

# LEED AUTOMATION



**Dhruv Gami,**  
Business Solutions  
Manager, USGBC



When it comes to sustainable building, USGBC sets the standards. They see the trends and show leadership. And they're global. We're excited that this might be another USGBC-led trend that is easily exported around the world.



*Dave Weinerth,*  
EVP Marketing,  
SCLenergy

Sitting in the Greenbuild 2011 LEED Master Series on LEED Automation last October, I was struck once again by the potential that LEED Automation has not only for the thousands of LEED project teams working on LEED buildings, but also for the building and tech industry itself. For those of who haven't heard of LEED Automation yet, it's a program that was launched by USGBC at the end of 2010 that, in layman's terms, opens up the backend of LEED Online to third-party technology partners. The idea may sound basic, but it has never been done before and it is making the LEED project management, documentation and certification process faster and easier. To date there are 16 technology partners in USGBC's LEED Automation Program and every single one of them is bringing new solutions to the table to enhance the LEED certification process, including innovations in data collection, information and content integration and project management.

"LEED Automation allows USGBC and the technology companies to create multi-party interactions versus point-to-point communications between various software applications and IT systems," said Mahesh Ramanujam, COO, USGBC. "This makes the LEED documentation and certification process much more flexible and enables our systems to talk to one another with the push of a button."

LEED Automation has three main functions: opening the LEED documentation process to third-party solution providers; providing new opportunities for unified views of project data across multiple information systems; and accelerating and standardizing communication about LEED projects.

Late last year USGBC also launched its online App Lab as part of the LEED Automation Program. The lab currently features eight cutting-edge applications developed by LEED Automation Partners. The App Lab provides opportunities to discover automation solutions, learn about new functions, read user reviews and link to partner websites.

Each partner solution featured in the App Lab is a fully functional software tool designed to help LEED projects teams and administrators accelerate certification tasks and better integrate their workflows with LEED Online. LEED Automation Providers are helping clients apply these new tools to manage LEED projects, standardize credit submittals, monitor energy performance and evaluate and select building products.

"The LEED App Lab has been highly anticipated as a way to expand the presence of green building," said Scot Horst, Senior Vice President, LEED, USGBC. "LEED already embodied innovation. Now we are pushing LEED toward an entirely new world of possibilities."

The stories our LEED Automation Partners tell are so exciting. David Pratt is President, of LoraxPro, designers of LEED project management software that helps simplify and manage LEED certification projects. "For us, it was important to work with USGBC and LEED Online; the relationship is important to our business model. We believe LEED Automation is the next phase in the evolution of the sustainable building industry. Automating the process is what happens when an industry moves from being a startup to being mature. That's what's going on in our industry now."

LoraxPro supports various versions of LEED rating systems and is designed to increase the communication and collaboration between project members, something that USGBC is very intent on facilitating. Communication and collaboration among the LEED project team have been cited as the top indicators of LEED certification success.

## LEED Automation Partners:

ecoScorecard  
Indie Energy  
SCLenergy  
PJS  
GBIG  
IES  
Sefaira  
BOPT  
Greengrade  
Loraxpro  
Serious Energy  
New Building Insite  
Noveda Technologies, Inc.  
GreenWizard  
SAGE for Buildings  
Vorpaware

LEED Automation has great promise to create new opportunities to add value and reduce the time spent on LEED documentation and project management. It is our hope that we will be able to lower the costs of LEED project management and raise the value and demand for green buildings.

For more information visit  
[usgbc.org/leedautomation](http://usgbc.org/leedautomation).

Through the LEED Automation program, USGBC has created a scalable foundation upon which an entire ecosystem of interoperable applications can grow to support every aspect of LEED certification and building performance optimization. This is a pathway that we did not have before; prior to automation, application developers had to be in constant reactive mode in how they approached LEED-enabled functionality, often having to manually administer LEED content changes. Today our automation partners are in a position to co-create without the versioning burden.

Added Andre Poremski, USGBC's Creative Director, "The LEED development process has always followed the open source model. We didn't create LEED ourselves—USGBC convened the building industry to create LEED. However, we didn't follow through on that model when it came to LEED delivery. That really hindered our ability to stay nimble as LEED grew and become increasingly sophisticated. Now we have the foundation to deliver LEED faster and at massive scale—convening the technology industry to give the building industry choices and new capabilities. It's a paradigm shift that follows what propelled the financial industry and then the technology industry (with social media). We'd like to be at the forefront of bringing that same connectedness to the building industry."

GreenWizard's Vice President of Business Development Terri Murray says that "LEED project teams use GreenWizard as a virtual workstation to centralize data and documentation, communicate internally and externally as a team, expedite assessments, and view real-time project summaries. In addition, design and construction firms can leverage business intelligence and collective experience by using GreenWizard's web-based software to clone previous projects and maintain their own proprietary virtual product library."

SCLenergy's Barry Abramson, Senior Vice President, Engineering said that only four percent of all LEED buildings currently pursue the ongoing commissioning credit. Maintaining a building's performance over time is critical to the goals of sustainable building. Making it easier to earn that credit is the service SCLenergy provides. "Everything SCLenergy does is about the ongoing performance of buildings and avoiding efficiency drift. You get everything working right, but over time systems drift. We help to minimize that," said Abramson.

Jim Duffy, Principal & Chief Software Architect of VorpWare spoke to us about its PlantLog software that works in tandem with bar coding and scanning devices to accurately monitor, record and compare the ongoing performance of building equipment and systems. "LEED certification requires you to track performance data and meet benchmarks. To make improvements, you need to know how much energy or water you're using, and where it's going," said Duffy. "PlantLog captures your EB: O&M credit data, correlates it and submits it to LEED Online at the end of each performance period."



I completely believe that when you get your building LEED-certified, you have a more valuable building and at a higher quality. That's whom we want to be partnered up with.



*David Pratt, President LoraxPro.*