



SIX STEPS TO TEARING DOWN THE CONSTRUCTION PRODUCTIVITY WALL

Growth-minded contractors are embracing technology to power success...are you?





With complex projects, people and responsibilities to manage on a daily basis, achieving profitable growth in construction is a significant challenge — especially since projects often vary in size, scope and timelines. For smaller and mid-sized contractors, the key to achieving significant and stable growth is to find your productivity sweet spot and harness it.

This begins with a realistic assessment of your current processes and the technologies powering them, identifying roadblocks to productivity. Staying in the productivity sweet spot, however, means having financial and operational controls in place that let you know where you stand at any moment in time on any job. This, in turn, means investing in innovative new technologies and in the systems that better connect office operations with project teams and field staff.

We've seen first hand how contractors who resist innovating and investing in improving productivity can struggle to maintain, let alone grow, their existing businesses.

Here are six steps you should be considering right now if you want to modernize and grow.

1

Make a Move to the Cloud

It wasn't that long ago that the word "cloud" was considered a negative term among contractors. Concerns from data security to the ability to access applications had many companies approach cloud computing with trepidation. Today, most companies realize that enterprise-class cloud-based software can and does provide high levels of security, accessibility and cost savings. An early-2018 survey by Software Connect¹ on construction technology trends noted that 87% of contractors are now open to reviewing cloud/hosted software for their construction management needs.



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Cloud-based construction software is helping contractors manage work in real time — something they couldn't easily do before. Whereas previously it could take days, weeks, or more to collect and analyze construction data from multiple sources and locations, cloud-based software expands access to project information and applications beyond the back office to the field and to everyone on the project team. This allows for instant visibility into your project health and provides collaborative tools for your project teams to make more informed decisions in real time, mitigating project delays and reducing errors.

Deploying cloud software can also reduce capital expense and IT strain, eliminating the need to buy and regularly update server hardware and application software. With cloud computing, software updates can be rolled out automatically, so end users simply log in and start using new functionality. Network World in discussing cloud computing trends for 2018², noted increased cloud storage capacity, the rise of internet quality and 5G networks, and the exponential growth of cloud services are making it even easier to do business in the cloud.



2

Deploy Truly Integrated Software

One of the biggest productivity challenges you might be facing is the use of multiple software systems and data sets across different departmental and operational functions, or even worse, manual processes and collection of data. Having non-standardized data throughout the organization creates extra work when data needs to be entered [or re-entered] into multiple systems for processing. It also increases chances for mistakes, missing data, project delays, conflicts over work done or documents in place and much more.



Even when your IT department can find ways to import data between software programs or connect them with APIs, there is still a ton of work and vigilance necessary to ensure data is flowing correctly and efficiently. And, when updates are made by one software vendor, these connections points can easily break or close, causing upheaval to construction processes caught in the middle.

That's why many contractors have turned to all-inclusive enterprise resource planning (ERP) platforms that feature integration between functionality for different departments, using one set of data. From accounting to project management to HR and payroll to equipment and material management — these platforms create a one-stop shop to run your entire organization smoothly and effectively. And with more customization available and significant ROI in productivity and profitability³, contractors of all sizes are finding immediate value.

3

Go Paperless

Aside from being good for the environment, eliminating paper from the organization can have significant benefits. By going with digital documents and storing them electronically, you can increase efficiency, reduce work and mitigate chances for mistakes or lost data.

