THE LEADING BUSINESS MAGAZINE FOR CONTRACTORS

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CONSTRUCTION BUSINESS OWNER

OCTOBER 2026

HOW R4 CONTRACTORS FOUND STABILITY IN THE WOODS

Reliable equipment supported Scott Reed's successful transition from civil work to the timber industry

2026 Corporate Capabilities

IN THE OFFICE
How 1:1 meetings build stronger teams

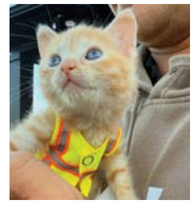
IN THE FIELD
Add another tool to the safety toolbox

CARMEN CAPOCCIA

Senior Managing Editor
Carmen Capoccia

It's that time of year again: The air's getting cooler, the leaves are turning yellow and Construction Business Owner is publishing our annual equipment edition. It's my favorite issue of the year, and an excellent way to kick off my favorite season.

Construction equipment has made a few appearances in the news lately, and I've gathered some of my favorite stories:



Sue the kitten
Photo courtesy of
RiverReach Construction

- **Sue steals the show —** In July, a crew at Ohio's RiverReach Construction found a small kitten lodged in a Komatsu excavator. Workers removed the skid plate, and out tumbled an orange ball of fluff now named Sue (short for Komatsu). Today, she has a branded vest and hard hat, merch in her likeness and, most importantly, a home. This story warmed the hearts of many, but it also serves as an important reminder: Always be aware of your surroundings. You never know when a new friend has wandered on-site. (instagram.com/riverreachconstruction)
- **Reach for the stars —** Vermeer and Interlune recently announced their expanded partnership. Last year, the companies unveiled a lunar excavator prototype, designed to harvest resources from the moon. Vermeer and Interlune aim to have "mission-ready" lunar equipment by 2028 — just two short years from now. Interlune's CEO Rob Meyerson said, "Reliable, autonomous mobility and heavy-duty excavation are the backbones of any permanent settlement on the moon." Space isn't my first thought when I see a boom and bucket, but we're living in the future. (constructionbusinessowner.com/lunarconstruction)
- **Last chance for a limited-edition loader —** CASE Construction Equipment partnered with Metallica's foundation, All Within My Hands (AWMH), to auction off a limited-edition machine. Last year, CASE released 25 "Heavy Metal" Hetfield Limited Edition TV450B compact track loaders, commissioned by Metallica frontman James Hetfield as part of an agreement with CNH. This is the final machine from the line, and it's up for grabs at purplewave.com until Dec. 17. Proceeds will go to an AWMH initiative that supports education in the trades. What's more metal than that? (constructionbusinessowner.com/hetfieldloader)

Whether your fall projects take you to the moon or deeper into the earth, I hope your fuel tanks stay full, your crews stay motivated and your business stays booming.

Until next time,

Carmen Capoccia

CONSTRUCTION BUSINESS OWNER

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IN EVERY ISSUE

THE BUSINESS COUNCIL

IN THE OFFICE

IN THE FIELD

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FEATURE SERIES

EQUIPMENT

ON THE COVER

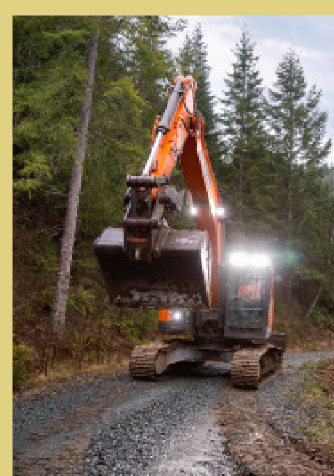

Photo Credit: DEVELON

MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS

Sage Acquires Bangert to Strengthen Onboarding for Sage Intacct Construction
Sage, provider of accounting, financial, HR and payroll technology for small and midsized businesses, has acquired Bangert, a long-standing Sage partner and specialist in AI-enabled implementation and onboarding for construction financial management. For customers, this means a faster, more predictable path to Sage Intacct Construction. Unlike many industries, construction businesses manage multiple projects across different entities, subcontractors, suppliers and jobsites, making the adoption of new financial management software particularly complex. Bangert's AskRichard platform combines guided, AI-enabled workflows and expert implementation support to simplify deployment while giving customers access to trusted knowledge throughout the onboarding journey. Visit sage.com.

Reading Truck Equipment & Masterack Unite
Reading Truck Equipment LLC. and Masterack LLC., two companies specializing in commercial vehicle upfit solutions, announced the integration of their operations to create a comprehensive commercial vehicle upfit organization. The integration brings together Masterack's leadership in cargo management solutions for commercial vans and pickup trucks with Reading Truck Equipment's nationwide network of commercial vehicle upfit, installation, parts and service locations. Together, the combined organization creates a broad commercial vehicle upfit portfolio, giving customers access to expanded product offerings, greater geographic coverage and a more seamless experience from specification through installation and ongoing support. Reading Truck Equipment and Masterack will continue investing in the products and capabilities that help commercial fleets operate more efficiently. Visit readingtruck.com and masterack.com.

NEW HIRES

Tiffany Robinson
Associated Builders and Contractors

Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) announced that Tiffany Robinson has joined the association as its vice president of workforce and safety policy. Robinson brings deep experience in executive leadership, workforce development, public policy and infrastructure to ABC. As a member of ABC's executive leadership team, Robinson will lead research, policy and strategic initiatives designed to strengthen the construction workforce, advance health and safety and help expand America's capacity to build critical infrastructure. She will work closely with ABC's 67 chapters and 24,000 members to identify emerging workforce and safety challenges and develop proactive, research-driven solutions. Prior to joining ABC, Robinson served as Maryland secretary of labor. She later served as Virginia director of rail and public transportation. Visit abc.org.

Jack Sommer
McShane Construction Company

Jack Sommer joined McShane Construction Company's Southeast regional office in Auburn, Alabama, as vice president. In this role, he will spearhead McShane's commercial pursuits across the Southeast. Sommer comes to McShane with more than 20 years of commercial construction experience spanning operations, project management, preconstruction and strategic growth. Throughout his career, he has successfully led the delivery of complex projects across a diverse range of markets, including hospitality, mixed-use, healthcare, higher education, K-12, research, industrial and commercial facilities. Most recently, he served as project director at Bailey-Harris, where he played a key role in delivering successful projects and developing lasting partnerships with clients. Sommer earned a Master of Science in building construction from Auburn University and a Bachelor of Science in business administration from University of Tennessee. Visit mcshaneconstruction.com.

Katie MacGillivary
Sims Crane

Sims Crane, a provider of crane, rigging and lifting solutions across the Southeast, announced Katie MacGillivary as its new chief financial officer (CFO), effective Oct. 5. MacGillivary brings 25 years of financial leadership experience to Sims Crane, with a track record of transforming financial operations and helping companies navigate growth, acquisitions and strategic transactions. Throughout her career, she has led numerous acquisitions, multiple exit processes and an initial public offering across industries including transportation, financing, logistics and energy. MacGillivary joins Sims Crane from Channel Partners, where she served as CFO since 2019, leading the company's finance, accounting, payroll, tax, human resources and legal functions. She also held finance leadership roles at TECO Energy and began her career at Ernst & Young and Arthur Andersen. Visit simscrane.com.

Brandon Smith
Hoar Construction

Hoar Construction promoted Brandon Smith to director of division operations for its Florida division, where he will oversee project and field operations while supporting operational consistency, team development and strategic growth initiatives across the state. Smith joined Hoar in 2014 and has established himself as a collaborative and solutions-oriented leader with extensive experience managing complex, high-profile construction projects. Throughout his tenure, he has led projects for several Fortune 100 companies, including Apple, Amazon and Universal. As director of division operations, Smith will lead project staffing and provide oversight across the division's portfolio, from preconstruction and estimating through project closeout. He will work closely with project teams to ensure consistency, accountability and alignment with business objectives. Visit hoar.com.

INDUSTRY UPDATES

Volvo Construction Equipment Rolls Out First US-Built Excavators & Large Loaders

Volvo Construction Equipment (CE) is expanding its U.S. footprint, resulting in more than 50% of its North American machine supply being produced at its Shippensburg, Pennsylvania, facility. Less than a year after announcing plans to localize more machine assembly, the company is delivering its first American-built excavators and larger wheel loaders to customers. A total of 11 additional models will be produced in Shippensburg, shortening customer lead times by more than six weeks. The expansion brings Volvo CE's North American production portfolio to 30 machine models, including excavators, wheel loaders and compactors. With the most recent investment of $40 million, Volvo CE has invested over $1.4 billion since 2007 to triple its annual output capacity and build workforce skills to support growth and increased digitalization. By building greater flexibility into its operations, Volvo CE is better positioned to navigate geopolitical dynamics and the cyclical nature of the construction equipment industry. The company increased production capacity through automation, process improvements and more efficient use of existing factory space, enabling growth while maintaining its existing manufacturing space and workforce. Visit volvoce.com.

CMHA Releases New Storm Shelter Manual

The Concrete Masonry & Hardscapes Association (CMHA) has released "Tornado Storm Shelter Prototypes Using Reinforced Concrete Masonry," a new manual providing architects, engineers and contractors with practical guidance for designing and building ICC 500-compliant tornado shelters. Funded by the National Concrete Masonry Association Education and Research Foundation, the report was developed through work led by the Masonry Institute of St. Louis. The manual comes as severe storms continue to increase the need for structures that protect occupants during extreme wind events. Building codes require ICC 500-compliant tornado shelters in critical emergency operations facilities and most Group E educational occupancies within the 250-mph tornado wind-speed zone. To help project teams meet those requirements, the manual examines three stand-alone shelter prototypes based on educational facilities, ranging from a smaller room to a large gymnasium. The manual also outlines contractor responsibilities related to quality assurance, documentation, special inspections, structural observations and example costs for each prototype. Visit cmha.org.

Counslr Expands With New Partnerships to Address Industry Mental Health

Counslr, a B2B mental health and wellness platform, announced new partnerships with organizations in the construction sector, including JRM Construction Management, headquartered in New York City, and Reno, Nevada-based United Construction. The partnerships provide live, on-demand, confidential mental health support for employees working in an industry where long hours, high-pressure environments, physically demanding work and stigma surrounding mental health often prevent individuals from seeking help. The effectiveness of Counslr's accessible text-based, on-demand approach was demonstrated in a JMIR Formative Research study, "Evaluating User Engagement with a Real-Time, Text-Based Digital Mental Health Support App: Cross Sectional, Retrospective Study," which found that the majority of users chose on-demand sessions, underscoring the value of immediate, in-the-moment support. More than 80% of sessions occurred between 7 p.m. and 5 a.m., times when traditional mental health services are often unavailable. Visit counslr.com.

4-Horn Trench & Shoring Expands Florida Footprint

4-Horn Trench & Shoring, a provider of trench safety equipment, road plates and engineered shoring solutions for underground construction, announced the opening of its newest branch in Orlando, Florida. Located at 47 E Taft Vineland Road, the new 6,300-square-foot facility sits just one block off Orange Avenue and features a fully fenced laydown yard, wash bay, well-equipped warehouse and 1,075 square feet of office space. Positioned in one of central Florida's most active construction markets, the Orlando branch strengthens 4-Horn Trench & Shoring's ability to serve contractors, utilities, municipalities and industrial customers throughout the Orlando metro area and surrounding I-4 corridor. The branch will offer a full inventory of trench shields, manhole shields, hydraulic shoring, modular boxes, sheet pile and road plates, backed by 4-Horn Trench & Shoring's engineering services and rapid delivery capabilities. Visit 4horntrench.com.

Need More News?
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The 5% Argument

When no one knows the firm's net profitability

GREGG M. SCHOPPMAN
is a partner with FMI Corporation, management consultants and investment bankers for the construction industry. Schoppman specializes in the areas of productivity and project management. He also leads FMI's project management consulting practice. Prior to joining FMI, Schoppman served as a senior project manager for a general contracting firm in central Florida. He has completed complex construction projects in the medical, pharmaceutical, office, heavy civil, industrial, manufacturing and multifamily markets. He holds a bachelor's degree and master's degree in civil engineering, as well as a Master of Business Administration. Schoppman has expertise in numerous contract delivery methods, as well as knowledge of many geographical markets.
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Ask any member of your team if they know the net profitability of a firm such as yours. The answer may astound you. Having done this exercise over the last 20 years, it is interesting to see values as high as 50% and as low as 1%. So, either your team believes that the executive team runs a massive printing press to push out all of those dollars, or you are barely making enough to cover weekly payroll. Below is a table that represents the last five years of net profitability across the various construction sectors as measured by FMI.

There are a million reasons why one sector is the darling while another is the frog, year over year. Keep in mind that this five-year average also includes a time shortly after the pandemic and firms that may have been recipients of the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan through the federal government, so firms may have received a windfall through the PPP, managing the business well in a crisis, or a combination of both. While it is great for leaders to maintain a strong, healthy knowledge of industry benchmarks, it is more important to go back to the thesis question: Why does your team have such a diverse set of responses when asked about profitability? Additionally, does this diversity also create or drive bad behaviors? For instance, what is your propensity to drive labor productivity when you think the firm is making 50 cents on every dollar that comes into the business?

Reluctance

There are certainly organizations that

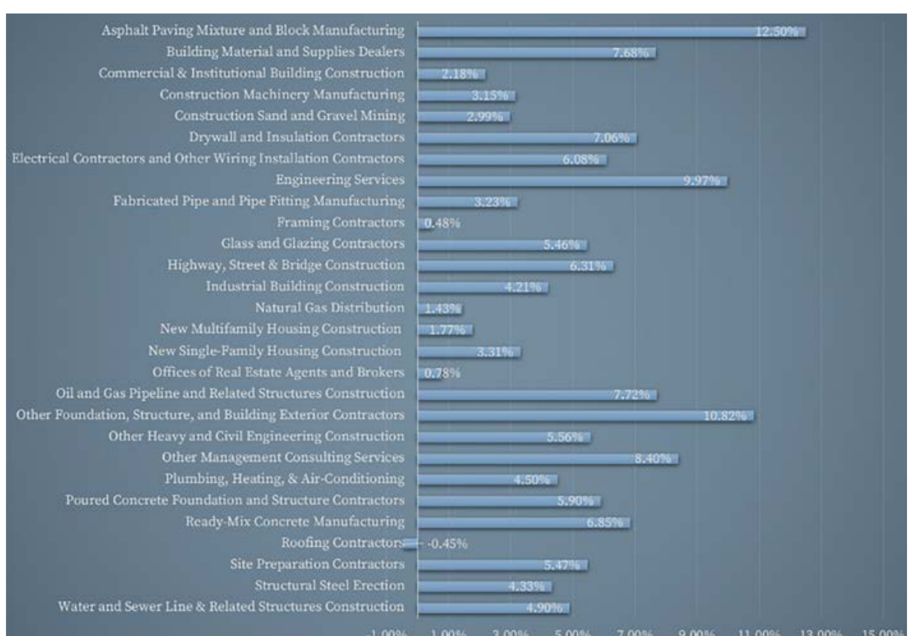


Figure 1. Net profitability by construction sector, five-year average
Photo Credit: Gregg Schoppman

Photo Credit: Mer_Studio- adobestock.com

play it close to the vest when it comes to financial performance. Simply put, most construction organizations are privately held businesses, and sharing such information might feel uncomfortable.

To be clear, this is not to say that to create greater knowledge of financial performance, leaders should leave the income statement in the breakroom next to the coffee maker. But consider an alternative message.

For instance, in Figure 1, the average across all the sectors is 5%. It would be interesting to see the reaction when posed like this: "For every dollar that comes through the front door, we get to keep one nickel. For the risk we take as a business, we get to keep a nickel." When you put it that way, it doesn't seem like such a fun party after all. By no means should we be crying into our coffee, but this context provides the right amount of impact.

Financial Association: Part 1

Consider a civil contractor. This civil contractor — Dirt Movers Inc. — owns 10 excavators of various sizes. The excavators roughly cost around $300,000 each.

Now think about the team that runs said excavators. Doing some quick math with a crew of five for each piece of equipment at $50/hour, burdened, you are looking at $2,000/day. Contextually, it is easy to see how one might make an errant assumption about profitability when doing some scratch pad math. Costs and profit are not the same thing. A little education goes a long way in creating the fight foundation.

Financial Association: Part 2

Costs are a piece of the equation. There is also the top line of this income statement that comes into question. So, Dirt Movers Inc. just landed a $20 million contract. This is in addition to the other four projects they were awards this year totaling $80 million in revenue. To a rank-and-file employee — office and field alike — they hear messaging that sounds a lot like winning the Powerball lottery. In the end, the top line enables us to have jobs, but the bottom line means so much more to the long-term health and well-being of the individual and firm.

Financial Association: Part 3

As an example that builds upon the financial model, ask your team how they would respond to this question: Would you rather be a $100 million contractor generating 5% net or a $50 million contractor generating 10% net? Strategic implications aside as it relates to being larger or smaller, it is amazing how many individuals choose the $100 million in revenue option.

Consider this revision to the previous statement: "You go from $50 million to $100 million but you make the same amount of money, even though you took $50 million worth of additional risk to the business." Once again, there may be logical, strategic reasons for going to $100 million (i.e., market protection, investment in the team, etc.), but there are also many businesses making bad sales decisions because they think chasing the top line has more sex appeal than the bottom line. However, the bottom line finances the company's future while the top line represents a promise that may or may not come to pass.

