

Sage Construction and Real Estate

Go where the work is:
Enabling mobility in your construction firm



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Table of Contents

Go where the work is:
Enabling mobility in your construction firm 3

Improvements through mobility..... 3

Being mobile with Sage Construction Anywhere 4

Mobility opportunities extended..... 5



Go where the work is: Enabling mobility in your construction firm

Your construction company's back office—billing, paying invoices, running financial reports, payroll, and planning logistics—is the backbone to your company's financial success. In order to move business forward, many back-office functions are dependent on an information exchange between the field and the office. Traditionally this extension has been done by paper or by phone. But today the need to access the most up-to-date business information, feed timely field information to the office, and collaborate with others has intensified—in part due to a tougher economy and higher customer expectations.

Many companies are now investing in mobility technology beyond phone, text and email to better enable their workforce. The prevalence of mobile use is now commonplace. Half of U.S. mobile phone consumers are using smart phones.¹ 122.3 million tablets are forecasted to be sold worldwide by end of 2012,² with 30 million of those tablets used inside companies.³ Like other industries, construction management is increasingly relying on real-time updates and the constant connectivity offered by mobile technologies.⁴ In construction, any next-generation mobile technology investments should include integrated and secure extensions to the heart of the business—a company's back-office financial and operations software—so that workers in the field stay informed and agile.

Improvements through mobility

A technology solution that optimizes operations is welcomed in the construction industry, but only when contractors know there will be real improvements and a strong return on investment.

For example, according to Linda Eastridge-Jordan, Sprint's industry marketing manager,⁵ construction firms could benefit greatly from mobile time-tracking technology, as it can cut down on errors and paperwork by automating the time collection and approval—letting workers clock in and out through their phones.

“Any solution that increases productivity, whether on the jobsite or in the back office, improves profit margins for construction firms that are still recovering from the recent economic conditions,” Eastridge-Jordan says.

Having access to back-office information that is the most current, no matter where you are, can also improve the management of construction projects and protect margins. Arming superintendents with information and communication capabilities with the corporate office as they walk the job site rather than requiring they spend their time within a job site trailer office, or serving as a courier to hand-carry paper timecard information, is especially appealing as every construction sector struggles to maximize the productivity of its workers.

1. www.slideshare.net/secret/E5F38n7Vl5ZuVr#btnNext
2. www.idc.com/getdoc.jsp?containerId=prUS23833612
3. www.forbes.com/sites/sap/2012/01/25/is-enterprise-enthusiasm-for-tablets-already-waning
4. www.constructech.com/news/articles/article.aspx?article_id=8873&SECTION=1
5. www.constructech.com/news/articles/article.aspx?article_id=8873&SECTION=1

Many construction companies have already recognized the opportunity that enabling mobility within their organization offers. More than 67 percent of companies that responded to a ConstructTech survey in 2011 said that they remotely report from the field, and more than half—54 percent—said they manage projects remotely. 20 percent are using remote solutions to track and maintain equipment, 37 percent report on monitoring safety, and 40 percent use mobile time tracking.⁶ Project management, scheduling and punch lists tasks are additionally handled with mobile devices in the field.

While construction companies have reported from the field for many years, more are moving away from the pen-and-paper method and are beginning to use a variety of mobile devices to deliver field reports in a more cost-effective way.

Being mobile with Sage Construction Anywhere

Given the fast-moving nature of mobility, today's business management solutions need to support the highly mobile workforce of the construction industry today and into the future. Sage Construction Anywhere provides Sage 300 Construction and Real Estate (formerly Sage Timberline Office) customers with immediate productivity and operational efficiency through tight integration with Sage back-office financial and operations software—helping construction companies mobilize project information, simplify field-to-office communication, and streamline key back-office processes, like job costing and payroll.

With Sage Construction Anywhere, users can access project-related reports housed within their back-office financial and operations software anytime, anywhere on mobile devices. This accessibility ensures workers can make decisions in the field or over their morning cup of coffee using the latest, most accurate project information available.

In early 2013, Sage Construction Anywhere will provide project team members with new capabilities to easily store and access project files including documents, drawings, and photos within a centralized, cloud-based location. By using the cloud and mobility technology, users will be able to foster collaboration and strengthen communication among the project team to avoid project missteps and delays.

Sage Construction Anywhere users will also in early 2013 be able to use mobile devices to collect, review, and approve employee time worked on a given project—and then efficiently share accurate, approved labor-related data directly with their Sage 300 Construction and Real Estate job cost and payroll software. This time reporting functionality eases the burden of time collection, review, and approval processes—and provides management with quicker visibility to labor issues in the field so adjustments at the job site can be made sooner. Visit www.SageConstructionAnywhere.com to learn more.

6. www.constructech.com/resources/subscriber_services/Default.aspx

Mobility opportunities extended

Many opportunities exist for construction and real estate companies to leverage mobility technology within their organizations. While most companies start out initially exploring the areas described in the previous pages such as providing better report access, centralized project file storage, and mobile time-tracking capabilities, there are a number of other areas where an organization could use mobile technologies for operational improvements. These could include strengthening the service work order communication with service technicians, the scheduling of subcontractors on the job site, or easing the tracking of warehouse inventory. Sage integrates its financial and operations solutions with more than 30 development partner solutions to address these mobile and other customer needs—helping companies to streamline their processes, enable mobility within their organizations, and reap the benefits of greater productivity and operating efficiency. You can learn more about Sage development partner solutions at: www.SageCRE.com/Products-and-Solutions/Additional-Solutions.

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