnergy to upgrade its existing Autodesk and Oracle database technologies, deploy Autodesk Map(R) 3D 2005 to 600 designers allowing them to create, manage, and share spatial data with complete engineering precision, and to make the information accessible to over 1400 additional users via the web through Autodesk MapGuide(R) 6.5. Autodesk Consulting will also ensure effective knowledge transfer for the new system to FirstEnergy, so that FirstEnergy personnel can maintain and support the Autodesk solution.

The new Autodesk solution will give FirstEnergy employees more direct, intuitive access to the geospatial information they need in order to do their jobs better. For example, circuit reliability index (CRI) maps are used by management to proactively monitor distribution circuit reliability and reduce outages by deploying field resources more effectively. The new system will provide FirstEnergy's Energy Delivery team with access to this vital information anytime, anywhere via a Web browser in just seconds. In addition, expenses such as paper and shipping will be significantly reduced.

"The solution we're deploying with Autodesk -- particularly gaining web-based, real-time access to up-to-date, accurate circuit reliability index maps for each customer -- will help differentiate FirstEnergy from its competitors," said Brad Ewing, vice president of Energy Delivery at FirstEnergy. "In fact, this initiative represents one of the most significant advances in my 22-year career at FirstEnergy."

"FirstEnergy's Energy Delivery team understands how to use CAD and GIS information for competitive advantage," said Chris Bradshaw, vice president of Autodesk's Infrastructure Solutions Division. "FirstEnergy's decision to enlist Autodesk in solving an enterprise-wide challenge further validates our approach to helping utility companies use geospatial and design data to better serve their customers."

Utility Solutions From Autodesk

Autodesk helps utilities solve critical business challenges by providing comprehensive solutions that incorporate best-in-class technology with value-added consulting services. These solutions leverage Autodesk's partnerships with other leading technology providers large and small, including Microsoft, Oracle, SAP, and hundreds of independent application developers worldwide. Through Autodesk Consulting, customers gain access to the foremost experts with Autodesk technology, deep industry and project management expertise, and direct access to Autodesk's product engineering groups. For more information, visit www.autodesk.com/utilities.

About Autodesk

Autodesk, Inc. is wholly focused on ensuring that great ideas are turned into reality. With six million users, Autodesk is the world's leading software and services company for the building, manufacturing, infrastructure, digital media, and wireless data services fields. Autodesk's solutions help customers create, manage, and share their data and digital assets more effectively. As a result, customers turn ideas into competitive advantage by becoming more productive, streamlining project efficiency, and maximizing profits.

Founded in 1982, Autodesk is headquartered in San Rafael, California. For additional information about Autodesk, please visit www.autodesk.com.

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