The core arguments for profitability messaging are these:

1. **Knowledge —** Sharing profit goals and performance, whether as a percentage or the actual number, is a good practice to share. Not sharing could lead to bad decision-making based on unrealistic perceptions, and in the worst scenario, spending money they thought existed but never did.
2. **Strategic decision-making —** Control the narrative about how decisions are made whether it is a client, market or even equipment. Left to their own devices, associates make generalizations that may or may not be grounded in facts.
3. **Training —** Educate your team on what great financial performance looks like. This does not mean you are going to create junior certified public accountants, but a little knowledge enhancement goes a long way.

Schlouch Incorporated: Leading With Safety, Growing Through Well-Being

Lessons in building trust in leadership

CAL BEYER, CWP, is senior director of SAFE Workplaces for SAFE Project. Beyer is a longtime national advocate for workplace mental health, substance misuse, suicide prevention, and opioid risk reduction and overdose prevention. This grew out of his work on human capital risk management and worker well-being. SAFE Project is a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit committed to overcoming the addiction epidemic in the U.S. Established in 2017 by Admiral James and Mary Winnefeld after the tragic loss of their 19-year-old son Jonathan due to an opioid overdose, SAFE Project aims to save lives impacted by substance use and mental health challenges through overdose prevention and response, education on stigma, and development of prevention and recovery programs. SAFE Project also provides tailored guidance and programming for workplaces and organizations; within college and university campuses; for veterans, service members and their families; and within communities. Since 2016, Beyer has served as a member of the editorial advisory board for Construction Business Owner. Reach Beyer at cal@safeproject.us or 651-307-7883. Visit safeproject.us.

Many construction companies begin with a pickup truck, a shovel and determination. Few evolve into organizations that redefine what workplace safety really means. Schlouch Incorporated (Blandon, Pennsylvania) is one of them. Founded by Barry and Deb Schlouch in 1983, the company has grown from those humble beginnings into a full-service site development contractor serving central Pennsylvania, the Lehigh Valley and the Delaware Valley. Today, more than 70% of its work comes from repeat customers, reflecting four decades of trusted relationships built on safety, quality and operational excellence.

I first met Barry Schlouch in 2002 at a captive insurance owners conference, and I met Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer Rich King the following year through the Construction Financial Management Association (CFMA). I have had the privilege of learning from and collaborating with these leaders ever since.

What first stood out to me about Schlouch was the humility, servant leadership, desire for personal growth and discipline for continuous improvement. Looking back over the past two decades, I am not surprised the company evolved into a leader in workplace health and well-being. Those qualities were evident long before mental health and substance use prevention became part of broader workplace conversations.

Schlouch's commitment to safety was always palpable. The company viewed safety as an investment rather than simply a compliance requirement. King periodically reminisces how leadership intentionally promoted education through continuous learning that extended well beyond toolbox talks and jobsite safety huddles.

Another characteristic that distinguished Schlouch was transparency. Employees responsible for managing projects, departments and field crews had access to meaningful financial, safety and operational information so they could make informed decisions and understand how their work contributed to the company's success.

Barry Schlouch describes the company's culture as, "built on people first, where safety, teamwork, integrity, continuous improvement and caring for one another create lasting value for our employees, customers and communities." That spirit of transparency continues today. Each year, all employees and their spouses or partners are invited to an annual meeting where leadership reviews safety metrics, financial performance, strategic priorities, employee benefits and the business plan for the coming year. Schlouch also surveys its vendors annually and brings them together to discuss the results, industry trends, safety and opportunities to work more effectively together.

For many years, Barry Schlouch promoted the idea of coming to work fit. King explained, "Leadership understood that preventing injuries involved more than eliminating hazards on a jobsite. Helping employees better understand their own health was another way to keep them safe."

Long before wellness programs became

common in construction, Schlouch partnered with the wellness division of Lehigh Valley Health Network to host health fairs. Around 2010, the company expanded those efforts by introducing biometric screenings and encouraging employees to "know your numbers."

King and HR Coordinator Lisa Bogert also began participating in the Lehigh Valley Business Coalition on Healthcare (LVBCH) in 2012. What began as an opportunity to learn from other employers grew into active leadership within the coalition. King has served on the board since 2017, became an officer in 2021 and is completing a two-year term as chair.

The results have been meaningful. Employee engagement increased, population health improved and employee health contributions declined. Most importantly, as King highlighted, "Quite a few employees and spouses had previously undiagnosed health conditions detected, such as hypertension and diabetes, and received treatment before those conditions became more serious."

As I watched Schlouch's wellness efforts focused on physical health mature into a broader focus combining physical health and mental well-being over the years, another pattern became clear. Leadership was not creating another program. They were broadening the scope of safety.

Construction has always recognized the importance of protecting workers from physical hazards. Schlouch came to recognize that physical health, psychological safety, mental well-being and substance use prevention all influence whether employees can perform at their best and return home safely each day.

King credits the Schlouches with that evolution: "Barry has spoken publicly about his parents' struggles and their successful treatment through Caron Treatment Centers. Barry's willingness to share that personal story helped reduce stigma and made it easier for employees and their families to seek help."

The same vulnerability was shown by several other members of Schlouch's leadership team who had family members who experienced mental health or substance use challenges. Those experiences created a greater awareness that these issues touch every workplace and reinforced leadership's commitment to providing meaningful support. This vulnerability created a safe space for others to acknowledge that they or a family member needed support.

"We never viewed an employee assistance program as simply 'checking a box,'" King shared. "When employees or family members experienced difficulty accessing care, Schlouch changed providers, expanded services to include financial, legal and parental support, and worked intentionally to normalize conversations about mental health and recovery."

That philosophy continues today. In May, King and Bogert joined another member of their insurance captive on a panel during a "Building a Mentally Healthy Culture" workshop that I had the pleasure of facilitating. Schlouch has embraced many of SAFE Project's recommendations for creating recovery-friendly workplaces, including:

- Signing the #NoShame Pledge
- Expanding employee assistance program services
- Implementing next-chance agreements for employees needing support
- Providing flexible leave policies that support treatment and recovery
- Placing naloxone in company facilities and jobsites
- Developing partnerships with community treatment and recovery providers

These initiatives are not separate from Schlouch's long-standing commitment to safety. They are the next evolution of it. Companies that genuinely care about their employees recognize that protecting people means caring for the whole person.

King also credits long-time Chief Operating Officer Don Swasing for helping create buy-in among field employees on the wellness and mental health initiatives. King shared, "Don is respected for his technical knowledge and leadership. However, his more valuable skills are how he leads from the heart and intuitively finesses tough conversations, like mental health and substance use."

King continued, "Our key field leaders also embraced the programs and allowed us to bring wellness to the field with on-site biometrics and health educational sessions."

Purpose and intention are still the hallmarks I think about when I reflect on Schlouch. I remember Barry proudly pointing out artwork created by Deb, displayed throughout the company's offices, which reflect the company's philosophy. King shared, "Barry and Deb have always believed in providing a welcoming and comfortable environment in which employees are inspired to do their best work and be creative."

I last visited Schlouch while the company's renovation was underway to create brighter collaborative spaces with updated technology while preserving artwork and traditions that reflect its history and culture. Like so many things at Schlouch, the environment continues to evolve without losing sight of the values that shaped it.

Schlouch reminds me that exceptional organizations never stop learning. Collectively, the leadership team expanded the definition and scope of safety. They recognized that caring for employees means caring for the whole person. They committed to breaking stigma around mental health and substance use helping to provide pathways for employees and family members to seek help. In an industry where trust, teamwork and safety remain fundamental to success, this is a lesson worth sharing.

Expand Your Financial Toolbox

How outsourcing builds more robust financial capabilities

Stephanie Knowles is a managing director in the outsourced accounting solutions practice at CBIZ. With significant experience advising businesses on financial management, process improvement and operational efficiency, her collaborative approach, combined with deep accounting and advisory expertise, has made her a trusted resource for organizations navigating growth and change. She can be reached at stephanie.knowles@cbiz.com. Visit cbiz.com.

In construction, project work is completed on-site, but money is often made in the back office. That's why it's so important that construction firms and contractors have the modern finance tools and services they need to build sophisticated administrative functions. Just as work can't be completed without skilled craftspeople, no amount of experience or skill can negate the need to protect margins, estimate accurately and act with agility in the face of emerging project disruptions and changing markets. Thankfully, outsourcing makes qualified accounting, technology, administrative and leadership-level professionals available as needed.

In the current construction environment, strong financial practices often underwrite an organization's competitive profile. For those looking to strengthen their financial capabilities, here are a few key areas where outsourcing can help you add valuable tools to your finance tool kit.

Improving Estimates & Bidding

According to the latest CBIZ Construction Survey, large organizations reported bidding more frequently on projects they would previously overlook for being too small in scale or budget. As a result, boutique firms and specialized providers may find themselves competing against entities with vastly larger resources and cost advantages in areas like material sourcing. One way to level the playing field may be to refine bidding practices to produce a quote that's more likely to win the work and estimates that are more accurate.

How Outsourcing Helps With Improving Estimates & Bidding

Knowledge comes at a premium but often pays for itself, particularly when it's short-term or project-based. With so many moving parts, each construction project is full of opportunities to improve processes and practices. Even incremental efficiency improvements add up to stronger margins thanks to work that remains on schedule and projects that finish within budget.

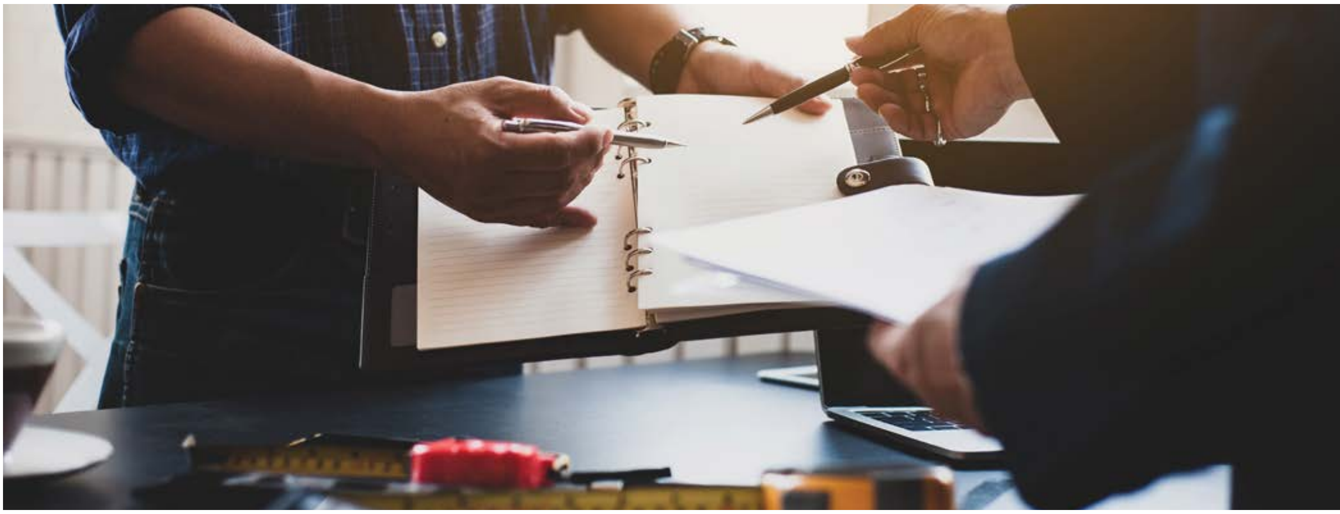
Outsourced professionals can get involved in your projects, ideally as early as the bidding and estimation stage, to guide your efforts and yield benefits. Seeking out the right professional resources with applicable experience can help construction businesses implement building, fabrication and material management practices (among others) that improve their bottom line. That translates into bids that are more competitive and estimates that are more accurate.

As a result, organizations can win more work, incorporate advice that produces more reliable estimates and optimize profit margins.

Scaling & Special Projects

Increasingly, specialist insight can be sourced on an ad hoc basis as roles at virtually every level of seniority can be brought in to advise or contribute on priority projects. Even leadership-level technology, marketing and compliance

Photo Credit-Wasan- adobestock.com



professionals can be hired for short-term or project-based work. If your business is undertaking major initiatives of any kind, it's a great option to know that short-term help is available as an alternative to permanently increasing the wage bill.

How Outsourcing Helps With Scaling & Special Projects

Among outsourcing's most powerful benefits may be the ability to scale rapidly while controlling costs, particularly on a temporary basis or short notice. In construction, opportunities often arise suddenly. Outsourcing assistance can help businesses respond without being caught flat-footed. For example, a project may require compliance expertise and oversight a business does not have in-house. The input of a specialized professional can be arranged on an outsourced basis to satisfy compliance requirements and establish ongoing internal controls.

Similarly, internal initiatives like technology modernization efforts require experienced guidance to succeed. Hiring a qualified technologist on a permanent basis may be prohibitively expensive. Outsourcing that same expertise can secure equally or more qualified candidates to design and implement new systems, lead organizationwide training, and maintain the degree of involvement necessary to help ensure the modernization effort's long-term success.

For organizations with relatively static technology ecosystems, outsourcing may be the difference between successful modernization programs and ambitions that remain too costly or out of reach.

Technology

Artificial intelligence is the phrase on everyone's lips, but there are many opportunities to apply various forms of technology within the construction industry. For 42% of CBIZ Construction Survey respondents who have made identifying and implementing new technologies a top strategic priority for the year ahead, there are a lot of great options to discover, AI included.

How Outsourcing Helps With Technology

For businesses starting at square one, it's important to build the foundation for a strong technology ecosystem before chasing breakthrough technologies like AI. For better or worse, construction has a reputation as an "old school" industry in which many organizations remain behind the curve. Those just getting up to speed on the business benefits of technology can use outsourced expertise to guide the design of tech stacks that reflect how their businesses operate and have the capabilities to best support them without disrupting how work currently gets done.

Fortunately, some of the technologies that can most efficiently move the needle are low-cost. Enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems are a great place to start. ERP systems centralize data for easier management of reconciliations, transaction analysis and reporting, and journal entries. They can also help organizations automate certain mundane tasks, saving employees time for higher-value pursuits, and are the ideal springboard for implementing other, more sophisticated tech features in the future.

Virtually every construction business routinely encounters both challenges and opportunities that call for specialized expertise. Some take pride in their ability to leverage internal resources to find clever solutions. Others may find that it's more cost-effective and efficient to call on experienced professionals to lend an outside perspective.

Ultimately, when competition increases, cost pressures mount and the maintenance of schedules becomes more important, the reliable guidance of those with firsthand experience proves its worth. For that reason, outsourcing is positioned to play an important role in construction companies for years to come, and the examples above are just a narrow snapshot of the practice's broad potential benefits.

Inside the Billing & Scope Habits Keeping A&E Firms Out of Cash Flow Trouble

Choosing a design partner with functional operations

BY LESLIE HELLER

When a construction project starts logging delays or running over budget, we tend to point fingers at the usual suspects: supply chain hiccups, labor shortages or unpredictable site conditions. But what if the real culprit isn't happening on the jobsite at all? What if it's rooted in your design partner's bookkeeping?

It sounds harsh, but the financial health of the architecture and engineering (A&E) firms you partner with directly impacts your bottom line.

According to the 2026 Architecture & Engineering Industry Benchmark Report by Factor A/E, project management software built for A&E firms, a staggering number of design firms are operating in a financial fog. The data reveals that 42% of A&E firms cannot report their own net profit margin, while 60% don't track their realization rate (the percentage of billable time that turns into collected revenue). Worse, 40% fail to track project profitability in real time, even though 73% recognize scope creep as their biggest budget killer.

With nearly half of the design sector operating without this basic financial data, the consequences rarely stay confined to their offices. They show up directly on your jobsite.

What This Means for Construction Business Owners

Financial pressure on the design side quickly translates into operational pressure for the general contractor.

An A&E firm that absorbs scope creep early in the design phase without tracking it essentially burns through its budget invisibly. And once leaders finally realize they are bleeding cash, they are forced to play catch-up, which often means trying to shave hours later down the line, right when the project transitions into construction.

For a contractor, this manifests as half-baked drawings, delayed responses to critical field questions and corner-cutting during construction administration. Furthermore, with the report indicating that 70% of firms wait more than 31 days to get paid (with 22% waiting over 60 days), design teams are frequently operating under intense cash flow stress.

The effects are already apparent. Earlier this year, Construction Business Owner reported on the impact late payments can have on construction timelines. A design partner who is stressed about making payroll is a major, unmanaged risk to your construction schedule.

How High-Performing Firms Get It Right

The A&E firms that manage to avoid this trap don't necessarily have more staff or bigger budgets; they simply have better operational discipline. They treat financial visibility as a core project management function, not an administrative afterthought handled once a quarter.

One metric prioritized by healthy firms is their realization rate. They look at active projects, calculate the hours logged and consistently compare them to what is billed and collected. This allows them to spot pricing and staffing issues early, before it's too late to fix things.

When an A&E firm is running smoothly, three distinct habits stand out:

- ***Clear scope definition*** — They treat the scope document with the same legal weight as the contract. Vague scopes are the root cause of project disputes. Itemizing exactly what is or isn't included up-front makes the "that's an additional service" conversation much easier later.
- ***Real-time profitability tracking*** — They review financial performance on a set cadence while the work is live. They know whether a project is on pace or underwater before the invoice goes out, leaving room to adjust.
- ***Good invoice discipline*** — They invoice on a fixed, recurring date, regardless of project milestones. Regular billing creates predictable cash flow and signals to clients that timely payment is a professional expectation, keeping the firm properly capitalized to support your field team.

What to Look for in a Design Partner

As a contractor sitting at the end of the project chain, choosing the right design

Photo Credit wanniwat- adobestock.com

partner is a form of risk mitigation, and it could be the difference between a smooth project and dealing with delays and cash flow issues that are out of your control.

When evaluating who to team up with on your next bid, keep an eye out for the following operational green and red flags.

