Inside the Advantages of Construction Management Software

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PERFECTING THE PROJECT REVIEW PROCESS FROM START TO FINISH

Contractors can't afford slowdowns or inefficiencies during a project. Construction management (CM) software allows for constant communication, documentation, and collaboration, ensuring the project stays on track and on budget. CM software assists the general contractor in all aspects of project review, minimizing risk by creating built-in workflows to ensure no details are missed — all without typical administrative oversight or tracking checklists. These management programs help to create an accurate and informed project review, which is an integral part of a successful project at all phases, from preconstruction through the close-out process.

WHAT IS PROJECT REVIEW?

Effective project review ensures accountability and awareness of a project from the beginning to the end. It provides a "pulse," so to speak, which helps promote professional growth for every person involved, along with objective data which can be used for case studies in post-project review. This process ensures your team can improve moving forward. Project review involves the examination of all aspects of the construction project during the conception, pricing, and construction build, as well as unplanned external audits during the project or after its completion. In a typical project review, the general contractor, architects, engineers, and trade contractors each review aspects of the project. These aspects include quality control, budget, and schedules to ensure each responsible party is accountable

for the completion of the work according to the contract documents. Successful reviews of the contract documents need a simple and easy-to-understand presentation. Software allows project review accuracy without risk of information drop to important documents such as owner contracts or trade contracts, which include a scope of work, budget, and schedule. Software also provides project documentation and collaboration on any issue that may arise during construction or building operations upon completion.

PRECONSTRUCTION PROJECT REVIEW

During preconstruction, all project documentation needs to be scrutinized to ensure all details are uncovered, accounted for and understood — not only for determining the cost of the project but, more importantly, identifying the scope of work to which the entire project team is accountable.

ONE SOURCE OF TRUTH IN ONE PLACE

The best construction software programs allow the general contractor to have control over the flow of communication between project partners. This ensures operational oversight throughout the project, so budget, quality, and schedule remain on track, and unknown conditions are minimized.

Construction software platforms house project documentation and make it accessible to the entire project team in real time. For example, an online plan room provides a simple way to distribute and manage drawing iterations. With the right software, all parties can access the same information and the most up-to-date and accurate contract documents needed to accurately estimate project costs and execute construction.

During the preconstruction phase, project review takes place by reviewing documents. Subcontractors and vendors receive bids through the construction software platform, then analyze the bids to create the project budget. Each bid is carefully reviewed against the project documents to ensure all gaps are covered and a scope of work for each trade is created. Construction software has the power to carry all these details into an owner proposal, owner contract, and subcontract agreement with no information drop along the way, minimizing the risk of details being dropped from bid to contract. The real power is in building a repeatable process that produces the information in organized containers, ready to analyze, and communicate to the client.

PROJECT REVIEW DURING CONSTRUCTION

Staying organized throughout the project is paramount to staying on track and on budget. There are a number of ways estimators, project managers, accounting teams, site superintendents, and trade partners can use construction software for these purposes, such as:

- » Managing requests for information
- » Project meetings/minutes
- » Managing submittals
- » Managing project schedule
- » Collection of daily logs/timecards
- » Setting up a project budget/buyout
- » Change management
- » Managing/approving subcontractor billing
- » Managing expenses and material purchase orders
- » Owner billing
- » Automatic creation of a job cost statement and work-in-progress (WIP) report

Of course, housing more tasks in a single construction software makes it easier to train all team members on the internal software processes. Integrated software platforms are great options as well, until the data sync fails in a critical time event. CM software provides operational oversight and risk management that makes project review seamless, reduces project risk and reduces the amount of time it takes to perform these tasks by each responsible party. This gives the team back an estimated 30% of valuable time to focus on the quality of workmanship and execution of the project schedule, which ultimately ensures the project will stay on budget. The construction software provides the support each general contractor needs to easily communicate, review documents and stay ahead of unforeseen problems with minimal interruptions.

PROJECT REVIEW POST-CONSTRUCTION

Following the construction of a project, the CM software platform has all the necessary tools to produce close-out documentation such as operations and maintenance manuals, final, red-lined construction drawings and warranty information. Additionally, the software has captured all documentation necessary for a post-mortem project review process with the project team. You will discuss quality of work, efficiencies gained or lost, documentation and communication throughout the project, whether the client received appropriate communication and all necessary documentation, budget fluctuations, software ease of use, any issues that arose, and how you may have managed the project differently.

When harnessed, CM software organizes teams, manages risk, creates accurate job cost reporting, and enables a project review process seamlessly. General contractors who embrace technology, adapt their processes and lay a foundation to scale their business by utilizing software will grow into a new era along with the industry.

About the Author

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