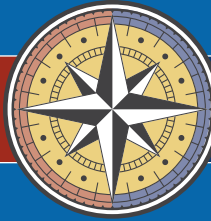


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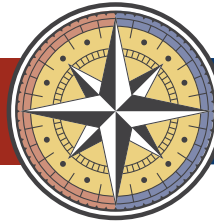


COMPASS

Document Management in Modern Business



THE CONTRACTOR'S COMPASS



EDITORIAL PURPOSE

The Contractor's Compass is the monthly educational journal of the Foundation of the American Subcontractors Association, Inc. (FASA) and part of FASA's Contractors' Knowledge Network. FASA was established in 1987 as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt entity to support research, education and public awareness. Through its Contractors' Knowledge Network, FASA is committed to forging and exploring the critical issues shaping subcontractors and specialty trade contractors in the construction industry. The journal is designed to equip construction subcontractors with the ideas, tools and tactics they need to thrive. The views expressed by contributors to The Contractor's Compass do not necessarily represent the opinions of FASA or the American Subcontractors Association, Inc. (ASA).

MISSION

To educate and equip subcontractors and suppliers with the education and resources they need to thrive in the construction industry. Additionally, FASA raises awareness about issues critical to and about construction in the United States.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Contractor's Compass is a free monthly publication for ASA members and nonmembers. For questions about subscribing, please contact communications@asa-hq.com.

ADVERTISING

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EDITORIAL SUBMISSIONS

Contributing authors are encouraged to submit a brief abstract of their article idea before providing a full-length feature article. Feature articles should be no longer than 1,500 words and comply with The Associated Press style guidelines. Article submissions become the property of ASA and FASA. The editor reserves the right to edit all accepted editorial submissions for length, style, clarity, spelling and punctuation. Send abstracts and submissions for *The Contractor's Compass* to communications@ASA-hq.com.

ABOUT ASA

ASA is a nonprofit trade association of union and non-union subcontractors and suppliers. Through a nationwide network of local and state ASA associations, members receive information and education on relevant business issues and work together to protect their rights as an integral part of the construction team. For more information about becoming an ASA member, contact ASA at 1004 Duke St., Alexandria, VA 22314-3588, (703) 684-3450, membership@ASA-hq.com, or visit the ASA Web site, www.asaonline.com.

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Dear Members and Friends of ASA—

It is quite an honor to begin my term as your ASA National President. I look forward, with great anticipation, to serve you in the best way possible.

About 17 years ago, my company, Prime Electric, became a member of ASA. At the time, my business partners asked me to be the “active” member of ASA, as they were involved in another national organization. And so I started attending chapter meetings and events. I have to admit I was a bit timid about getting involved and meeting others in our industry. First, I was asked to join a committee; later I was asked to be on the chapter board, and eventually made my way up to becoming president of ASA New Mexico.

In 2016 I attended my first SUBExcel in Miami, FL. A year later I was asked to serve on the National Board. And as they say, the rest is history. I would have never thought, 17 years ago, that I would be your ASA National President. I am blessed and honored to be in this role. You can too.

In the 44 years that I have been in the subcontracting industry and 26 years as a business owner, I have seen the many changes that have taken place. Some for the good and others, not so good. Being a part of ASA has definitely

broadened my horizon and helped me, personally, gain a wealth of knowledge and understanding in helping our company deal with the complexities that we face in our industry. ASA has been, and continues to be, the association that helps our industry move forward. Of course, if you are reading this letter, you probably already know that.

We are in the middle of the summer and with that, most of us experience severe heat, with what seems like record temperatures every year. Just a reminder to make sure your workers take the necessary steps to stay safe in the high temperatures of the summer. Hydration and frequent breaks in cooler locations are key. As with any aspect of the tasks our workers perform, safety is paramount and we want our workers to return home to their families every day. Stay cool and stay safe!

As a reminder, every ASA member is invited to attend the Think Tank meetings. Think Tank was created to serve the purpose of developing innovative ideas amongst the members who participate and to share the experiences that we all have in our businesses. I would encourage that if you have never attended a Think Tank meeting that you do so. You will walk away with a wealth of knowledge that you can take back to your companies. Our next Think Tank meeting is on September 18th in Seattle, Washington. The ASA National website has more information about it to register.

In this issue of Contractor's Compass, the topic is on Document Management. And we come at it from a wide variety of angles. Just scan the table of contents and pick one...or two. Whether it's on streamlining and easing the burden of document management, enhancing efficiencies and optimizing workflows, or something different. I encourage you

to read these articles, as I know that if you are like me, anything to help make “paperwork” easier is a huge plus.

During my tenure as President, I would like to see ASA grow. That may sound cliché, but I don't just mean in terms of numbers. I truly want to see the growth be about strength as a cohesive and collaborative association, that can make a difference in our industry. We can continue to grow in this fashion with your input and support. What you put into it, you will get out of it. I learned that - and much more - in my 17 years as a member. Please bring your fresh ideas and suggestions to the table. Work through your chapters, chapter leadership and executive directors to help improve our industry and the way we do business. Likewise, please look to ASA National to help you as chapters and members. We are all in this together to continue to make a stronger industry.

I wish to thank Brad Miller for his leadership and guidance during his tenure as President, as well as the Executive Committee who I collaborate with on a regular basis. I am grateful for the dedicated Board of Directors as well. I wish to thank Richard Bright, our Executive Director, and his staff along with Mike Oscar and his staff for their continued hard work on the National Level. I anticipate everyone's continued support and commitment to ASA. This includes our Chapters, Chapter Leaders, and of course our Chapter Executive Directors who are “the boots on the ground”.

I am always open to any comments, suggestions or ideas you may have. Thank you for affording me the opportunity to lead you. Together we can make a difference.

Ray Moya
President, ASA - 2024-25
asapresident@asa-hq.com

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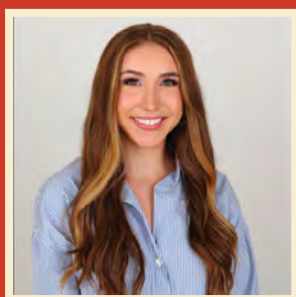
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Sara Nauert

Business Development Analyst
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CONTRACTOR COMMUNITY

Participate in the 2024 Lean Benchmarking Survey - Your Input Matters

ASA is collaborating with the [*Lean Construction Institute*](#) and Dodge Construction Network to study the national utilization of Lean in design and construction. The 12-15 minute survey will reveal important benchmarking data to determine the progress of Lean use throughout the industry, and we invite you to participate.

As a construction professional, **your input is critical to the success of this study**, whether you utilize Lean or not. [Click on this link to take the survey.](#)

This research will determine the degree to which the design and construction industry is aware of and utilizing the specific Lean practices and provide the comparative data needed to understand trends based on previous years' studies.

Participants need to be familiar with project outcomes (budget compliance, schedule compliance, etc.) and contracting methods, as well as the processes in which project teams engage.

Owners, architects, interior designers, engineers and contractors with experience with all types of building projects, from commercial to industrial to infrastructure, are eligible.

To thank you for your participation, upon completing the survey, you will be eligible to receive a copy of the findings of this study and LCI's Lean Deployment Guide.

Please note that your participation will be completely confidential – results will be analyzed and reported to the industry in aggregate only. Individual replies will only be made available to the survey participants.

[Click on this link to take the survey.](#)

Surety Bond Producers — Discounted Learning

The National Association of Surety Bond Producers (NASBP), an ASA Alliance Partner, offers a host of resources and educational programs focused on bonding and risk management for both producers and contractors. ASA members can now access SuretyLearn and SuretyLearn for Contractors at member rates on the NASBP site (look for code in your chapter

newsletters). [*SuretyLearn for Contractors*](#) helps to orient small and emerging contractors to the path for achieving surety credit, through both free and paid resources and live and recorded educational programs.

SLDF Moving the Ball for Subcontractors in Texas!

At the urging of the American Subcontractors Association's Subcontractor Legal Defense Fund and other concerned parties, on June 14, the Texas Supreme Court agreed to take up the *Third Coast Services & Spawglass Construction v Castaneda* case. The dispute involved a multi-vehicle accident on a construction site, resulting in a lawsuit for contractor negligence and premises liability. The Contractor and Subcontractor moved for summary judgment, arguing that they were immune from suit under Texas Code.