Green Flags

- ***Complete milestone submissions*** — Their construction documents are complete at major milestones. Comprehensive drawings mean fewer requests for information (RFIs) and less confusion in the field.
- ***Specific, decisive RFI responses*** — They answer RFIs with technical precision rather than defensive deflection. A good partner gives you a solution; a struggling one gives you a vague clarification that breeds two more questions.
- ***Active construction administration (CA) presence*** — Firms that are financially squeezed tend to understaff CA because it wasn't priced properly. Regular site presence and prompt submittal reviews are a signal that CA was budgeted for and is being honored.
- ***Clean scope management*** — When an owner requests a midproject change, the design firm handles it professionally. Firms with clear internal processes document it, price it and move forward.

Red Flags

- ***High early RFI volume*** — A flood of basic coordination questions in the first few weeks of construction usually means the design disciplines weren't properly coordinated internally before printing.
- ***Slow submittal reviews*** — If a standard two-week submittal turnaround consistently drags into five weeks, the firm is likely severely understaffed or overcommitted, or both.
- ***Vague answers about who is responsible for what*** — On well-run design teams, everyone knows their lane. If you can't get a clear answer about who the CA lead is or who to call for a structural question, that's an organizational problem that will show up repeatedly and stall your build.
- ***Owner disputes spilling into the field*** — If an architect and owner are quietly in conflict over additional services, the contractor is usually the first to feel it via radio silence on critical field requests.
- ***Lack of construction experience*** — Not a disqualifier on its own, but worth asking how they stay current on constructability. The best firms have someone who has spent real time in the field or makes a habit of post-occupancy learning.

Managing Project Risk From the Start

A design firm that is stretched thin, undercharging for its expertise and blind to its own profit margins is an inherent hazard to your construction schedule.

Billing delays and margin blindness might look like internal A&E business problems, but they can have severe downstream consequences. As a construction business owner, protecting your cash flow and timeline means looking closely at how your partners run their operations. Choosing a design partner who respects their own business metrics is one of the smartest ways to ensure a smoother process for all.

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How 1:1 Meetings Build Stronger Construction Teams

Managers should use this undervalued tool to connect & support their employees

BY ZACH HARRIS

Perhaps this scenario looks familiar: A skilled foreman has been with the company for six years. He gradually starts missing things, such as a minor scheduling error. Then he's late to the jobsite twice in the same week. The superintendent notices but figures he'll bounce back. Five weeks later, the foreman submits his resignation.

Similar scenarios play out on construction projects every day. Disengaged employees can lead to expensive outcomes like lost productivity, rework, turnover and safety incidents.

What could have been different if someone had asked the foreman how things were going a few weeks earlier?

Why Construction Managers Struggle With 1:1 Communication

Oftentimes, construction promotions are based on technical experience and performance, not people skills. The best carpenter becomes the foreman. The best foreman becomes the superintendent.

We promote our best builders and not always our best communicators. People management skills are often assumed and rather developed, leaving technically skilled managers uncomfortable having a structured one-on-one (1:1) conversation with their teams.

Construction also has a culture of toughness and getting things done on tight schedules. Sitting down with a direct report to build a working relationship could suddenly feel "soft" or unproductive.

Leaders who get this right understand that 1:1 meetings are not a break from the work — it's how they protect it.

The Numbers Behind the Conversation

According to Gallup, managers "account for at least 70% of the variance in team engagement." Gallup also reports that engaged employees are 69% less likely to burn out and 47% less likely to be job hunting compared to their disengaged counterparts.

Retaining productive talent is important for job continuity and each project's bottom line. The Society of Human Resources Management reports that replacing talent can cost 50% to 200% of that employee's salary.

One-on-one meetings are a great place to start building a psychologically safe environment where employees feel heard and are encouraged to be engaged. When employees feel supported, they speak up and seek help before a crisis hits. The data makes the case, but what does this look like practically on a construction project?

Psychological Safety Is About Trust

Sally Stewart, senior wellness administrator for Brasfield and Gorrie, has nearly a decade of experience in corporate wellness for construction. She explains what psychological safety should look like in the industry: "To me, psychological safety means creating a workplace where people feel comfortable speaking up. That could be pointing out safety concerns, asking a question, admitting they made a mistake or even saying they're struggling personally. It's knowing you won't be ridiculed, ignored or punished for being honest."

An untrusting environment can affect communication, safety and production, as well as mental well-being. According to Stewart: "Construction has traditionally had a culture of being tough, and many people have felt like they needed to keep personal struggles to themselves. Thankfully, that's starting to change. More companies are recognizing that mental health affects focus, decision-making, relationships and, ultimately, jobsite safety."

"We recently provided education to craft leaders on suicide prevention and recognizing the warning signs," said Stewart. "The training was well received and opened the floor to some impactful conversations about mental well-being. When employees know it's OK to ask for help, everyone benefits."

Managers play a key role in creating psychological safety on construction sites. Stewart explained: "Leaders set the tone every day, often without realizing it. The way a superintendent or foreman responds when someone asks a question, reports a mistake or raises a concern tells the entire crew whether it's safe to speak up. They also know their teams better than most anyone. Sometimes, they spend more time with their team than their own family. This gives them the unique ability to notice when something has changed or when someone is experiencing a hardship.

"The strongest crews are the ones where people look out for each other physically and mentally. When employees feel supported, they're more engaged, more likely to speak up and ultimately help create safer, stronger jobsites."

1:1 Meetings as a Core Tool

Psychological safety is built over time, and one of the best manager tools are private 1:1 meetings with their direct reports.

Tina Treantos is the vice president of people growth and development at AOI Corp., a Nebraska-based general contractor. From her experience, she shared: "A good 1:1 is consistent, Photo Credit: peopleimages.com- adobestock.com

uninterrupted time dedicated to the employee, not just another status update. It is an opportunity to remove barriers, provide coaching, discuss development and understand how they're doing. Consistency is what builds trust, and trust is the foundation of psychological safety."

What a 1:1 meeting is:

- Scheduled time focused on the employee
- Consistent cadence (e.g., monthly, every other week or weekly)
- Primarily driven by the direct report

What it is not:

- Unplanned
- A performance review
- A progress report or status update

Treantos has seen this thoughtful approach play out firsthand: "I've seen consistent 1:1s lead to higher engagement, stronger supervisor-employee relationships, fewer performance issues and better retention. Employees are more likely to share ideas, raise concerns early and ask for support before challenges become larger problems. From an organizational perspective, that creates a culture where feedback flows both ways, people feel valued and leaders can make better decisions, because they have a clearer understanding of what's happening across their teams."

When 1:1s Surface Something Bigger

Regular 1:1s give workers an opportunity to surface mental health struggles, personal crises or burnout before they become emergencies. For managers, a disclosure can be uncomfortable, but it can also signal that they've earned their employees' trust.

Most workplace mental health disclosures happen privately in trusted conversations or after noticing a worker isn't their normal selves. Treantos advised: "Managers should remember that they are leaders, not counselors. Their responsibility is to listen without judgment, demonstrate empathy, maintain appropriate boundaries and connect employees with the right resources, whether that's an employee assistance program or HR. Often, employees don't expect their manager to solve the problem; they want to know someone cares and that they're supported."

I've seen this play out on construction sites. When trust is established, a manager notices a change, asks about it and listens. Then, the manager can connect the employee with available resources. That might mean a referral to an internal resource or, in more serious cases, privately calling the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline with the distressed employee.

Getting Started

For managers who are not currently holding 1:1s, consider these easy ways to get started:

- Begin with direct reports and establish a recurring cadence.
- Try to stick to the regular cadence, and don't cancel it without promptly rescheduling.
- Tell them the purpose of the meeting: "This time is for you. We will talk about how you are doing, what you need and how the team can support you."
- Show up, be patient and understand it might take longer to build trust with some employees.
- Build and train people skills (e.g., active listening, coaching conversations with HR, mental health training).

This is an example of an agenda that is focused on the employee:

1. ***Check in*** — How are you doing, really? What is your energy level this week?
2. ***Clear obstacles*** — What is getting in your way right now that I might be able to help with?
3. ***Connect to growth*** — What is one thing you want to get better at? How can I support that?
4. ***Close with care*** — Is there anything you need from me that you have not felt comfortable bringing up?

Schedule the meeting, have the conversation and repeat. That is where lasting trust starts and teams are made stronger.

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How R4 Contractors Found STABILITY IN THE WOODS

Scott Reed successfully transitioned from civil work to supporting the timber industry

BY ALLISON GRETTENBERG

Photo Credit: DEVELON

The sun had not yet started to rise over the jagged peaks of the Cascade mountains, but Scott Reed and his crew were already deep into the timber. A thick mist hung between the Douglas firs as an excavator's diesel engine rumbled to life, breaking the morning silence.

In the remote backcountry in the Mount St. Helens region of Washington, Reed's office view was a narrow, muddy ridge, and the nearest paved road was miles away. He couldn't have been happier.

While many construction owners spend their mornings stressing over high-stakes city bids or fluctuating interest rates, this day Reed was focused on a different goal: building a reliable road through the forest.

As the owner of R4 Contractors, Reed manages 50 to 60 miles of logging road construction and reconstruction every year. He's found that a specialized niche, reliable equipment and a loyal crew are the ultimate tools for a successful business.

From Civil Contractor to Forestry Foundations

Reed's positive outlook was built on hard-earned experience. His journey started with a major career pivot during the 2008 economic recession. At that time, he was a successful civil contractor accustomed to the fast-paced world of housing developments and public works. When the housing bubble burst, the phone stopped ringing.

"In 2008 and 2009, when the economy crashed, I couldn't buy a job," he said.

Instead of viewing the standstill as a dead end, he sold his assets and took a job as an employee for a local contractor. He spent the next five years running the company's forestry division and learning the specific demands of timber infrastructure. He realized that while the civil contracting world offered higher individual paydays, the forestry sector provided more consistent, long-term jobs.

"Civil work and what we do now are quite a bit different," said Reed. "The paycheck is a lot smaller with what we're doing right now, but we do a lot more of it."

When the owner of that firm eventually decided to retire from the forestry side of the business, Reed did not hesitate. He saw an opportunity to get back into ownership, bought the division and renamed it R4 Contractors.

Based in Ethel, located about 20 miles from Chehalis, Washington, the company has established itself in a region where timber is the primary industry. By focusing on a start-to-finish service — handling everything from the initial clearing to the final rocking of the subgrade — R4 Contractors has become a vital partner for five major timber companies in the Pacific Northwest.

Transitioning to a New Fleet

As Reed built his business, he faced a significant hurdle:

aging construction equipment. He had purchased the original fleet from his former employer, but the machines weren't keeping up.

"We had bought the machines worn out … and it really was a struggle for us for the first five years, just keeping equipment moving and going," he explained.

Seeking a change, Reed looked toward more reliable equipment and a dealer with a responsive staff. He found both at Cascade Trader, a local dealer he had known for years. After researching the experiences of other owners, he decided to purchase his first DEVELON DX225RB road builder, an iteration of a crawler excavator.

"I'd looked around, and I'd talked to a lot of guys that had the DEVELON equipment at the time," said Reed. "And they were all satisfied. So, I began investing in a modern fleet where every machine was a 2022 model or newer."

This shift wasn't just about having shiny new paint; it was about operational uptime. In the woods, a broken hose or a failed hydraulic pump doesn't just delay a job: It can strand a crew miles from civilization. By standardizing his fleet with the excavators, a DL220-7 wheel loader and a DD130 dozer, Reed's team spends their 10-hour shifts moving dirt rather than worrying about downtime.

Performance in the Peaks

Reed chose his equipment based on its ability to help his employees stay efficient in high-production environments. The DX235LCR-7 reduced tail-swing excavator was essential for fish passage projects, where digging a massive footprint was not an option. "In the sensitive ecosystem of the Washington woods, upgrading a stream with a large fish culvert required a machine that could dig deep without a wide counterweight swing damaging the surrounding trees."

His road builder was purpose-built for the task. Unlike standard excavators, this machine is wider and taller — allowing it to climb over stumps and debris that would have high-centered a civil-grade machine.

The Art of the Logging Road

Building a road in the forest is a coordinated dance of heavy machinery and environmental care. The process begins after a separate contractor cuts the right of way to remove standing timber. Reed's team then moves in for clearing using heavy excavators to remove stumps and debris to create a clean slate.

From there, they build the subgrade, the vital foundation of the road. On relatively flat ground, a two-person crew could build between 800 and 1,000 feet of road in a single day. "That's just with two people," said Reed.

Once crews establish the grade, a rocking crew follows with dump trucks and a wheel loader to provide the durable surface loggers need for heavy loading and hauling.

R4 Contractors also specializes in reconstruction — restoring roads that have been neglected for as long as 40 years. Reed's team whips through these projects, clearing decades of overgrowth to reveal the established grade underneath and transforming forgotten trails back into vital infrastructure.

Comfort in the Dark

Because the Pacific Northwest winters are dark, damp and cold, Reed's machines are equipped for operator comfort. His team spends 10 hours a day in the cabs, so he ordered them with upgraded heated seats and top-tier climate control. The visibility provided by modern technology also played a massive role in safety and productivity.

Combined with 360-degree camera systems, these features allowed R4 Contractors to maintain a high level of production even during the shortest days of the year.

A Crew That Has Stayed for Decades

While the machines provide the muscle, Reed's crew provides the heart of R4 Contractors. Despite 4 a.m. starts and 14-hour days, including commutes, some of his operators have been by his side for 20 years. They have followed him through his transition from an employee to an owner, a testament to the culture he has built.

Reed's approach to labor is simple: He treats his people as long-term investments. He looks for local talent who have a desire to master a trade. He brings new hires on as truck drivers, teaching them the logistics of the forest before moving them into the cab of an excavator.

"When I hire someone, they have a full-time job," said Reed. "I pride myself in keeping my people busy. With the industry we're in, it takes a special kind of person to work out there. They've got to really like it, because it's usually a two-hour commute each way, and then they work 10 hours a day. It makes for a long day."

When veteran operators eventually retire, Reed is ready with a pipeline of younger talent who have been trained on the latest equipment technology, ensuring that the skill gap never stalls production.

By picking a specialized niche, investing in the best equipment and taking care of the people who did the work, Reed has created a company that is truly resilient.

Reed's success comes down to a simple, positive philosophy: If you provide a steady job, use the right equipment and treat people with respect, you can weather any economic storm.

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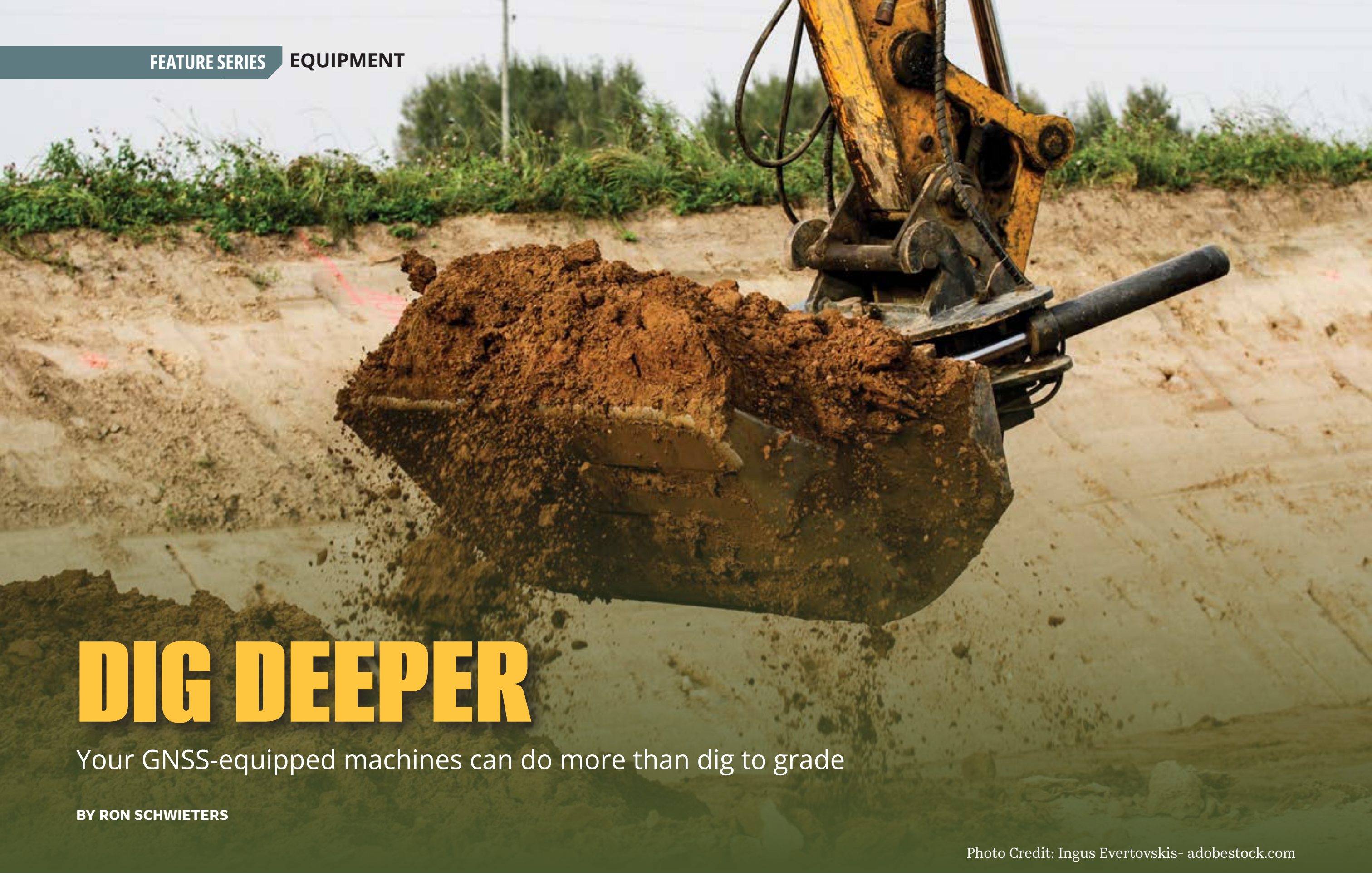


DIG DEEPER

Your GNSS-equipped machines can do more than dig to grade

BY RON SCHWIETERS

Photo Credit: Ingus Evertovskis- adobestock.com

For years, the business case for GNSS (global navigation satellite system) machine control was pretty straightforward: Put the design in the machine, reduce staking and grade checking, help the operator get to grade faster and cut down on rework.

