THE LEADING BUSINESS MAGAZINE FOR CONTRACTORS

DECEMBER 2025 | CONSTRUCTIONBUSINESSOWNER.COM

CONSTRUCTION BUSINESS OWNER®



Tackle Labor Challenges With Digitally Assisted PROJECT PLANNING

HOW TO BRIDGE THE WORKFORCE GAP & BRING IN MORE BUSINESS

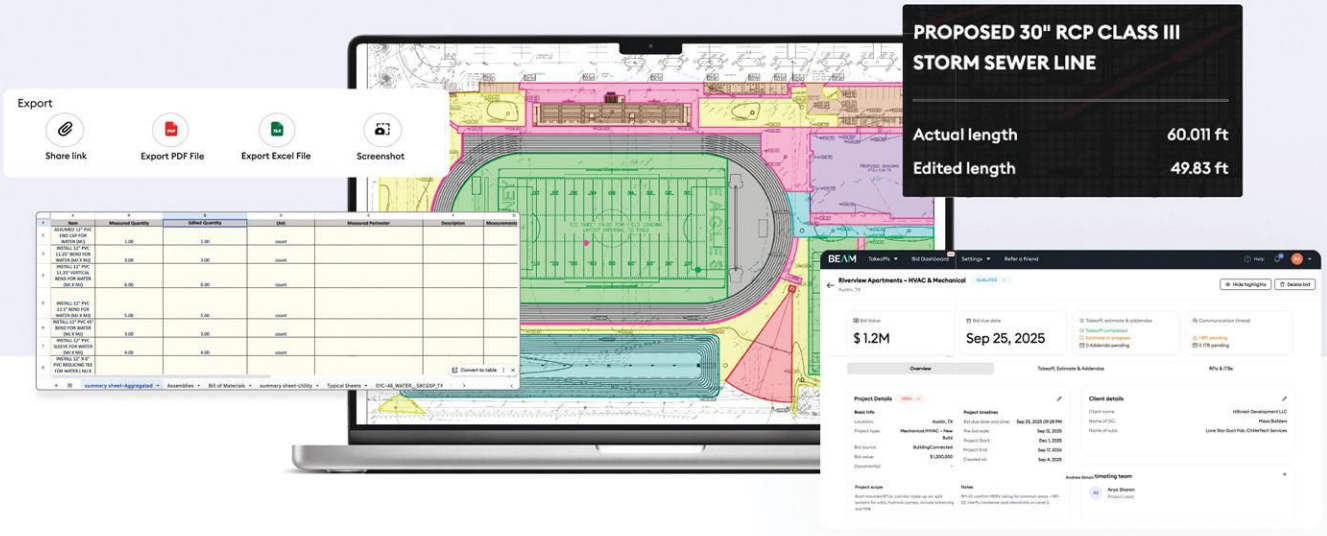
IN THE OFFICE
Why every construction project needs a dispute resolution plan

IN THE FIELD
Optimizing mobile power with battery energy storage systems

BEAM
Powered by Attentive.ai

The New Standard In Preconstruction Efficiency

Estimators deserve better. Let AI do the heavylifting.



You can't build the future of construction on manual estimating workflows

See why Beam AI - the ONLY AI-based fully automated material takeoff software, is the right investment for up to 90% time savings and increasing bid volume by 2X.

Beam AI has been my best investment, saving time and letting us chase ~800 projects, 2X our usual volume, without hiring another estimator.



Henry Greenberg
President, Guardian Roofing & Exteriors Inc.

It's not the cheapest tool, but it's a complete done-for-you takeoff software that frees up 20–30 hours per job and easily pays off with 2x bids submitted.



Jordan Kipnes
CFO, ProWorks Painting

Trusted by **1,100+ contractors** and **suppliers** across the US & Canada

petticoat schmitt · BommariTO CONSTRUCTION · Merritt contracting · NATIONAL WHOLESALE SUPPLY · PRO WORKS PAINTING · RAYS STAIRS STEEL COMPANY

Scan this Code to Experience Beam AI

notifications@attentive.ai · www.ibeam.ai · +1 (269) 855 7708

DEVELON

Powerfully efficient.

FULL COVERAGE
36 MONTHS 5K HOURS

More power, greater precision and effortless positioning — DEVELON equipment is built to help you do more work in less time. Add in our superior standard warranty and local dealer support and you'll conquer every challenge with confidence.



See how we stack up.

©2025 HD Hyundai Infracore. All rights reserved. DEVELON is a brand of HD Hyundai Infracore; HD Hyundai Infracore is an affiliate of HD Hyundai.

FROM THE EDITOR

MEGAN BEAM



Editor-in-Chief
Megan Beam

Every December, we find ourselves saying the same thing: It's somehow already time for the final print issue of the year. Time always seems to fly, and once again, the industry has met new challenges with creativity and resilience.

It's also fair to say this year hasn't been easy. Change and uncertainty have touched us all in different ways. Yet, by acknowledging those difficulties, we open the door to connection, understanding and the kind of collaboration that helps our industry move forward.

While this issue doesn't focus solely on connections, it's filled with insights and perspectives on projects and organizational alignment that we hope offer a sense of steadiness — and maybe even inspiration — as we head into another new year.

We are also navigating some exciting transitions within our own team. We are wishing the very best to one of our account executives (and our dear friend), Andrew Arnold, as he navigates a new position with another brand in our organization. And we are welcoming a new account executive just in time for a new year — Zach Haynie! Alongside our internal changes, we are excited to bring new contributors next year who will undoubtedly bring fresh ideas, unique perspectives and renewed energy to our content. Their enthusiasm is already shaping what's next for our coverage, and we're eager for you to see how those new voices strengthen and expand the stories we tell.

The start of 2026 will also take us on the road, reconnecting us with so many of you in person. We'll kick off the year at World of Concrete in January, followed closely by CONEXPO-CON/AGG in early March — two events that never fail to remind us why this industry is so dynamic and inspiring. Being out in person and learning directly from leaders, innovators and doers, is one of the best parts of what we do.

As we reflect on 2025, we're proud of the stories we've shared — both in print and online — and grateful for the insights our contributors and readers have offered along the way. Looking ahead, we're developing brand-new content and perspectives for 2026 that we can't wait to unveil.

From our entire team, we wish you a safe, peaceful and restorative holiday season. Take care of yourselves and of each other.

And as always, thanks for reading.



CONSTRUCTION BUSINESS OWNER

EDITORIAL
Editor-in-Chief
Megan Beam
mbeam@cahabamedia.com · 205-314-8264
Senior Managing Editor
Carmen Capoccia
ccapoccia@cahabamedia.com · 205-961-3391

CREATIVE SERVICES
Art Director
Andi Shepard
Digital Production Designer
Matt Hodges
Web Developer
Greg Caudle

PRODUCTION
Client Services Coordinator
Sonya Crocker
scrocker@cahabamedia.com

CIRCULATION
Subscription Management
constructionbusinessowner@omeda.com
800-256-2785

ADVERTISING
Senior Account Executive
Van Imbragulio
vimbragulio@cahabamedia.com · 205-314-8263
Account Executive
Andrew Arnold
aarnold@cahabamedia.com · 205-961-3384
Sales Development Representative
Jonathan Noble
jnoble@cahabamedia.com

CAHABA MEDIA GROUP

Publisher
Matthew G. Conroy
VP of Sales
Greg Meineke
VP of Finance
Brandon Whittemore
Director of Content
Elizabeth Manning
Director of Operations
Laurie Tisdale
Director of Sales
Stacy Marshall

P.O. Box 530067, Birmingham, AL 35253

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

Richard D. Alaniz
Partner - Alaniz Law & Associates PLLC

Dr. Scott Arias
Professor – Eastern Kentucky University
CEO/Chairman of the Board - ACE Consulting Company

Brian Barksdale, CPA
Partner - Carr, Riggs & Ingram LLC

Cal Beyer
Senior Director of SAFE Workplaces - SAFE Projects

Steven Davis
Senior Vice President, Director of Construction - McGriff

Peter Hilger, AIA
Faculty Director, Curriculum and Internship Adviser, FM Program Coordinator Construction and Facility Management Program - University of Minnesota

Crawford E. McInnis
Executive Vice President - Epic Brokers

Joseph Natarelli, CPA
National Construction Services Leader - Marcum LLP

Gregg M. Schoppman
Partner - FMI Corporation

Construction Business Owner (ISSN 1551-3246) is published by Cahaba Media Group, PO Box 530067, Birmingham, AL 35253. Periodicals postage paid at Birmingham, AL and additional mailing offices. Subscriptions: Free of charge to qualified construction business owners. Publisher reserves the right to determine qualifications. Annual subscriptions: U.S. and possessions $48, all other countries $125 U.S. funds (via air mail). Single copies: U.S. and possessions $5, all other countries $15 U.S. funds (via air mail). Call 800-256-2785 inside or outside the U.S. Postmaster: Send changes of address and form 3579 to Construction Business Owner, PO Box 271, Lincolnshire, IL 60069-9835.

©2025 Cahaba Media Group, Inc. No part of this publication may be reproduced without the written consent of the publisher. The publisher does not warrant, either expressly or by implication, the factual accuracy of any advertisements, articles or description herein, nor does the publisher warrant the validity of any views or opinions offered by the authors of said articles, descriptions or any advertisements. Submissions: We welcome submissions. Unless otherwise negotiated in writing, by the editors, by sending us your submission, you grant Cahaba Media Group, Inc. permission by an irrevocable license to edit, reproduce, distribute, publish and adapt your submission in any medium on multiple occasions. You are free to publish your submission yourself or to allow others to republish your submission. Submissions will not be returned.

VOLUME 22 ISSUE 10

Progressive Casualty Insurance Co. & affiliates.

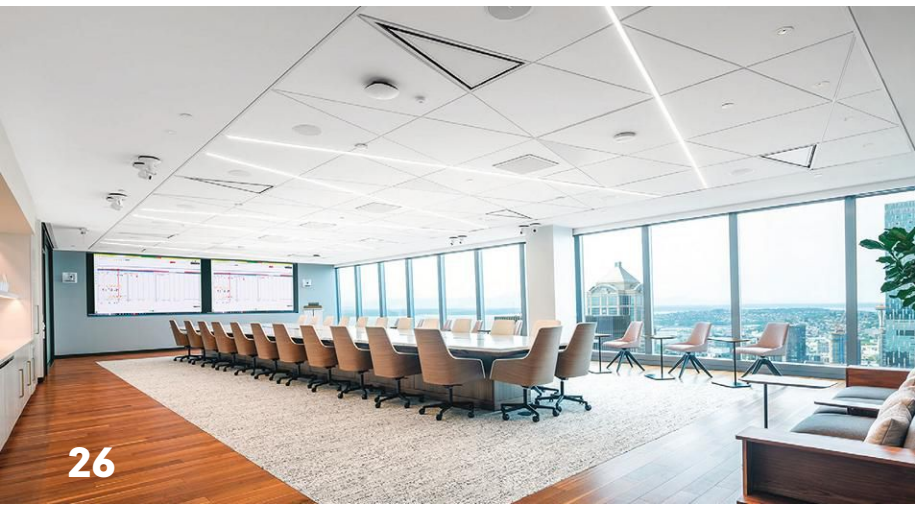


STAND UP TO YOUR MONSTER TO-DO LIST? ☑ SAVE MONEY? ☑

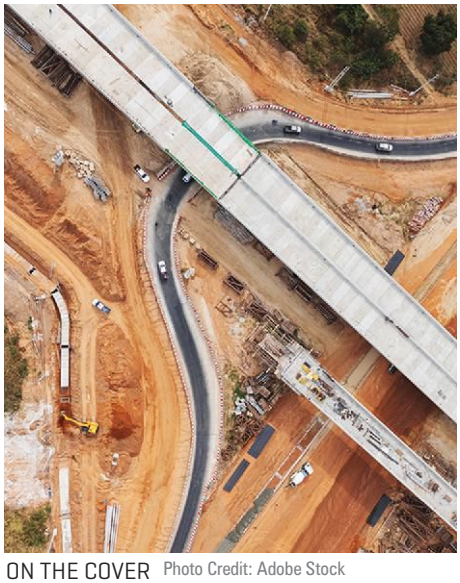
Small business owners' to-do lists can add up. So see if you can save money on a commercial auto quote at **ProgressiveCommercial.com.**

PROGRESSIVE® COMMERCIAL

Get a quote online in as little as 8 minutes







ON THE COVER Photo Credit: Adobe Stock

FEATURE SERIES

PROJECTS

26 Tackling Labor Challenges With Digitally Assisted Project Planning
How these solutions can bridge the workforce gap & bring in more business

30 Redevelopment Realities
Balancing vision & viability at The Metropolitan & beyond





Photo Credits: Armstrong World Industries, PK Safety, United Rentals, Adobe Stock, Diversified Fall Protection

IN THE OFFICE

The Business Council

10 Gregg M. Schoppman
The importance of providing your crew with meaningful performance data

12 Cal Beyer
SSC Underground: Building on a caring culture

16 CBIZ
Supercharge post-OBBBA tax planning with these strategies

18 Special Update
Navigating immigration policies in construction

20 Legal Notes
Why every construction project needs a dispute resolution plan

24 Marketing
How to build your brand on social media

IN THE FIELD

32 Equipment Matters
Considering lift path & other key factors is essential when choosing a loader

36 Jobsite Safety
Examining the importance of gas detector maintenance

38 Sustainability
Optimizing mobile power with battery energy storage systems

42 Gear & Apparel
Safeguard your workforce with proper PPE



IN EVERY ISSUE

2 From the Editor

6 News

8 Industry Spotlight

44 Products

48 Stats

ISUZU



HAPPY *Holidays*

"Wishing you joy, peace, and prosperity this holiday season."