The trial court denied the motions and the Court of Appeals of Texas, 14th Appellate Division affirmed, holding that neither the Contractor nor Owner had established that they met each requirement of their affirmative defense. Spawglass and Third Coast petitioned the Texas Supreme Court for review, which it has now granted. The issues at hand involving statutory immunity and immunity for construction workers are paramount for subcontractors nationwide.

Thanks to Brian Carroll and Shaina Swanson of Sanderford & Carroll, PC, for their work on this case.

The House Small Business Committee Unanimously Approves the Transparency and Predictability in Small Business Opportunities Act

Reps. Alford (R-KS) and Mfume (D-MD) legislation entitled "the Transparency and Predictability in Small Business Opportunities Act," H.R. 8014, was unanimously approved by the House Small Business Committee with a vote 23-0. The legislation would bring clarity to small business owners when a federal agency cancels a contract solicitation and help them identify similar contracts to bid on.

OSHA Releases Proposed Heat Illness and Injury Prevention Standard

Prior to the 4th of July, OSHA released the text of its proposed standard for heat illness and injury prevention for indoor and outdoor settings. Elements of the proposal include the following:

- Training requirements for supervisors, heat safety coordinators, and employees;
- Developing and implementing a work site heat injury and illness prevention plan (a written plan must be created for employers with more than 10 employees);
- An initial heat trigger with a heat index of 80 degrees Fahrenheit (or equivalent wet bulb globe temperature). Requirements for employers include providing drinking water, break areas for indoor and outdoor work sites, acclimatization of new and returning employees, paid rest breaks if needed;
- A high heat trigger with a heat index of 90 degrees Fahrenheit (or equivalent wet bulb globe temperature). Requirements for employers include a minimum 15-minute paid rest break at least every two hours, warning signs for excessively high heat areas;
- Two different options for acclimatization procedures for new and returning workers; and
- Additional recordkeeping requirements.

OSHA is giving the public 120 days to comment after publication in the Federal Register, which will likely happen in the next couple of weeks.

FASA's Preparation Guide for 2024 Natural Disasters

Hurricane Beryl wreaked havoc in Houston, TX. We remind all ASA members about the Foundation of the American Subcontractors Association (FASA) preparation guide for natural disasters. The guide cites statistics from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that 40% of businesses do not reopen following a natural disaster. Ninety percent of companies fail within two years of experiencing a natural disaster, according to the United States Small Business Administration.

How natural disasters can affect the construction industry

- Demand for skilled workers increases
- Logistical issues for local travel to construction site and environmental issues impact access to site

- Materials used for restoration and recovery become scarce and difficult to obtain
- Large scale damage for equipment and supplies
- Overall cost of project increases
- Disruptions and delays occur as a natural result of the above issues
- Unforeseen delays can also create contractual issues and lead to litigation

What the guide includes

- Federal resources to consult or contact before, during and after the event
- Insights on commercial property insurance, specifically for the types of disasters it may not cover: flood, hurricanes and earthquakes.
- Legal and contract considerations on projects following a disaster

[Click here or visit fasacares.org for the FASA Natural Disaster Guide.](#)

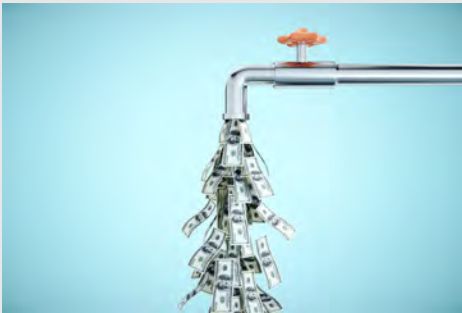


Summer is in full swing, and we know that contractors are busy tackling a full slate of projects. To help you stay organized and improve your cash flow, **Knowify is offering ASA members an exclusive 30% discount on our construction management software** through the end of August - visit **Knowify.com** or call **212-233-3230** for more details.

UPCOMING WEBINARS

Five Secrets to a Healthier Cash Flow

Tuesday, August 13, 2024 ▪ 12 PM - 1 PM ET



As a subcontractor, you're constantly financing your clients' projects. You're funding the job and doing the work before you're paid. And getting paid isn't easy. Only 5% of subcontractors report always being paid on time, and the average time to get paid in construction is 90 days. It's time to buck the status quo! In this session, Claire Wilson will share best practices and strategies for getting paid faster and better managing cash flow on projects.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify and address the main causes of payment delays
- Detect billing red flags and intervene
- Optimize change order management
- Implement billing projections and cash flow forecasts

[Register here.](#)

Presented by: Claire Wilson. Claire is the Head of Construction Solutions at Siteline. Previously, she was a project manager at Tishman Construction in New York City, where she worked on major projects like Hudson Yards and JP Morgan's Corporate Headquarters. She serves on the Bay Area Subcontractors Association (BASA) board, is an active member of CFMA San Francisco, and has spoken at numerous regional and national construction conferences.




Maximizing Your ASA Membership

Wednesday, September 11, 2024 ▪ 12 PM - 1 PM ET

Whether new to ASA or an old pro, you'll find new information and nuggets to take your membership to the next level.

Presented by: Matt Levine, Director of Chapter Relations and Community Engagement

[Register here.](#)



Imagine a room buzzing with dynamic conversation, where the air is thick with innovation.

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We think outside-the-box.

We brainstorm what the future holds for the industry.

Then we synthesize these viewpoints into comprehensive solutions and actionable strategies that guide the organization.

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ASA Think Tank Seattle

September 18 | 9am - 4pm

Hilton Garden Inn - Seattle Downtown



Join Subcontractors from all over the U.S. in this peer group of ideas to tackle industry issues that matter!



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AWESOME

ASA Welcomes Ray Moya ASA's President, 2024-2025

As he mentioned in his letter in this month's issue of The Contractor's Compass, Ray Moya became president by taking baby steps. People recognize talent, passion, and ability. We're honored that Ray has grown within ASA, and that we've been the recipient of his efforts.

Ray has been an equal owner in Prime Electric since its inception in 1998. Prior to that, Ray worked as a

project manager and estimator for Hughes Electric and Modern Electric from 1980–1998. Having worked for three successful electrical contractors for his entire career (since 1980) Ray has a vast array of experiences and duties from both an employer's perspective as well as that of a business owner. Ray attended the University of New Mexico with a major in Architecture and Planning.

Ray has been a member of ASA since 2000; served on the Board of Directors for ASA New Mexico for six years; and was Secretary, Vice President, and President for the local chapter. In 2017 Ray accepted a position to serve on the ASA National Board of Directors.



Ray and his family

Q&A with Ray

What inspired you and your partner to start Prime Electric?

We started Prime Electric in 1998 when the owner of the company we all worked for retired and wanted to help us start our own company. At that time there were four equal business partners and I was the youngest of the group. Since 2013 it has just been and W.T. Claunch, my business partner and me. The other partners have retired.

How did you come up with the name?

Being that there were four of us at the beginning, we tried using the name Four Star Electric, but it was too close to the name of another company. Not sure about the "Prime" name, other than it meant high quality. The logo represents the four owners.

Who do you credit with inspiring you the most? The one(s) you could/can lean on?

My father was a general foreman for about 25 years, for an electrical contractor that I started my career with. I was never in the trade as a wireman, but worked as a laborer for this electrical company during my summers when I was in college. Upon graduation I was asked by the owner to go to work for him as an estimator. Eventually I worked into a project management role. So to answer your question, I would have to say that my dad, my first boss (Edgar Jones) and the boss I had that helped us get Prime Electric started (Dave Hughes) are who I owe my career to. I learned a lot about the electrical business from them.

What's your primary goal as president of ASA?

I want to do all I can to make ASA grow in terms of strength and service to our members. I do not think that

enough of our members realize what ASA National has to offer and I want that message to get out to them and to utilize the tools available to them. It is tough to sometimes teach old dogs new tricks.

What made you decide to go from involvement in chapter level activities to national level involvement?