Those are still good reasons to invest in it. But there's a whole other world of benefits you may not be taking advantage of.

The same equipment you bought to improve digging or grading accuracy can now help you understand where a project stands, how much work is left and whether production is matching the plan before a small problem becomes an expensive one.

For a business owner, that's where things get interesting.

The Machine Knows More Than Whether It's on Grade

Modern machine control and guidance systems constantly map the current terrain and work so they can plan their next pass on the way to the digital plan. That's not just factory-integrated machine control systems — it's retrofit GNSS kits as well.

What if you took that information out of the machine and rendered it with software? And then what if we put the final design file in that same software? You'd have a near real-time picture of what's actually been done and how it compares to the final design. You could see how much material you moved today — or even this hour. And you could see what percentage of the job you have left to do without radioing everyone and sending someone to recreate the day's work after production stops. And the operator doesn't have to do anything differently.

Planning tomorrow gets a lot easier.

Of course, where your machines are working isn't the full picture of the site status. That's where drone flights, GNSS rovers and other vehicles fitted with GNSS surveying kits can fill in the gaps. We're seeing more contractors add mapping capability to haul trucks, wheel loaders, supervisor trucks, even utility task vehicles.

The workflow we are seeing is straightforward: capture a drone survey before work begins, load the digital design, continuously collect information from GNSS-equipped machines as work progresses, and finish with a final drone survey at project closeout.

That's Where the Money Is

When I talk with contractors about technology, the conversation always gets to the same place: How is this going to help me make money or eliminate a headache?

Knowing more about the job sooner can do both.

Suppose an earthwork estimate assumes a certain production rate. If production starts falling behind, knowing it a few days into the work gives you options. You can look at the crew, equipment, haul plan or site conditions while there's still time to recover. Finding out three weeks later may simply tell you how much margin you've already lost.

The same applies to quantities. When completed work can be measured against the design, a project manager has better support for progress reporting and pay applications without spending days assembling numbers from different sources.

That record is becoming even more important as large project owners and government agencies increasingly require detailed as-built progress and completion documentation. If your equipment is already collecting completed work every day, reporting becomes far less of a separate exercise. You're building the record as you build the project.

It can also change how you use some of your most valuable people. Your superintendent or project manager should be solving problems, planning the next phase and keeping work moving, not driving to a site simply to figure out where things stand. The same goes for sending a survey crew back every time the office needs another progress measurement.

Surveys and site visits still matter. You're simply using them where they add the most value.

Over time, you're also building a better record of how your company performs. Knowing what crews and equipment actually produced on completed jobs can make the next estimate better. Today's project data starts affecting tomorrow's margin.

Get More From the Equipment You Already Have

For contractors who already own GNSS-equipped machines, I don't think the next step needs to be complicated. I'd start small.

1. ***Pick one active earthmoving project.*** Choose a job where you're already using machine control and where progress, quantities or documentation matter to the business.
2. ***Choose one question you regularly spend time answering.*** How much dirt is left? Are we producing what we estimated? Do we have the quantities for this month's billing? Can we produce the documentation the owner requires without another manual process? Start with something that costs you time or money today.
3. ***Find out what your equipment is already recording.*** That data may come from integrated machine control, a retrofit kit or even GNSS-equipped support vehicles. Find out how it can be brought together with your design and other field measurements.
4. ***Put the answer in front of someone who can act on it.*** The goal isn't another report. If a project manager sees on Tuesday that production is slipping, there should be something they can do differently on Wednesday.

That's the test I would use. If collecting more project information doesn't lead to a decision, simplify a required process or provide proof someone needs, it probably isn't helping you. If it helps you catch problems earlier, support billing, satisfy reporting requirements, use crews more effectively or estimate your next job with better production history, there's a direct business case.

Knowing what crews and equipment actually produced on completed jobs can make the next estimate better. Today's project data starts affecting tomorrow's margin.

The Next Return On Machine Control

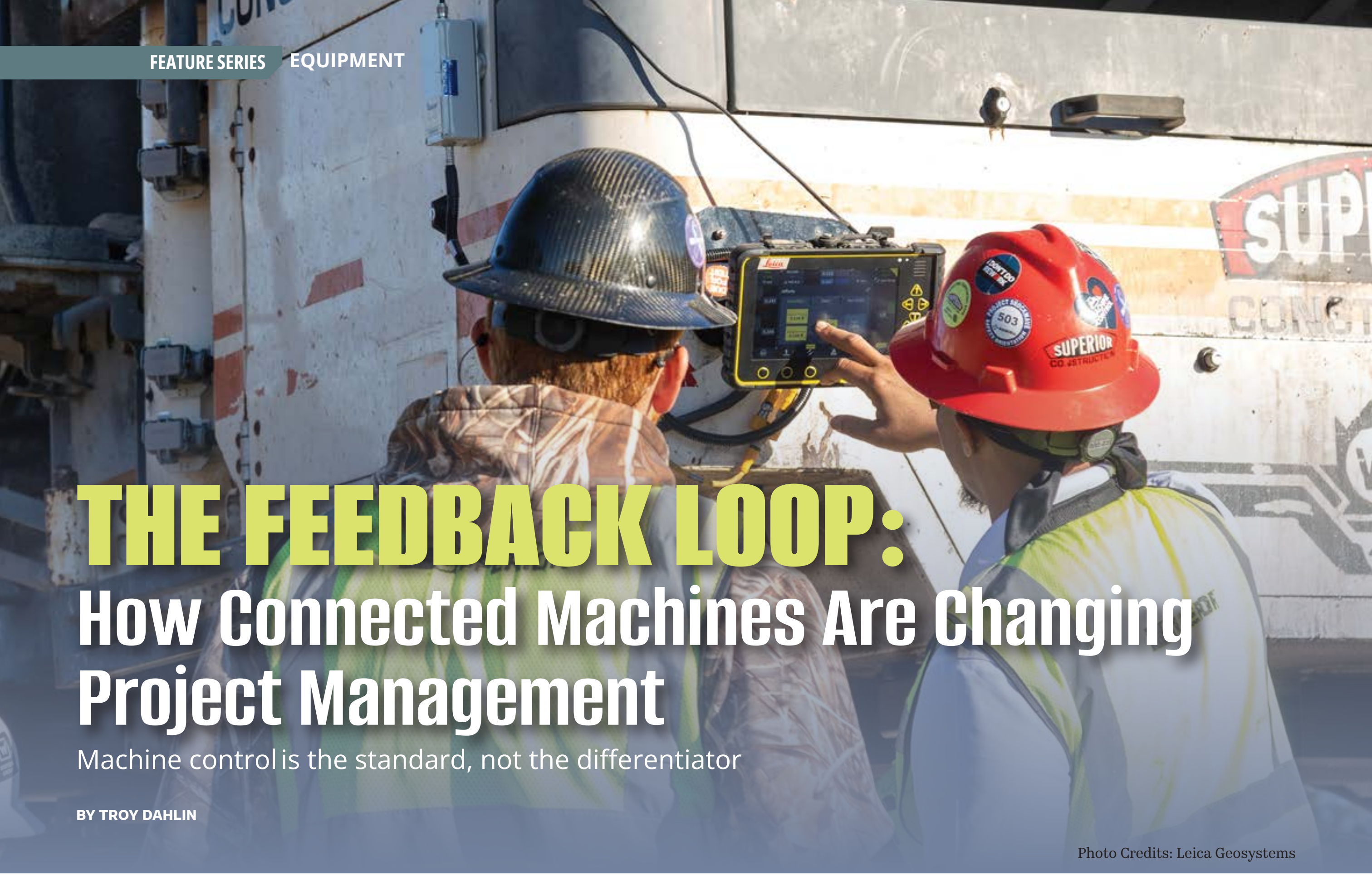
The biggest value of GNSS machine control is still exactly what it's always been: helping contractors move dirt accurately, efficiently and with less rework. That's not changing.

What's changing is that the same investment can now deliver value long after the blade or bucket has passed. The information your equipment already generates can help you make better decisions, document work more easily, protect margins and build a more predictable business. It's another way to get a better return from the equipment you already own.

And as the industry continues moving toward greater automation and, eventually, autonomous earthmoving, that continuous understanding of where the machine is and what it has already built won't just be useful — it will be required.

The equipment still has to move the dirt. You might as well get everything you can out of it while it does.

Ron Schwieters is Smart Construction senior manager for Komatsu North America. He works with contractors and dealers across North America to apply construction technology to real jobsite challenges, with a focus on helping companies improve productivity, project visibility and the way field information is used to manage work. Visit komatsu.com.



THE FEEDBACK LOOP:
How Connected Machines Are Changing Project Management

Machine control is the standard, not the differentiator

BY TROY DAHLIN

Photo Credits: Leica Geosystems

Today's jobsites are more connected than ever. While technology is everywhere, from smart wearables and machine controls to digital twins, it is only truly effective if it helps teams safely complete jobs on time and on budget.

Precision measurement technology and AI-enabled, trade-specific workflows allow contractors to deliver highly accurate layouts faster and more effectively. Nowhere is the payoff more apparent than in quality assurance and quality control (QA/QC).

Technology is only fully optimized when it focuses on managing risk, reducing rework, improving documentation and streamlining project management.

Assure Quality in Real Time

QA, which happens before and during a project, requires real-time data as the project evolves. This is made possible by the feedback loops that connected machines create.

Instead of just working faster and more accurately, teams can now be sure the work was done right and have the data to prove it. When data is available immediately, it helps teams make better decisions, boosting productivity, safety and project outcomes.

In a traditional workflow, an operator performs the work, a supervisor checks it, and the data then goes to the office for analysis. This process can take hours or even days before decisions are made.

In a connected setup, machines do the work and record their progress. The data goes straight to the cloud, so project managers and others can see it right away. If changes are needed, they are sent to the machine which updates in real time. This keeps the project moving, even when plans change.

Tools like precision sensors collect data accurately and securely, giving contractors confidence in the data's reliability — even on complex projects.

Cloud-based collaboration tools let teams share real-time data and work from a single source of truth. AI can then accelerate automation and enrich workflows with insights, helping teams make better decisions with up-to-date information.

Eliminate Data Silos

Too often, technology is just added to existing processes. While it can help teams work together, silos still exist on the jobsite. The real challenge is finding ways to break down these barriers.

To address this, teams must understand the impact of silos — and why removing them matters.

Many companies hesitate to fully adopt technology, leading to data silos and teams working without a complete picture of the jobsite.

Some companies are unsure about the benefits or worry that the costs are too high. Others may not know how to get the most out of technology.

When teams use a single source of truth, there are fewer mistakes and less need for costly rework. Cutting down on rework also makes jobsites safer and lowers both financial and human risks from accidents.

Removing silos helps organizations finish projects on time, meet specifications and stay on budget.

A Fully Connected Jobsite: Unlocking New Potential

Modern projects need a complete, big-picture view. When teams understand and use this approach, they open up many new possibilities. For example, contractors can use drone-generated point clouds to track progress, no matter how big or complex the job is. However, data is only powerful when analyzed to track progress and proactively identify potential problems.

Artificial intelligence can accelerate automation and provide insights into workflows, helping teams make better, faster decisions. These trained and advanced AI tools make it easy to visualize changes and outstanding tasks, giving contractors valuable jobsite insights.

AI empowers users to remove obstacles — such as machinery, materials or structures — from digital models, enabling accurate earthwork volume calculations with just a click. This efficiency saves hours and delivers better results.

Take Charge of Quality Management

The future belongs to those who fully embrace technology, harnessing the power of data to make informed decisions. The right technology streamlines data collection, greatly

improving speed and reducing costs for contractors. Those who break down silos and adopt intelligent solutions will gain a competitive advantage.

While the technological revolution seems to have picked up steam in recent years, it is far from finished. The proliferation of AI is inescapable, including on the jobsite.

The good news is that as companies hire younger, tech-savvy workers to address talent shortages, silos are starting to disappear. Companies should take this chance to review their workflows, spot any bottlenecks and figure out how to fix them.

Often, small, targeted changes — not a major overhaul — are enough to align workflows and ensure full connectivity. When this happens, silos disappear, and organizations are better positioned to prevent them from forming in the future.

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REBUILD OR REPLACE?

How to evaluate your aging equipment's second life

BY HILTON WOOD

Photo Credit: Volvo Construction Equipment

Every contractor eventually hits the same crossroads. You've got a core machine approaching the end of its first life, and you need to figure out what comes next. Replacing it with a brand-new machine isn't always the right move, and sometimes it's not even an option. Maybe capital is tight, your team isn't ready to take on new technology and emissions systems, or your operators simply love the machine they're running and don't want to part with it.

Buying new obviously has its perks, but it's far from your only choice. Leasing, renting, purchasing used equipment and Equipment as a Service (EaaS) are all viable paths. Rebuilding is another strong alternative that can unlock value if you evaluate it correctly.

If you've got a machine in line for a heavy equipment rebuild, you're likely weighing the same core questions: What's it going to cost? How long will it take? What kind of machine will actually come back to the jobsite?

While there isn't a single formula for every machine, walking through a few practical evaluation steps will clear up whether a rebuild makes financial and operational sense for your business.

Pinpoint the Timing & Sweet Spot

Determining when to rebuild comes down to your expectations for the asset. Are you trying to perform an earlier-hour rebuild to maximize the machine's total life expectancy? Or would you rather wait until repair costs begin to climb, then weigh replacement cost against rebuild value?

In our experience, many machines entering a major rebuild have accumulated approximately 12,000 to 15,000 hours, although the appropriate timing varies considerably. For example, a wheel loader working in a heavy extraction or load-and-carry application puts far more stress on its front end and drivetrain than a loader operating in a waste transfer station. As a result, the extraction machine will likely hit its rebuild point much sooner.

To find that timing sweet spot, watch your maintenance data before parts consumption spikes. For machine owners who track fuel-consumption trends, oil analysis results and machine diagnostic information, those data points offer clear warnings on component health.

You don't always have to rebuild the entire machine at once, either. Rebuilding just an engine might be the right play if you simply need one or two more seasons out of a utility machine. It's also common for equipment owners to assess their available year-end capital or maintenance budget and allocate available capital toward a machine rebuild to extend the asset's total lifespan. Keep the following factors in mind as you weigh your options.

Weigh Machine Sizing & Fleet Roles

Before sending a machine to the shop, evaluate how it fits into your operational goals. A rebuild is only worth it if the finished product matches your future jobsite demands. Ask yourself these key questions:

- ***What role will the machine play?*** Will it return to full-time production, or is it transitioning into a backup or utility role? The job expected of the machine directly dictates how much capital you should invest.
- ***Is the machine still properly configured for your work?*** Take a close look at whether the frame and capacity still fit your current job requirements. Is it too big or too small? If buying a new machine would open doors to take on entirely new project types, a rebuild won't give you that growth opportunity.
- ***Is the operator productive in it?*** Operators often prefer familiar machines. If an operator is both comfortable and highly productive in a specific unit, rebuilding it is a reliable way to keep that productivity going without a learning curve.
- ***Are you ready for new technologies and emissions systems?*** Rebuilding can buy you valuable time before making the transition to newer emissions systems, allowing you to extend an existing compliant asset.
- ***Does the machine size make economic sense?*** Higher replacement-value assets are generally much better candidates for rebuilds than smaller units. As one example, an L220-class wheel loader rebuild may cost approximately 50% to 60% of the price of a comparable new machine. On some smaller machines, the ratio can approach 70% to 80%, potentially making replacement more attractive. Talk with your local dealer, and schedule an inspection to evaluate your machine's condition and potential for rebuild.
- ***Can your business handle the downtime?*** A thorough rebuild requires planning for machine absence. You'll need to weigh the time required for a rebuild against the lead time for a replacement machine.

Understand What an OEM Rebuild Entails

If you choose to pursue a structured original equipment manufacturer (OEM) route, it's helpful to understand how the process works so you know what you're paying for.

At the base level, a certified rebuild typically focuses on overhauling the powertrain, including replacing major drivetrain components like the engine and transmission with remanufactured components. From there, programs generally offer customized scopes based on machine condition and budget. A second tier might cover the powertrain plus hydraulics and hoses, while a complete top-tier rebuild adds a full cab refurbishment.

A thorough OEM rebuild process follows an extensive checklist and relies on remanufactured components where available, sticking to a strict repair-versus-replace evaluation methodology. At Volvo, our process generally looks like this:

1. ***Initial inspection and quoting*** — The machine undergoes an initial inspection to scope out required repairs and establish a quote.
2. ***Teardown and secondary inspection*** — As the shop tears the machine down, technicians inspect deeper components. Additional issues may surface here, which get factored into the final work plan.
3. ***Restoration and component replacement*** — Defective or worn components are replaced utilizing Volvo remanufactured components wherever possible in order to control costs and bring performance back to like-new conditions. Replacing components often delivers added operational benefits, such as restored fuel efficiency.
4. ***Warranty protection*** — Major remanufactured components (e.g., engines, transmissions and drop boxes) are typically backed by robust protection, such as a three-year or 5,000-hour warranty..