© 2025 Isuzu Commercial Truck of America, Inc.

Hitachi Construction Machinery Announces Rebrand

Hitachi Construction Machinery announced that in April 2027, it will officially change its corporate name and brand to LANDCROS. This change will introduce updated equipment and parts branding. This brand transition represents the company's next stage of accelerating innovation to create and provide customers new forms of value. The LANDCROS brand will debut with new machine decals and company logo. All other core aspects like company structure, equipment manufacturing, product offerings and warranty policies will remain the same. LANDCROS is a symbolic word that represents the "guiding ideals" the company will follow as they look towards the future. The new brand name combines the word "LAND," representing respect for the company's history and their vision for the future, with "Customer," "Reliable," "Open" and "Solutions" to express how it plans to provide innovative solutions to its customers. During the transition period before the official brand change in 2027, Hitachi Construction Machinery and its dedicated network of dealers will use a dual Hitachi Construction Machinery Reliable Solutions – LANDCROS logo as customers familiarize themselves with the LANDCROS brand. Visit hitachicm.us and landcros.com.

Liebherr USA Co. Appoints New Divisional Director for Mobile & Crawler Cranes



Simon Schuster

Liebherr USA Co. appointed Simon Schuster as divisional director of mobile and crawler cranes effective November 2025. As divisional director, Schuster will be responsible for ensuring exceptional support for U.S. mobile and crawler crane customers in regards to new crane sales, used crane sales, customer service and spare parts. Schuster brings a robust engineering and leadership background to his role as divisional director at Liebherr USA Co. Schuster began his journey with Liebherr in 2018 as a sales trainee at Liebherr-Werk Ehingen GmbH, where he underwent comprehensive on-the-job training across multiple business units and departments. His training also included a two-month assignment in the U.S. and Canada, which laid the foundation for his understanding of North American markets. Liebherr USA Co. based in Newport News, Virginia, provides sales and service on behalf of 10 different Liebherr product segments: earthmoving, material handling, mining, mobile and crawler cranes, tower cranes, concrete technology, deep foundation machines, maritime cranes; components, and refrigeration and freezing. Visit liebherr.com.

STACK & Velixo Partner to Power Excel Integration for Estimating

STACK Construction Technologies, a provider of cloud-based construction software, has announced a strategic partnership with Velixo, a prominent provider of analytics, reporting and budgeting solutions for Excel. Through this collaboration, the companies have launched STACK for Excel, marking an integration that enables users to leverage STACK takeoff and estimating data directly in Excel using the Velixo add-in. Many contractors still rely on manual exports, copy-paste routines, or one-off macros to align estimating and financial data. This integration bridges the gap between estimating and financial systems, enabling tighter, more automated workflows. STACK for Excel empowers users to build custom reports and dashboards using live data, reducing friction, lowering error risk and accelerating insight. Unlike many traditional Excel/ERP connectors, STACK for Excel supports all modern Excel versions, doesn't require STACK to run in the background and is project-centric (not tied to static file links). When combined with data from construction enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems like Acumatica, Sage Intacct and Microsoft Dynamics, it offers a one-stop environment for estimate-to-actual visibility. Visit stackct.com and velixo.com.

Zachry Construction Corporation Agrees to Acquire Crescent Constructors

Zachry Construction Corporation, a heavy civil, roadways and infrastructure construction company for public and private customers, announced its agreement to acquire Crescent Constructors, a firm specializing in water and wastewater infrastructure projects. This strategic acquisition is a bolt-on expansion to Zachry Construction's growing portfolio of infrastructure services and positions the company to better serve one of the fastest-growing segments in the construction industry: water. Headquartered in Plano, Texas, Crescent brings more than 100 team members and a strong portfolio of water/wastewater treatment plant and lift station projects throughout north Texas. Crescent Constructors focuses exclusively on municipal and industrial water projects, developing deep experience in the design and construction of complex storage, reservoir, conveyance and treatment systems. Crescent will continue operating under its current name as a Zachry Construction affiliate, maintaining its presence in Plano while gaining access to Zachry's broader support network, capital resources and market reach. Visit zachryconstructioncorp.com.

Bobcat Company Celebrates Credo Award Winners & Patent Achievements

Bobcat Company has given awards to nearly 150 employees as part of its annual Credo awards and patent recognition program. These awards celebrate individuals and teams who have delivered bold innovations, transformed processes and built competitive advantages that propel the organization forward. New to this year's program is a special recognition for employees who have reached significant patent milestones — those whose

contributions to product development and intellectual property are shaping the future of Bobcat's offerings. The Credo awards are rooted in the Doosan Credo — a set of guiding principles that inform decisions, shape culture and unite Bobcat's global workforce. As part of the expanded awards program, Bobcat recognized employees who have achieved notable patent milestones: those with 10 or more patents and those with 15 or more. Honorees with 10-plus patents: Dennis Agnew, acceleration manager; Jeremy Harms, product manager; Jim Breuer, director global product identity; Jin-hup Yeu, chief industrial designer; John Pfaff, director engineering; Jonathan Roehrl, global director engineering; Scott Schuh, chief technology officer and senior vice president; and Spencer Mindeman, global director engineering. Honorees with 15-plus patents: Chris Young, principal engineer; Jeff Dahl, vice president global core technology; Mark Bares, director quality; Michael Wetzel, director product management; and Thomas Tokach, engineering specialist senior. Visit bobcat.com.

KAI Build Hires Marisol Ramos as Project Manager



Marisol Ramos

Marisol Ramos has rejoined KAI Build as project manager at its St. Louis headquarters. Ramos was previously an assistant project manager for KAI 360 Construction Services in 2021 before transferring to the Build group until 2024. Ramos has more than nine years of experience in the industry. She has expertise in all phases of construction management, including value engineering, scheduling, forecasting and budgeting. As a project manager, she supervises and coordinates all contractor performance reviews and submits change orders; reviews submittals, invoices and requests for proposal; performs jobsite inspections; and provides field supervision. Visit kai-db.com.

Ditch Witch's Parent Company to Acquire Tornado Infrastructure Equipment

Ditch Witch's parent company, The Toro Company, has entered into an agreement to acquire Tornado Infrastructure Equipment Ltd., a manufacturer of vacuum excavation trucks and infrastructure equipment solutions. While this transaction is subject to regulatory approvals and other customary closing conditions, the acquisition will help build on Ditch Witch's position in underground construction. In 2022, Ditch Witch collaborated with Tornado Infrastructure Equipment to co-develop an exclusive line of Ditch Witch-branded hydrovac trucks. Based in Calgary, Alberta, Tornado Infrastructure Equipment has been recognized for delivering powerful, precise and high-capacity hydrovac solutions. Designed for safe excavation around utility lines and other sensitive infrastructure, Tornado's technology uses high-pressure water or air alongside robust vacuum systems, providing contractors with solutions that reduce risk while maximizing efficiency on urban and complex projects. Since the initial manufacturing agreement, the relationship between the brands has been centered on introducing the Warlock Series, including the W12 and W8. This partnership positions Ditch Witch to meet rising global demand in underground infrastructure. Visit ditchwitch.com.

SmartBarrel & Plexxis Join Forces

SmartBarrel, an artificial intelligence (AI)-powered biometric time-tracking solution for the construction industry, announced a native integration with Plexxis, a subcontractor-focused construction ERP solution. The integration captures facially verified clock-ins from the field, aligns hours to Plexxis activity codes and syncs approved time directly into labor time logs, ending duplicate entry, cutting payroll disputes and giving subcontractors real-time cost accuracy. For years, subcontractors have wrestled with paper time sheets, buddy-punching and delayed reporting, creating payroll bottlenecks and eroding cost control. SmartBarrel aims to address the problem at the source with AI-based facial verification on rugged jobsite devices and a simple kiosk app. Purpose-built for specialty trades, Plexxis unites estimating, project management, accounting and field operations in a single platform. With SmartBarrel feeding verified time sheets directly into that backbone, subcontractors gain a continuous, end-to-end view from crew check-ins to payroll. The SmartBarrel + Plexxis integration is available now. Visit smartbarrel.io/integrations/plexxis.

SEAA Names New Director of Membership & Business Development



William Hutabarat

The Steel Erectors Association of America (SEAA) announced the appointment of William Hutabarat as director of membership and business development. Hutabarat will oversee all aspects of member recruitment and retention programs, sponsorship and event sales, and strategies to increase the visibility of SEAA through social media, promotional campaigns and events. He will also maintain the membership database, providing regular updates on recruitment progress and retention success. Hutabarat brings more than 12 years of experience in association management, having worked with nearly 50 professional and trade associations, including construction-related groups. As account executive at Big Red M, he generated more than $2.5 million annually in exhibits, sponsorship, advertising and membership sales. SEAA is a national trade association representing the interests of steel erectors, fabricators, contractors and related service providers. Visit seaa.net.

NEED MORE NEWS?
constructionbusinessowner.com/news



Mark Gemignani
Founder & President/CEO
Dominion Builders

Striving for excellence in construction

BY KRISTIN EASTERLING

Mark Gemignani was always drawn to construction, building and design. During his time in college that Gemignani discovered that "planning and discipline are the foundation of successful projects."

"As I gained experience and realized how much I enjoyed solving complex challenges, I developed a deep passion for commercial construction," he said.

After years of working for other companies in Washington, D.C., and New York, Gemignani saw the need for a new company that could handle technically demanding work, with a planning-first mindset. In a 2023 interview with Authority Magazine, he explained that Dominion Builders was born during the financial upheaval of 2008, and he focused his attention on federally funded local contracts.

In the years since, Gemignani has led projects from high-rises to hospitality to corporate interiors. The company recently branched into high-tech agriculture and industrial projects. These markets often feature bidding for the contract, and he said part of his role is to help clients understand what they can expect by choosing Dominion Builders for their project — even if it isn't the lowest bid.

"We work hard to demonstrate that the greatest predictor of success is intense front-end planning, transparency and steady communication — and that setting realistic expectations from the start saves time, money and frustration."

His day to day involves strategizing new projects, collaborating with clients, evaluating new markets and coaching employees.

"I focus heavily on critical thinking, thoughtful planning and smart problem-solving so our teams can deliver success with clarity and confidence," he said.

Impact, Growth & Future Focus

One memorable project for Gemignani was a luxury condominium tower in Midtown Manhattan in 2005, a contract he described to Authority Magazine as a "breakthrough moment" for his career. "[The project] gave me a developer's perspective and sharpened my ability to manage projects in fast-paced, high-pressure environments with extremely limited space. The final product was incredible — and the experience was transformative," he said.

Gemignani attributes his success to personal discipline, which he credits wrestling in high school and college with helping him develop. He also credits an early mentor who pushed him to grow and master the construction industry. "I worked for a leader who taught me that your reputation is your currency — and planning is everything."

PROspecs

DOMINION

Founded: 2008

Employees: 25, supported by a national network of partners and subcontractors

Primary region served: The U.S. and Canada, with a strong presence in Florida, the Northeast and emerging controlled-environment agriculture markets

Clients: Developers, commercial property owners, hospitality brands, controlled environmental agriculture and specialty industrial sectors

Purpose/Mission: Excellence is not a skill — it's an attitude

> **Collaboration is becoming a lost art, yet it's the heart of this industry.**

"I believe the right mindset and preparation create outcomes," he said. "I'm driven, I keep an ambitious pace, and I use weekends to reflect and map the week ahead. That rhythm keeps me sharp and allows me to lead with intention."

As the construction industry shifts and grows, Gemignani hopes to help guide the industry in a direction that's more technology-driven, energy-efficient and purpose-built.