I attended my first SUBExcel in Miami in 2016. I drank the Kool Aid and was hooked. I saw the value of the convention and the benefits that ASA had to offer. I developed friendships with other ASA members throughout the country and could go to them whenever I had questions about subcontracting issues. These friendships have grown over the years. The following year when I was asked to participate on the National Board of Directors, I accepted with some hesitation. That hesitation was because I wasn't sure of the time commitment and I was also a bit intimidated. Once I became involved, those "fears" were soon gone.

What's the most important thing you've learned from your involvement with ASA?

I have learned that we are not the only company that has struggles in our everyday businesses. Other subs encounter the same issues and that is why the networking and friendships built over time is so important. We all help each other out and we can rely on each other for advice and fresh ideas. I also have a better understanding of the other trades we work side by side with.

What advice would you give to those just starting their careers in construction as subcontractors?

The road can be tough at times. You can feel discouraged by the issues you

face. BUT, the rewards can be great. The sense of accomplishment is awesome. Be careful with who you do business with. Make sure you have your ducks in a row. When you find good partners to do business with, stick with them. This business is about relationships. Build bridges and be diplomatic whenever possible. Persevere!

Are there other groups you volunteer for?

I am an active member of our church in Santa Fe, in several ministries. I also chair our Building and Grounds Committee at church, and have been a member of that committee since 1990. I am somewhat active in my high school's Alumni Association. My most rewarding volunteer work was coaching basketball at the elementary school and junior high girls levels, for 18 years, but I have since retired from doing that. I do miss it, but it was time to pass the torch on to younger coaches.

What's the one physical tool you take with you everywhere (or would if you could)?

I have my phone with me most everywhere I go. But that is not always a good thing as sometimes I enjoy the peace and quiet without it. I do however always wear a chain on my neck that has a cross representing my faith in God, a small heart that represents the love of/ for my family and a medal that reads "For I am with you, and no one is going to harm you", again representing my faith.

Construction Data & Figures

U.S. Census—Construction Spending

Total Construction

Construction spending during May 2024 was estimated at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$2,139.8 billion, 0.1 percent (± 1.0 percent)* below the revised April estimate of \$2,142.1 billion. The May figure is 6.4 percent (± 1.6 percent) above the May 2023 estimate of \$2,011.8 billion. During the first five months of this year, construction spending amounted to \$836.3 billion, 8.8 percent (± 1.2 percent) above the \$768.6 billion for the same period in 2023.

Private Construction

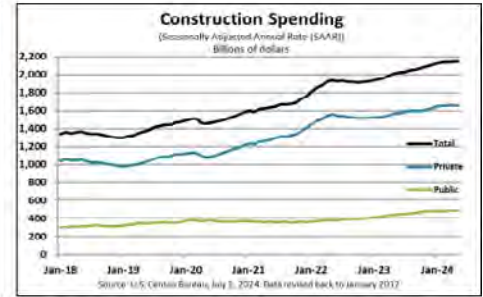
Spending on private construction was at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$1,652.1 billion, 0.3 percent (± 0.7 percent)* below the revised April estimate of \$1,656.7 billion. Residential construction was at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$918.2 billion in May, 0.2 percent (± 1.3 percent)* below the revised April estimate of



\$920.3 billion. Nonresidential construction was at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$733.9 billion in May, 0.3 percent (± 0.7 percent)* below the revised April estimate of \$736.5 billion.

Public Construction

In May, the estimated seasonally adjusted annual rate of public construction spending was \$487.6 billion, 0.5 percent (± 1.8 percent)* above the revised April



estimate of \$485.4 billion. Educational construction was at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$102.1 billion, 0.6 percent (± 2.5 percent)* above the revised April estimate of \$101.5 billion. Highway construction was at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$147.6 billion, 0.5 percent (± 5.3 percent)* below the revised April estimate of \$148.3 billion.

DODGE MOMENTUM INDEX

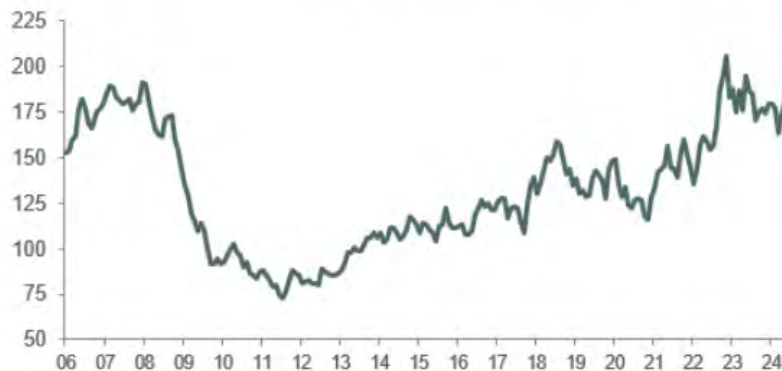
(2000=100, Seasonally Adjusted)

	Jun-24	May-24	% Change
Dodge Momentum Index	198.6	179.9	10.4%
Commercial Building	266.2	232.5	14.5%
Institutional Building	115.0	114.7	0.2%

Source: Dodge Construction Network

DODGE MOMENTUM INDEX

(2000=100, Seasonally Adjusted)



Dodge Momentum Index

The Dodge Momentum Index (DMI), issued by Dodge Construction Network, increased by 10.4% in June to 198.6 (2000=100) from the revised May reading of 179.9. Over the month, commercial planning increased 14.5% and institutional planning ticked up 0.2%.

"Data centers continued to dominate planning projects in June - fueling another strong month for commercial planning," stated Sarah Martin, associate director of forecasting at Dodge Construction Network. "More momentum in planning, while not as strong as data centers, was seen across most segments and indicates confidence in 2025 market conditions. The DMI is up 43% from June 2019 levels, signaling strong construction spending in 2025."

Data center planning continued to be the primary driver of commercial growth in June, alongside moderate growth in retail, hotels, and warehouse projects. On the institutional side, weaker healthcare planning was offset by an improvement in education activity. Additionally, a large detention facility entered the queue last month and bolstered public planning as well.

In June, the DMI was 7% higher than in June of 2023. The commercial segment was up 25% from year-ago levels, while the institutional segment was down 25% over the same period. [More details on June DMI](#)

ABC's Construction Backlog Indicator Inched Higher in June, Contractors Remain Confident

Associated Builders and Contractors reported that its Construction Backlog Indicator increased to 8.4 months in June, according to an ABC member survey conducted June 20 to July 3. The reading is down 0.5 months from June 2023.

View ABC's [Construction Backlog](#) Indicator and [Construction Confidence Index](#) tables for June.

View the full [Construction Backlog Indicator](#) and [Construction Confidence Index data series](#).

The entire decline in backlog observed over the past calendar year is attributable to the Middle States and Northeast. Backlog in the South and West regions was unchanged between June 2023 and June 2024.

ABC's Construction Confidence Index readings for sales and staffing levels fell slightly in June, while the reading for profit margins improved. All three readings remain above the threshold of 50, indicating expectations for growth over the next six months.

"Backlog continues to hold up remarkably well despite high interest rates, inflation and emerging weakness in the broader economy," said ABC Chief Economist Anirban Basu.

"While contractor confidence regarding the outlook for sales and staffing levels fell modestly in June, all three Construction Confidence Index components are higher than they were one year ago.

"The combination of slowing inflation and softening growth suggests that the Federal Reserve may begin to lower interest rates as soon as September," said Basu. "That will buoy backlog as some of the softer construction segments, like office and commercial, benefit from lower borrowing costs and looser lending standards."

AIA: Architecture business conditions decline in May, AIA/Deltek Architecture Billings Index Reports

June 26, 2024

The AIA/Deltek Architecture Billings Index (ABI) score declined to 42.4 in May, as more firms reported a decrease in billings than the month prior. The ABI score is a leading economic indicator of construction activity, providing an approximately nine-to-twelve-month glimpse into the future of nonresidential construction spending activity.