Turnaround times vary based on shop capacity and scope, but certified programs typically target structured schedules so you can plan your machine coverage around predictable downtime.

Field Results Show Real ROI

Consider American Rock Salt in Mount Morris, New York. The company ran a Volvo L350F wheel loader tasked with moving material from salt piles to a hopper that then sent salt up to truck-loading stations via conveyor. The company reported that radiator and electrical components were consumed at roughly twice the rate experienced in other applications. Yet, when the loader hit the 17,000-hour mark, its engine was still running strong, and the machine had experienced virtually no mechanical issues.

Because the operators loved how the loader handled, the company evaluated their options with their local dealer. Rather than replacing the unit, they opted for a certified rebuild. The refurbishment cost roughly half the price of a brand-new loader, putting the machine on track to double its original operating hours and deliver an entire second life cycle at a fraction of the capital investment.

Run the Numbers Before Making Your Call

Deciding whether to rebuild or replace is about looking at where your machine sits in its life cycle, calculating the gap between rebuild costs and new replacement value, and then deciding if a second life fits your operational goals.

Hilton Wood is an uptime solutions manager at Volvo Construction Equipment. He supports Volvo CE's remanufactured components and machine rebuild programs, helping dealers and customers extend equipment life and get more value from their machines. He has been with Volvo CE for more than 14 years. Visit volvoce.com.

CORPORATE CAPABILITIES

Wise construction business owners know it's best to remain adaptable in this ever-changing industry, and it's important to do so with reliable, proven partners. In the following pages, you'll find some of the best in the business to help you do just that.

The companies featured in the pages of this special section supply the top tools, services and resources that can help your company gain an advantage over the competition. Whether you want to streamline company processes, supplement or add to your fleet, venture into another market sector or adopt a new technology, the companies in this section offer a mix of options to meet your needs.

Caterpillar Inc.

Caterpillar Inc. is the world's leading manufacturer of construction & mining equipment, off-highway diesel & natural gas engines, industrial gas turbines & diesel-electric locomotives

A machine that won't start could cost you the job.

"In this industry, if you have downtime, you're out," said Louie Gambrell, who has owned Levelground Construction in Greenville, South Carolina, since 1997.

"Somebody else is gonna come in and get the job. They're not gonna call you back."

Gambrell does residential grading, land clearing and demolition — the kind of work where a missed day can quickly become a missed opportunity. For small contractors like him, uptime isn't just an equipment metric. It's the ability to keep a promise, protect a reputation and say yes to the next job.

For most of Gambrell's career, he ran a variety of equipment brands. Then a Cat Compact rep from Blanchard Machinery called.

Try Before You Buy

"That was just an amazing relationship from the beginning," Gambrell said. "They let me borrow equipment to see if I liked it. They certainly have great trucks and mechanics that come out and take care of business."

That's the type of experience Cat Compact aims to deliver through participating dealers and Cat Compact locations in states like South Carolina, Colorado, Georgia and beyond. Teams work with customers to understand what the job demands, then recommend the right machine to get it done. And with Cat Rentals options available before you buy, you can try the machine on the job before making it yours.

"They just understood it," he said. "And I was very surprised at how the machines compared to other brands, and what I was able to do with it."

When a Machine Goes Down, Cat Compact Shows Up

A relationship is easy when nothing goes wrong. But when a minor issue turned up on Gambrell's machine, it was handled the same day, and a courtesy machine was offered before Gambrell asked for one.

"One of the biggest challenges I face as a business owner is having dependable equipment," he said. "I'm very impressed with how available the machine is any day I wanna get in it, crank it, go to work."

Getting back to work means one call, one stop and fewer hours lost between a breakdown and a fix. For owner-operators, that time is the difference between keeping a commitment to a customer and losing one. Plus, a customer value agreement (CVA) can provide the option of same-day parts and repair windows to get you back to work the next day (or a courtesy machine to keep you moving in the meantime).

Ready for What You Need

It's all about reaching more customers like Gambrell and providing the equipment and support Cat Compact was built to deliver — including new, used and rental solutions and a team trained to match the right machine to the job.

Learn more about how Cat Compact can help you: cat.com/catcompact.

Caterpillar Inc.
888-614-4328
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ANA Inc.

Why construction's power strategy is changing

The traditional approach to generator selection was developed for a time when power demand was relatively predictable. Today's jobsites rarely operate that way. Demand rises and falls as the project progresses, yet many generators continue operating as though every moment requires maximum output.

This mismatch between power production and power demand creates inefficiencies that can affect the entire project. Generators sized for peak demand often spend long periods operating under light load while remaining ready for the next surge in activity. Although that approach provides confidence that power will always be available, it can also increase fuel consumption, accumulate unnecessary engine hours and contribute to higher maintenance costs over the life of the equipment. As contractors place greater emphasis on life cycle costs and equipment utilization, these operating patterns deserve closer attention.

A modern power strategy recognizes that construction demand is rarely constant. Instead of assuming the generator must operate continuously regardless of changing conditions, it considers how to produce power more intelligently while maintaining the reliability contractors expect. During periods of high demand, the system must respond immediately. During periods of lower demand, it should avoid unnecessary runtime while remaining prepared for the next increase in load. The objective is to align power production more closely with how the jobsite operates.

Hybrid technology has emerged as one of the most practical ways to support that objective. Although hybrid power is often associated with battery storage, the concept is much broader. Hybrid systems combine proven generator technology, advanced controls and stored energy to improve how power is generated, managed and delivered. The goal is not to replace generators but to enable them to operate more effectively under changing jobsite conditions.

As contractors become more familiar with hybrid power, another important realization is emerging: There is no single hybrid solution that fits every application. A highway contractor has different operating requirements than a commercial builder. Utility work presents different challenges than emergency response or industrial construction. Every application requires a different balance of runtime, mobility, scalability, response time and operational flexibility.

Rather than developing one hybrid product intended to solve every challenge, manufacturers are beginning to build portfolios of complementary technologies. The objective is not to force every contractor into the same solution, but to provide multiple approaches that can be matched to the specific demands of the application. Just as contractors select different machines for excavation, grading or compaction, temporary power is following the same philosophy: Different jobsites require different strategies.

Recognizing this shift, ANA developed the ANA Hybrid Portfolio to provide contractors with multiple pathways to smarter jobsite power. Rather than relying on a single technology, the portfolio combines complementary hybrid solutions that address different operating environments, improving efficiency without compromising reliability.

EBOSS is designed to optimize generator performance through intelligent controls and battery energy storage, making it well suited for larger or more complex temporary power systems where scalability and runtime management are critical. FLEXBoost integrates hybrid technology directly into a familiar generator platform, automatically responding to changing load conditions while helping reduce unnecessary runtime in applications where simplicity and mobility are essential. These solutions provide contractors with the flexibility to select the hybrid approach that supports their project rather than adapting every project to a single technology.

The conversation surrounding temporary power is no longer centered solely on generator capacity. It is expanding to include efficiency, responsiveness, life cycle costs and overall jobsite performance. As construction continues to evolve, the companies that rethink how power is delivered will be better positioned to improve productivity, reduce operating costs and adapt to the industry's changing demands. A smarter jobsite begins with a smarter power strategy, and that is the opportunity the next generation of hybrid power is designed to deliver.

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Armstrong World Industries

How detailed planning turned a complex airport ceiling into a buildable road map

The $1.7 billion landside terminal at Pittsburgh International Airport set out to redefine what an airport can be. At the center of that vision stood a soaring, double-height ceiling that captured the rolling hills, forests and starlit skies of western Pennsylvania. Roughly 400,000 square feet of ceiling, built around the MetalWorks Immix Linear Panelized Torsion Spring Ceiling System, brought that design to life. Working with architects Gensler, HDR, and luis vidal + architects, specialty contractor Wyatt Inc. installed a ceiling of unmatched complexity, on time and on budget.

Preconstruction Planning Saves Time & Labor

Every complex installation lives or dies in the planning phase, and this project proved it. The Armstrong ProjectWorks team worked closely with the project architects and contractors to transform an ambitious concept into a buildable, repeatable process. Detailed 3D drawings confirmed that the twists, warps and flexes needed to create the rolling-hills effect could be achieved without sacrificing material quality. Collaborative design sessions weighed good, better and best options, giving design and installation teams confidence long before products reached the site.

That planning also absorbed a major curveball. When concerns about humidity and wood patina forced a last-minute switch from natural wood to a wood look in aluminum and steel, the team adapted the specification quickly and kept the schedule intact. Highly detailed shop drawings turned the intricate design into a paint-by-numbers road map for the installation crew.

“Out of all the services the ProjectWorks team provides, the most valuable thing we provide is confidence for the architects and the contractor,” said Dan Holdridge, senior manager for ProjectWorks at Armstrong.

“With such an intricate design, we wanted to make sure they knew where every piece needed to go.”

Constructability & Fast Installation

On-site coordination made all the difference. Scaffolding covered only about 20% of the ceiling at any given time, so crews needed the exact custom materials for each section, precisely when they were ready to install them. Armstrong managed a phased delivery schedule, shipping hundreds of crates in the right sequence to match a demanding six- to eight-week installation window.

The system itself was engineered for speed and access. The torsion spring panels delivered 100% plenum access across the interior, a first at this scale, while a preslotted grid simplified panel placement. The SimpleSoffit drywall framing system supported faster, more efficient assembly and helped reduce labor and material costs. Even with 58 transition types and highly customized pieces, the installation came together smoothly.

“A panelized linear ceiling of this size offering 100% access is something no one had ever done before,” said Fred Episcopo, president of Wyatt Inc. “Armstrong did a fabulous job laying out the details, they were always available to us before and during the installation process, and everything came together smoothly. Armstrong had a real commitment to making this happen, and the result is something we are all proud of.”

Armstrong World Industries

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Attentive.ai

Providing AI-based software & services for construction workflows, helping teams move from preconstruction to field execution with greater speed & accuracy

If every trade has the right information, why isn't everyone building from the same picture?

Because sometimes, the full picture only becomes clear once work has already started.

Architects, structural engineers, and mechanical, electrical and plumbing (MEP) contractors may all have the information they need. But when each trade works from its own set of drawings, clashes between systems can still go unnoticed until those plans are brought together.

Those clashes are much harder to deal with once they reach the site. By then, a wall may already be built where a duct needs to go, or conduit may be running into plumbing. What could have been fixed on a screen becomes rework, a change order, a schedule delay and extra cost.

BIM CoPilot by Attentive.ai helps teams catch those issues earlier. The fully managed, human-vetted building information modeling (BIM) solution gives you experienced BIM professionals who work as an extension of your team.

You share PDFs and CAD files, and Attentive.ai's BIM specialists take it from there. They coordinate architecture, structural, civil, HVAC, electrical, plumbing and fire protection models in one shared 3D view. Clash detection and constructability reviews help spot conflicts before they reach the field.

But BIM CoPilot Doesn't Stop at Coordination

Specialists also support construction-ready drawings, shop drawings, as-built models, BOQ generation, Revit family creation and BIM process implementation. That means teams can rely on one BIM partner to manage the entire process end to end, from the early coordination stage all the way through project handover.

And that kind of support matters more as BIM becomes a standard part of project delivery.

BIM Is No Longer Something Teams Can Leave for Later

On many major projects today, BIM is becoming a baseline requirement rather than a nice-to-have. Public agencies across New York, California and Texas are already integrating BIM or digital-modeling requirements into project delivery, while owners are setting clearer standards for how models are created, coordinated and handed over.

That also means compliance matters. BIM CoPilot supports projects in line with globally recognized standards, including ISO 19650, NBIMS-US, AIA BIM and LOD specifications, helping teams meet project requirements without having to build all that expertise in-house.

And while some teams are still figuring out how to make BIM work at scale, teams using BIM CoPilot are already building that capability into their projects. They have access to the people, processes and BIM support needed to take on more complex requirements and stay ready for what owners expect next.

Trusted by more than 1,200 businesses across the U.S. and Canada. Discover BIM CoPilot by Attentive.ai.

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Bobcat Company

Forging the future of construction equipment

In the demanding world of construction, success isn't just about hard work; it's about smart work. For decades, Bobcat Company has been a name synonymous with efficiency, reliability and the power to get the job done right. Bobcat's legacy spans more than 65 years to when it pioneered the compact equipment industry. Today, Bobcat is driven by the same spirit of innovation that created the first skid-steer loader, and the company has been reinventing it ever since. From minor builds and residential projects to major infrastructure and large-scale commercial developments, Bobcat machines have proven their value.

The Legendary Loader Lineup

The Bobcat lineup features several varieties of compact loaders, which are the workhorses on most construction jobsites. These machines allow operators to lift more, take on bigger jobs and do more in less time. Bobcat's family of loaders is diverse and designed to offer solutions for every type of task.

Compact track loaders offer superior traction and flotation on soft ground, making them ideal for landscaping, grading and utility work. These loaders are built for impressive lifting capabilities, premium comfort and attachment versatility — all supported by powerful hydraulics and selectable joystick controls.

For those who need to easily maneuver in tight spaces, skid-steer loaders are versatile machines, known for their compact size and agility. Skid-steer loaders feature powerful hydraulics, selectable joystick control and effective weight balance. The versatility of both compact track and skid-steer loaders is unmatched, offering a wide range of applications from concrete work to forestry and landscaping.

Beyond these machines, Bobcat offers an extended lineup of compact loaders to meet operators' needs. Small articulated loaders feature an articulation joint for tight turning while their light footprint minimizes tears in turf, while mini track loaders, with their small footprint and high-flotation tracks, bring concentrated power to confined jobsites.

On the other end of the spectrum, Bobcat's compact and large wheel loaders and backhoe loader deliver the power and lifting capacity to move heavier loads and handle heavy-duty excavation tasks for larger-scale operations. The operational efficiency of these machines allows operators to lift more and complete jobs faster, which directly translates to a healthier bottom line.

Digging Into the Excavator Lineup

Beyond the ground-level work, the Bobcat excavator lineup is a force to be reckoned with. Its compact excavators are ideal for urban and residential projects where maneuverability is essential. These machines provide powerful digging performance in a surprisingly compact package. For projects demanding serious earthmoving capabilities, Bobcat's expanded large excavator lineup offers the size and strength to tackle the most ambitious jobs, ensuring every foundation is laid and every trench is dug with precision.

Your Complete Jobsite Solution

Bobcat's portfolio extends into specialized equipment that addresses every facet of the construction process. The Bobcat portable power lineup, including air compressors, generators and light towers, ensures the work doesn't have to stop due to a lack of power or visibility. For specialized tasks, Bobcat light compaction equipment, such as rammers and plate compactors, ensures the foundation of any project is solid and stable. For lifting, carrying and transporting materials, Bobcat also offers Toolcat utility work machines and several telehandler models. This equipment works together to create a seamless and efficient workflow, meaning more time spent on building.

The Power of Versatility: Attachments

Versatility is maximized by pairing Bobcat equipment with its vast range of attachments and implements. With the most attachments in the industry, a single Bobcat machine becomes a multitasking powerhouse. These performance-matched tools — from augers and breakers to angle brooms and graders — maximize the return on your machine and streamline operations on the jobsite.

Your Partner in Productivity

Bobcat is a trusted partner for those who build the world around us. Bobcat provides solutions that empower professionals to tackle any job.

Bobcat Company
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TWO WAYS TO TAKE ON THE WORKDAY
CLASSIC
PRO
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Find the loader that fits your work style
Explore Bobcat Classic and Pro loaders and get the machine that's right for your crew.
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DEVELON

Reshaping the standard

Beat rising construction costs without sacrificing crew safety or jobsite productivity.

Protecting your crew and maximizing jobsite efficiency shouldn't require costly add-ons. That's why DEVELON builds premium performance, safety and comfort features into its standard equipment, giving you full capability without extra costs.

Discover how standard DEVELON features stretch your jobsite budget:

Protecting Productivity

Many advanced technologies that can be costly options on other equipment come standard on DEVELON machines. Like 2D machine guidance and control on the latest -9 Series crawler excavators. Or an active payload meter on articulated dump trucks that saves time and money. Other features include collision avoidance assistance, Transparent Bucket technology on wheel loaders and countless simple self-service features that keep you on the job and out of the shop.

Lowering Total Cost of Ownership

Right-priced from the start, DEVELON equipment works smarter to save you time on every cycle and money over the life of your machine. Longer service intervals mean less downtime. A variety of fuel-efficient features stretch your budget further. For example, the -9 Series crawler excavators help you achieve 8% greater fuel efficiency and up to 20% increased engine output over previous models.

Money-saving offers, including financing as low as 0%, rebates and lease options, are always available. DEVELON equipment also comes with one of the strongest standard warranties on the market: 36 months or 3,000 hours.

Extending Your Operation

No matter the size of your fleet, keeping crews running smoothly is the top priority for DEVELON from Day 1. A North American dealer network works hard to understand your operation and help match the right machine and features to the job. Offering pressure-free sales support, timely parts availability and responsive service, your DEVELON dealer team knows you by name and treats your machine as if it were their own. And that's whether you have two pieces of equipment or 20.

With roots dating back to 1937, DEVELON is a proven partner in protecting construction companies' bottom lines. The brand is committed to building smarter, safer solutions for overcoming the jobsite challenges of today and tomorrow. A dealer network of more than 200 locations across North America is ready to support your sales, parts, service and rental needs.

To learn more about DEVELON equipment or to find a dealer near you, visit na.develon-ce.com/en.

