

EarthCam CEO outlines timelapse process of the UAE's Louvre Abu Dhabi

by Nikhil Pereira on Mar 31, 2018

EarthCam has played a crucial role in documenting the Middle East's construction sector, with its key contribution being to introduce developers to the concept of construction site cameras.

In a February 2017 interview with Construction Week, EarthCam's chief executive officer, Brian Cury, explained that developers had "traditionally passed off a security camera as a construction camera".

However, there are vast differences between both products, primarily in the type of technology that is used in the two applications.

EarthCam was founded in 1996, and has since gained a firm footing in global construction markets by providing technology services – mainly live-streaming video, time-lapse construction cameras, and photography documentation – for corporate and government clients.

More than two decades down the line, the firm shows no signs of slowing down. Cury tells Construction Week that the company's most recent launch is a software that integrates virtual reality (VR).

"We launched the VR Site Tour app recently, which allows users to connect wirelessly to a growing line of inexpensive 360° VR cameras from their mobile devices and instantly start sharing 'street view' images, which are geo-tagged to site plans for a comprehensive view of progress," he explains, adding: "A single 360° photo captures all four walls, floors, and the ceiling, providing as much information as eight separate traditional photos, making this imaging technology a smarter way to monitor, document, and promote construction progress."

Photos captured by the software are automatically assembled into a VR guided tour, giving stakeholders the ability to remotely inspect each room and explore the jobsite in real-time every day.

"With EarthCam's environmental data technology, each image is noted with temperature, humidity, and dew points as well, providing critical data for daily work relying on particular environmental conditions," Cury says.

"The 'do-it-yourself' nature of the application has taken the time-consuming, multiple processes of traditional jobsite photography, and reduced them to a straightforward solution for everyday interior documentation."

Over the last 22 years, EarthCam has pulled off a series of firsts, which includes the world's first outdoor gigapixel panorama camera system. The patent-pending technology, Cury says, is able to deliver multi-billion pixel clarity for monitoring and archiving important projects and events across the globe. He also reveals that EarthCam documented \$225bn of construction projects in 2016.

In the region, EarthCam's most notable recent development is the completion of an eight-year timelapse of the Louvre Abu Dhabi museum.

"The Louvre Abu Dhabi is an epic architectural achievement, and we are honoured to have been the timelapse technology provider for the project," Cury says. "I'm proud of the work our dedicated team has produced over the past eight years, documenting this incredible Jean Nouvel masterpiece."

The video cut together 70,000 hours of archived footage taken from 10 MegaPixelCam timelapse cameras, placed at 50 different angles across the site throughout the construction process. More than one million high-resolution images were taken over the eight years.

Cury says the camera systems were designed to withstand the environmental challenges posed by the coastal landscape of the UAE. EarthCam's regional team maintained the cameras and installed them in strategic locations, and the timelapse footage was later put together by the firm's movie editing team.

The future looks bright for EarthCam, which is expanding its 4ha campus in northern New Jersey in the US, and is maintaining its 13 additional offices worldwide. On the business front, EarthCam has joined forces with Aconex, a digital platform provider for managing construction, infrastructure, and energy projects, in a move that is expected to further EarthCam's audience.

Cury explains: "This [partnership] will help us integrate our high-quality imagery content into Aconex's software. Like Aconex, EarthCam serves international customers in many industry sectors including infrastructure, sports stadiums, and healthcare. Our



shared expertise with projects spanning a wide variety of applications further highlights the synergies between our two companies.”

The partnership will allow Aconex to offer its users high-quality megapixel imagery to document important construction projects of all sizes. Photos captured through EarthCam’s systems will be shareable through Aconex’s dashboards, and result in streamlining the ability to make informed decisions more efficiently.

Commenting on the partnership, co-founder and senior vice president of product and engineering at Aconex, Rob Phillipot, says: “We are constantly expanding our ecosystem by connecting our users with powerful service providers like EarthCam, empowering our user network to extract that value from their data.

“With a single, consolidated view of all project information in Aconex, our clients can get clearer insights and make fast, informed decisions,” he adds.

Cury concludes: “This partnership allows us to further our goal of providing industry professionals with the most valuable visual content to efficiently analyse and communicate project progress.”