"I'm especially committed to advancing controlled environment agriculture (CEA) to help deliver fresh, local food across the U.S. and Canada — regardless of climate — and to strengthen food quality and supply resilience," he said.

Dominion has carved out a niche in the industry as one of the few companies providing design and construction services for CEA companies, he told Authority Magazine. The company has become a go-to for custom grow facilities for both food and cannabis farmers, spinning off DAG Facilities for CEA projects.

The future of the industry, he said, will involve more robotics and artificial intelligence, which will, "help us design in 3D, schedule more dynamically and build with incredible efficiency."

He also predicted that buildings will become more intelligent, with easily reconfigured spaces and new materials that can withstand harsh climates and changing weather patterns. Most importantly, Gemignani said, construction will become a more collaborative industry.

His advice for young people looking to enter the construction industry is simple: "Master the fundamentals: construction safety, project management and emerging technology," he said. "But just as importantly, learn how to communicate and work as a team. Collaboration is becoming a lost art, yet it's the heart of this industry." ▲

Kristin Easterling is a freelance writer for Construction Business Owner Magazine & Digital Media.



Playing Without a Scoreboard

The importance of providing the crew with meaningful performance data to influence project outcomes



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. Contact Schoppman by email at gregg.schoppman@fmicorp.com. Visit fmicorp.com.

No, this is not another shameless reflection on a certain National Championship basketball team. However, if you are a fan, feel free to insert those superstars in this scenario. Consider two major teams in basketball are playing a back-and-forth game. Scoring in this game will quickly escalate to triple digits for both teams. However, the scoreboard is broken, and it does not show the score, the time remaining, the foul situation, etc. The only indication of a play stoppage is the referee blowing the whistle for a foul or end of play. The teams continue to run back and forth, scoring and defending with little regard for how they are performing. The only feedback the teams receive is when the coach yells at them if they are losing or remains silent if they are winning.

This might be the worst game to watch as a spectator. Now, imagine being a player. If this were a game of baseball or football, there would be some equally quizzical looks about playing with no scoreboard, but the activity and scoring in football is a little less frenetic than a high-scoring basketball game. So, who would love to be a player in this environment? Any takers?

Yes, this is a far-fetched scenario, and no one is lining up for these "disaster shows." However, think about construction organizations. How many organizations today send their best people into the field with little regard for the "score" of their game? If you went to one of your jobsites right now and asked about the individual labor performance on a work package or the overall score of the game, what would the response be? Furthering this misery, how many organizations drop the playbook in their people's hands a mere moment before the game starts? Imagine the player introductions: "Introducing the starting center, 5-foot-10-inches out of Tampa, Florida, Gregg Schoppman" — only to have this player spill his 3-inch-thick playbook binder on the arena floor, scattering reams of scribbled plays.

Now consider your organization. What does the field see relative to their performance, whether it is on a specific labor code, general condition or overall project? Think of the following points relative to the score:

Strategy in Budgeting

- What is the baseline production rate that your team will use on a project?
- What is the basis for the production rate? Put another way, how do factors like weather/seasonality, spatial constraints and complexity factor into the rate calculations?
- Does your team have projects with more labor codes than actual labor hours?
- Contrarily, do you have basically two labor codes — i.e., "aboveground" and "below ground" — creating large pools of labor hours that are difficult to track and status?

- Lastly, does your team even believe in the labor budget, regardless of whether you have a million codes or two codes? Have you heard phrases like "There is NO way we can do it for that" or "I know the project manager is shuffling money around like a we're running an illegal Ponzi scheme"?

Work-in-Progress Reporting

- What is the frequency of performance updates? How does the current score get conveyed?
- How is the scored visualized? Does the "performance story" get lost in a massive spreadsheets and variance reports?
- What is management's reaction to the score? Is the immediate reaction to question why the team is failing, or is it focused on reclamation?
- Do your field leaders make strong fiscal decisions or push anything related to money to the office (i.e., "I'm just in charge of the field — don't bring that money stuff in my trailer")?

Best-of-class performance is grounded in more than points (or margin). Planning for success is critical; without a real strategy that is implemented well before the boots hit the ground, the scoreboard will end up as a work of fiction, lacking any semblance of reality or integrity. There are key elements of any labor cost feedback process that should be examined as well:

The Currency

One of the most important things to consider is the currency that the field sees on the budget and the performance updates. This is not to say we should translate labor codes into cryptocurrency or euros. Consider the two scenarios below:

- Scenario 1: "You and your team have $150,000 in this code to do this work."
- Scenario 2: "You and your team have 1,250 hours to do the labor."

Regardless of whether your team can do the heavy lifting to translate $150,000 into labor, materials, equipment, etc., teams have the ability to strategize around labor metrics. Why make it more complicated than it needs to be? There always seems to be reticence to share dollars with the field, simply for the fact that this data can fall into "the wrong hands." Thinking in terms of an "hourly currency" creates less trepidation about sensitive information being viewed by bad actors.

The Visualization

More than likely, firms have migrated away from the dot-matrix printers that spool off pages of job cost reports with 20-plus columns and fonts that can only be seen with a magnifying glass. Field leaders are very smart, but it is baffling to have a scoreboard that requires advanced degrees to comprehend.

It gets more complicated when we introduce concepts like "variances" and explain that a negative variance is actually a positive, as if this is a bad round of golf. Realizing that every job cost software has nuances that complicate things, how do you present the scoreboard to your team? Is it a graphical visualization leveraging earned-value scorekeeping of labor in a fashion that is easy to read — and actionable?

Incentives

The incentives in this discussion are not related to bonuses. To be clear, this is related to the benefit that the team gains by having clear optics on the budget and ever-changing scoreboard. Referring to the basketball team analogy, consider the following:

- How does the team change performance without knowing the score?
- How do you motivate "high performers" if they don't have a benchmark or status update?

One argument that many leaders have is this: "Shouldn't they play/work hard regardless?" Of course, any superstar will play hard even when the scoreboard is off, but consider this:

- For teams that are losing, how do you adjust strategy if you don't know how much time you have? Where do you begin?
- For teams that are winning, how would you adjust your play? Put another way, how do you keep the teams aggressive and communicate the larger picture within the firm?
- For all teams, how would you reward star performers?

There are certainly more aspects to creating a high-performance culture. Even with a great budget and scoreboard, projects will fail if the preconstruction strategy is poor and closeout is ineffective. The scoreboard just happens to be a tool that represents the embodiment of winning and losing. Hopefully, the score is easy to see, digestible and actionable for positive and proactive change. ▲

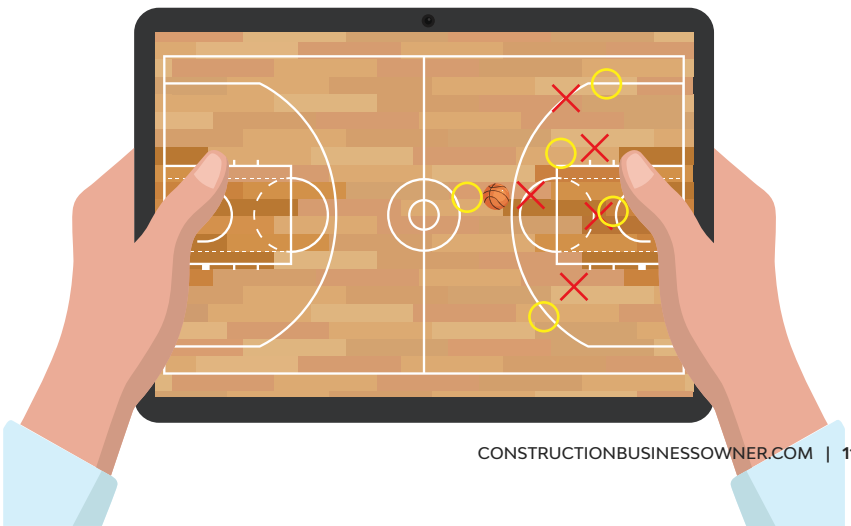


Photo Credit: meddesigner - stock.adobe.com

SSC Underground: Building on a Caring Culture & Leading Through Innovation

Inside SSC's cultural initiatives & employee outcomes



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.

When SSC Underground says "Our boring past has made for an exciting future," it means it. Founded in 1969, the Phoenix-based, family-owned company has spent more than five decades pioneering trenchless installation of underground utilities, vacuum-utility locating and excavation services. Today, SSC Underground is known just as much for its cutting-edge operational excellence as it is for its deep commitment to people: employees, customers and the broader industry.

That focus on people connects directly with the mission of SAFE Project (Stop the Addiction Fatality Epidemic), a national nonprofit working to end overdose fatalities and create recovery-ready communities and workplaces. SAFE Project believes harm reduction and mental health support are inseparable from organizational success. SSC Underground exemplifies this belief in action, showing how a construction company can innovate underground while also building a caring culture aboveground.

A Legacy of Leadership

Now in its third generation of family leadership, SSC remains anchored by CEO and Chairman of the Board Marcia Veidmark and President Arvid Veidmark III, supported by Vice President of Operations Michelle Walker and General Manager Steve Walker. Together, they guide a company of roughly 45 employees with an eye toward innovation, safety and a culture that treats people like family.

'I AM SSC': A Culture That Sticks

SSC's values are captured in a simple phrase: I AM SSC. "Integrity, accountability, mutual respect, safety, service and commitment to excellence" shape the company's identity.

"Having long-term employees who embody those values is one of our biggest strengths," said Michelle Walker. "When people stay with us five, 10, 20 years, we're not just reducing turnover; we're reinforcing trust, safety and the culture of care that runs through everything we do."

That culture is reinforced through personal touches: celebrating milestones, offering generous holidays and ensuring benefits apply equally to all. The result is a workplace where retention fuels safety, productivity and profitability.

Seeing the Whole Person

At SSC Underground, safety has always meant more than hard hats and personal protective equipment (PPE). Leadership believes you can't separate a worker's physical safety from their mental, emotional and social well-being. Walker put it simply: "You have to look at the whole person. It's not just about how someone performs on a jobsite — it's about whether they feel supported in their life."

This perspective has shaped SSC's mental health and suicide prevention efforts, guided initiatives like second-chance agreements and fueled a culture where employees know their well-being comes first. It echoes what programs such as Total Human Health emphasize across the

industry, but SSC has been quietly putting it into practice for years. It also aligns with SAFE Project's call to action: Workplaces must look beyond compliance and actively create cultures where people feel safe to ask for help. SAFE provides the framework; SSC shows what it looks like in action.

Support That Changes Lives

Perhaps the clearest example of SSC's people-first mindset is its Second Chance Agreement program. Many years ago, leadership realized that employees sometimes stumbled not because they lacked skill, but because life challenges spilled into work. Rather than adopt a harsh, zero-tolerance policy, SSC built a flexible framework to coach employees through performance-related or lifestyle-related issues while keeping them employed.

"It caused us to think bigger about how we can help employees through something they may be struggling with while maintaining their employment," Walker explained. "For some people, this job is the only support structure they have. Taking that away when they're already in crisis would only make things worse."

The agreements have taken different forms. Some addressed substance use, with mixed results. Walker admitted. But in cases involving anger management, accountability or relationship issues, the outcomes have been remarkable. "We've had employees come back and tell us the agreement changed their lives," she said. "They report improvements in their relationships, their self-confidence, even their health. They become the biggest advocates not only for SSC but for seeking help when you need it."

This approach mirrors SAFE Project's belief that people deserve support, safety and dignity always. By offering support instead of punishment, employers can keep people connected to community, income and hope — three essentials for recovery and well-being.



Image 1. SSC Underground's company values. Courtesy of SSC Underground.

Education as Prevention

Walker believes the construction industry must do more to educate employees and families about alcohol and substance use. "As employers we may be the only voice helping people see the danger in alcohol and substance misuse."

At SSC, these conversations are direct and practical. The company has hosted wellness sessions on opioids, emphasizing education and prevention, and encouraging employees to talk with their doctors and explore options, building a safety net through knowledge and dialogue. "That one conversation could save someone from becoming dependent without realizing it," Walker noted.

SAFE Project takes a similar approach, offering tools that empower employees and families to make informed decisions about alcohol, prescription pain management and drug use. For both organizations, the goal isn't to shame but to equip people with information and options.

Recognition That Matters

SSC's commitment to care has been validated through recognition. In 2010, during the depths of the recession, Marcia Veidmark was named Executive of the Year by the Construction Financial Management Association's Valley of the Sun chapter.

"That award was the encouragement we all needed," she reflected. "It gave us something to celebrate when times were really tough."

More recently, SSC was surprised with the 2023 Equipment World Contractor of the Year award. For Arvid Veidmark III, it was especially meaningful: "It affirmed not just where we'd been, but where we were headed. To celebrate that as a company award with our entire team was truly special."