DEVELON

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Foundation Software

Software built for growth, while reducing overhead

A.L. Helmcamp Inc. has come a long way since its humble beginnings as a small company in 1978. Today, the central Texas-based highway contractor manages dozens of related companies across the state — and a workforce that has tripled, growing from 200 to 600 employees. And through that growth, FOUNDATION construction accounting software has been a constant, dependable system.

"FOUNDATION blends perfectly with the company's years of experience, so our projects can be completed well and on time. That really has led to our growth," said Kelly Gallagher, CPA, and corporate accountant for the company.

And as a long-time user of the software, A.L. Helmcamp Inc. relies on FOUNDATION to support its accounting workflow, connect its offices and keep overhead low — scaling right alongside the company without requiring a bigger back office to run it.

One System, Dozens of Companies

For Gallagher, FOUNDATION is the only reason she is able to oversee accounting for every company under their umbrella.

Several of those companies do business with each other — for example, one supplies materials, another uses them to build the road. And A.L. Helmcamp Inc.'s accounting team must track those intercompany transactions accurately across every field. But because they have FOUNDATION, the process is simple and requires minimal manpower.

"We have multiple databases for our multiple companies, but with FOUNDATION, it's very easy to go between them," Gallagher said.

The software lets her team move between databases without logging out, checking balances across entities and confirming those transactions reconcile correctly, so each office is always aligned.

Growth Without Growing Overhead

Even though A.L. Helmcamp Inc. has continued to add employees to its team and companies to its portfolio, its accounting office staff hasn't needed to grow much. And payroll is the clearest example, with Payroll Lead Vickie Daniel running the department for all 600 employees by herself. Her secret? FOUNDATION.

"If it wasn't for FOUNDATION and the different reports I can run from its payroll module, the corrections list would be through the roof," Daniel said.

Accounts payable (AP) also benefits from the efficiency of the software. With a lean admin team, $25 million in monthly AP volume across all managed companies is no sweat.

But for A.L. Helmcamp Inc., these are just two of many ways FOUNDATION's accounting capabilities support the company.

Dependable Software for the Future

As for what's next, Gallagher doesn't see a ceiling.

"I think from where we are now with FOUNDATION, even with how big as we are, we haven't seen that there's a limit to it," Gallagher said.

And that confidence extends beyond supporting growth, it's also peace of mind knowing that data is secure in the FOUNDATION system.

Despite the company's fast growth, A.L. Helmcamp Inc. knows that FOUNDATION can always keep pace — a dependability that will keep making all the difference as they plan for the future.

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FOUNDATION®

Isuzu Commercial Truck of America Inc.

The North American distributor of Isuzu commercial vehicles, supporting a nationwide network of dealerships while providing reliable, low cab forward trucks & fleet solutions

Isuzu Commercial Truck of America Inc. (ICTA) is the distributor of Isuzu commercial vehicles in the U.S., supporting customers through a nationwide network of independently owned dealerships. ICTA works closely with dealers, fleet customers and business owners to provide sales, service support, parts availability, training resources and customer assistance throughout the vehicle ownership experience.

Isuzu commercial trucks are widely recognized for their low cab forward design, which places the driver over the front axle to provide excellent visibility, maneuverability and operational efficiency. This design makes Isuzu vehicles well suited for a variety of applications, including local delivery, utility services, landscaping, refrigerated transport, towing and other vocational uses.

ICTA represents a broad portfolio of commercial vehicles designed to meet the needs of businesses across multiple industries. The Isuzu N-Series lineup includes gasoline, diesel and all-electric models such as the NPR, NPR-HD, NQR, NRR and NRR EV. These vehicles can be paired with a wide range of body configurations and upfits, allowing customers to tailor solutions to their operational requirements. For applications requiring greater capability, the Isuzu F-Series offers higher gross vehicle weight ratings and additional versatility for demanding commercial operations.

In addition to vehicle distribution, ICTA focuses on helping customers maximize productivity and uptime through dealer support programs, service resources, maintenance solutions and parts distribution. Working in partnership with its dealer network, the company helps ensure customers have access to the support and resources needed to keep vehicles operating efficiently throughout their service life.

A key strength of ICTA is its commitment to building strong relationships with dealers and customers. By serving as a link between the Isuzu brand and the businesses that rely on commercial vehicles every day, ICTA helps deliver the products, support and expertise customers need to operate successfully in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

Today, Isuzu Commercial Truck of America continues to support businesses throughout the U.S. by providing access to a proven lineup of commercial vehicles and a comprehensive dealer support network. Through its focus on customer service, dealer relationships and operational support, ICTA remains a trusted presence in the commercial truck industry.

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EVERY JOB STARTS WITH GETTING THERE SAFELY
That's why the Isuzu N-Series EV and Diesel models are engineered with an Advanced Driver Assistance System (ADAS). Standard on the N-Series EV and available on N-Series diesel models, this advanced technology package is designed to enhance driver awareness and when activated, can help stop the truck in an emergency braking situation.
Advanced Driver Assistance System (ADAS) includes:
• Automatic Emergency Braking (AEB)
• Full-range Adaptive Cruise Control (ACC)
• Following Distance Warning
• Lane Departure Warning
• Auto Brake Hold and More
ISUZU
ADAS is available on N-Series diesel and standard on N-Series EV trucks. Vehicles shown with optional equipment. Some equipment is dealer installed. © 2026 Isuzu Commercial Truck of America, Inc.

Munich Re Specialty North America

Construction's mental health crisis: A call to action

Coming off the heels of Construction Suicide Prevention Week (Sept. 14–18), it is clear that the construction industry has recognized and is working toward solutions to the industry mental health crisis. Despite the attention, the crisis continues. Construction worker suicide rates are approximately 53.3 per 100,000 workers, 400% higher than the national average. For every construction workplace fatality, there are approximately five workers who take their own lives. Industrywide, that's approximately 15 deaths per day, or almost 6,000 per year. The aggregate numbers are terrible, but the costs are worse for society.

Six thousand is a staggering number of human beings to lose across the industry each year: family members, friends and co-workers. This is 6,000 families impacted and countless children who will grow up without a mother or father.

Moreover, at a time when backlogs are growing, and there are labor shortages in the skilled trades, the economic impacts are undeniable. Direct costs, including compensation benefits, lost productivity, and replacement hiring and training, can reach nearly $1 million for a single suicide. Some sources estimate nearly $3.6 billion in lost productivity, recruitment and training costs.

The construction industry uniquely combines a variety of known risk factors linked to suicide risk, including the prevalence of chronic pain, economic instability from work seasonality, elevated substance abuse rates, demanding travel and schedule factors, and high divorce rates. In addition, the workforce is nearly 90% male, and existing cultural factors make males more prone to suicide. Aggregating these factors makes those at highest risk less likely to seek help.

Significant reduction in the suicide rates within construction will take a major cultural shift among the workforce to destigmatize mental health and decouple male "value" from productivity. Business owners and contractors can now play a role in facilitating change through awareness, business planning and targeted changes to the culture in the workplace.

Below is a list of strategies aimed at helping to prevent suicide:

- Awareness is the best way to remove stigma. Engage employees via toolbox talks, industry stand-downs and communications from trusted co-workers within the crews.
- Provide employees and supervisors with question, persuade, refer (QPR). There are also similar mental health/suicide prevention training resources available.
- Develop a culture of peer support. Train workers in active listening and crisis intervention. Workers are far more likely to confide in each other than seek professional counseling. Give them the tools to make a difference in each other's lives.
- Make an employee assistance program or member assistance program available to employees. Ensure employees are aware of its existence, can easily access (especially during night and weekend hours) and can easily obtain services. Talk to your employees about the types of assistance programs and modes of communication (phone, text, etc.) they would feel most comfortable using.
- Provide substance abuse resources and treatment options as part of employee benefits. Choose workers' comp medical providers that offer nonopioid pain management.
- Proactively seek to prevent chronic pain. Provide tools, processes and workspaces intended to reduce cumulative stress injuries. Make stretching programs mandatory. Select employee medical plans with coverage features for generous physical therapy and medical massage.
- Diversify project work. This can aim to minimize layoffs during winter or other "slow" periods.
- Actively manage workloads and maintain staffing levels to help prevent burnout. Plan more float into schedules.

For those interested in establishing or improving mental health programs, the following resources can help: Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention, Construction Suicide Prevention Week, Construction Safety Research Alliance and the Occupational Health and Safety Administration.

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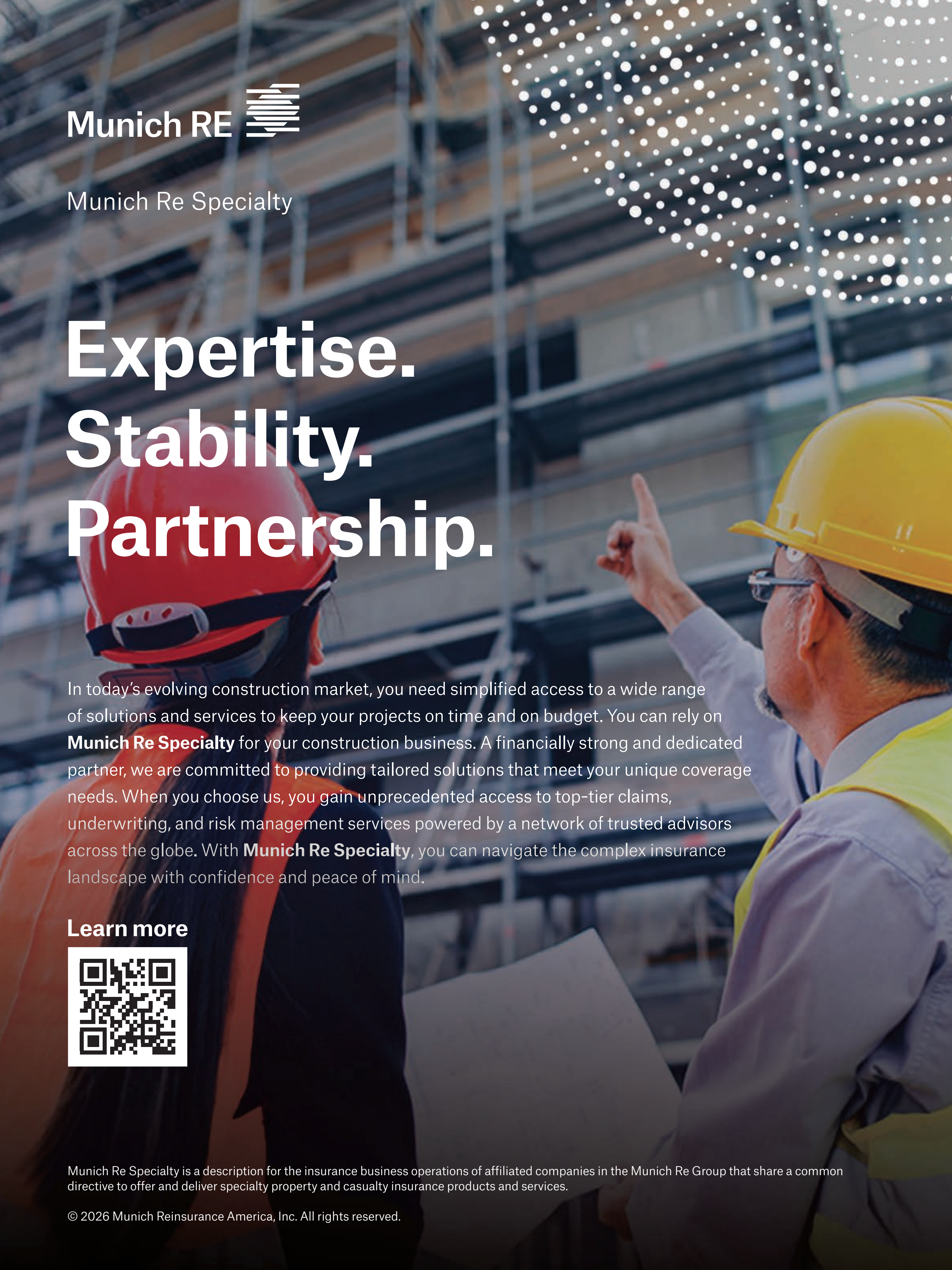
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Progressive Commercial Auto Insurance

Protecting the business you've worked hard to build

As America's No. 1 commercial auto insurer*, Progressive has a wide range of insurance options for contractors. Its customizable policies offer flexible options from minimum coverage to comprehensive protection. Plus, you can shop a variety of other business insurance products.

Progressive's direct representatives and independent agents can help you find the right insurance for your construction business. Here are a few of the many reasons you can rely on Progressive for your commercial auto needs:

1. ***Industry experience*** — Progressive has a history of insuring construction businesses. This experience means they can ask the right questions to get the coverages and limits you need to stay protected. The company's insurance experts study the latest coverages and trends to make sure you get great protection for your work vehicles.
2. ***In-house commercial claims representatives*** — Progressive's dedicated team of adjusters knows your work vehicles are an integral part of your business. Progressive's in-house representatives have experience handling commercial claims, so they can help you get back to work fast.
3. ***Adaptable to changes*** — Your insurance needs will likely change over time. Progressive offers a wide range of coverages to make updating your policy easy. When you buy a truck or secure a contract, Progressive can make your insurance work for you. It can also help you find other coverages, like general liability and business owners policies (BOP), so you're protected at each stage of your business's development.
4. ***Customizable coverages*** — No two construction businesses are the same, so you wouldn't expect their insurance to be either. Whether you have a seasonal business, tow a trailer or have attached equipment on your vehicle, you can customize your policy to fit your needs. You can update your coverages, limits, vehicles and drivers at any time.
5. ***Ways to save*** — Discounts** help you get quality insurance at a more affordable price. Get instant savings by enrolling in Snapshot ProView***, a program that rewards safe drivers on their commercial auto insurance. Progressive also offers savings for maintaining continuous coverage, paying your bills electronically and more.
6. ***Available when you need it*** — Your work might not be limited to a 9-to-5 schedule — that's why Progressive is available when it's convenient for you. Whether you need to make policy changes, request an insurance certificate, or file a claim, it is available 24/7 by phone or online. Progressive's knowledgeable staff takes care of your needs so you can get back to what matters most.

**No. 1 commercial auto insurer from SNL Financial's 2022 national written premium data. **Discounts vary and may not be available in all states and situations. ***Not available in all states. At new business, PRG customers enrolled in Snapshot ProView receive at least a 5% discount, but some can save 8% or more.*

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United Rentals

United Rentals' Customer Equipment Solutions proves a true differentiator

Large contractors face a common struggle: how to maintain their owned equipment when their footprint spans multiple locations around the country. Typically, they patch together a network of local repair shops, but this fragmented approach demands time and active, ongoing effort that could be better spent driving business growth.

Service and maintenance programs from United Rentals relieve the burden of performing ongoing preventive maintenance and repairs so that companies can focus on what they do best.

Maintenance Services From the World's Largest Fleet Owner

A leading provider of commercial fire sprinkler systems and mechanical services relies on myriad pieces of equipment, from excavators to aerial lifts, to perform its work. With multiple locations in six states, the contractor struggled to stay on top of regular preventive maintenance for its owned equipment.

For contractors of any kind, a lack of proper preventive maintenance often leads to unscheduled downtime, an increased risk of safety incidents and a higher total cost of fleet ownership.

An Effective, One-Stop Solution

Placing equipment maintenance in the hands of United Rentals ensured that equipment was serviced quickly, which minimized downtime. When equipment required service, a single call to United Rentals yielded a fast response and a quick turnaround.

With its access to countless equipment vendors and with thousands of parts in stock and available for immediate use, United Rentals is able to perform work in a timely manner despite supply chain issues that frequently cause delays at local service shops.

The single-source approach to maintenance and repair saved time and man-hours on the back end as well. The contractor no longer had to deal with invoices from multiple service providers. Payments were handled through a single invoice from United Rentals.

Harnessing Total Control for Improved Fleet Management

The contractor was familiar with the benefits of using Total Control to locate rental equipment in real time but did not realize that United Rentals customers could also track their owned equipment using the same platform. By installing GPS-enabled telematics devices on owned equipment and adding the equipment to the contractor's account in Total Control, United Rentals allowed the contractor to make better use of its fleet.

Thanks to Total Control, the company could pinpoint the location of GPS-enabled equipment on a map, which alleviates time-consuming searches. It could also receive alerts when service was due. The same alerts notify United Rentals that it's time to send a technician or schedule a pickup.

This proactive approach to maintenance reduces the amount of time equipment is out of the field and helps ensure that equipment remains in good operating condition from project start to finish.

The Complete Package

Based on the positive impact of leveraging United Rentals' owned equipment maintenance program at its largest location, the contractor has since made use of the program in 40 of its branches. The contractor noted that the efficiencies gained by outsourcing equipment maintenance to United Rentals have resulted in significant savings.

United Rentals

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eMars Inc.

Users report 80% productivity improvement

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This system is a web-based, certified, prevailing wage, accuracy system that requires no installation or maintenance of software. Immediate prompts alert the use how to solve the problems and guarantee compliance.

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eMars Inc.'s more than 15,000 clients have not had any random DOL audits for the past three years.

Spending time and money worrying about a compliant payroll? Compared to paper and pencil preparation, eMars Inc.'s guaranteed system represents an 80% productivity improvement, plus instant recognition of payroll errors.

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Romtec Utilities

One system. One team.

Romtec Utilities designs, manufactures, supplies and supports complete packaged pump systems for water, wastewater, stormwater and industrial applications. As a single-source provider, Romtec Utilities helps owners, engineers, contractors and developers manage risks tied to specialized infrastructure work, including schedule delays, cost overruns, scope gaps and coordination challenges.

Each system is engineered for the specific site, application, owner preference and long-term maintenance needs of the project. The in-house team integrates structural, mechanical, electrical, and communications and control system design into one pumping system that is delivered as a coordinated, prefabricated solution.