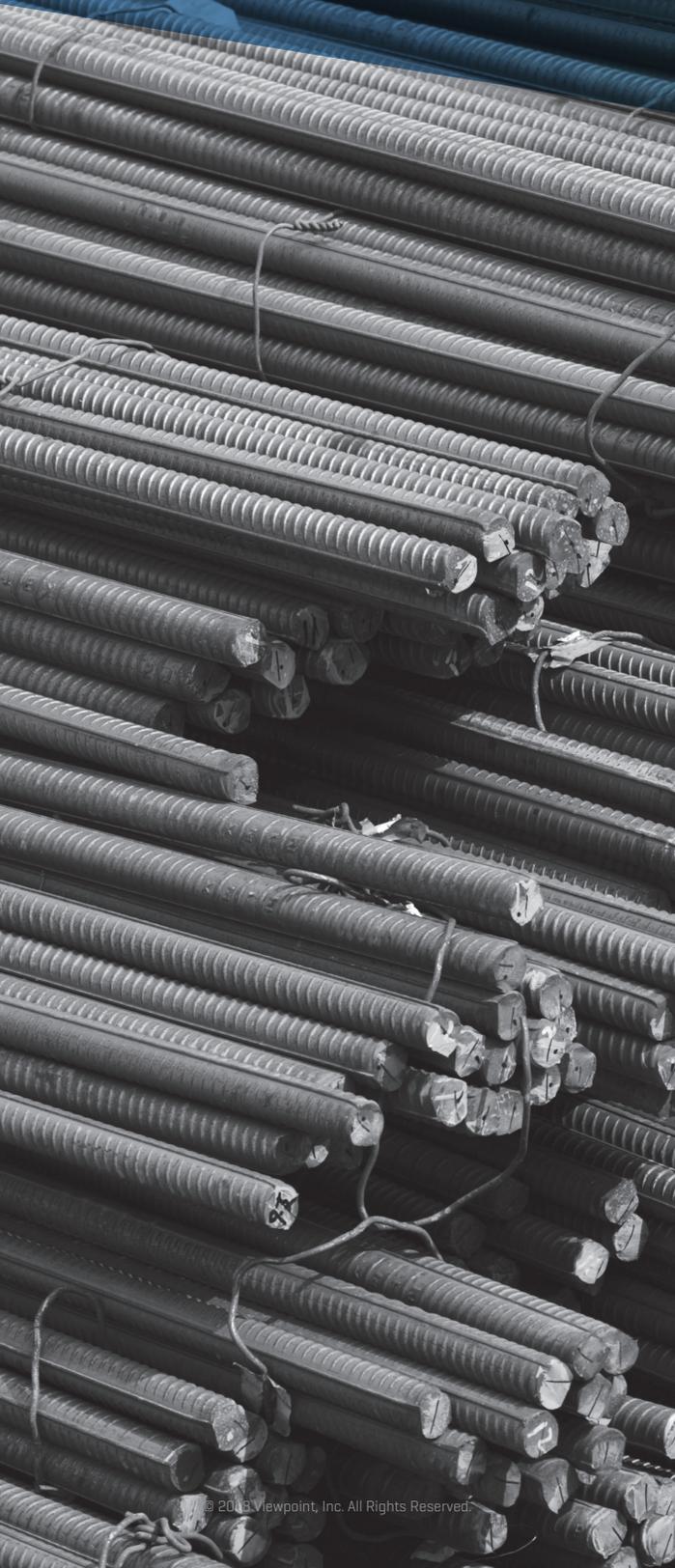
There are powerful document imaging programs available which allow paper documents like invoices, work orders and time sheets to be scanned and stored. Many construction ERP platforms include document imaging and archiving. Most modern construction software also allows users to create electronic documents and easily share them with those that need them. This cuts paper out of the equation altogether while providing complete document management that includes versioning, tracking and intuitive searches to making finding needed documentation quick and easy.



4

Embrace Automation and Workflows

Construction is often contrasted with the manufacturing industry. Unlike in manufacturing, construction work is never uniform or takes place the same location, meaning it can be next to impossible to standardize a typical construction project. But that doesn't mean that a lot of the work done in construction cannot be automated and simplified. Today's leading construction software is built to be workflow friendly — allowing you to automate many of the processes it once took hours, days, weeks, even months to complete.