Innovation at the Core

SSC has long been a leader in technology adoption, shifting early from open-cut excavation to trenchless methods, and expanding into vacuum-utility locating, and trenchless constructability and design consulting.

"We believe in a rising tide lifting all ships," Walker explained. "That's why we're engaged with industry organizations like North American Society for Trenchless Technology, National Utility Contractors Association and Underground Construction Technology Association. Staying connected helps us innovate and share those lessons widely."

In an industry where safety margins are slim and risks are high, staying ahead of technology has made SSC a trusted partner. Clients not only benefit from improved results on the ground, but also from the company's ability to consult on constructability before projects even begin.

Advancing Mental Health in Construction

Walker has been at the forefront of national efforts to address suicide prevention in construction. As a founding trustee of the Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention, she has seen attitudes shift dramatically.

"In 2015, people looked at us like we had three heads when we started talking about suicide prevention," she recalled. "Now, terms like 'psychological safety' and 'emotional well-being' are commonplace. It's becoming part of the fabric of our industry."

Her mission — compelling contractors to create caring cultures — aligns closely with SAFE Project's workplace initiatives. Both stress that mental health support is not a side program but a business imperative.

Building Recovery-Ready Workplaces

While SSC isn't formally part of the Recovery Friendly Workplace movement, many of its practices already align with it: valuing employee well-being, investing in suicide prevention and looking at people as whole human beings.

One practical step still in progress is naloxone implementation. SSC has already provided training, but naloxone in first-aid kits remains on the to-do list. "We've done the awareness piece. Now it's about ensuring our teams are equipped if they encounter an overdose on a jobsite," said Walker.

SAFE Project works with companies nationwide on similar efforts, offering free training and resources to make workplaces equipped to respond to an overdose. SSC's pending rollout underscores how even forward-thinking companies are still building the bridge as they cross it, and how progress can inspire others to take their own first step.

Caring Culture 2.0

For Walker, the proof of SSC's success is simple: "Seeing our people surround each other during a personal loss; checking in during an illness or even calling just to stay connected while someone's on vacation, that's what tells me our culture is alive. That's Caring Culture 2.0."

As industries everywhere grapple with workforce shortages, safety challenges and rising mental health concerns, SSC proves that cultural care is not a distraction from business goals — it is the foundation for sustained success.

Join the Movement

SSC Underground shows how SAFE Project's mission comes alive in the construction industry. Their story proves that innovation and safety can go hand in hand with compassion and care. By seeing employees as whole humans, confronting substance use openly and preparing to respond with tools like naloxone, SSC demonstrates what a caring, people-first culture looks like.

These examples are proof that cultural care is not a distraction from business goals — it is the foundation for lasting success. ▲



Photo Credit: Volodymyr - stock.adobe.com

SURVIVAL MODE. Stay ahead of the game – knock out going from straight trim to curved and back again with less pieces and in half the time using Axiom® dynamic curved trim. Plus you get ProjectWorks® pre-construction planning services at no-cost. This includes precision cut and mitered trim pieces which means far fewer seams, less waste, less labor – and NO curved to straight joints.

Take the Upper Hand: armstrongceilings.com/axiom

AXIOM® DYNAMIC CURVED TRIM

KNOCK 'EM OUT



AXIOM DYNAMIC CURVED TRIM INSTALLS OVER **2X FASTER** THAN BASIC CURVED TRIM

Armstrong®
World Industries

Supercharge Post-OBBBA Year-End Tax Planning, Starting With Your Contracts

Outlining key financial factors for construction business owners



BARRY A. FISCHMAN is a managing director in CBIZ's tax department and works out of its New Haven, Connecticut, office. Fischman contributes to the national construction, real estate, business enterprise tax services, high-net-worth individuals, tax compliance, family wealth services, and trusts and estates practice groups. He has more than 31 years of tax and consulting experience serving closely held businesses, and a wide range of industry experience spanning construction, real estate, research and development, professional services, manufacturing and high-net-worth individuals. Visit cbiz.com.

The One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) made several provisions of 2017's Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) permanent and introduced new provisions with potential advantages for the construction industry. To make the most of the tax benefits now available under OBBBA, take a fresh look at your tax strategies. Start to unlock savings by paying particular attention to the language within your contracts.

Tax Accounting Methods 101

For larger firms with sophisticated tax strategies, Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 460 special rules for long-term contracts and its provisions are already a major area of focus. The OBBBA introduces significant changes that can affect how IRC Section 460 is applied.

Methods of tax accounting can vary depending on the language within your contracts. Revenue from construction contracts can be reported under several methods of accounting, each of which can produce different results.

Identify contracts that may represent deferral opportunities, starting with work-in-progress (WIP) schedules. Each project's WIP should be reviewed with the following in mind: the intended use of the project, the type of work involved and the percent completed. Your review of WIP schedules, along with thorough knowledge of the contract, can unlock the potential for tax deferrals associated with that project.

Long-term construction contracts are required to report income tax using the percentage-of-completion method (POCM). However, exemptions can allow the use of alternative methods for home construction contracts or if the taxpayer qualifies as a small contractor.

OBBBA Expands POCM Exemptions

Home construction contracts include those involving a project in which 80% or more of the estimated total costs can be reasonably attributable to building, construction, reconstruction or rehabilitation of buildings containing four or fewer dwelling units.

Under the OBBBA, a wider range of construction projects are eligible for exclusion from the POCM requirement. Specifically, the home construction exception can now apply to residential construction contracts involving condominiums, apartment buildings, student housing, long-term care facilities and other buildings with multiple residential units. This change is effective for contracts entered into in tax years beginning on or after the date of enactment of the OBBBA (i.e., for contracts entered into in 2026 for calendar year taxpayers).

For the small contractor exception to apply, the following must be true:

- When the contract was entered into, the estimated completion date was within two years of the contract's commencement date.
- Over the three taxable years before the date the contract was entered,

the contractor's average annual gross receipts amount to less than $31 million.

If eligible for a POCM exemption, the contract in question may use another tax accounting method that may have tax advantages. Exempt contracts that are not subject to IRC Section 460 may elect to make use of other income tax methods, including the following:

- Cash basis
- Accrual method
- Accrual less retainage
- Completed contract method (CCM)

Under IRC Section 460, additional deferral options may be available to large contractors, including the following:

- 10% elective deferral
- Excluding retainage receivable and payable
- Allocating general and administrative expenses in accordance with IRC Section 460

Altering the method of accounting associated with a contract requires requesting a change by filing Form 3115 with the IRS. To determine whether or not a change may be advantageous, review the tax accounting methods available based on contract terms and the exemptions detailed above.

Additional OBBBA Tax Opportunities

Beyond POCM changes, the OBBBA includes several provisions that should factor into 2026 tax planning strategies.

Bonus Depreciation & Section 179 Expensing

Under the OBBBA, the TCJA's 100% bonus depreciation is restored and made permanent. Bonus depreciation can be applied retroactively to property that is both acquired and placed in service after Jan. 19, 2025, and before Jan. 1, 2031. Under IRC Section 179, the immediate expensing maximum has been increased to $2.5 million, with the phase-out threshold beginning at $4 million.

Research & Experimentation

One hundred percent of domestic research and experimentation (R&E) costs paid or incurred for tax years beginning after Dec. 31, 2024, can be deducted. The law provides some alternatives for deducting unamortized R&E expenses capitalized in 2022 through 2024, depending on the company size (which may lead to refunds from prior years). The new law provides options to capitalize the expenditures over 60 months or more.

'Qualified Production Property' Costs Deduction

Full and immediate deductions may be available for certain nonresidential real property used in manufacturing or production. Qualifying expenses are those relating to building or acquiring manufacturing, production or refining property placed in service before Jan. 1, 2031, and with construction beginning after Jan. 19, 2025, and before Jan. 1, 2029.

Qualified Business Income (QBI) Deduction/IRC Section 199A

Construction firms are often structured as pass-through businesses and may benefit from the 20% Section199A/QBI deduction that is now permanent.

Net Business Interest Expense Deduction

After its introduction, the TCJA's business interest expense deduction was changed so that it was limited to 30% of earnings before interest and taxes (EBIT). The OBBBA restores the original TCJA limitation, effectively increasing the deduction base to 30% of earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA).

Focusing narrowly on the tax advantages introduced by the OBBBA should enable your year-end planning to progress efficiently while maximizing its impact on your bottom line. These areas likely represent the best new opportunities for tax savings available to construction firms and contractors under the OBBBA.

As always, the experience and knowledge of tax professionals can prove valuable in assessing tax strategies for the year ahead. That is particularly true in the wake of major legislation like the OBBBA, which includes significant changes to "business as usual." The utility of professional insight is even more acute amid the challenges facing the industry today, with demand, labor and material price volatility, among other concerns, increasing the headwinds facing the industry. The tax opportunities presented by the OBBBA can prove instrumental in taking control of your finances and protecting profitability. ▲



Photo Credit: NorSham - stock.adobe.com

Building Better Trust & Support With Immigrant Construction Workers

Appleseed Network's senior advisor shares steps & strategies for navigating immigration policies in construction

BY ANNETTE LOVOI



Photo Credit: Sundry Photography - stock.adobe.com

Project timelines, safety, supply chain challenges and economic headwinds have long caused headaches for construction companies and their site managers — not to mention workforce issues. Anxiety can prevail on construction worksites in the current political climate of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids and escalated deportations.

Construction is a crucial part of the American economy, fueling growth from coast to coast while creating ever-rising demand for skilled workers who can complete the job safely and do it well. Around 25% of American construction workers were immigrants as of 2024, according to Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy. However, that percentage is often higher in states like California and Texas. In 2023 alone, the industry employed 3.3 million immigrants, USAFacts reported.

Without immigrant labor in construction, projects will come to a halt, contracts will be lost and consumers will face rising prices, the American Business Immigration coalition warns. The federal government has toughened its immigration policies and enforcement tactics even as the construction industry struggles to find the skilled workers willing to do the labor the industry and nation need to expand everything from office space to infrastructure. And cultivating a reliable construction workforce today and in the future will only become more difficult.

Immigration Policy & the Workforce

As mass deportation becomes the new normal, the immigration issue is now front and center once again in the construction industry. Managers must depend on having a workforce that reliably shows up on time, understands instructions and safety, and is ready to execute on the tasks required for complicated, multifaceted project deadlines. If managers cannot rely on



25% or more of their workforce to show up on time or at all to complete a project, the problems mount. Everything from architectural oversight to inspection to permitting to meeting timelines could crumble like a proverbial house of cards.

Attrition only compounds the situation. Can construction sites finish projects, in whole or in part, when managers cannot reliably predict whether a major portion of their workforce will show up at 7 a.m. or be around to finish the job in two or three weeks? Construction jobs require certain skills, precision and safety practices that only well-trained workers carry along with their toolboxes.

Navigating These Challenges

Construction employers and site managers bear a responsibility to communicate about immigration issues with their workers in ways those workers can understand, so everyone can focus on getting their jobs done. While managers feel the pressure of maintaining and protecting their workforces, the workers feel a different pressure about being separated from their families.

It's important to emphasize with immigrant workers that they've been hired to do a job, management respects their contributions and efforts, and management is cognizant of the challenges they face.

Leadership should be educated and trained on immigration issues, so they can put their workers at ease and protect them within reason. Leadership sets the tone for how workers feel on jobsites, so train leadership to respond calmly and thoughtfully to any questions immigrant workers might have to quell their fears and help them refocus on the work. Discuss issues at meetings and develop clear tactics with HR and company leadership to keep everyone on the same page.

For example, many jobsites display signage that reads: "No unauthorized entry." A construction manager could reassure workers that no one will enter the worksite without their knowledge. If ICE shows up at a construction site, management should be called to the entry point and to protect immigrant workers to the extent they can legally. This reinforces that managers do not want to see workers arrested and that those workers are a protected, needed and valued part of the team.

While there is only so much a manager can do legally, they can share helpful immigration resources without creating fear or liability, such as posting signage in break rooms or at the jobsite that details federal immigration policies.

Editor's Note: Have thoughts, counterpoints or best practices on how your leadership is managing immigrant laborers and/or your workforce is being affected by immigration policies? We're interested in hearing from you — email the team at mbeam@cahabamedia.com.

Furthermore, managers can distribute the Immigrant Legal Resource Center's "Red Cards" (Tarjetas Rojas) to immigrant workers. These cards, available in 56 languages, are pocket-sized quick references detailing constitutional rights and protections both legal citizens and undocumented immigrants have. Namely, that they legally don't have to open their doors, don't have to answer questions, should not sign any documents without first speaking to a lawyer and should show the card to any law enforcement agent.