SOLIDUS

JULY CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS PRICE REPORT

Commodity	12 Month % Change	1 Month % Change
Softwood Lumber	-8.1%	-3.6%
Hardwood Lumber	1.8%	0.9%
General Millworks	1.2%	-0.1%
Soft Plywood Products	0.9%	-1.0%
Hot Rolled Steel	-8.1%	-1.6%
Copper Wire & Cable	18.0%	9.6%
Power Wire & Cable	16.7%	4.5%
Builder's Hardware	-0.9%	0.0%
Plumbing Fixtures	1.6%	0.3%
Enameled Iron & Metal Sanitary Ware	N/A	N/A
Furnaces and Heaters	1.2%	-2.0%
Sheet Metal Products	2.1%	-0.1%
Electrical Lighting Fixtures	-0.1%	0.3%
Nails	-13.5%	-1.7%
Major Appliances	-0.3%	-0.6%
Ready-Mix Concrete	5.6%	-0.4%

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ABC: Prices of Construction Materials Fall

Construction input prices fell 0.3% in June compared to the previous month, according to an Associated Builders and Contractors analysis of U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Producer Price Index data released today. Nonresidential construction input prices declined 0.4% for the month.

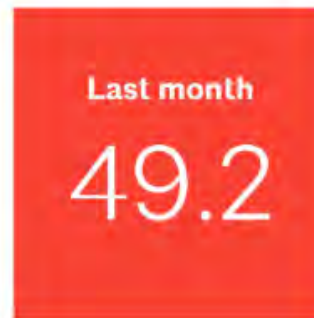
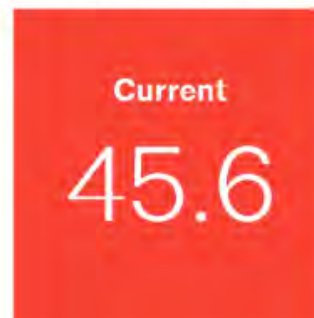
Overall construction input prices are 1.1% higher than a year ago, while nonresidential construction input prices are 0.7% higher. Prices increased in 2 of 3 energy subcategories last month. Natural gas prices were up 36.3%. The aggregate price of unprocessed energy materials was up 4.7%. Crude petroleum prices were down 0.2% for the month.

"Construction materials prices dipped in June, perhaps a reflection of declining project starts in a number of construction segments and an associated dip in demand," said ABC Chief Economist Anirban Basu. "For instance, input prices fell in the multifamily segment, where many contractors indicate substantial softening of demand for their services. The same was true of input prices in commercial construction segments.

Billings



Design Contracts



Above 50



Below 50



50

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FEATURE

Document Management in Modern Businesses

by Michael Pelletier, CLAConnect

Businesses have been managing documents for centuries. Whether it was a general store or a blacksmith, there was some sort of ledger that kept track of who bought what and who owed what. As a business in the construction industry, document management has become increasingly complex as projects generate an immense amount of paperwork. Whether it's an invoice, change order, blueprint, timesheet, project plan, or something else, managing documents can be a challenge because of different formats, sources, and volumes. A document management strategy can solve this by helping businesses organize, store, protect, and share their information effectively and efficiently.

Document management refers to the processes and tools used to create, capture, store, retrieve, distribute, and dispose of all types of business record files. Documents can be physical or digital, structured or unstructured, and can include text, images, audio, video, and other types of data. Document management aims to ensure documents are accessible, searchable, secure, compliant, and up to date.

Some factors that drive the need for a fresh look at document management include:

- The increasing volume and variety of information generated and consumed by businesses.
- The growing demand for collaboration and teamwork across different locations, devices, and platforms.
- The rising expectations of customers, partners, and regulators for timely, accurate, and consistent information.
- The evolving threats and risks of data breaches, cyberattacks, and compliance violations.
- The emerging opportunities and challenges of digital transformation,

cloud computing, and artificial intelligence which require access to the information within business documents.

To address these factors, businesses can benefit from a document management strategy that is:

- **Agile** – It adapts to changing business needs and environments, while supporting innovation and efficiency.
- **Secure** – It protects the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information, while complying with relevant laws and regulations.
- **Collaborative** – It facilitates teamwork and communication among internal and external stakeholders, while enhancing productivity and performance.

Key Ingredients

Businesses can choose from many document management platforms and solutions in the marketplace from industry specific vendors such as Procore and Acumatica, or more generalized platforms from companies like Microsoft and Google. But getting started takes a desire to do things differently. There are several factors that go into designing and adopting a successful document management solution outlined below.

- (1) **Willingness to Change:** Often we engage with a client who has had an unsuccessful experience with a document management solution because they tried to apply technology to align with their current processes. Attempting to automate a manual process without rethinking the process through the lens of technology's capabilities makes it challenging to achieve the value they're seeking from their investment. It is critical that a

business assess their challenges, envision an efficient future state before implementing a new technology. Often it is helpful to have an outside perspective when evaluating processes and potential improvement.

- (2) **Establish Structure and Process:** Does "standard" exist in your business? Do you have a set process you follow from bid to closeout? The more standardization you can establish, while still being agile to handle unique circumstances, the more automation you can bring to a process. There are many ways to approach this, but one example is the concept of a job. The job has several attributes such as the client, vendors you purchase materials from, subcontractors, and other common categories from job to job. Establishing a consistent document structure containing the same types of information and how files are named, a protocol for loading documents into that structure, and a mechanism to establish metadata about the documents will set you up for success. It should be noted that many document management solutions aren't constrained by the traditional file folder structure of a typical file system. This allows for a multitude of ways to search, sort, and filter the content you need.
- (3) **Define the Nouns of your Business:** Continuing from structure and process, an important step is to establish the Person, Place or Thing so that you can then describe it. Imagine you have a file share today and you have a folder for each client or job and then in each folder you have other folders to capture documents for different phases (bid, planning, procurement, change orders, etc.). If you need to find an invoice but you aren't sure what

client it was for, how do you find it? Some may start by opening a client folder, clicking through to the appropriate subfolder, looking for the invoice, moving on to the next client, and so on.

A modern document management solution, such as Microsoft SharePoint, allows you to define an "Invoice" as a document type, establish the attributes of that invoice (Vendor, Date, Client, etc.), and then tag a document that you've uploaded. This allows you to search for all invoices across all clients or jobs, regardless of their folder location, with specific search criteria such as the vendor name. The attributes of an invoice will be different from those of a change order, a blueprint, etc. By establishing the nouns of your business and their attributes, you'll be able to store and manage your documents more effectively.

(4) **Establish Security and Controls:**

It is unfortunately too easy for a confidential document to end up in the hands of someone inappropriate. With the ease at which cloud based document sharing solutions can be enabled, it becomes a simple copy/paste exercise to share content with a competitor. Fortunately, there are solutions that can and should be put in place to secure documents.

A couple of solutions that can play a role with security include Microsoft's Purview Information Protection and Defender for Cloud Apps tools. Purview Information Protection allows you to apply labels to documents such as sensitive, confidential, general, etc. Based on the label, the security is automatically defined to impact the ability of an individual to print, save, copy, email, or otherwise share the document. This tool helps prevent data loss due to intentional or accidental sharing of content.

Defender for Cloud Apps helps manage the SaaS applications that a user can access within the business. As such, if the standard platform for document storage is SharePoint and Teams, but a user tries to copy a file to a Google Drive location, the solution stops the user from logging in and accessing the account, thus preventing the file from leaving the organization.

While having a great Document Management solution in place can help you manage and access your content more easily, it may also make it easier for the data to leave the business, so implementing appropriate controls are important.

- (5) **Mobile Access:** While the capabilities we've outlined so far are great, it falls short if you can't access the content when it matters most, on the jobsite. Depending on the size of your operation you may have a dedicated mobile office with full PC access to your systems. Often that's not the case so being able to pull up a document on a phone or tablet can be a time saver. Further, mobile access can be incorporated as a new business process so a change order can be drafted and signed electronically in the field to keep a project moving.

