

Lulu firm inks deal for Aconex service

THE COMPANY in charge of the construction of Bahrain's US\$1.2 billion Lulu Island development project has signed a deal with Aconex for the use of its online information management service.

The Lulu Tourism Company has been using the Australian-based firm's document management and control system to better organise and access information for the massive project since June. All documents such as plans, drawings, and correspondence relating to the development are available online for anyone working on the project.

Users simply type key words into a search engine and any matching documents will immediately be available for them.

The system is expected to increase efficiency due to the time saved finding and accessing information, lower costs relating to document printing and reduce the risk to the developer arising from information loss and contractual disputes.

"It is a big project and we have to get organised," said Waleed Hayek, construction manager at Lulu Tourism Company.

"We hope it will have a knock-on effect on productivity and cost savings," he added.

Due to be completed in 2009, Lulu Island is a multi-purpose development consisting of vil-

las, apartments, a hotel, shopping arcades, restaurants and other facilities on a man-made island in Manama, Bahrain.

Leigh Jasper, Aconex managing director, said this was the first contract his firm had won in Bahrain and followed deals with Abu Dhabi's 'Between the Bridges' development project and the Bags Wood international architecture firm's Dubai operation. He said the cost of the system, which is billed on a monthly basis, depended on the size and the complexity of the project and was not related to the number of users.

"The major benefits for our clients are, firstly, they will save costs because they are moving documents over the web, it is a lot more efficient than couriering them, particularly when you have got consultants spread across the world," Jasper said.

"The second thing is it increases productivity on the project so that the people on the projects, the document controllers, the project managers, don't have to spend heaps of time trying to find information," he added.

Jasper said the third reason people use this is to manage the risk on a project. This was particularly crucial for owners and developers where they had a number of companies working for them on the project.