Make sure immigrant workers are aware of local immigrant organizations, nonprofits, churches and vetted legal partners that provide meaningful help to their communities.

Finally, the Appleseed Network offers the Deportation Preparation Manual (deportationpreparation.org), a free, anonymous online tool that allows immigrant families to make practical, confidential plans for deportation. This easy-to-use, fully searchable guide covers child custody arrangements, safeguarding finances, powers of attorney and more. The manual is private, available in English and Spanish, and guided by attorneys and experts nationwide.

Employers can share the manual with workers or simply familiarize themselves with its contents to better understand what employees may be experiencing and how they can prepare. Using the manual to make a plan can help immigrants protect their families and finances, and it can empower those workers during unpredictable times. ▲

Annette LoVoi is a senior advisor at the Appleseed Network and the original developer of the Deportation Preparation Manual for Immigrant Families. She has spent more than two decades advocating for low-income and immigrant families through national policy reform and systemic advocacy. Visit appleseednetwork.org.



Building for Conflict

Why every construction project needs a dispute resolution plan

BY ADRIEN PICKARD & KELLEY HALLIBURTON

Anyone who has spent time in construction knows that disagreements are part of the landscape. Owners, contractors, subcontractors, designers and suppliers are all working under pressure, often with competing priorities and different interpretations of their obligations. Unpredictable factors such as weather delays, material and labor shortages, and unexpected cost spikes add to the risk of disputes. Conflicts can drain resources, fracture relationships and throw schedules into disarray, placing the successful completion of the project at risk.

In addition to drafting contracts that clearly define the roles, duties and obligations of the parties, the parties to construction contracts must plan and establish critical mechanisms to manage dispute resolution. A well-drafted contract with thoughtful dispute resolution provisions can mean the difference between a project that stalls under the weight of conflict and one that moves forward to completion.

The following article discusses common dispute resolution provisions to consider for your next project.



Photo Credit: Siberian Art - stock.adobe.com

Contracts as Risk Mitigation Tools

Construction contracts are, at their core, risk management instruments. They allocate responsibilities, define performance standards and establish payment structures. Just as importantly, they provide a path forward when things don't go as planned.

Well-drafted dispute resolution provisions play a critical role when other contract terms lack necessary clarity. By specifying how conflicts will be addressed — through negotiation, mediation, arbitration, litigation or some combination thereof — parties establish clear mechanisms to achieve resolution before emotions are high and positions are entrenched.

Industry-standard contracts, like those issued by the American Institute of Architects or ConsensusDocs, recognize the importance of these provisions by incorporating them into their templates.

While these forms offer useful defaults, they shouldn't be adopted blindly. Every project has unique risks and dynamics. Sophisticated owners and contractors modify or replace standard provisions to ensure that dispute resolution is tailored to the project's size, complexity and relationship dynamics.

Likelihood of Disputes & the Importance of Resolution

Disputes in construction tend to arise from familiar pressure points. Scope creep, delays — no matter the cause — allegations of defective or nonconforming work, and disputes over payment remain common flashpoints. What makes these disputes so costly is not only the substance of the disagreement but the consequences. Projects that stall while parties argue suffer financially. Legal costs and expert fees mount. Executive time is consumed by conflict instead of business development. Even when a dispute is ultimately resolved, collateral damage can linger in the form of strained or broken relationships and reputational harm to the project and the parties involved in the dispute.

A dispute that is addressed promptly and effectively may still leave scars but not derail the project or consume resources out of proportion to the underlying issue. Structured, step-by-step processes for resolution are essential to keeping disputes contained.

What Happens in the Event of a Dispute?

When a conflict arises, the first question should be: What does the contract require? Well-drafted agreements typically outline a series of steps, beginning with notice and informal negotiation, and escalating to more formal processes if necessary.

Executive Conference

The earliest stage is often direct negotiation between project executives. This is where many disputes are resolved, particularly if both parties are motivated to avoid escalation and seek a fair result and are willing to compromise to reach that end. Executive-level meetings give decision-makers a chance to address the problem candidly, weigh risks and craft business-oriented solutions. The process is quick, preserves relationships and is relatively cost-free. Its success, however, depends entirely on the parties' willingness to compromise. When emotions are high or positions are rigid, negotiation can falter.

Formal Mediation

If executive-level negotiation fails, construction contracts often require that the parties pursue some form of mediation. Many contracts make mediation a mandatory step before arbitration or litigation. Mediation brings in a neutral third party — often an attorney with relevant experience in construction — to help the parties bridge their differences. The mediator does not impose a decision but reviews the facts, the law and the relevant contract terms, providing a neutral view on fair disposition of issues while creating space for dialogue and compromise.

Mediation has many virtues: It is confidential, less costly than arbitration or litigation, and flexible enough to allow for creative solutions. It also often serves as a helpful guide to understanding the relative strengths and weaknesses of positions taken by the parties. This perspective often serves as a sufficient deterrent to escalating matters to formal litigation. Mediation is not, however, a panacea. Because it is nonbinding, parties can walk away without resolution, adding another layer of delay and potentially increasing hostilities before formal legal proceedings begin.

Arbitration & Litigation

The parties may have no choice but to escalate matters when compromise proves elusive. Construction contracts typically call for either binding arbitration or litigation — not both. And critically, if the parties prefer arbitration, they need to state their agreement to pursue this venue in lieu of litigation in the contract. Arbitration cannot be forced upon nonconsenting parties.

Litigation and arbitration share several common attributes. Both are subject to rules that govern the presentation of evidence, and the ultimate decision of the judge, arbitrator or arbitration panel are binding on the parties. But they also differ in various material aspects.

Arbitration involves the formal presentation of witnesses and documentary evidence to a neutral arbitrator — typically a one- to three-person panel comprising disinterested but knowledgeable practitioners with relevant industry knowledge. Arbitration is private, often faster than litigation, and can be tailored to the needs of the project. But it is not without drawbacks. Costs can be significant, particularly if a panel of arbitrators is involved. The limited rights of appeal mean that errors are hard to correct. And some parties feel that in an effort to be fair, arbitrators too often "split the baby," leaving neither side fully satisfied. Arbitration can be the right choice, but only if the parties understand both its strengths and its limits.

Litigation, by contrast, involves trial in a court of law before a judge and possibly a jury. These proceedings, in federal or state court, offer the parties full discovery rights, enforceable judgments and the ability to appeal. Litigation also creates a public record, which can serve as a deterrent against bad actors. But these advantages come at a price: Litigation is slow, expensive and adversarial. Sensitive business matters become public, and judges or juries may lack the technical expertise to grasp the nuances of construction disputes.

Importance of Detailed Dispute Resolution Terms in Contracts

The quality of a dispute resolution process is often determined long before the first disagreement arises. Too often, parties treat dispute resolution clauses as boilerplate that doesn't need attention,

Photo Credit: VectorMine - stock.adobe.com



an afterthought tacked onto the end of a contract. This is a mistake. These clauses should be drafted with care, because they shape the trajectory of every dispute that follows.

The most effective contracts lay out a clear, step-by-step escalation process: e.g., start with executive negotiation, move to mediation, then proceed to arbitration or litigation if necessary. Well-drafted contracts detail deadlines for bringing claims, often coupled with strict waiver provisions that, if not observed, can result in parties forfeiting their rights to pursue claims. They set forth documentation requirements to ensure that early, informal claims are supported by records, not just rhetoric. They establish any prerequisites that must be satisfied before engaging in mediation. And in case executive negotiation and mediation fail, they specify which jurisdiction's law applies and the venue where proceedings must take place. Construction contracts should also allocate responsibility for costs and attorneys' fees, providing disincentives for parties to stake out unreasonable positions.

These provisions provide certainty and efficiency when thoughtfully tailored. The parties know in advance how disputes will be handled, reducing the likelihood of tactical maneuvering or forum shopping. The process follows a road map rather than becoming a battlefield. By contrast, vague or generic clauses create uncertainty, invite procedural skirmishes and often delay resolution. In an industry where time truly is money, that is a risk few can afford.

Final Thoughts

Disputes are an unavoidable reality of construction. While conflict can never be entirely avoided, its impact can be controlled. Proactive planning through careful contract drafting and a commitment to structured dispute resolution prevents disputes from leading to project failure. The lesson for construction professionals is straightforward: Do not treat dispute resolution clauses as boilerplate to be ignored in contract drafting or negotiation. Invest the time and attention to tailor these provisions to your project. The payoff comes when conflict arises and you have a clear, efficient path to resolution laid out. ▲

Adrien Pickard, a partner at Barclay Damon's Washington, D.C., office, uses his 20 years of litigation and trial experience in federal and state courts nationwide to help major construction, power and energy clients resolve complex construction and commercial disputes. He can be reached at apickard@barclaydamon.com.



Kelley Halliburton, a partner in Barclay Damon's Washington, D.C., office, focuses her practice on complex construction and commercial litigation. She has nearly 15 years of experience working on power and energy construction disputes. She may be reached at khalliburton@barclaydamon.com. Visit barclaydamon.com.





Build Your Future in Safety

Earn Your OSH Degree in Construction Safety

Columbia Southern University is committed to advancing safety today, tomorrow and for years to come.

Graduates who earn the **Bachelor of Science in occupational safety and health with a concentration in construction safety** may apply for the Graduate Safety Practitioner® designation prior to becoming a Certified Safety Professional® through the Board of Certified Safety Professionals.

Going to World of Concrete?

We'll see you there at booth #C6073.

COLUMBIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

ColumbiaSouthern.edu » 877.347.6050

Testimonial may not reflect the experience of all CSU students. Multiple factors, including prior experience, geography and degree field, affect career outcomes. CSU does not guarantee a job, promotion, salary increase, eligibility for a position, or other career growth.

Building Your Brand Online: Social Media Strategies for Construction Pros

Making social media work for your business

BY MIKE MADDERN

When people think about the construction industry, social media usually isn't the first tool that comes to mind. Power tools? Sure. Project timelines? Absolutely. But social platforms? Too often they're overlooked — and that's a missed opportunity.

Social media has become a cornerstone of business-to-business (B2B) marketing, especially in construction. A recent study from Content Marketing Institute and MarketingProfs shows that over 90% of marketers now rely on social platforms to share content, outpacing blogs, email campaigns and even in-person events.

And the shift isn't limited to customer outreach. According to Associated General Contractors of America's 2023 Workforce Survey, nearly two-thirds of construction firms are using digital tools like social media and targeted ads to attract younger talent — a sharp increase from just 39% the year before.

I've spent the past 20 years in sales and marketing across the manufacturing and home improvement sectors. I've seen how digital strategies — particularly social media — can move the needle for even the most traditional industries. And construction is no exception.

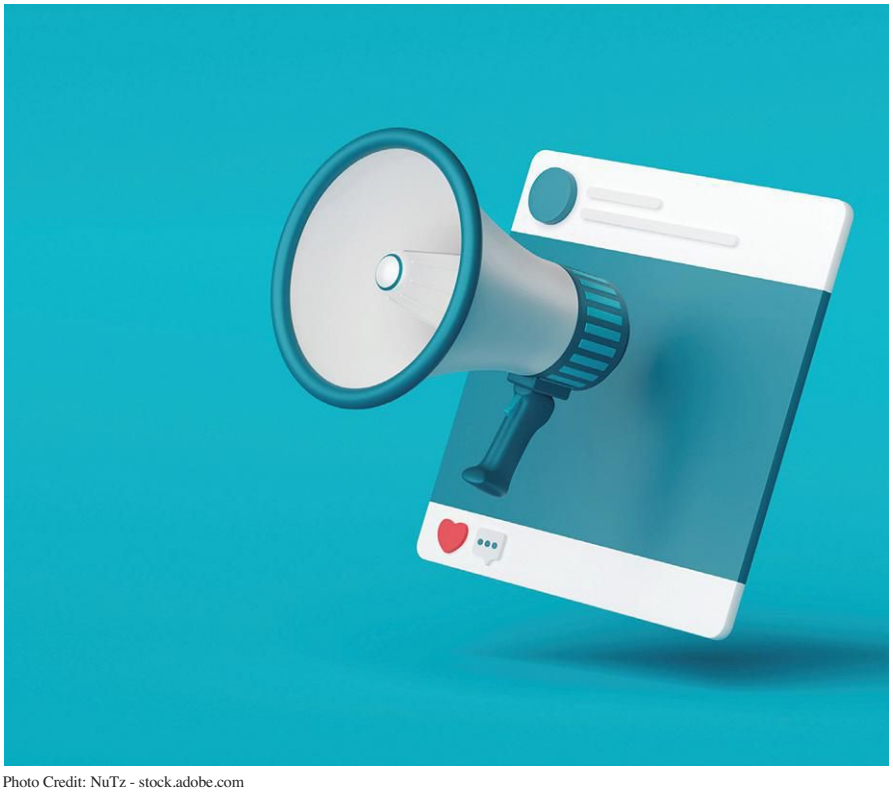


Photo Credit: NuTz - stock.adobe.com

A New Tool in the Toolbox: Social Media's Role in Construction

In today's digital-first world, social media has become essential to the customer journey. Whether you're an independent contractor, a midsize firm or a global business, your online presence directly impacts how clients perceive you, your lead generation and how competitive you remain in the market.

