

YOUR WINDOW TO GOLDFER CALGARY

DECEMBER 2011

PIPELINE

EQUIS FOR ALL CANADA
...and beyond

Two weeks on
THE TUNDRA

LIONS, TIGERS AND BST

**FROM THE ROCKIES
TO THE ANDES**

Our Peruvian Journey

EQulS for all Canada... and beyond

With Matthew Thill and Jonathan Smith in Calgary, Sanjay Advani in Fort Collins, Paul Hurst in Ottawa and Peter Guy in Denver based on a story idea by Alice Fung in Burnaby

Matthew kayaking in Johnstone Strait near Port Hardy, BC

It was 2005. Sitting in his Mt. Laurel, New Jersey office, Senior Scientist Peter Guy assessed the challenge before him. Several Principals and Associates were concerned about the quality of our data, mishandling and untimely entry processes. They had asked Peter in his first year with Golder to find a solution that would centralize and secure data, protect an original copy from the “monkeying around” common in multiple copies of Access and Excel. He needed a solution that was flexible, consistent and available to everyone at Golder.

After some research, he settled on EQulS (Environment Quality Information System) sold by Earthsoft, an American vendor. Impressed with its capabilities, Peter championed EQulS resulting in various American offices adopting it.

Then a few Canadian offices jumped on the EQulS

bandwagon, creating a loose conglomeration of people in North America pushing it along. A good thing makes its rounds around the Golder universe. Not surprisingly, EQulS has become popular outside North America.

“It is used in Italy and Australia. Our South Africa and China operations are considering it for their use, and we’re providing them with information and practical experience to help them make a final decision,” Peter says.

Golder purchased and started implementing the system in early 2006. As resellers of EQulS, Golder Associates S.r.l. have also landed a couple of clients.

“But for now, the focus is on making it the consistent information management solution of choice for data management for Golder in

Canada. There is also a need to align all the current users because different people use it differently and there are various versions in use,” says Matthew Thill, Application Specialist in Calgary’s Information Management (IM) Division who is also Project Lead on the EQulS implementation across Canada.

PART OF A NATIONAL IM ARCHITECTURE

EQulS is one element of the Canadian Information Management Team’s roadmap to develop a national IM architecture. The desire is to establish a unified coordinated approach to tools, processes and the IM organizational structure.

The team has formed subcommittees to examine key tools such as EQulS, gINT, emLine and acQuire. Each subcommittee will draw “super users” from relevant disciplines to test, identify and fix issues, enhance, train and serve as champions.

EQulS is the furthest ahead.

RISING ABOVE EXCEL

A Project Scientist and Database Specialist in our Fort Collins office, Sanjay Advani is an EQulS user and champion. Over the years, he has observed a rapid increase in the amount of data environmental scientists and engineers are able to collect.

“Standard tools that we used to manage our data – paper data sheet, Excel or even Access databases – are not meant to manage the amount and type of data we now collect. EQulS gives us a tool that can match our needs,” Sanjay says.

Paul Hurst, Environmental Engineer reports our Ottawa office uses EQulS to manage environmental data for the majority of our ongoing landfill and quarry monitoring projects.

“EQulS is also used regularly for both large contaminated site projects and one time Phase II ESA drilling and sampling projects. The ability to load laboratory data directly to EQulS and output report-ready chemistry tables already compared to relevant guidelines in a matter of minutes is a great benefit and huge time saver,” Paul says.

For larger datasets, one can easily create graphs, calculate statistics, and extract whatever data is needed for the task at hand.

STANDARDIZED PORTABLE ‘ONE GOLDER’ QUALITY

Before EQulS, people were using different tools to manage data with different ways and protocols to enter data. The reports generated looked

completely different.

Sanjay believes EQulS is a tool that standardizes data entry, quality assurance and quality control processes. The result is greater data quality and integrity. Our reports too become standardized.

“Data uploaded to EQulS is subject to a number of quality checks that must be resolved before they can become part of the record,” he says.

Golder has successfully implemented large scale data management projects in water quality, soil quality, geotechnical data, with millions of rows of data and counting. But now, project data managed in EQulS is easily portable between offices and even different holding companies.

Peter Guy considers EQulS a key tool in making decisions during Remedial Investigation / Feasibility Studies (RI/FS). It provides a central secure location for data to be accessible by all project staff, and provides interactive tools for data evaluation.

“In general, using EQulS as the data management tool, Golder has shown tangible cost savings on various projects related to data validation, database management and the creation of report-ready tables and figures,” Peter says.

“This brings us closer to our goal of One Golder,” Sanjay notes.

CLIENT-FOCUSED BENEFITS

“EQulS is a more efficient way to manage data. This means reduced cost, quicker turnaround time which of course means happier clients,” Matthew says.

“In fact many clients are already working with EQulS and expect us to adopt it. Many more are planning to adopt it. The fact that we already have it is definitely a point in our favour,” he points out.

Jonathan Smith, Calgary Information Management Division Manager, feels

implementing EQulS as a standard will help us develop work and reputation with clients. Many consultants in the industry already use EQulS to input and integrate all their environmental data and Jonathan feels it is essential for us to be on par.

It integrates well with other specialized discipline analysis tools. For instance, EQulS is one of the data components that could feed into Golder Orientis – our Integrated Data Management application which boasts strong presentation capabilities for clients. EQulS collates, processes and analyzes data before feeding it into Golder Orientis.

ALIGNING BY END 2011

The offices in Canada that adopted EQulS implemented it in different ways. In a way this is a commentary on EQulS’s built-in flexibility – a strength.

“But without a governance structure in place, it also becomes a bit of a weakness. Now we have to bring all of the different implemented formats into line while keeping everybody happy,” Matthew says.

Ottawa, probably the most advanced office in terms of using EQulS, is bringing their expertise and experience to the national system.

The team hope to complete Phase I by end of November 2011.

Phase I is the implementation of a standardized lab and field data entry process; an internal process linking them; and some standardized reports across all Canadian offices.

“It is helping our One Golder approach in its cross-border origin and orientation. As we implement EQulS across the board in Canada, perhaps our American counterparts may consider doing the same,” says Matthew enthusiastically. ☞