Impact on the Construction Industry

The construction industry involves a large number of stakeholders such as contractors, subcontractors, architects, engineers, suppliers, and clients, who need to collaborate and exchange information throughout a project's lifecycle. This process generates a vast amount of documentation including contracts, drawings, specifications, reports, invoices, and permits, which all need to be managed and maintained properly. Combined with challenges and risks, such as cost overruns, schedule delays, quality issues, safety incidents, and potential legal disputes, an effective document management solution can

help a construction business run more efficiently. It can also achieve the following outcomes:

- Improve collaboration and communication among project stakeholders, with access to the latest and most accurate information.
- Enhance efficiency and productivity by streamlining workflows and processes which reduces errors and rework.
- Increase security and compliance by protecting sensitive and confidential information as well as adhering to relevant standards and regulations.
- Reduce costs and risks by avoiding duplication, reducing waste and preventing or resolving issues and disputes.

With construction businesses continuing to evolve, document management can become a critical tool in helping manage information better and more safely, as well as elevate business for the future. Although the basics of getting started have been covered, there's even more to consider given the recent explosion of AI capabilities around document ingestion and summarization. In fact, document management can be an important first step in a business' digital transformation, unlocking further opportunity for automation and efficiency.

About the Author

Michael Pelletier is the Managing Principal of Automation and Integration within CLA Digital. Our Digital team focuses on fostering a culture of innovation, reinventing business processes and unlocking our clients' data to create extraordinary opportunities. Whether it's helping an organization define an IT strategy that supports growth objectives, automating business process, creating dashboards or simply finding a simple solution to a complex problem, Michael spends his time getting to know our clients to provide unique and innovative solutions.

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BILLD MEETUP

Accounting for the Cost of Capital

July 24th at 12pm CT

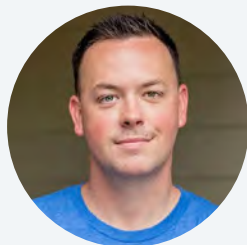
Subcontractors who account for the cost of working capital and include it in their bids have 11% higher profit margins than those who don't.

These subs were also more likely to report revenue growth, have better outlooks with their GCs, and take on bigger projects in 2024.

**We think that all subcontractors should
enjoy these benefits.**

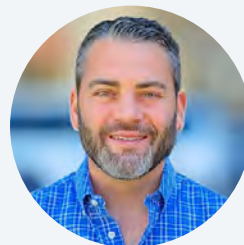
Register here

Billd is excited to have Travis Mayor and Jerry Aliberti, two seasoned industry veterans, to lead a virtual Meetup where they will discuss how to account for the cost of capital and how to best leverage your working capital options.



Travis Mayor

Director of Strategic
Partnerships at Billd



Jerry Aliberti

Construction and estimating expert
with 20 years of experience

Register here | <https://grow.billd.com/accounting-cost-of-financing-meetup/>



FEATURE

Conquering Closeout Chaos: Document Management Tips for a Seamless Project Finish

by Claire Wilson, Siteline

Picture this: You've just completed a major project—the work is done, the site is clear, and now it's time to collect your final payment. However, this isn't accomplished with just a simple handshake and a check. This final step is more like a high-stakes dance of documents, deadlines, and details that can make or break your bottom line. And though we call it the closeout phase, it's something that demands your attention from day one—starting with an organized, efficient documentation management system.

To help you achieve a smooth closeout, this article outlines key strategies to optimize your documentation management practices throughout a project's lifecycle. By following these guidelines, you'll be better positioned to complete each project with your full payment, reputation, and sanity intact.

1. Know your contract inside and out.

Scrupulous document management starts with a thorough understanding of your contractual obligations. Your contract serves as the blueprint for a smooth closeout, outlining specific deliverables and the deadlines for submitting them. By carefully reviewing these closeout obligations upfront, you'll lay the groundwork for a documentation management system that's tailored to meet your project's specific requirements. Here are some key aspects of your contract to pay close attention to:

- **Specific Deliverables:** Clearly identify all documents, reports, and other deliverables you're contractually obligated to provide upon project completion. This may include as-built drawings, operation and maintenance (O&M) manuals, lien waivers, warranties, and inspection reports (*among other items* that I'll touch on later).



- **Completion Timeline:** Note any deadlines or milestones for submitting these documents. Failing to meet these deadlines could result in delayed payments or even legal disputes.
- **Payment Terms:** Familiarize yourself with the payment terms outlined in the contract, particularly retainage percentages and any specific conditions for releasing final payments.
- **Dispute Resolution Procedures:** Understand the steps to take if any disputes arise during the closeout process.

2. Establish a clear documentation management system from the outset.

Once you have a firm grasp of your contractual obligations, you're ready to create a detailed plan for managing project documents.

This includes defining:

- **Document Types:** Identify all the documents you need to collect, create, and submit throughout the project. These might include contracts, change orders, invoices, daily reports, safety documents, and closeout documents (as outlined above).
- **Naming Conventions:** Develop a standardized system for naming and numbering files to ensure consistency and ease of retrieval. For example, use the project name and number, followed by the document type and date. Communicate your selected convention to all project stakeholders, including the general contractor (GC), architect, and engineers, to ensure everyone is filing and searching for documents using the same system.
- **Storage:** Determine where you'll store documents—preferably in a digital, cloud-based system—to ensure authorized personnel can access documents easily (and that nothing gets lost in the shuffle).

3. Proactively collect and organize documents.

One of the biggest mistakes I see subcontractors make is scrambling for documents at the eleventh hour. This reactive approach not only creates unnecessary stress, but also leads to delays, errors, and even disputes with clients. By proactively collecting and organizing documents as they're created throughout the project, you can streamline the closeout phase and showcase your professionalism to clients.

While documentation requirements will vary from project to project, the following documents generally play a crucial role in the closeout. It's essential to keep track of these throughout the project lifecycle to ensure a smooth and timely finish. These include:

- Lien Waivers (Conditional and Unconditional)
- As-Built Drawings
- O&M Manuals
- Warranties and Guarantees
- Test Reports
- Daily Reports
- Permits and Inspection Certificates
- Change Orders, RFIs, and Submittals
- Punch List Sign-Off
- LEED and Environmental Tracking
- Safety Logs
- Insurance Certificates
- Invoices and Payments

4. Use technology to streamline the process.

As you collect and organize project documents, a cloud-based document management software offers a superior alternative to traditional methods like physical filing cabinets or scattered desktop folders. Here's why:

- **Centralized Storage:** Keep all your project documents in one secure, easily accessible location. No more digging through folders or misplaced files.

- **Enhanced Accessibility:** Access project documents from anywhere, anytime, using any internet-connected device. This allows for real-time updates and greater cross-team communication.
- **Streamlined Workflows:** Automate repetitive tasks like creating templates, tracking document revisions, and setting reminders. This frees up valuable time for you to focus on other important (and often more strategic) tasks.
- **Secure Collaboration:** Grant different levels of access to authorized users, ensuring that only the right people have access to sensitive information.
- **Integration with Other Systems:** Integrate your document management software with your accounting or project management software to eliminate duplicate data entry (saving even more time in the process).

Note: With the wide range of software options available, it's crucial to choose one that aligns with your specific needs and budget. Before making a decision, consider factors such as ease of use, scalability, integration capabilities, security features, and customer support. Request demos to compare different options to find the best fit for your business.

5. Maintain open communication with all stakeholders.

Communication is key throughout the project lifecycle, particularly when it comes to document management. Consistent communication with the GC, the project owner, and any other relevant parties ensures that everyone is on the same page regarding document requirements, submission deadlines, and any changes or updates that may occur. This collaborative approach helps prevent misunderstandings, streamlines the closeout process, and fosters a positive working relationship with all project stakeholders. Regular communication channels include:

- **Regular Meetings:** Schedule regular meetings to review project progress, discuss any document-related issues, and ensure everyone has the information they need.

- **Status Updates:** Keep stakeholders informed with regular status updates, including document submissions.
- **Document Sharing Platforms:** Use shared document systems (as outlined above) to facilitate greater collaboration and transparency.

6. Conduct a thorough final review.

You made it this far. Now, it's all about verifying completeness, accuracy, and compliance with the contract before submitting your final closeout documents. A *closeout checklist* is particularly valuable here to ensure you haven't overlooked any required documents. Having a colleague-to-peer review can provide an extra layer of scrutiny to catch any errors or omissions.