Building Trust, 1 Post at a Time

Let's start with the basics: trust. In construction, credibility is everything. Clients want to work with someone experienced, reliable and capable of doing the job right. Social media gives you a platform to demonstrate that visually, consistently and at scale.

Platforms like Instagram, LinkedIn and Facebook allow you to showcase past projects, share client testimonials, walk through your process and explain how you solve problems. It's a cost-effective way to build brand awareness and strengthen your reputation. When potential clients research your business, a strong social feed can be the proof point they need to reach out.

Why It Matters in a Competitive Market

There's no shortage of skilled contractors out there, but that's exactly why standing out matters. Social media gives you a chance to highlight what makes your approach different. Do you specialize in sustainable materials? Do you bring a

unique workflow to jobsite management? Share it. The more specific and consistent you are, the more you'll attract the right kind of work.

One of the biggest misconceptions I hear is "Social media isn't for our industry." I'd argue it's one of our best visual storytelling tools. Investing in social media to showcase design trends and technology advancements helps reach the next generation of contractors.

Another common objection is time. Yes, it takes some effort. But with a clear strategy and a consistent posting schedule, it's more manageable than you think. And the return on investment can be substantial, especially if you're targeting long-term growth.

Staying Visible Year-Round

Every business faces slow seasons, but that doesn't mean your marketing should go quiet. Social media allows you to stay top of mind regardless of the time of year. A quick maintenance tip, a walkthrough of a recent job, or a "what to expect in your next build" post can go a long way.

The key is not to default to a sales pitch. Nobody logs onto social media to be sold to. Instead, offer value. Showcase your ability to address issues that homeowners, builders and property managers face. Be the contractor who educates, informs and solves problems before a client even gets in touch. That kind of approach builds loyalty and positions you as a resource, not just a vendor.

Strategies That Work

Ready to put social media to work for your business? These practical tactics can help you showcase your expertise, connect with clients and stand out.

Showcasing Expertise & Building Credibility

If you're not sure where to start, check out a few tactics I've seen work well in this space:

- Before-and-after photos are consistently strong performers, especially on Instagram. They're visual proof of your capabilities and instantly capture attention.
- Client testimonials and reviews build trust. Consider pairing quotes with project photos to add depth.
- Project walkthroughs give people a peek behind the curtain. These can be short videos that walk through your process or highlight specific challenges you overcame.
- Behind-the-scenes content — like team spotlights or day-in-the-life posts — can humanize your brand and make you more relatable.

Paid Ads: Small Budget, Big Impact

Organic content is essential, but paid advertising can amplify your reach, especially when you want to grow locally. Unlike traditional advertising, you don't need a huge budget to make an impact. Start by boosting posts that already perform well, and target them by geography or project type.

For example,if you're a concrete subcontractor in Dallas or a utility contractor in Nashville, paid social can help you reach the right clients in your service area. It's a smart complement to traditional lead-gen tactics like referrals and trade shows.

Connecting With the Right People

Social media isn't just about marketing to clients: It's about community. I've seen contractors successfully build partnerships just by showing up consistently online. Commenting on a supplier's post or joining an industry group can lead to real business relationships.

It's also an opportunity to mentor younger professionals and attract new talent to the industry. Sharing your journey, advice and insights shows what leadership looks like — and that's good for all of us.

Don't forget about platforms like LinkedIn. It's not just for resumes; it's a valuable space for building relationships with vendors, partners and decision-makers in the industry. Share thought leadership, join relevant groups and engage with your peers.

Know What to Measure

You can't manage what you don't measure. Engagement metrics such as likes, shares, comments and clicks are signs that your content resonates. But don't stop there. Track inquiries, website visits or direct messages that come from social media. Those are tangible indicators that your content is leading to real conversations.

Over time, these insights will help you refine your messaging, double down on what works and cut what doesn't. Social media shouldn't exist in a silo — it should inform and support your broader marketing strategy.

Don't Wait. Start Building.

If you're still on the fence about whether social media is worth it, I know it is! You don't need to post every day or go viral. You just need to show up consistently, share your work with pride and stay engaged with the community around you.

Social media is no longer a nice-to-have: It's a vital tool for growth, credibility and visibility. Whether you're a seasoned contractor or just starting out, integrating it into your annual marketing plan can make all the difference. ▲

Mike Maddern is the chief marketing officer at Gutterglove, an innovation company focused on people, products, programs and technology for the home improvement space. With over 20 years of experience in sales and marketing, he has a deep understanding of the manufacturing sector. Maddern is passionate about driving growth through creative solutions and customer-focused strategies. Visit gutterglove.com.

Tackling Labor Challenges With Digitally Assisted Project Planning

How these solutions can bridge the workforce gap & bring in more business

BY ERIC HERR

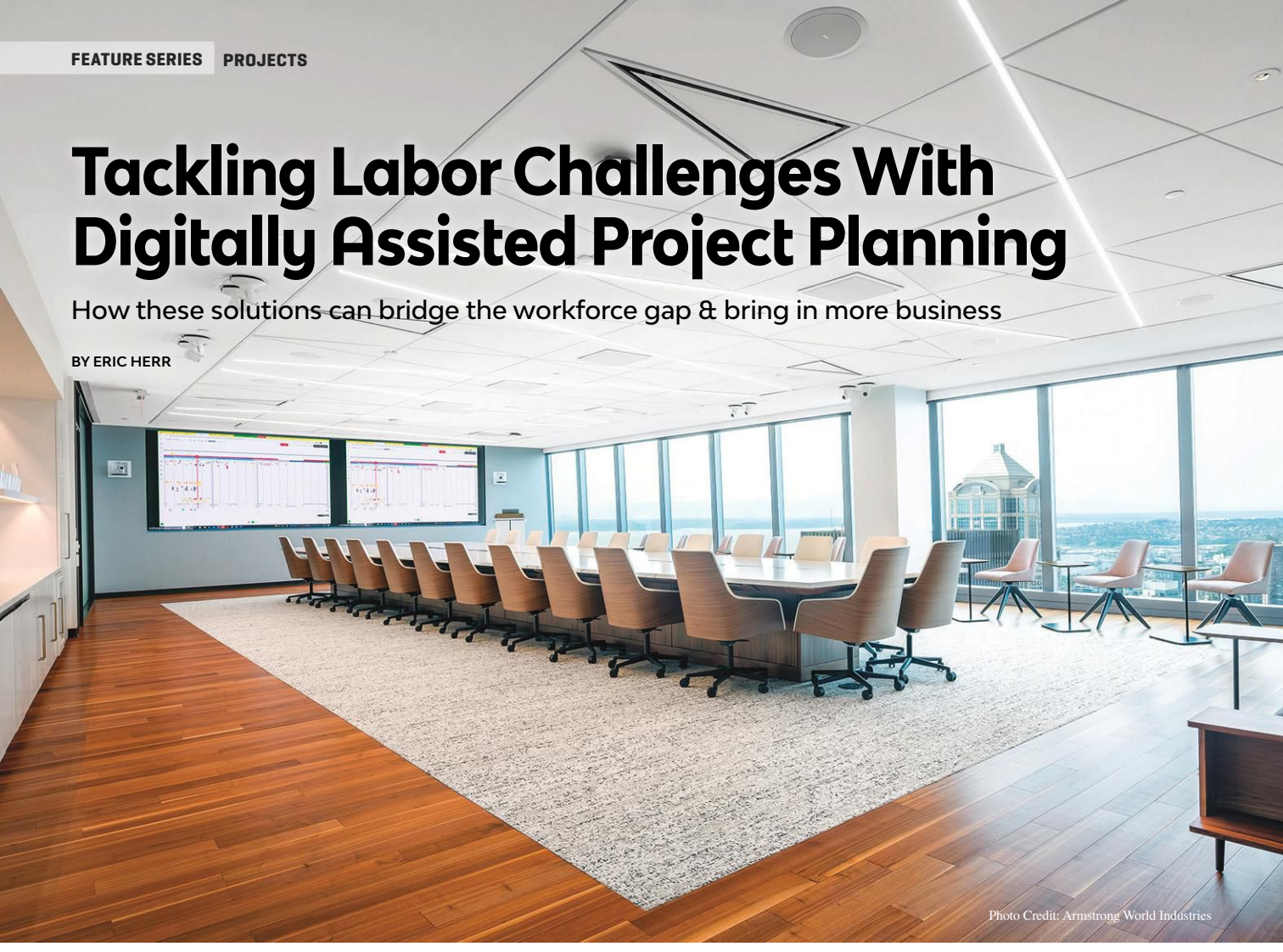


Photo Credit: Armstrong World Industries

The workforce shortages contractors face today are significant and expected to persist for years. As firms try to overcome the challenges of fewer workers, other factors are expected to further shrink the availability of qualified labor and increase the number of jobs in the construction industry.

Successfully navigating the current landscape of low labor supply and high project demand requires a business strategy focused on more than recruiting workers. Digitally assisted project planning for ceiling and wall installations is a solution that can support contractors — and their businesses — on multiple levels. This includes allowing jobs to be completed on time and on budget, despite fewer workers.

In addition, it can help ensure contractors maintain, and possibly build, their businesses by bidding on more construction projects and tapping into the movement toward more complex ceiling designs.

To follow, we'll look at the environment construction businesses are operating in today, as well as the ways digitally assisted support services can help drive success in overcoming challenges and leveraging opportunities.

Half-Million-Worker Shortage & Other Bottom-Line Challenges

Estimates from Associated Builders and Contractors indicated 439,000 new construction workers were needed in 2025 to meet rising demand in the construction industry. While contractors struggle to have adequate crews on-site, factors are at work to decrease the pool of available tradespeople. Among these are federal policies aiming to restrict immigration, a rise in the number of workers who are 55 and older, lack of trade interest among the younger generation and a shortage in training resources. As labor shortages continue, contractors can also expect to face a growing number of project opportunities driven by anticipated lower interest rates inspiring more new construction, post-pandemic office renovations, and a surge in the building of data centers and manufacturing facilities.

Multiple "trickle-down" effects of the labor shortage stand to impact a firm's bottom line:

- Wages are on the rise and eating into profits. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, between May 2021 and May 2022, average hourly wages for production and nonsupervisory employees in construction rose 6.3%.



Digital technology can evaluate a project scope while considering the installation process. As a result, potential issues — such as perimeter hardware clashing — can be vetted before any materials reach the jobsite. Drawing packages should include a bill of materials, accurate and comprehensive finish schedules for all components across the project, clear layouts, and highly detailed drawings and schematics that enable seamless installation.

- Contractors are competing for workers, which can drive up the cost of incentivizing new hires through better wages, benefits and more.
- Unsure if they can handle certain jobs, contractors are forgoing job opportunities. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce reported that in 2021, more than one-third of contractors turned down projects.
- According to Associated General Contractors of America, 54% of contractors experienced project delays due to labor shortages in 2024, which can also add costs and prevent a company from moving on to the next job.
- Contractors may be outbidding themselves to account for increased labor-related costs and delays.

Improved Bidding Accuracy, Increased On-the-Job Efficiency & More Project Opportunities

By using emerging digital support services that offer complete design-to-installation support, contracting businesses can overcome labor challenges as well as take advantage of shifts in the number and complexity of renovation and new construction projects. Be sure to look for a partner offering digital services that offer complete support — from takeoff to project closure — and include human oversight on everything from design evaluation to ways to enhance the digital technology. Below are several advantages digitally assisted support services offer in ceiling and wall installations.

Digitalization of the takeoff process supports faster, more confident bidding.

Digital services are revolutionizing the way contractors bid a project. For instance, ceiling solutions can be digitalized and, when applied to a reflected ceiling plan (RCP) layout, automate the exact quantities of every component needed for that project. This capability greatly increases the accuracy of materials needed on the jobsite. Ultimately, digitalization takes the guesswork out of estimating, provides a total materials package in which the contractor can be fully confident and significantly expedites the bidding process.

Digital support services simplify & accelerate project installation by providing 1 convenient & complete drawing package to guide contractors.

Digital technology can evaluate a project scope while considering the installation process. As a result, potential issues — such as perimeter hardware clashing — can be vetted before any materials reach the jobsite. Drawing packages should include a bill of materials, accurate and comprehensive finish schedules for all components across the project, clear layouts, and highly detailed drawings and schematics that enable seamless installation.

