CASE STUDY

Knovel®

AMEC

Improved productivity and reliable insights for a global engineering community

SUMMARY

Knovel provides AMEC’s global community of engineers with efficient access to reliable insights to support the development of profitable, safe and sustainable services.
**Knovel provides AMEC engineers with high-integrity industrial process and design information, enabling ‘well-substantiated designs’.

As one of the world’s leading engineering, project management and consultancy companies, AMEC’s goal is to deliver profitable, safe and sustainable projects and services for its customers in the oil and gas, minerals and metals, clean energy, environment and infrastructure markets.

**Enabling global, multidisciplinary teams**

From its initial stages in the UK lead works industry in 1848 to subsequent operations in stone, piping and other construction activities, AMEC has achieved world-class results by combining skill sets across multiple disciplines. As AMEC grows, the company aims to boost overall productivity by becoming more efficient. Arming global teams with technical information that is globally accessible, up-to-date, and trusted, is a requirement that ultimately brought them to Knovel.

After years of using content from in-house libraries and content found via web-based Google searches, one of AMEC’s chief process engineers discovered Knovel and brought it the attention of Jacek Morawski, AMEC’s Director of Engineering for Oil Sands and Natural Resources Americas. “I have to assure my organization of the technical integrity of what we produce,” says Morawski. So he polled his office to determine if people were interested in Knovel. In Morawski’s words, “there was a resounding ‘Yes’... and because we felt that this was something that could be used by more offices...we went to all the offices in North and South America... and we had the same response from all those offices.”

Of course, with a multi-billion dollar company like AMEC, corporate decisions involve more than just taking a poll. Various divisions in the company now subscribe to Knovel based on a combination of factors including, “size of collection, ease of use, the up-to-date collections, special features, pricing, relevancy of materials and [that it had] online global availability from all offices of AMEC.”

**Breadth of reliable technical information to support strategic initiatives**

Now the Natural Resources Americas, Power and Process Americas, Power and Process Europe, and Environment and Infrastructure businesses of AMEC use Knovel to provide engineers with the high-integrity industrial process and design information they need to produce what Morawski calls “well-substantiated designs.” Moreover, because AMEC Oil Sands has every engineering discipline represented, including process, instrumentation and controls, electrical, piping, civil, structural, architectural, mechanical, technical safety and engineering systems—in Morawski’s words, “Pretty much well the whole gamut”—this enormous breadth of technical information puts AMEC’s strategic initiatives in direct alignment with Knovel’s wide range of engineering and scientific content all the more.

The extent to which AMEC’s work and Knovel’s support reaches across the engineering spectrum can be seen in the following examples from four of the company’s engineers/technologists.
Reliable, accurate information for solving problems

While working on equipment certification issues to ensure that installation in certain hazardous locations was tenable, one AMEC Senior Technologist reported that “Knovel had content that allowed [him] to confirm/cross reference IEC certifications being quoted by the manufacturer.” Reliable, accurately sourced information from Knovel helped him get the job done.

A third Lead Engineer at AMEC appreciated both Knovel’s discipline-specific reference materials and the availability of industry standard texts. “Access to recognized handbooks is important,” he explained, “for credible study, report and design criteria, etc.” In general he praised Knovel’s “access to credible technical sources on many subjects almost instantaneously.” In particular he described a specific process issue relating to dust control. In that case, Knovel helped to determine some design parameters at a macro level. All in all, he said, “[Knovel] is a big boost to productivity.”

“The information from the site has been very useful in my projects and deliverables” said a Senior Industrial & Commercial Technologist about Knovel. “I believe this is a strong tool for engineers and technical personnel who want to spend less time/money in getting information that would impact productivity. I would highly recommend this solution.”

Simply put, Morawski says of Knovel: “We’re happy with the quality of the material we’re able to access.”

HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE KNOVEL TO SEARCH FOR INFORMATION?

- 60% use Knovel once per month
- More than 30% use Knovel weekly
- More than 60% use Knovel’s interactive data analysis tools for problem solving

Another Senior Mechanical Engineer “used [Knovel] to research a design method for rectangular tanks and vessels.” The information he discovered among Knovel’s references “proved helpful in figuring out how difficult a design problem that really is.” Thanks to Knovel, however, he found resources “that walked [him] through a very comprehensive design method.”

In an annual survey of over 150 engineers:

87% of AMEC respondents report that Knovel helps them in their work/projects
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Visit www.elsevier.com/rd-solutions or contact your nearest Elsevier office.

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