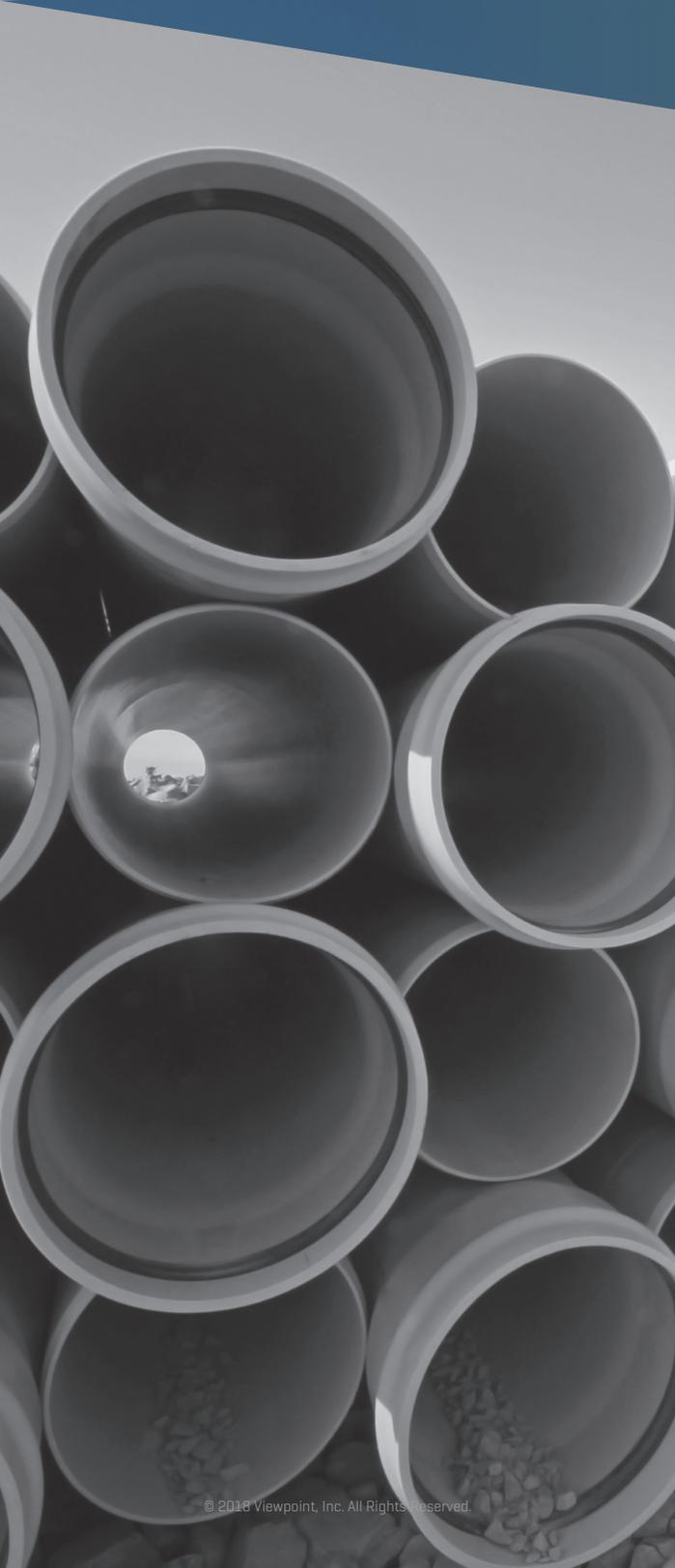


While most modern software will simplify tasks or processes, true automation and intuitively-designed workflows are a benefit of cloud-based, integrated ERP software platforms. By harnessing the real-time data and expanded collaborative access that cloud computing provides, these platforms build the automation in. Contractors are finding that streamlined workflows pushed by the software are helping to significantly boost productivity in the field. And, with customization options, you can create your own unique workflows to fit specific needs. This makes your construction data even more relevant and informative, allowing you to more easily explore new concepts and processes you might not have been able to do in the past.

5

Foster Real Collaboration Across the Entire Project Team

One of the biggest challenges in any construction project is getting everyone involved on the same page and working from the same information at all times. When project changes and updates needed to be communicated, it traditionally meant a slow, disorganized process of emails, team meetings and paper or other manual updates. Miscommunication about work, materials, costs, changes and more could easily fall through the cracks — and when they did, you could typically face project delays, rework and loss of profit.



Today's construction software, however, is eliminating these communication conundrums. Cloud computing has opened real-time access to all of your project information. Integrated software platforms are standardizing the data used. Document management, sharing and control tools are providing uniform communications in real time. Workflows, meanwhile, are ensuring the right data gets to where you need it to be and that the right work gets done the first time.

These collaborative tools and collaboration platforms that are part of construction ERP packages are ensuring that construction projects flow the way they were designed to. Risks due to lost documents, data errors or plain missed communication are mitigated. Productivity is boosted as real-time decisions can be made. Tighter controls on project costs and a reduction of wasted time and materials can allow you to realize better profit margins as well.

6

Embrace Business Intelligence and New Ways to Look at Construction Data

As technology continues to advance in everyday lives, today's leading contractors are realizing that growing their organizations requires a better understanding of the projects they create — and the data that powers them. Business intelligence used to be a buzz word that most people associated with either deeply-complex financial companies or highly-creative technology developers. Today, just about every industry is invoking some form of business intelligence practices, and construction is no exception.



The Solution? Connecting the Office, Team and Field

Viewpoint has been transforming the construction industry with technology that connects the office, team and field. For the back office, Viewpoint provides a host of integrated software solutions for contractors of all sizes to help them streamline central business functions like accounting, payroll, human resources [HR], estimating, project financial planning, equipment and materials, project management, service management and business intelligence.



OFFICE

TEAM

FIELD



On the job site, contractors leverage powerful mobile platforms to replace paper processes in the field for time capture, daily logs, punch lists, safety observations, inspections, defect management, commissioning and much more. Meanwhile, for project teams, Viewpoint provides an easy-to-use, collaborative project management platform that connects extended teams of subcontractors, suppliers, architects, owners and other key stakeholders.

These solutions are designed to let you to easily address the aforementioned six key productivity steps to modernizing operations and fueling growth. And proof is in the return on investment pudding:

A 2017 study of Viewpoint clients conducted by Hobson & Company³ showed adopters of these technologies achieved significant results. Construction organizations averaged revenue gains of 7%, costs savings of 36% and a 57% boost in productivity.

What Do Clients Say?

“

Projects are moving faster, owners are able to get more information, and we are able to share collaborative documents without waiting on anyone, the process is streamlined and we are able to deliver a faster turnaround to the owner.

— Jamie Berzon, IT Manager with SM Wilson

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It's not just software to us, it's a critical component of how we execute business, it is a trusted member of the organization and part of the fabric of what we do every single day.

— Jeff Hansen, EVP/CEO Adolphson & Peterson Construction



*Ready to modernize your construction operations and achieve the results today's leading contractors are realizing? Call Viewpoint today at **+1.800.333.3197** or visit viewpoint.com*

SOURCES:

- 1 SoftwareConnect's Construction Technology Trends — 2018 Report
- 2 Network World's 5 cloud computing trends to prepare for in 2018
- 3 Hobson & Company [2017]: Driving ROI, The Case for a Proven Construction Management Solution.