Digitalization supports fewer wasted hours.

The best digital service will take the lead and collaborate with architects in the design phase of a project to clearly understand the materials needed to execute the design intent. That digital service will then collaborate with the contractor to revise plans based on actual jobsite conditions, eliminating time that otherwise may have been wasted backtracking to fix mistakes. This level of collaboration and project efficiency will enable a project to be completed on schedule and on budget and allow contractors to move more quickly to their next job.

Digital technology can optimize materials within a project space based on realistic scrap reusability.

For example, digitalization can analyze every cut panel at the perimeter of a ceiling and determine if the cutaway scrap can be used in another perimeter location. This significantly reduces material, providing a huge cost savings for the contractor while helping to facilitate sustainable construction practices.

Digital support services give contractors the confidence to take on more complex designs.

As architects push the boundaries to meet expectations for

Photo Credit: SOMKID - stock.adobe.com



greater individuality and ingenuity in their designs, contractors must install these complex visuals with impeccable precision. By enabling accurate and faster bids — as well as by ensuring installation is completed correctly the first time — digital support services offer contractors a critical competitive advantage, no matter how complex the project.

Digitally Assisted Planning Delivers Unparalleled Results in Seattle Boardroom

The Seattle-based technology company F5 Inc. had steep requirements — including a five-month start-to-finish timeline — for its boardroom renovation, a project that would create an optimized hybrid meeting environment. One of the most distinguishing elements of the 44-story F5 Tower is that the building is slanted and features angled glass curtain walls. While this gives it a sleek appearance, it creates significant challenges for interior wall and ceiling upgrades because the existing structure in which architects, designers and builders must work is not parallel. The challenges of the ceiling renovation for the 1,000-square-foot boardroom made the project ideal for the design flexibility, total integration and time-saving benefits of digitally assisted planning.

The team included NBBJ (architect), Acoustical Design Inc. (contractor) and Armstrong World Industries (provider of products and the digitally assisted design and preconstruction service). The boardroom utilized seven integrated ceiling solutions to create the desired diagonal movement, resulting in a wall-to-wall seamless ceiling design that upholds the integrity of the space as well as the F5 Tower.

The digitally assisted design and preconstruction service facilitated a continual flow of communications. The computer-aided design (CAD) specialist felt confident that, by the teams working together, the design could be installed after completing a few iterations, resulting in the project meeting the client's goals and time frame. Because they understood the difficulty of the constructability of the desired angles, the design and preconstruction service team was also able to deliver on the designer's vision.

Multiple versions of the original design were created to achieve the final look. Next, the digitally assisted project planning provided a comprehensive RCP drawing package to support the project that included panel, grid and hub layouts. A full-line bill of materials was also provided to streamline bidding and ordering.

"We were able to preinstall all of the brackets on each of the four main runners," said contractor Peter McClain of Acoustical Design Inc. "So, by the time we got to the jobsite, it was a simple click and go."

By outlining recommendations that eased installation and reduced time, material and labor, digital assistance helped ensure things were completed right the first time — resulting in a ceiling that took only five months, from design to completion.

In the face of labor challenges, digitally assisted project planning should be considered an essential part of contractors' business strategies to help prevent further strain on the workforce, timelines and budgets. These services should also be embraced for the ways they support material optimization, facilitate a smoother collaboration between architect and contractor, and open new opportunities to take on projects with highly complex designs. ▲

Eric Herr is senior manager of sales and operations, ProjectWorks, Armstrong World Industries. Herr leverages nearly 25 years of experience in distribution and the construction industry to ensure customers can easily design, bid, order and build with Armstrong products. As a ProjectWorks leader, he focuses on customer-centric solutions that facilitate stronger relationships between designers and contractors, efficient and accurate installation, and beautiful results. Visit armstrong.com.



FOUNDATION software



THE ESSENTIAL BUILDING BLOCKS TO MANAGE YOUR ENTIRE CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

Run profitable projects with the all-in-one integrated construction solutions from Foundation Software.

- Continual investment in software and services
- Trusted nationwide by thousands of contractors
- Extensive expertise with 40+ years in the industry

Software purchases may qualify for Section 179 tax deducions.*
**Consult with your CPA for more details.*

Explore Product Suite
(800) 246-0800 | foundationsoft.com/cbo

FOUNDATION® payroll4construction MCCORMICK the EDGE SUITE WorkMax



Redevelopment Realities

Balancing vision & viability at The Metropolitan & beyond

BY WALT BROWN JR.

Photo Credit: Phoenix IG LLC

Redevelopment is never a straight line. It demands patience, collaboration and a willingness to balance vision with viability. In Arizona, where rapid growth often meets aging infrastructure, redevelopment has become both an art and a discipline.

Across metro Phoenix, decades-old properties are being reimagined to meet the needs of modern tenants and communities. Population growth and infill opportunities are accelerating this shift, with Arizona ranking among the nation's fastest-growing states in 2024, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Redevelopment has become a key tool for cities seeking to revitalize underused land and align with sustainability goals.

The Metropolitan, a major redevelopment of the former Metrocenter Mall, is an example of reinvestment in the Southwest. The project is transforming the long-vacant site into a mixed-use destination that blends housing, retail and public gathering spaces while reestablishing economic vitality in the city's northwest corridor. It also reflects a broader trend taking shape in markets nationwide: converting aging retail centers into walkable, multiuse environments that meet evolving community and economic needs. Diversified Partners, serving as the retail developer in collaboration with Concord Wilshire Companies, is leading the creation of The Loop at The Metropolitan, an experience-driven retail and entertainment district designed to complement the residential components while promoting accessibility, mobility and long-term community value.

Finding the Right Balance

The Metropolitan's development team faced the typical challenges that accompany large-scale urban redevelopment: access limitations, traffic circulation, permitting updates and coordination among multiple stakeholders. Each hurdle required creative problem-solving and consistent communication among design, construction and financial teams.

The city's commitment to revitalizing the Metrocenter provided the foundation for collaboration. Through multiple design iterations, the project evolved into a balanced plan that honors the site's historic legacy while integrating mixed-use density and community-driven amenities. The result is a walkable, amenity-rich environment that supports both economic and social vitality in northwest Phoenix.

According to the Urban Land Institute's "What's Old Is New: The Business Case for Urban Adaptive Reuse" report, adaptive reuse continues to gain traction in commercial real estate development as projects convert existing buildings into mixed-use or residential spaces to reduce risk and improve sustainability. The Metropolitan reflects this trend, repurposing a historic retail landmark into a mixed-use community that balances community revitalization with long-term economic value.

Lessons for Construction & Development Leaders

From a construction management perspective, redevelopment requires a different mindset than new builds. Unforeseen conditions, existing infrastructure and regulatory complexity mean contractors must remain flexible. Early coordination between design, engineering and municipal partners helps identify and mitigate risks before they impact schedules or budgets.

Redevelopment projects also benefit from maintaining open communication among all stakeholders, from architects and engineers to financial backers and city officials. Establishing shared expectations early can help prevent misalignment later in the process, particularly when unexpected site conditions arise.

Equally important is recognizing what a site is before determining what it could be. In the case of The Metropolitan, acknowledging the existing structure's limitations and opportunities allowed the project team to design around its strengths instead of forcing a new identity. That approach proved vital for maintaining community buy-in and project feasibility.

According to the Associated Builders and Contractors' Construction Backlog Indicator, the national backlog averaged 8.5 months in September 2025, illustrating how construction firms are adapting to longer project pipelines and emphasizing efficiency to maintain progress.

These conditions reinforce the need for disciplined cost tracking, transparent communication and proactive contingency planning across all phases of redevelopment.

Collaborative Development Model

The scale and complexity of The Metropolitan required a partnership structure built around specialized expertise. Diversified Partners serves as the retail developer alongside master developer Concord Wilshire Companies and residential builder Oakwood Homes, with each organization responsible for distinct but interdependent components. That structure allows each partner to focus on its strengths while maintaining a unified vision for design, infrastructure and community activation.

For Diversified Partners, collaboration extends beyond the development team. The firm works closely with the city of Phoenix and community stakeholders to align The Loop at The Metropolitan, the retail and entertainment plan, with the city's broader goals for economic revitalization in the northwest corridor. This integrated model has become increasingly important in large-scale infill and redevelopment work, where multiple land uses, ownership groups and approval processes must move in tandem to maintain project momentum and financial feasibility.

Scaling Lessons Across Arizona & Beyond

Redevelopment and new construction activity continue to expand across Arizona, particularly in markets such as Laveen, Surprise, Glendale, Mesa, Chandler and Gilbert. Together, these regions represent roughly half a billion dollars in active commercial and mixed-use development statewide, reflecting steady demand and continued market growth.

To keep pace, many firms are expanding their internal capabilities by integrating investment, design and construction-management functions to streamline project delivery. Diversified Partners, for example, has adopted this model to enhance efficiency and foster earlier collaboration between disciplines, an approach increasingly common among midsize developers and contractors managing complex, multimarket portfolios.

Across the industry, this integrated structure mirrors a larger shift toward tighter coordination between design intent and financial performance. By combining in-house expertise with local partnerships, firms can maintain quality, reduce costs and align outcomes with long-term community goals.

A Broader Perspective

The national construction outlook continues to evolve as developers navigate tighter financing conditions, higher material costs and shifting market demand. According to the American Institute of Architects' 2025 Consensus Construction Forecast, nonresidential building spending is expected to grow 1.7% in 2025 and 3.9% in 2026, signaling steady but moderate expansion across commercial sectors.

Meanwhile, the National Association of Realtors' "Commercial Real Estate Market Insights" report notes that office vacancies remain elevated at roughly 14.1%, even as retail and industrial segments show greater resilience. These trends highlight the continued need for adaptive design and reuse strategies that balance long-term demand with evolving tenant expectations.

For redevelopment teams managing complex mixed-use projects, these data points reinforce the importance of building flexibility into design and delivery, aligning each phase with current market realities and future shifts in how people live, work and gather.

A Homegrown Outlook

Redevelopment is as much about stewardship as it is about construction. Each project offers the chance to enhance a city's livability while maintaining its sense of place. For construction and business leaders, the takeaway is clear: Treat every redevelopment as a partnership, stay flexible through the process and remember that the value built today can strengthen a community for decades.

Across the country, similar efforts are reshaping cities. Whether revitalizing a historic retail corridor, a shuttered industrial site or a suburban infill property, the same fundamentals apply: early collaboration, adaptable planning and shared vision between public and private partners. ▲

Walt Brown Jr. is the founder, CEO and designated broker of Diversified Partners, a full-service real estate development and brokerage firm. He brings over 30 years of experience leading complex retail and mixed-use projects, emphasizing collaboration, smart growth and sustainable community design throughout Arizona and the greater Southwest. Visit dpcre.com.

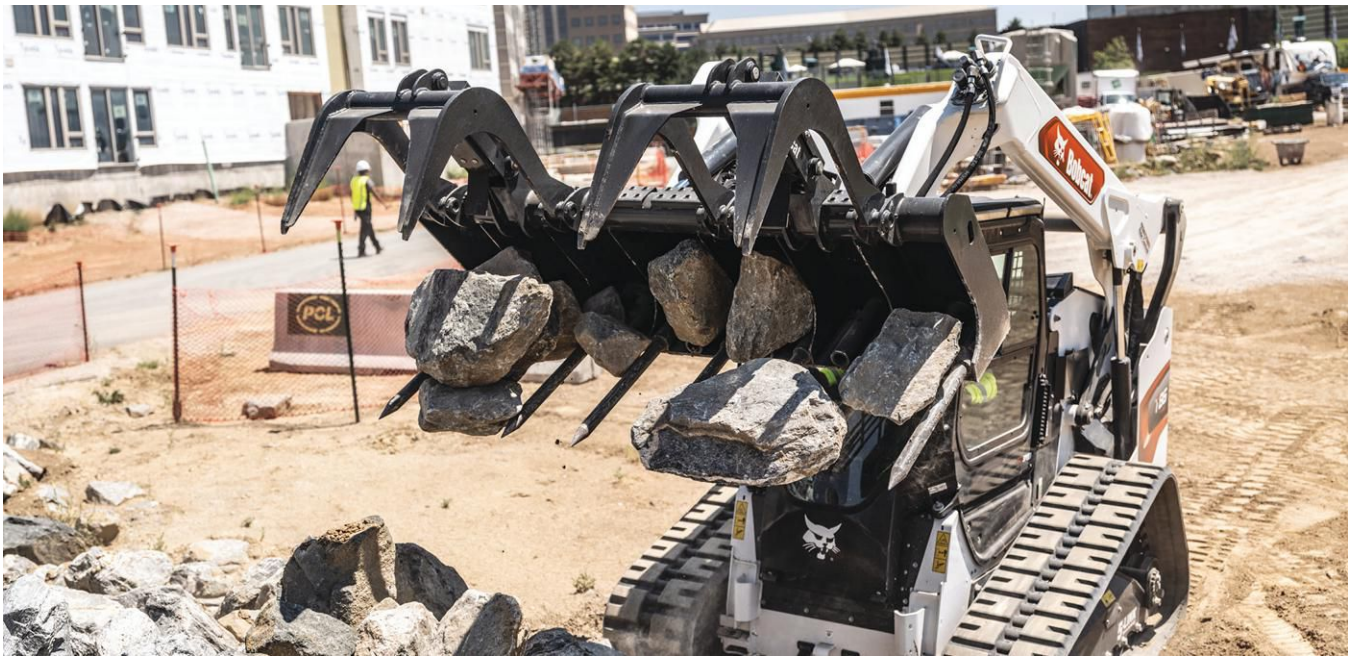


Photo Credit: Bobcat

Loader Logistics: Balancing Lift Path & Key Features for Jobsite Success

Making the right machine decisions

BY RYAN SAUNDERS

Selecting the right compact loader — whether a skid-steer or compact track loader — is a decision that goes beyond brand preference or price. It's about matching machine capabilities to your specific jobsite needs. An important, but often overlooked, consideration is the lift path configuration. However, this is just one factor in a broader set of features that impact performance.

