

Mistakes in Data Capture Are Costly. Here's How Contractors Can Avoid Them.

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BY BEING DILIGENT IN WHAT THEY TRACK, CONSTRUCTION FIRMS CAN SAVE MONEY AND TIME.

With some of the slimmest profit margins across different industries, an occasional oversight could lead to bad news for construction companies. It can be as easy as a rounding error here, a missed invoice there, or even an accidental overpayment. How do these mistakes happen?

Traditional construction processes and workflows have been linked to vital information not being accessible in a timely manner. At the rate crews move, and as activities are completed, companies cannot afford to wait days, weeks, or even months for information to come in from jobsites and be analyzed.

There are a few typical pitfalls that teams run into when gathering information: duplicate entry, human error, outdated information, lack of communication, and jobsite distractions among other issues. Any one of these can lead to companies reporting or using bad data to make decisions.

It sounds great to be using the flashy, latest and greatest system or process for reporting and analytics. These should be able to tell stakeholders what is going well on projects, and where the project may be exposed to some level of risk. But what happens when the information being entered isn't accurate or even the right information needed?

Accurate and timely information captured on project sites are



the backbone for reporting project health and performance throughout the organization. Nobody knows what goes on daily better than the people with the boots on the ground physically building and managing the work. Unfortunately, ever-increasing schedule demands and other pressures can divert attention away from an employee's ability to record what happens on site.

No two construction projects are alike, just as what works for one company may or may not work for the next. When considering what kind of process will work for your company there are a few key components to understand. Here are some of the most important:

Who will be entering information? For some companies, this might be the foreman or superintendent, but for others it could be an entirely different person or team.


What information will these people responsible for tracking

on a daily basis? What information are they not tracking, but should be? This often includes things like time allocation, production quantities, allowances, delivery tickets, equipment inspections, vacation hours, and more.

How and when will these items be tracked? Is your team using phones, tablets and laptops, or are they tied to desktops in the back office? How often are they using timecards, logs, work tickets, and change orders?

Who is responsible for reviewing and approving information captured on site? If certain standards need to be met in order for information to be used in decision making on and off the jobsite, it is vital that these are discussed, understood, and reviewed regularly. Reviewers also have to be clear on what criteria needs to be met before records are shared with home office, owner reps, and others.

How will the information be shared with other departments or people within the business? If your data is siloed and only accessible by certain people within an organization, this can create bottlenecks and lead to poor decision-making when key personnel do not have access to all the information needed.

Technology is transforming the way contractors work. By replacing manual processes and allowing software to capture and share information throughout the organization, construction companies are able to focus on delivering the project on time and under budget. Technology doesn't have to be the answer to every one of these questions, but by using it in the places where it makes the most sense, the entire system becomes more streamlined, simpler, and more effective for both teams on the ground, and those in the office. 



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