Because the company is not tied to specific manufacturers, components can be selected based on performance needs, specifications, code requirements and operator familiarity. It can meet Build America, Buy America requirements.

Romtec Utilities supports projects from early planning through fabrication, delivery, installation support, commissioning, operator training and documentation. Its prefabricated approach shifts complexity into a controlled manufacturing environment, reducing field assembly, improving quality control and helping contractors limit redesigns, field changes, inspection issues and startup uncertainty.

Romtec Utilities delivers solutions built for performance, reliability and long-term operation. The company provides support to keep critical infrastructure projects moving forward.

Romtec Utilities
541-496-3541
rusales@romtec.com
romtecutilities.com

Tractics

Heavy civil construction management software that puts your entire operation to work — together

On a heavy civil job, work does not stay in one lane. A decision in the field can affect the schedule, equipment needs, payroll and job costs. When the people and data behind those decisions are disconnected, productivity takes the hit.

Put Your Job Data to Work.

Tractics brings field, office and fleet together in one cloud-based construction management platform built specifically for heavy civil contractors. Crews and operators capture data as the work happens. That data becomes useful across the entire operation:

- Time entered in the field supports payroll and job costing.
- Production updates help project managers track progress and identify problems sooner.
- Equipment activity gives fleet and operations teams a clearer view of utilization and performance.

See It Sooner. Act on It Faster.

Instead of piecing together spreadsheets, reports and disconnected systems, everyone works from the same current view of the job.

Foremen can manage daily production with greater confidence.

Project managers and administrators get the data they need for reporting, cost control and faster decisions.

Fleet teams can keep equipment productive and work moving.

That is Tractics Working Together: When your people, equipment and data work together, you can see problems sooner, make better decisions and keep every project moving forward.

Tractics
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TVH Parts Co.

TVH is a leading parts specialist in the material handling, industrial & construction equipment industries

TVH provides a wide selection of high-quality parts and accessories to keep your light construction equipment running at peak performance. From glass and tires to rubber tracks and undercarriage components like sprockets, rollers and idlers, TVH has the parts you need to maintain your equipment's efficiently. Help prevent unexpected downtime and extend the lifespan of your equipment by replacing components before failure.

With over 8 million part numbers for light construction equipment in stock and ready to ship, getting the parts you need, when you need them has never been easier. Whether you're performing routine maintenance, managing unexpected repairs or stocking up in advance, TVH's fast shipping and reliable inventory ensure you can stay productive without delays. The company's knowledgeable sales and support teams are ready to help you find the right parts and accessories you need for a wide range of makes and models.

TVH offers the brands you know and trust, ensuring quality and reliability with every order. Count on TVH to help keep your light construction equipment running smoothly. Explore all product offerings at tvh.com.

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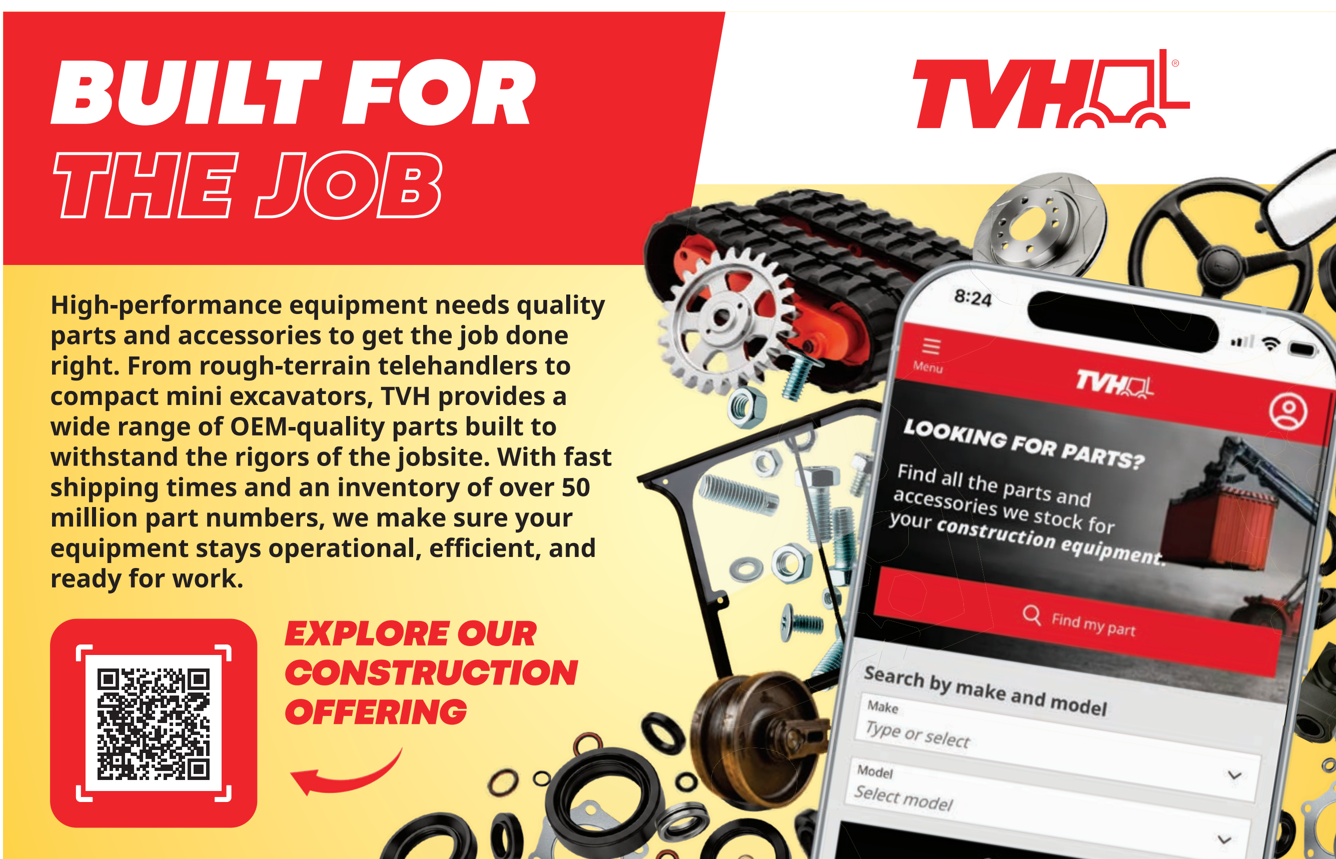

Beneco, part of FuturePlan by Ascensus

The hidden opportunity in prevailing wage benefits

When contractors think about prevailing wage, the conversation often centers on compliance, certified payroll, wage determinations and avoiding costly mistakes. But one of the biggest opportunities is often overlooked: how fringe benefits are managed.

Many contractors still satisfy fringe requirements primarily through cash wages, without realizing there may be other benefit strategies available that can help support their workforce while meeting prevailing wage obligations.

Retirement plans, medical coverage and other bona fide fringe benefits can play an important role in building a more competitive business. When thoughtfully designed and administered, they can help contractors strengthen employee recruitment and retention, support long-term workforce stability and simplify benefit administration.

The Challenge Is Understanding the Rules

Prevailing wage requirements continue to evolve, and topics like annualization, fringe calculations, and changing federal and state regulations can create unnecessary complexity for even experienced contractors.

That's Why Education Matters

At Beneco, helping contractors understand prevailing wage benefits isn't an add-on: it's the focus. Beneco works alongside construction companies to provide education, guidance and purpose-built benefit solutions designed specifically for contractors who work on public works projects.

Because the best prevailing wage strategy isn't just about staying compliant. It's about making every fringe benefit dollar work harder for your business and your employees.

Beneco is always building with you.

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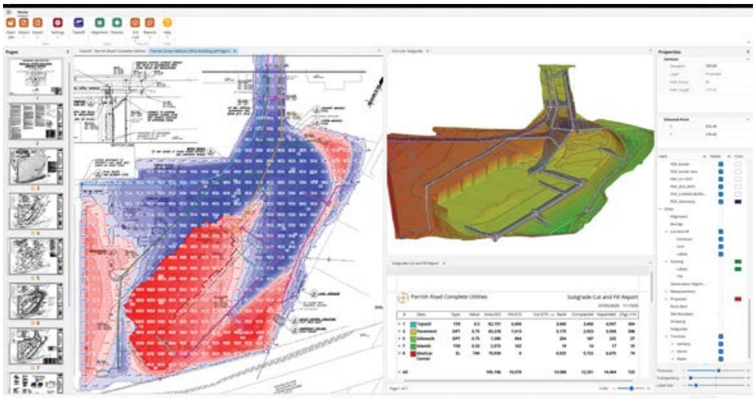
InSite Software

Elevation Pro is an affordable & easy-to-use full sitework takeoff & GPS modeling software solution for earthwork & utility professionals



Elevation Pro Takeoff and GPS Modeling Software delivers the speed, accuracy and digital proof contractors need to minimize risk and maximize profit on lump-sum grading projects.

Version 2027 advances that mission with AI and solid modeling, helping estimators understand projects, identify potential risk earlier and connect estimating data to the field with greater confidence.

AI as a Second Set of Eyes

Elevation Pro is designed around a simple principle: AI should assist the estimator, not replace them. AI-based job reviews can analyze takeoff data and flag potential inconsistencies, while AI-assisted data entry and future workflow automation are being developed to reduce repetitive work, help users identify issues faster and keep the estimator firmly in control.

Solid Modeling for Greater Accuracy

Solid modeling moves earthwork calculations beyond traditional grid- and cross-section-based sampling. By calculating volumes directly between true 3D surfaces, Elevation Pro provides more precise, defensible quantities while improving the visualization of complex grading conditions.

Bringing Clarity to Utility Takeoff

Utility work is one of the highest-risk areas of sitework estimating. Elevation Pro's TrenchVision 3D models trenches, structures and pipe runs in three dimensions, calculating excavation by soil strata along with bedding, backfill and other material quantities. 3D Live provides visual verification, while detailed reports can be exported to estimating and bidding applications.

Together, AI, solid modeling and TrenchVision 3D transform Elevation Pro from a takeoff tool into a more complete estimating platform, helping estimators build more confident bids.

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Rocket Equipment

Smarter equipment. Measurable results.

Restoring the historic Ogle County Courthouse in Oregon, Illinois, presented Sterling Commercial Roofing, a Tecta America company, with more than a debris-removal challenge. Tight access, an occupied building and strict safety requirements meant the wrong approach could add significant labor, equipment costs and congestion to an already complex jobsite.

Sterling instead used a Trash Rocket TR-5000 to remove debris from the scaffolded work area. The system funneled debris from steep, high-elevation roof sections into a designated disposal area, allowing crews to continuously remove approximately 160,000 pounds of slate without stockpiling material on weight-limited scaffolding.

The impact went beyond logistics. According to Project Superintendent Brady Keller, eliminating the crane saved approximately $3,500 per day, while freeing up two workers saved another $1,600 per day in labor. Over the 15-day tear-off, that represented approximately $76,500 in avoided crane and labor costs.

"The Trash Rocket proved to be a cost-effective solution for the tear-off," Keller said. "It provided a safe and controlled environment, ensuring the safety of all personnel around the building."

After using the Trash Rocket on three projects, Sterling has seen how the right equipment can do more than solve a jobsite challenge — it can improve safety, efficiency and the economics of the job.

Rocket Equipment
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TimeSuite Software

The first modern relational construction ERP: Everything accessible from anywhere, with no siloed data or processes

TimeSuite Software Corp. delivers an advanced, comprehensive construction platform with a modern relational architecture. TimeSuite is built for general contractors, subcontractors and civil contractors generating $10 million to $500 million in annual revenue. Unlike systems with modules, data is centralized with everything accessible from everywhere. Data is not duplicated or posted across different modules or external systems. There is no duplication of data with a modern relational architecture.

Accounting, job costing, project management, estimating, on-screen takeoff, CRM, task management, payroll and geo time cards live in one place, accessible in real time.

That means a project manager has real-time access to project data. No lag, no postings between modules, no exports, no imports, no reconciling between modules or external systems.

Founded in 1994 by a construction-specific CPA firm, TimeSuite has spent over three decades refining a platform purpose-built for the way contractors work: bidding, building, billing, closing the books and staying on top of their projects, all from a platform that is centralized (no modules).

For contractors tired of patchwork software stacks, TimeSuite offers something newer, simpler and better: one system, a single source of truth and exceptional visibility into every job, every dollar, every day.

Learn more and schedule a free demo at timesuite.com.

TimeSuite Software

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Yooz

A financial operations automation platform that helps organizations eliminate manual processes, reduce risk, combat fraud & gain greater control over financial performance

Construction finance teams face a unique challenge: managing invoices, approvals and supporting documentation across multiple projects, stakeholders and jobsites while maintaining visibility into costs, cash flow and financial performance. Yooz helps organizations create one accounts payable (AP) process across every project, replacing manual, disconnected workflows with a fully automated approach that delivers greater transparency, control and efficiency.

By automating invoice capture, approvals, matching and document management, Yooz enables finance teams to eliminate bottlenecks, accelerate processing and gain real-time visibility into every invoice, approval and payment obligation. The result is stronger financial controls, improved subcontractor relationships, more accurate budget alignment and better decision-making across the organization. Yooz helps finance leaders spend less time tracking information and more time driving project and business outcomes. This messaging aligns with Yooz's focus on real-time financial visibility, automated invoice processing, intelligent workflows and end-to-end transparency.

Trusted by more than 7,000 customers worldwide and having processed over 300 million invoices, Yooz combines intelligent automation, AI-powered insights and flexible workflows to help organizations reduce waste, risk, fraud and errors while improving profitability and operational performance. With seamless ERP integration and a customer-first approach, Yooz empowers construction finance teams to scale efficiently, strengthen compliance, and maintain complete visibility across every project. Yooz North America is headquartered in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, with global operations across North America and Europe.

Yooz
832-384-9669
contact@us.getyooz.com
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Acumatica Cloud ERP

Acumatica's industry-specific business management solution is purposely built to address real-world needs & help small & midsize companies thrive in today's digital economy

Today's construction industry is high-pressure, with firms battling inflation, labor turnovers and supply chain disruptions. To remain successful, businesses must develop workflows that connect everyone in a project — from office to field and beyond. Legacy management systems can't meet the challenge. But Acumatica Cloud ERP provides the industry-specific functionality modern companies need. Acumatica Construction Edition is purposely built to help contractors, homebuilders and land developers gather and analyze project information in a single, connected system. From role-based dashboards, employees can access accurate data anytime, anywhere. The software also seamlessly integrates with third-party applications, so companies can mix-and-match end-to-end solutions that fit their needs. The Acumatica Marketplace boasts 303 such solutions, including Procore, Docusign, CriterionHCM and more.

Construction companies rely on Acumatica Construction Edition for business continuity, resilience and success. One such firm is Spohn Associates Inc. A full-service specialty contractor, Spohn typically runs 40 to 50 projects concurrently. With its legacy system failing under the load, Spohn switched to Acumatica Construction Edition and has since enjoyed:

- Connected operations
- Automated workflows
- Powerful AI and ML
- Near-infinite customizability

Says Jeremy Sturgeon, Spohn's vice president of operations: "We can make it adapt to what we need it to do, to the way we do business."

To learn more about Acumatica Construction Edition, visit acumatica.com/construction.

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Gordian

What every contractor should know about adjustment factors & JOC pricing

For many contractors, winning work means investing significant time and resources into bidding, only to face uncertainty about whether the project will move forward or generate acceptable margins. Gordian's Job Order Contracting (JOC) offers a different approach.

Because JOC is built around a preestablished pricing structure and an awarded contract, contractors can spend less time chasing individual projects and more time delivering work. Once a JOC contract is in place, projects are issued quickly, creating a steady stream of opportunities without the need to repeatedly prepare new bids.

At the heart of this process is the Construction Task Catalog (CTC), the comprehensive database of construction tasks and unit prices that serves as the pricing foundation for Gordian JOC programs. Rather than negotiating costs project by project, contractors propose a single multiplier called an adjustment factor that is applied to the prices listed in the CTC.

For contractors, that's where the opportunity begins.

A well-developed adjustment factor allows contractors to account for local labor costs, material pricing, overhead, subcontractor expenses and desired profit margins. Instead of estimating every project from scratch, they can rely on a consistent pricing framework that simplifies the proposal process and reduces administrative burden.

The result is greater efficiency, increased predictability and the ability to focus resources on project execution rather than repetitive estimating activities that may never pay off. Contractors who understand their costs and develop a thoughtful adjustment factor are often better positioned to compete confidently while protecting profitability across multiple projects.

As the creator and steward of JOC and the CTC, Gordian has helped contractors and project owners maximize the benefits of Job Order Contracting for decades. By providing a transparent pricing framework, JOC helps accelerate procurement, streamline project delivery and create a more collaborative environment for owners and contractors alike.

For contractors looking to better understand JOC pricing, adjustment factor and strategies for building a successful proposal, Gordian's resource hub provides practical guidance and real-world insights.

Learn more at gordian.com/resources/how-to-bid-a-joc-contract.

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How Technology Is Strengthening Jobsite Safety

Adding another tool to the safety toolbox

BY DAVID EDWARDS

On most jobsites, the day starts the same way. Equipment warms up, crews gather for a briefing and operators climb into their machines, already thinking through the day's work. It's a routine that feels familiar, virtually automatic.

But that's also where risk begins.

It's not with a major failure or a dramatic incident, but with smaller, less visible moments: a missed cue, a distracted glance or an assumption that the area is clear. A key to solving one of the contractor's biggest safety challenges is managing those minor upstream actions that shape whether a jobsite stays safe or slowly drifts toward an incident.

