

LEAN CONSTRUCTION TAKES A BACK SEAT TO ADMINISTRATIVE WORK

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Contact: Christopher Franchi, Regional Manager - NextPlans

Resources and time are critical from one construction project to the next. Every business aspires to utilize limited resources in order to produce or execute an efficient and cost-effective operation. True to form, a big percentage of total cost on construction projects is allocated to time and administration. Document control is an area of admin that begins at the onset of a project, and lasts long after the tools are collected off a job-site. For instance, architectural firms may base 35-45% of their fee on the time exhausted on managing construction documents alone, and another 25-30% on administration during the construction phase according to the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada. Likewise, the Houston Chronicle reports that engineering fees breakdown to final design services and paperwork at 45 percent and construction administration at 20 percent. Subsequently, Project Close out is the last major phase of a project's life cycle where collecting, completing, and archiving project documents is one of the most significant in terms of time and resources used.

It would seem that since document administration is a relatively known and necessary issue to tackle during a construction project that there would be many more tools out there catering to the needs of small and large contractors, design firms, and engineers. The concern is clear... a construction firm, in whatever capacity, builds buildings. Their wheelhouse is not document control, nor should it be. In the face of this dilemma, companies turn to the abundance of technology drowning the marketplace in one file sharing service after another. The hope, is to get on board the digital revolution and assuage some of these trivial troubles. In reality, what happens is the opposite. Lean construction takes a back seat to loading up office engineers and field staff with resources that simply drain more and more of an employee's billable time. Valuable time that could be devoted to greater efficiency of the construction itself, not towards quality control, indexing, and naming of the document packages that are issued for the project; Not towards the collection of information from Subs, and the distribution of information to project participants.

Did you know that the IRS offers tax tips that state a construction company can deduct General & Administrative indirect costs? These costs are those associated with running the company, but not tied to a specific job. In that case, wouldn't it be nice to have an added general administration service that saves both your employees time, labor, and cuts down on direct costs that are currently being utilized on a job, while creating added financial benefits for the company?

Many web-based tools on the market merely create more cumbersome processes, and take an abundance of time to navigate and provide the appropriate end user support. Isn't this just what construction managers don't want? What's missing from all of these systems is the human element. These technologies are propositioned as a solution when really they only increase the burden on what may very well be a busy and overworked staff already.

The NextPlans system is one of few that it is completely designed for the construction industry alone and is a tremendous solution for this over-reaching problem. It provides

total accountability, quality control, reliability, and efficiency when it comes to document control procedures. It simply integrates with a company's current business practices in order to deliver the most effective execution of project administration from pre-construction to Close out, facilitating the admin so you don't have to. Incorporated within this, is a team of professionals that are completely focused on end user support and outstanding service.