Once you're confident in your documents, submit them by the deadline specified in your contract. It's also good practice to check with the GC or refer to the contract to confirm the preferred submission format and method.

Remember, meticulous documentation isn't just a formality; it's a strategic advantage that protects your business, strengthens client relationships, and paves the way for continued success in the construction industry. By following these strategies for efficient document management, you'll be better equipped to conquer closeout chaos, streamline project completion, and secure the money you're owed.

About the Author

Claire Wilson is Head of Construction Solutions at Siteline, the only pay app and lien waiver management software for trade contractors. Previously, Claire was a project manager at Tishman Construction in New York City where she worked on monumental projects including Hudson Yards and JP Morgan's Corporate Headquarters. She has a BS in Civil Engineering from Bucknell University and now serves on the board of the Bay Area Subcontractors Association (BASA).

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*Prequalify one and done.





FEATURE

Transforming Permit Document Management for Contractors

by Anthony Perera, *Inspected.com*

In an industry where time and accuracy are the two main factors in moving projects forward, contractors must have access to efficient document management processes. Despite this need, many current permit management methods are unmanageable and prone to mistakes, leading to project delays and increased costs. Most contractors could use a little help managing documents across platforms and systems, especially if they're still using traditional methods, which usually involve a cumbersome paper trail.

The construction industry has undergone massive changes since the American Subcontractors Association (ASA) first launched in 1966. From BIM and CAD, to mobile tablets and spreadsheets, most companies have embraced new technologies. So why have so many delayed shifting paper-based processes to modern digital solutions? Whether fear or skepticism, now is the time to recognize these challenges and embrace a smart and more efficient way forward by using innovative technology, starting with the outdated permit management system.

With an all-in-one permit management system, contractors can replace their struggles with a streamlined, efficient, and accountable process. By consolidating these processes into a single, intuitive platform, contractors can cut costs, reduce the risk of errors, and move projects along faster. For contractors, this means having a unified system to manage documents from multiple sources and ensuring everyone is working from the most up-to-date information.

How Streamlining Permit Tracking Enhances Efficiency

Contractors often deal with many documents due to collaborations with various partners, like general contractors, owners, other subcontractors, and specialists. Working with many partners can lead to fragmented document management systems across different parties.

As the industry enters this digital transformation, generational differences should be considered, such as between Baby Boomers and Generation Z. Baby Boomers are used to handling paper documents. In contrast, Gen Z prefers cloud-based systems and remote access. An online platform for

permit documentation management empowers team members, including contractors, inspectors, engineers, and more, to collaborate remotely, giving contractors the power to work from anywhere.

It's not just contractors using paper documents that can benefit from an upgrade. When Generation X stepped into leadership positions, they brought digital tools and replaced the traditional paper-based methods. That helped speed up processes, but today, they are still using generic systems like Google Sheets or Excel to track their permits, which takes a long time to set up and lacks the full integration offered by modern solutions.

Millennials who are leading teams are more open to cloud-based services like Permit Hub and other tools designed for contractors to manage permits across their organization and with partners. They point to greater efficiencies and no more lost permits or accountability struggles. If a contractor isn't organized, it can lead to non-compliance, which can result in legal and regulatory fines or even removal from a project, underscoring the need for a streamlined and accountable process.

With the help of remote capabilities to submit all necessary permits and documents online, contractors are empowered to accomplish their jobs more efficiently without the lengthy paper trail. This decreases the need for a physical paper trail, which usually includes driving back and forth between Building Departments to acquire the appropriate document, and reduces the risk of losing documents.

Contractors still using the traditional paper trail should know the legal and safety implications of relying on a physical document. In our industry, proper procedures for archiving old documents are essential for legal protection. Traditional methods that rely on paper trails pose significant challenges in retrieving documents years later for legal or compliance purposes. It's not as simple as scanning documents and saving them on a computer. Cybersecurity is critical as contractors handle sensitive information like blueprints and infrastructure details that hackers would love to get their hands on. Secure document management systems can mitigate the risk of data breaches and unauthorized access.

If contractors cannot effectively manage change orders, permit documentation, inspections, and much more, they can't accomplish their goals. Documents not constantly updated, with the help of streamlined permit management systems, can disrupt project timelines and add unnecessary costs. Contractors can better align project goals with their team members and partners when all documents are up-to-date and safely stored in one platform.

The Future of Permit Management

As the construction industry and technology continue to advance, permit management system capabilities will also be expected to expand. Future developments will likely include AI-driven technologies, further integration of additional construction management technologies, and enhanced remote capabilities. With an innate familiarity leveraging advanced technology, the younger generations are beginning to integrate fully into the industry. They will drive the future of document management and push the industry to become even more advanced, automated, and integrated. Permit documentation platforms are at the helm of this evolving technology, continually improving their services to meet the unique needs of contractors and Building departments alike.

Adopting new technologies for permit documentation management, such as Permit Hub Powered by Inspected, offers numerous advantages for contractors, including streamlined project management, improved efficiency, and reduced costs. To stay competitive, contractors must adopt and integrate these new technologies as the construction industry evolves.

About the Author

Anthony Perera is a serial entrepreneur with a track record of building successful businesses, including Air Pros USA, Inspected.com, Ella Cafe, and Peak Roofing Partners. He continues to innovate with his private equity firm, Exuma Capital Partners, targeting high-growth lower and middle markets in various sectors. Anthony's ventures highlight his commitment to brand building and strategic vision within the technology, real estate, food and beverage, and home services industries.



FEATURE

ASA—Why Modern Businesses Need an Integrated Document Management Platform

by Zulq Malik, SMARTBUILD



Keeping all those documents in line is crucial for keeping things running smoothly in the business world, especially in the construction industry. With so many drawings, RFIs, contracts, compliance records and reports flying around, it's essential to have a solid system in place, one that is an easy to adopt centralized, mobile platform available from field to office using the cloud to create, edit, and manage all the documents that contractors need to run their business.

The Pitfalls and Challenges of Not Having a Centralized Document Center

Managing documents without a centralized system can lead to several significant challenges. Teams often struggle with version control, where multiple versions of the same document circulate, causing confusion and errors. Additionally, storing documents across various platforms like email, cloud services, and physical storage can result in misplacement and difficulty in tracking crucial information. These inefficiencies can lead to costly rework, project delays, and non-compliance with regulatory requirements.

A construction project's success hangs in the balance of how well information is handled and shared. Messy document management can lead to costly blunders, misunderstandings, and delays. Just imagine a scenario where the field team is working off outdated drawings because the latest version wasn't accessible – talk about a recipe for rework and wasting time and resources, throwing the project's budget and timeline off track!

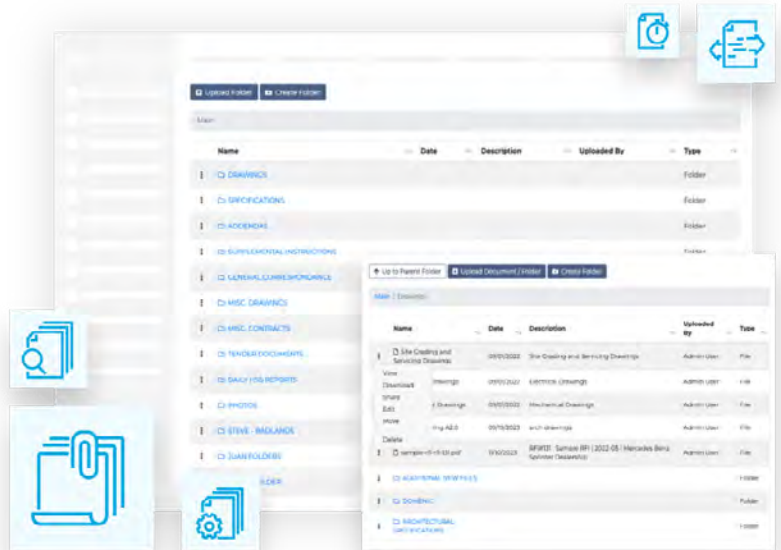
The Critical Role of Document Management in Construction

Efficient document management ensures that every team member has instant access to the most up-to-date documents, slashing the chances of errors and boosting collaboration. And let's not forget about compliance – construction projects have a laundry list of regulations and standards to meet. Well-organized and easily accessible documents make it a breeze to show compliance during audits and inspections, steering clear of any legal headaches and fines.