For contractors, improving safety isn't just about reacting to what went wrong. It's about understanding what could happen before anything goes wrong and building a culture that supports better decisions in those moments.

The Hidden Gap Between Hazards & Awareness

Even experienced crews may not catch every hazard. That's not a training issue. It's a human one.

Jobsites are dynamic environments. Operators are expected to manage multiple things at once: machine controls, ground crews, grade, obstacles and project deadlines. Add to those items noise, fatigue and the pressure to stay on schedule, and it becomes clear that attention is a limited resource.

In practice, that means:

- Hazards can go unnoticed, even in familiar environments
- Assumptions can replace confirmation
- Small lapses can compound over time

Most incidents don't happen without warning signs. They can be the result of a series of missed signals, those that were present but not recognized or recognized too late.

From a business perspective, missed signals matter. They show up as unplanned downtime, increased insurance costs, and costly rework and delays. Not to mention the risk and strain on crews and supervisors.

The takeaway isn't that people need to "try harder." It's that safety systems need to account for how people perform under real-world conditions.

Why Even Strong Safety Systems Can Have Gaps

Contractors invest heavily in training, procedures and compliance, and those remain essential. But traditional safety approaches tend to focus on rules and outcomes rather than the moments in between.

A crew may know the correct procedure, but conditions on the ground can shift quickly.

That's why many contractors are starting to rethink safety — not as a checklist, but as a system that needs continuous reinforcement and feedback.

Technology as a Practical Layer of Support

Technology is increasingly playing a role in closing these gaps — not by replacing people, but by supporting them.

Today's safety technologies generally fall into a few key categories:

1. ***Visibility and detection tools*** — Detection systems with alerts or cameras can help operators identify people, vehicles or hazards that may not be directly visible from the cab.
2. ***Operator vigilance systems*** — In-cab alerts and monitoring tools can identify signs of fatigue or distraction and prompt operators to refocus.
3. ***Remote control*** — Ideal for short-term use, lightweight, portable line-of-sight remote consoles remove the operator from the cab in potentially hazardous conditions and require no special infrastructure.
4. ***Active machine controls*** — Active machine control systems, such as motion inhibit and automatic braking, can mitigate collisions before they happen. Establishing electronic "fences" can help prevent equipment from entering unsafe zones or making unintended movements.
5. ***Data and telematics platforms*** — These tools track leading indicators, such as near-misses, in-cab operator alerts or unsafe operator behaviors like not using the seatbelt, and turn them into management insights on which contractors can act.

Individually, each of these tools adds a layer of protection. Together, they create a more resilient system, one that helps catch risks earlier and reduces the likelihood of serious consequences.

Extending Safety Across the Fleet

One of the biggest shifts happening today is how contractors think about where safety technology lives.

For years, advanced safety features were closely tied to the purchase of new machines. But that model doesn't always align with how fleets operate. Contractors run mixed fleets, hold on to equipment for years and need to balance safety improvements with capital constraints.

As a result, many are taking a more flexible approach by:

- Adding safety technologies to existing machines
- Upgrading equipment already in service
- Utilizing data to inform safety culture
- Applying consistent safety standards across mixed fleets

This is an important shift, as it recognizes that improving safety isn't a one-time decision tied to a purchase. it's an ongoing opportunity to manage.

For example, detection systems can be added to machines that didn't originally include them. Awareness systems can be installed as needed to reinforce operator behavior. Also, safety data can be collected across multiple pieces of equipment, regardless of manufacturer.

This approach allows contractors to scale safety improvements over time, rather than waiting for full fleet replacement. From a business standpoint, it also helps protect existing equipment investments, ensuring that machines continue to meet evolving safety expectations.

Turning Data Into Insights

Collecting safety data is one thing. Using it effectively is another.

Telematics data from a fleet of connected machines now provides contractors with access to leading indicators that were previously difficult — or impossible — to track consistently.

These might include:

- Frequency of collision alerts
- Instances of unsafe behavior or safety rule noncompliance
- Patterns of machine operation in high-risk areas
- Trends tied to specific crews, shifts or jobsite conditions

The real value comes when that data is used to guide decisions. Instead of reacting after an incident occurs, contractors can:

- Identify patterns that point to emerging risks
- Coach operators based on real-world behavior
- Adjust workflows or jobsite layouts
- Reinforce positive safety practices

This shifts safety management from reacting to "what just happened" to proactively managing "what could happen," making it a measurable, manageable part of the business.

Making Safety Part of Everyday Operations

For midsize contractors, the goal isn't to add complexity. It's to integrate safety into the way work already gets done.

That starts with a few practical steps:

1. *Evaluate current gaps* — Look at where risks are most likely to go unnoticed, such as blind spots, high-traffic areas, or points where ground workers and machines interact.
2. *Focus on leading indicators* — Don't rely solely on incident reports. Track the early warning signs that come before them.
3. *Consider scalable solutions* — Look for technologies that can be applied across new or existing equipment, not just a single machine or project.
4. *Use data to coach, not just enforce* — Position safety insights to support crews and improve performance, rather than as a compliance-only tool.
5. *Take an incremental approach* — Safety improvements don't have to happen all at once. Small upgrades, applied consistently, can drive meaningful change over time.

A Smarter Way to Think About Safety

There's no single solution that eliminates risk on a jobsite. Equipment, procedures and training all play a role, but none of them are sufficient on their own.

What's changing is how these elements come together. Contractors are increasingly viewing safety as a system. It's a system that recognizes and supports human performance, captures and learns from data, and adapts as conditions change.

In that system, technology isn't the complete answer. It's one of the tools. It's a way to reduce the impact of inevitable human limitations, extend operator awareness and reinforce good decisions.

Because in the end, jobsites are built and managed by people. And the most effective safety systems are the ones that recognize that reality and design around and for them.

David Edwards is a senior safety market professional at Caterpillar. Visit cat.com.

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Filling the Gaps

Compliance on government & specialty jobs depends on a connected project record

BY TARA ANDERSON

An April 2026 federal audit reviewed nine Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)-funded Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) facility and equipment contracts. Five were missing one or more required Buy American-related clauses, representing about $272.7 million in IIJA funds. FAA also used foreign products in three contracts and had problems with the waiver process. Those three represented $115.9 million in IIJA funding. One week later, two senators introduced a bill that would require agencies to report annually on their implementation of the Build America, Buy America Act (BABA).

That audit is aviation-specific, but the records lesson isn't. It didn't examine contractor closeout files or whether installed products matched approved submittals. It showed how missing clauses, weak waiver controls and incomplete data can undermine a compliance record. On government and specialty work, the same operational question applies: Can you show what requirement applied, what was approved, what changed and what was installed?

I look at this through the lens of project information management, because that's where compliance becomes provable. In my experience, documentation gaps often begin with a record that exists somewhere but isn't connected to the decision it supports. The certification is in an email. The reason for an approval lives in someone's memory. The change order was never tied back to the submittal it modified. Individually, none of these gaps looks like a crisis. Together, they create the kind of record an auditor may question.

Government Work Means Proving Your Materials, Not Just Installing Them

For infrastructure projects receiving federal financial assistance, BABA generally requires covered iron, steel, manufactured products and construction materials incorporated into the work to be produced in the U.S. A manufactured product must satisfy the applicable domestic content requirements, which for many federal procurements currently include a threshold of more than 55% domestic component cost, unless another applicable standard applies. The preference must flow into applicable subawards, contracts and purchase orders, so a supplier's sourcing decision can become a project compliance issue.

Most teams can explain the rule. Where they struggle is proving they followed it. The specification identifies the requirement. The submittal identifies the proposed product. A manufacturer certification or mill record may help document origin. A request for information (RFI) records a question or proposed change. A change order may approve a substitution under the contract. When a BABA waiver is required, the recipient requests it and the federal agency issues it. Every record can be correct and still leave a gap when the records live in five different places.

Capture the certification during procurement and submittal review. Connect it to the submittal, any related RFI or change, the applicable waiver and the record of what was installed.

Retention adds another layer. Federal Acquisition Regulation Subpart 4.7 applies to contracts containing specified audit and records clauses. For those contracts, records generally must remain available for three years after final payment or for an applicable record-specific period, whichever ends first. Under federal financial assistance, recipients and subrecipients generally retain award records for three years after submitting the final financial report. Unresolved claims, litigation, audit findings and contract terms can extend those periods. Follow the requirements passed down in your own contracts and purchase orders, read the actual terms instead of guessing and set the retention schedule at kickoff.

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Specialty Jobs Stack a Second Rulebook on Top

Government work isn't the only place this shows up. Healthcare construction often requires an infection control risk assessment and records showing that required controls stayed in place. Historic preservation work may require photographs, drawings, material records and approvals that show conformance with applicable standards. Secured facilities may add access, clearance and chain-of-custody records.

The specific requirements change by project type. The operational need doesn't: Show what applied, what evidence came in, who reviewed it and which decision it supports. The legal and contractual duties may differ from job to job, but the project information challenge stays the same.

Build the Record While the Work Is Moving, Not After

Fixing this at closeout is too late. Turn every contract or funding requirement into a plain list of evidence you need to keep. Assign an owner and a location for each record type before the first submittal comes in. Capture certifications the moment a submittal gets approved, not when the project wraps. Link submittals, RFIs, transmittals, changes and inspections to each other so one search pulls the whole story, instead of five people's inboxes. Before handover, give someone outside the project team the name of one installed material. Measure how long it takes them to find its full history.

That last test tells you the truth. If it takes more than a few minutes, you likely have a retrieval gap that an outside reviewer will see too.

The FAA audit isn't proof that every contractor is failing. It's a reminder that public and regulated work puts added pressure on the project record. The contractors best prepared for review know the requirements and can produce the connected record showing how the team met them.

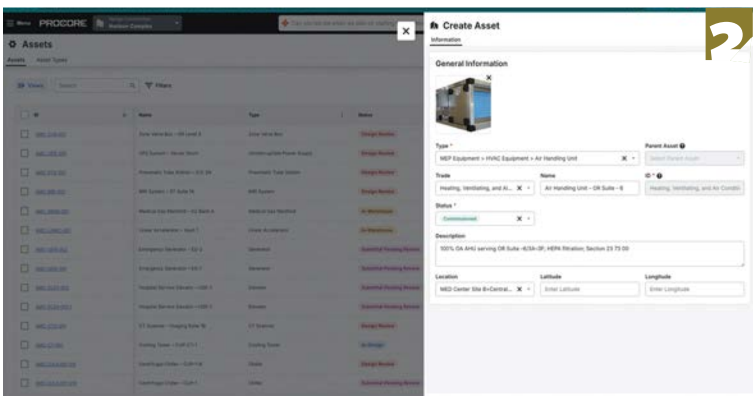
That's project information management in practice: every requirement connected to the evidence, review and decision behind it.

Note: This article is general information, not legal advice. Requirements vary by funding source, agency, award and contract.

Tara Anderson is senior vice president of customer success at Newforma. Visit newforma.com.

New Products to Watch

Selected by the editors of Construction Business Owner, these new-to-the-market products are just a few of our favorites recently released to the construction community. Stay tuned in every issue to find out what you need to know about the latest gear, solutions & industry-leading innovations.



1 WERNER

Werner Telescoping Scaffold (ATS-72)
Released: 8/4/26
Availability: U.S. market
What's new? The new Werner ATS-72 Telescoping Scaffold was designed specifically for today's mobile maintenance and construction professionals who move throughout commercial buildings during the workday. Its retractable telescoping design collapses into a compact footprint that fits through standard doorways and elevators, allowing one person to transport, assemble and reposition the scaffold in minutes. Combined with five adjustable working heights and tool-free setup, the ATS-72 gives professionals a single access solution that moves as efficiently as they do, helping improve productivity across painting, facility maintenance, remodeling and repair applications.
Specs: Engineered for maximum safety, stability and ANSI compliance, the ATS-72 combines portability with professional-grade features designed to support safe, efficient elevated work, including tool-free, one-person setup with color-coded assembly labels. Integrated features include guardrail, toe boards, outriggers, bubble level and pinch-resistant sections for safer operation. Five-hundred-pound load capacity supports the user, tools and materials

2 PROCORE

Asset Register
Released: 8/5/26
Availability: U.S., Canadian & European markets
What's new? Procore's Asset Register gives owners a searchable digital record of every fixed asset with warranties, manuals and inspection history attached, built during construction. With Asset Register, contractors replace weeks of project handoff work and deliver higher-quality handovers. Owners commission facilities and begin operations sooner when records arrive verified, and operations teams start from a documented maintenance baseline.
Specs: Organize installed assets in a centralized, searchable register. Update asset information directly from the field using mobile devices and scannable QR codes. Export structured asset information for owner maintenance systems, reducing manual data entry. View assets in 3d using building information modeling.

3 DEWALT

20V MAX* XR Cordless 16GA Straight Finish Nailer
Released: 8/1/26
Availability: U.S. market
What's new? DEWALT's most compact 20V MAX* XR 16GA Straight Finish Nailer. Capable of driving up to five nails per second, this tool (battery and charger sold separately) is designed to maneuver in tight areas at only 3.1 inches in width, minimize downtime and remove the limits of traditional pneumatic tools. Built to deliver pneumatic-like productivity without the hassle of using hoses, compressors or gas, this next-generation tool provides pros freedom from compromise.
Specs: Pin nailer, 20-volt. Cordless power, brushless motor. Nail gauge: 16. Maximum fastener size: 2.5 inches. Magazine capacity: 110. Nail gun angle: 0 degrees.

4 IGNITE ATTACHMENTS

John Deere Compatible Front-End Attachments for Compact Tractors
Released: 8/4/26
Availability: U.S. market
What's new? For years, John Deere compact tractor owners looking for aftermarket front-end attachments have faced limited options. Unlike most compact tractors, John Deere models use a proprietary loader interface, leaving many owners with few alternatives Engineered specifically for John Deere compact tractors with the proprietary hook-and-pin loader interface, Ignite's new bucket lineup gives operators a purpose-built bucket.
Specs: Available in 54-, 62-, 68- and 74-inch widths, the lineup makes it easier for customers to find the bucket that matches both their machine and the work ahead. The 2,500-pound-rated frame comes paired with 42-inch pallet forks and features five adjustable fork positions, allowing operators to safely move pallets, feed, seed, lumber and other materials with confidence.

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STATS

Annual Value of Construction Put in Place

July 2024/2025/2026 Annual Rate Comparison

This chart compares the two previous years' total value of construction put in place to an annual forecast based on July 2026 figures. (Millions of dollars. Totals may not add up perfectly due to rounding.)

$2,157,581

JULY 2026 TOTAL ANNUAL VALUE OF CONSTRUCTION PUT IN PLACE

	2024	2025	2026
Total Private Construction	**1,678,713**	**1,623,269**	**1,614,171**
Residential	941,559	886,533	859,002
Nonresidential	737,154	736,736	755,169
Total Public Construction	**483,971**	**515,842**	**543,410**
Residential	11,338	12,153	12,203
Nonresidential	472,632	503,689	531,206
TOTAL Construction	**2,162,683**	**2,139,110**	**2,157,581**

*Seasonally Adjusted Annual Rates. Source: U.S. Census Bureau

"Macroeconomic uncertainty continues to weigh on the built environment. High oil prices are putting upward pressure on inflation and may lead to even higher rates in the back half of the year. This will put additional pressure on developers and may lead to a further weakening in billings."

Richard Branch, AIA Chief Economist

AIA Architectural Billings Index (ABI)

National			*Regional - Billings				*Sectors - Billings			
Month	Billings	Inquiries	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	Multifamily Residential	Commercial /Industrial	Institutional	Mixed
Apr-26	48.3	57.7	47.2	48.0	47.7	49.0	51.5	48.9	51.1	42.5
May-26	44.5	49.4	46.2	45.3	49.6	45.4	49.2	45.5	46.9	44.1
Jun-26	47.3	56.1	44.9	45.1	49.5	45.6	45.6	46.7	47.4	42.7
Jul-26	46.6	52.6	44.8	46.7	48.7	47.8	48.4	46.7	47.4	43.2

For more information on the index or to subscribe to the complete historical data going back to 1995 for your internal analysis, please contact economics@aia.org.
The ABI presents monthly construction billings data, using a base score of 50. A score of more than 50 indicates a growth from the previous month, and a score of less than 50 indicates a contraction from the previous month. A score of 50 indicates no change. Source: The American Institute of Architects (AIA), Architecture Billings Index (ABI).

*Regional and Sectoral indexes are three-month moving averages, due to small sample size. All data is seasonally adjusted.
**Every January, the AIA research department updates the seasonal factors used to calculate the ABI, resulting in a revision of recent ABI values.

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ARE YOUR HEAVY CIVIL JOBS **PROFITABLE?**

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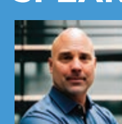
Heavy civil contractors generate job-cost data every day — but many leaders do not see the full financial picture until payroll closes, invoices arrive or month-end reporting is complete. By then, the opportunity to correct a problem may be gone.

In this practical session, Brent will show how labor, equipment, production, trucking/materials and field documentation shape job-cost accuracy; how to distinguish leading signals from lagging reports; and how to spot the gaps that create month-end surprises.

Attendees will leave with a simple Job-Cost Confidence Scorecard they can use immediately.

SPEAKER



Brent Erickson
Vice President of Sales
Tractics

Brent Erickson is vice president of sales at Tractics, where he works with heavy civil contractors to improve operational visibility, strengthen job-cost accuracy and reduce the disconnect between the field and office. His focus is helping construction leaders identify where manual processes, fragmented data and delayed reporting can contribute to margin erosion. Through his work with contractors, Brent brings a practical perspective on connecting labor, equipment, production and financial data so business owners can make faster, more informed decisions about job performance and profitability.

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