

Member Communication Experience

Contractor, Owner, Engineer: Getting the Right Project Data

Written by: InEight Blog Editors

The ability to make informed, actionable decisions based on up-to-date project data can be the difference between a successful capital project and a costly failure. For contractors, owners, and engineers, that means having the right information at the right time and in the appropriate format. Given the endless streams of data produced before and during long-term capital projects, is it possible? In short, yes. The question then becomes how.

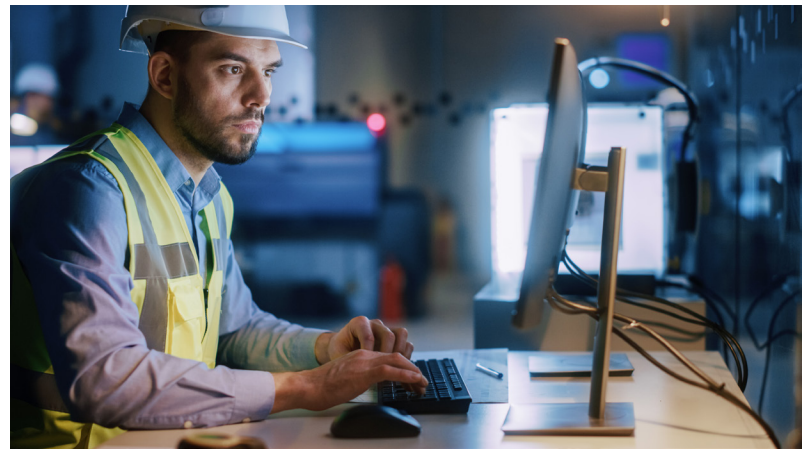
The how is more manageable than it might seem, but it does require adopting the right technology and putting some protocols in place that support it. Because of all it enables you to understand, learn, and do for your project, your data is among your most vital and valuable assets. This article outlines the what and the how of getting the right project data you need.

Go Digital

Say good-bye to legacy systems and practices (and paper), and hello to construction project management software.

It's a necessary shift that enables you to keep up with the sophisticated requirements of modern capital projects – requirements that depend heavily on the integrity of project data. Migrating to digital technologies like project management software means copious amounts of complex data can be efficiently collected for stakeholders to use, from scheduling and cost trending to forecasting and risk mitigation.

Ultimately, going digital is about improving the quality, accuracy, and speed at which work is done, making it easier to



assess progress toward project outcomes and plan proactively rather than operate reactively on gut instinct or unreliable data. This step makes the ones that follow possible.

Aim For A Cloud-Based Solution

Software that takes advantage of cloud technology allows you to leverage the potential of your data by making it accessible in real time no matter where you or your teams are – within the in-progress structure itself, jobsite trailer, back office, or remote location. You're able to get your data where and when you need it, as long as you're using a device with an internet connection. With all this information literally at your fingertips, you can stay up to date with project progress and make data-driven decisions that keep that progress on track.

Centralize Your Data In One Virtual Location

When things are moving quickly and simultaneously on the jobsite, that real-time data is essential. You want to know if the data you're looking at is the most current version that everyone else is using (or should be), if it's accurate and, more practically, that you'll be able to find it when you need it again.

Cloud-based digital technology can serve as a single source of truth, opening up visibility and access to all the project data points, documentation, and performance metrics housed within it. Everyone working from one data hub strengthens and streamlines communication and collaboration among stakeholders, which will directly inform the effectiveness of the decisions and action steps made throughout the project.

Customize Dashboards And Reports

Just because all that project data is widely visible doesn't mean everyone needs it all. That's an awful lot to wade through. Different audiences require certain data to support the kinds of decisions and action steps for which they're responsible.

Fortunately, construction project management software with customization capability makes it easy for each audience to fine-tune dashboards and reports according to their unique needs. Tailoring these tools allows each audience or stakeholder to drill down to the information that delivers the insights they need to do their job, making far better use of their time.

Use Data Visualization Tools

Want to take customization a step further? Data visualization tools help make complex data sets more easily understandable, increasing the likelihood of accurate analysis and decision-making. These tools allow everyone to define what data they see and how they see it – including visual formats such as bar graphs, pie charts, line charts, maps, and even building information modeling, etc., down to the colors and layout – whatever makes sense to be able to assess everything at a glance.


Provide Mobile Access

The what and how of data creation and delivery is just as important as the where. Stakeholders need the ability to interact with data on the go, which is especially important for

those in the field. And this goes back to cloud connectivity. All that field data being generated on the jobsite can be entered in real time via an internet-connected device, giving stakeholders immediate insight into productivity levels, work quality, and any developing risk factors that warrant attention. Further, accessing specific documentation on those devices can eliminate those well-worn paths back and forth to the job trailer just to look up project information.

Set Up Alerts And Notifications

Project data is constantly generated and changing. Continually checking dashboards and reports to monitor everything may not be the most efficient use of anyone's time. But creating alerts and notifications can ensure stakeholders are made aware when relevant data changes or a milestone is reached. This becomes especially critical with performance metrics that deviate outside their operating ranges, indicating a risk factor is threatening to impact costs and/or timelines and requires attention.

There's one more thing to consider making the "what and how" go a lot more smoothly: having the right technology partner. Too many solutions from too many vendors can risk leaving you with siloed data stored among systems that don't integrate well with each other. And that can send you right back to where you and your other stakeholders don't want to be, unable to make the confident, informed decisions necessary to achieve the desired project outcomes. 



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