Let's review some of the key benefits of having a centralized project document center and how having everything in one place can empower contractors to work more efficiently and productively.

Benefits of Having a Project Document Center

1. **Real-Time Access and Updates:** Make certain that all team members have access to the most recent document versions, preventing those costly mistakes that can happen when working from outdated information.
2. **Enhanced Collaboration:** With a centralized document management



system, team members can easily share, edit, and update documents. This streamlines communication and ensures that everyone is on the same page, leading to better-coordinated efforts and improved project outcomes.

3. **Reduced Rework:** By providing a single source of truth for all project documents, you can reduce the likelihood of errors and rework. Field teams are always informed and can work efficiently, knowing they have the most current information.
4. **Cost-Effective and Efficient:** Forget about juggling separate services like Dropbox and Google Drive. An integrated construction management platform streamlines document management, saving you money and headaches by simplifying workflows and cutting overhead costs.
5. **User-Friendly Interface:** An intuitive design that understands how tradespeople work, makes it easy for users to navigate and manage documents. Some contractors may not have had wide exposure to incorporating construction management software into their day to day tasks so platforms that have user-friendly interfaces help to streamline document management, allowing team members to focus on their core tasks.

6. **Comprehensive Storage Solution:** Document management software designed to handle a wide variety of files and documents, offers a concise storage solution. Whether it's drawings, specifications, or compliance documents, having everything stored and managed in one place helps to keep things simple.

A Smart Connection for Your Field Team

By eliminating the need to email drawings and specifications to field staff or share them via external services, your construction management platform should ensure that all project documents are always up-to-date and easily accessible. This smart connection fosters better communication and coordination among team members, leading to more efficient project execution.

SMARTBUILD Seamlessly Allows You to Manage and Share Information

SMARTBUILD was created for subcontractors using over 20 years of industry experience. Using the platform, trade contractors no longer have to deal with the fragmented approach of using multiple document storage and sharing

services. SMARTBUILD offers a more efficient, cost-effective way to manage, access, and share information, ensuring that the entire team is always informed and coordinated. This consolidation not only saves money but also simplifies and streamlines workflows, leading to decreased rework and boosted productivity on the job site. By leveraging the capabilities of SMARTBUILD, trade contractors can enhance their document management processes, improve collaboration, and achieve better project outcomes.

About the Author



Zulq Malik is the enigmatic Chief Happiness Officer of SMARTBUILD, a visionary leader with over 25 years of construction industry experience. As a maverick

entrepreneur, he is dedicated to revolutionizing construction through innovation and digital tools. Zulq's unconventional approach and commitment to elevating the industry's status have made him a respected mentor and a driving force in the construction realm.



LEGALLY SPEAKING

Document Management for Business— Three Tips to Do It Better

by Karalynn Cromeens, Cromeens Law Firm, PLLC

When you're running a business, there's a lot of documentation involved. Invoices, contracts, blueprints, and permits. There's a lot to keep track of. In the past, this was done with paper and filing cabinets, but nowadays, we have digital databases to help keep better track of all the documents needed for day-to-day operations of business.

But even then, it's still pretty easy for your databases to become a mess of files with no rhyme or reason to its organization. This can be frustrating at best and legally dangerous at worst because if you run into any legal issues, being able to produce documentation quickly is important.

So here's a few tips I can give business owners to whip their document management into better shape.

Centralize Data

"Oh this is in here, but that is in there." Businesses have these kinds of conversations all the time and it makes me want to swoop in and help them. Managing your documents is a lot like managing your closet: It's a lot easier if you know where everything is. So don't have 5 different places where you store your data. Instead, pick one robust database to house all your important documents. This will make it easier for you as well as for others to be able to quickly find what they need when they need it.

It takes a lot longer to get dressed in the morning if you have your clothes scattered all over the house. The same principle applies to document management. So save yourself the headache and centralize your data.

Make Documents Accessible Anywhere and to Anyone (*Within Reason*)

In construction, there's two primary places people work: in the office and on the job. So you're going to want a document management system that acknowledges that unique aspect of the industry. Having a digital platform that you can access from anywhere can allow any party who needs to be able to access the important and pertinent information to a specific job regardless of what they're currently doing. This is a big change from the pre-digital construction world where all the important papers had to be kept at the office.

Digital databases streamline efforts by allowing you to access them anywhere. If you have organized, centralized, and accessible documentation and data, needing to refer back to a specific document doesn't have to take time away from a job.

Still, cybersecurity is a real risk and you'll want to be sure that when choosing a system to go with that you're properly vetting it.

Optimize Workflows

Once you have a system in place, the next step is creating standards and practices for the information in it to be updated, dispersed, reviewed and approved, etc.

If you have many different softwares, this part can be pretty difficult and cause even more confusion than the digital database was meant to solve.

Along with the rest of this process, you want to make it known clearly and plainly how the system is and will work. Who will be doing the updating? With what frequency? Will there be a notification letting people know and if so

where should they look? Optimizing your workflows will account for all of these details and help everyone understand how the backbone of your business operates.

I know, it can be tempting to want to keep documentation to yourself and in your own personal organization, but it's important that the proper stakeholders have access to the information they need when they need it, and that others know who to turn to with questions about that information. It also keeps you accountable to a system of organization so that your important files don't fall into "organized chaos".

As owner, you're just one person and your focus needs to be on growing the business, not gatekeeping information to keep a hold on day-to-day operation. A good document management system will allow you to do the one thing that every growing business owner needs to focus on: delegating work to focus yourself where you're most needed.

About the Author

With more than 18 years of experience in construction and real estate law, Karalynn Cromeens has filed more than a thousand lawsuits to foreclose or remove mechanics liens successfully. Her family also owns a material supply company, providing Karalynn first-hand knowledge of the construction industry. This personal understanding, combined with her extensive legal experience, guides The Cromeens Law Firm's true purpose—To protect and defend all that you have worked hard for and be your partner in business. She is also a best-selling author and podcast host for Quit Getting Screwed.

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ADDITIONAL INSURED REQUIREMENTS

Does your Additional Insured coverage comply with contract language?

COVERAGE RESTRICTIONS & EXCLUSIONS

Do your insurance policies include coverage exclusions and conditions which may either restrict or not respond at all to certain contractual obligations you entered into, and land you in breach of contract litigation?



FEATURE

Five Key Areas in Construction Improved by Document Management

by Patrick Hogan, handle.com



Effective document management is critical for the success of construction projects. Construction companies can streamline operations, enhance communication, ensure safety, and boost overall efficiency by implementing a document management strategy—whether centralized or as an organized repository with different access controls. Here are five key areas where better document management makes a significant impact.

1. Communication and Collaboration

Real-Time Information Access

A solid document management strategy ensures that all project-related documents are stored and easily accessible. This allows team members to access real-time, up-to-date information, eliminating delays and reducing errors caused by outdated documents. Everyone works with the same accurate data, streamlining communication and decision-making.

Problems to Avoid: Do not rely on outdated or multiple versions of documents. Ensure all updates are

synchronized across the system to prevent misinformation and errors.

Improved Team Collaboration

A well-organized document management system enables seamless collaboration among project teams. Document sharing, real-time commenting, and task assignments reduce the need for back-and-forth emails and physical document exchanges. This speeds up workflows, minimizes miscommunication, and ensures all team members are aligned.

Problems to Avoid: Avoid siloed information and lack of access controls. Ensure all team members have the necessary access to documents relevant to their tasks while maintaining security protocols.

2. Safety and Compliance

Accessible Safety Protocols

Safety protocols, training records, and incident reports must be readily available to maintain a safe work environment. An efficient document management strategy ensures that these critical documents are easily accessible to all relevant

personnel, helping to uphold safety standards consistently throughout the project.

Problems to Avoid: Avoid storing safety documents in hard-to-reach or disorganized locations. Ensure that all safety-related documents are easily accessible to those who need them.

Regulatory Compliance

Construction projects must adhere to numerous regulations to ensure compliance with local, state, and federal laws. An efficient document management system plays a crucial role in providing clear and accessible records of all required documentation, which minimizes legal risks and fosters trust with clients and regulatory bodies.

Problems to Avoid: Ensure all regulatory documents are up-to-date and thoroughly maintained to avoid legal issues and fines.

3. Project Coordination

Integrated Systems

Integrations with *construction payment systems* and project tracking software enhance project coordination. For example, an organized repository that includes payment management features streamlines invoicing and ensures accurate financial tracking. This integration eliminates discrepancies and provides a cohesive workflow.

Problems to Avoid: Avoid using disparate systems that do not communicate with each other; ensure all systems are integrated to provide a seamless workflow and accurate data.

Cross-Team Communication

Effective coordination requires seamless communication across design, engineering, procurement, and construction teams. A strong document management strategy ensures that all teams have access to the latest project

information, reducing misunderstandings and delays and ensuring project alignment.

Problems to Avoid: Avoid poor communication channels and lack of document access. Ensure all teams can access the information they need without unnecessary barriers.

4. Efficiency and Cost Management

Automated Document Handling

Automating document management processes boosts project efficiency. A well-organized strategy reduces the time and effort needed to manage documents, minimizing human error and speeding up workflows--resulting in faster project completion times and lower overall costs.

Problems to Avoid: Avoid manual document handling processes prone to errors and delays. Invest in automation to streamline document workflows and improve accuracy.

Resource Optimization

Accurate and organized documentation enables better resource management. Detailed records of materials, equipment, and labor help project managers optimize resource allocation, reduce waste, and improve cost control. Comprehensive documentation supports data-driven decision-making, enhancing efficiency and financial performance.

Problems to Avoid: Avoid disorganized or incomplete documentation. Ensure that all records are thorough and up-to-date to make informed resource management decisions.

5. Long-Term Success and Knowledge Management

Historical Data Utilization

An efficient document management strategy creates a valuable repository of historical project data. This data helps identify best practices, common challenges, and practical solutions, enabling continuous improvement for future projects. Standardized procedures

developed from historical data ensure consistency and reliability.

Problems to Avoid: Do not neglect historical data or fail to analyze past projects. Ensure that historical data is well-maintained and regularly reviewed for insights.

Client Relationships and Business Development

Organized documentation supports strong client relationships and business development. Transparent and accountable record-keeping demonstrates a company's commitment to quality and professionalism, leading to repeat business, positive referrals, and a stronger market reputation. Efficient document management is a strategic asset for long-term success.

Problems to Avoid: Poor documentation practices can lead to client dissatisfaction. Ensure all client-related documents are accurately maintained and easily accessible to build trust and foster strong relationships.

Final thoughts

A document management strategy is crucial for construction companies seeking to enhance communication, safety, project coordination, efficiency, and long-term success. Prioritizing organized and accessible documentation is essential for construction businesses to thrive in a competitive industry.

About the Author:

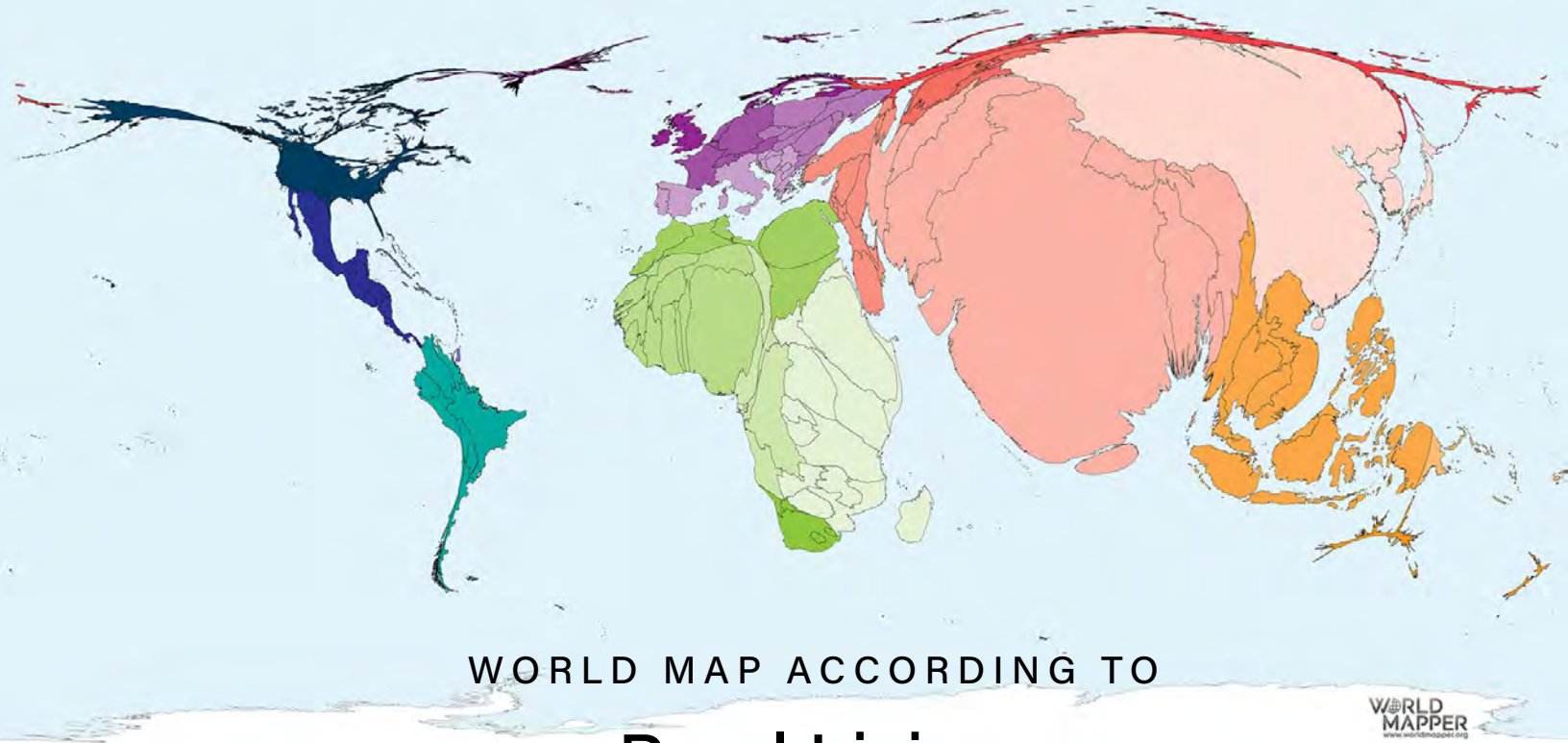


Patrick Hogan is the CEO of [handle.com](https://www.handle.com), where they build software that powers the largest credit teams in construction.

Handle is the new approach to construction payments and lien management, optimizing workflows to increase all credit and finance efficiency.



And Now for Something Completely Different



WORLD MAP ACCORDING TO Rural Living

The country with the highest total number of people living in rural areas is India—about the same number as China, Indonesia, and Bangladesh put together.

But while India has the highest total number of their population living in a rural environment—a 67 percent share—there are 42 countries with a higher share. According to the United Nations

World Urbanization Prospects (a biennial publication from the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs), rural populations reached their absolute high in 2022 with approximately 3.38 billion people. In the 1950s, only 1.78 billion people lived in the countryside. The current long-term projections see this number going slightly down to 3.2 billion people by 2050.

While the rural population has become a minority globally (about 46 percent), the majority of those are increasingly concentrated in the poorer parts of the world. Sixty-nine percent of people in the least-developed countries live in rural areas, while this number is only 20 percent in higher-income countries.

A blue-tinted photograph of a busy trade show floor with many people. Overlaid on the image is the text for 'GlassBuild AMERICA THE GLASS, WINDOW & DOOR EXPO'. The dates 'SEPTEMBER 30 - OCTOBER 2, 2024' and location 'DALLAS, TX' are prominently displayed. A white button says 'REGISTER TODAY'. A yellow callout box in the bottom right corner says 'Use code 24ASA for complimentary access to the tradeshow!'.



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