Lift Path Configuration: Radius vs. Vertical

Compact loader models are generally equipped with one of two primary lift arm configurations: the vertical lift path or the radius (or radial) lift path. Both systems deliver reliable performance, but their distinct mechanics offer different operational benefits based on where the machine achieves its maximum efficiency and reach.

Radius lift path loaders typically feature a simpler mechanical system, using a single pivot point to raise loads in a fixed, C-shaped arc pattern. This design is mechanically less complex and may result in a lower initial machine cost. The radius path is particularly efficient for digging and grading, as it often provides stronger breakout force at ground level — ideal for dedicated earthmoving tasks. It also delivers maximum forward reach at midrange heights, making it well-suited for loading flatbed trucks or backfilling.

In contrast, vertical lift path loaders use a more intricate linkage system with multiple hinge points. This design allows the load to travel nearly straight up and down, closer to the machine's center of gravity. Vertical lift models are becoming increasingly preferred as lift capacity, strength and vertical reach are critical needs for many operators. These machines deliver maximum reach and lift capacity at their peak height, making them ideal for stacking pallets and loading high-sided trucks, feed mixers or hoppers. They also generally offer a higher rated operating capacity (ROC), supporting heavier attachments and allowing operators to lift more material with control.

While either configuration will successfully complete nearly any job, the lift path choice can fine-tune your productivity. Understanding these paths can help elevate your jobsite performance.

Lift Path Is Just 1 Piece of the Puzzle

Beyond lift path, several other key considerations should guide your compact

BLENDED CEMENT
IS TAKING THE INDUSTRY BY STORM.

The Seattle Storm's 50,000-square-foot training facility is winning almost as much as the WNBA team that calls it home. The building won an NRMCA Innovation Award for achieving significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from the concrete.

The secret to its success? An engineered concrete mixture using Type IL portland-limestone cement and slag cement. In addition to providing enhanced durability, this project required nearly 90 percent less energy to produce, and has reduced carbon emissions by up to 50%.

From the mix to the moment of play, blended cements are scoring points throughout the industry and helping to create winning projects all over the world.

To implement them in your next project, and to read the full project profile, visit **www.blendedcements.com/exampleprojects**

ACA
American Cement Association



loader selection. Loader size and frame class play a major role in determining maneuverability, transportability and suitability for specific jobsite conditions. Small-frame loaders are ideal for tight spaces, residential landscaping and light-duty tasks. Medium-frame loaders strike a balance between power and agility, making them versatile for general construction and utility work, while large-frame loaders typically offer higher horsepower and rated operating capacities that can tackle more demanding applications. ROC and horsepower directly affect how much material you can move and how efficiently you can do it. A higher ROC supports heavier loads and larger attachments, while more horsepower enables faster cycle times and better performance in tough terrain or high-demand tasks.

Attachment compatibility is another critical consideration. The lift path and loader size influence which attachments will perform best. Radius lift loaders tend to work well with grapple buckets, trenchers and mulchers, making them ideal for landscaping, demolition and forestry applications. Vertical lift loaders excel with pallet forks, material buckets and high-reach tools, which are better suited for agriculture, construction and warehouse operations.

Transportability and operating weight are also important factors. The weight of the machine affects towing requirements and jobsite compliance. Lighter machines are easier to transport and may not require commercial licenses or trailer upgrades, while heavier machines offer more power but could incur additional transport costs. It's essential to check your truck and trailer's legal towing capacity before purchasing.

Jobsite terrain and application influence loader selection, especially when choosing between a compact track loader or skid-steer loader. Uneven terrain or confined spaces may favor smaller radius lift models for their agility and simplicity. Structured environments or tasks that require high reach and stability benefit from vertical lift machines. Compact track loaders offer better flotation and lower ground pressure for soft or wet terrain, while skid-steer loaders are more suitable for hard, paved surfaces.

Choosing the right loader involves balancing multiple factors. By understanding how each feature contributes to performance, you can make a confident, informed decision that supports success and productivity. ▲

Ryan Saunders is a senior marketing specialist for Bobcat Company. He is a creative marketing professional passionate about educating construction company owners and operators about solutions that create new opportunities for their businesses. Visit bobcat.com.





WORLD OF CONCRETE®

informa markets

EXHIBITS: JANUARY 20-22, 2026
EDUCATION: JANUARY 19-22, 2026
LAS VEGAS CONVENTION CENTER

TO THE MAX





Push limits. Smash barriers. Break boundaries. And when you've conquered all those obstacles? You discover your full capacity for greatness. World of Concrete delivers all the real-world solutions that will crush your challenges and take your expertise to new heights. Growth opportunities are everywhere, whether you're getting hands-on with game-changing tools and tech or shaking hands with your future partners. Ready for maximum success? Nothing's standing in your way.

ACHIEVE PEAK PERFORMANCE

VIEW GLOBAL EVENTS



Photo Credit: PK Safety

Invisible Threats, Real Consequences

Underlining the importance of gas detector maintenance

BY RICK PEDLEY

Without regular maintenance, gas detectors may fail to alert workers to dangerous conditions, putting lives and projects at risk. In this article, discover the essential elements of maintaining your gas monitoring solutions, including bump testing, calibration and proper storage, to help ensure your team operates in safe working environments.

Understanding Hidden Hazards in Construction Sites

Modern construction sites are dynamic environments where crews must be mindful of overhead loads, unstable trenches and moving machinery. Often, however, the most dangerous threats are the ones they can't see. Equipment exhaust, chemical reactions and processes that generate hazardous gases, including carbon monoxide, hydrogen sulfide and methane. In enclosed or low-ventilation areas, inaccurate readings from a gas detector can spell the difference between an otherwise routine task and a potentially fatal workplace incident.

Gas detectors are a critical line of defense in environments where confined spaces, fuel-burning equipment or decomposing organic materials are inextricable from everyday life. But having the appropriate monitoring solution isn't enough. Even the most advanced devices can provide a false sense of security without proper maintenance. That's when compliance failures, injuries or even fatalities can occur.

Best Practices: How to Properly Maintain & Store Gas Detectors

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), employers are responsible for ensuring that gas detectors used to evaluate atmospheric hazards are calibrated and maintained according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Here are some best practices to integrate into your gas detection maintenance plan:

- **Daily bump tests —** A bump test verifies that gas sensors and alarms are working as intended by exposing the unit to a known concentration of gas. It only takes a few seconds, but it confirms the detector can identify and alert for hazardous conditions. If a detector fails a bump test, it must be recalibrated before returning to service. My company recommends performing bump tests before each use, especially in high-risk environments or after prolonged storage.
- **Scheduled calibration —** Calibration aligns the detector's sensors with a known gas concentration to ensure accuracy. Recommendations on how often to calibrate may vary among manufacturers. As a best practice, my company recommends calibrating your gas detectors at least once every three months. In harsh conditions or high-use environments, more frequent calibration may be necessary. Without regular calibration, sensor drift can lead to dangerously inaccurate readings and a false sense of security. Consistent calibration and maintenance is key. If you have several units, consider an auto-calibration docking station to help schedule and manage testing and

recordkeeping of your gas monitors.

- **Proper storage —** Exposure to extreme heat, high humidity, freezing temperatures or airborne particulates can degrade sensors and reduce battery life. To prevent premature failure, gas detectors should be stored in a clean, temperature-controlled environment, away from contaminants (particularly solvents and silicones), which can poison electrochemical and catalytic sensors.
- **Firmware updates —** Many manufacturers release periodic updates to account for evolving standards or environmental conditions. These firmware updates provide performance enhancements, fix bugs and address known vulnerabilities that could affect sensor accuracy, alarm thresholds or device connectivity. Always ensure your gas detectors are running the latest firmware, and document update history as part of your maintenance log to support compliance and traceability.

Gas detector sensors have a finite lifespan, typically ranging from 12 to 36 months, depending on the sensor type, usage frequency and environmental exposure. Over time, their sensitivity diminishes (even with regular calibration), eventually compromising the accuracy of readings.

When to Replace Gas Detector Sensors

Not sure if your sensor is still reliable? Here are telltale signs it may be approaching end-of-life:

- **Sluggish response time —** If your device takes longer than usual to respond to test gas or atmospheric changes, the sensor may be losing sensitivity.
- **Frequent calibration failures —** Repeated calibration failures or the need for increasingly frequent adjustments may indicate that the sensor is nearing the end of its service life, losing sensitivity or affected by contamination.
- **Unstable or erratic readings —** Fluctuating readings, especially in clean air or known environments, often indicate sensor drift or degradation. When sensors can't hold a steady baseline, reliability (and safety) quickly erodes.

Follow the manufacturer's recommended replacement intervals, and monitor performance metrics to prevent false readings or untimely failure. If a sensor produces erratic data or fails to respond during a bump test, it should be replaced immediately.

When Detection Fails: The Cost of Neglecting Maintenance

If gas detector sensors drift (a gradual shift in sensor accuracy caused by exposure to harsh conditions or normal wear), alarms fail to trigger (often due to sensor degradation, software errors or power issues) or readings become unreliable (from calibration loss, contamination or depleted sensors), construction crews can be exposed to toxic or explosive atmospheres without warning. Unfortunately, these types of equipment failures only become apparent after an incident has already occurred.

In 2022, an Arkansas worker entered a sewer manhole to conduct testing 20 feet below ground. After losing consciousness due to oxygen deficiency, a second employee attempted a rescue, only to lose consciousness as well. The OSHA investigation found the contractor had failed to conduct the required atmospheric testing before entry, resulting in the deaths of both employees. OSHA cited the company for multiple violations and proposed a $287,150 fine.

While this unfortunate incident isn't directly tied to improper gas detector maintenance, it underscores how untested atmospheres can quickly result in multiple fatalities. The fallout from neglected maintenance is far-reaching: It endangers lives, invites OSHA enforcement, triggers project delays and can severely damage a contractor's reputation.

The good news? These risks are entirely preventable with a disciplined maintenance routine.

Building a Culture of Proactive Maintenance

Gas detector maintenance isn't just a compliance checkbox — it's a daily commitment to worker safety. Leading construction firms don't wait for OSHA inspections or after-the-fact investigations to take action; they make maintenance a core part of their safety culture, reinforcing it through shared accountability and consistent routines.

Fortunately, it doesn't take sweeping changes to get there. With a few simple practices, you can foster a culture where proactive maintenance becomes second nature:

- Assign a designated safety lead or crew member to manage bump tests and calibration schedules.
- Incorporate maintenance checks into daily toolbox talks or pre-task planning sessions.
- Keep documentation clear, centralized and accessible to ensure accountability.
- Regularly review manufacturer guidelines and update internal protocols as equipment or standards evolve.

If you're unsure whether your current gas detection program suffices, consult a trusted safety specialist. These experts can help evaluate your gas detection strategy, recommend improvements and ensure your team is equipped with solutions and practices that support compliance, reduce risk and save lives. ▲

Rick Pedley, PK Safety's president and CEO, joined the family business in 1979. PK Safety, a supplier of occupational safety and personal protective equipment, has been operating since 1947 and takes OSHA, ANSI, PPE and CSA work safety equipment seriously. Visit pksafety.com.





Photo Credits: United Rentals

Optimizing Mobile Power With Battery Energy Storage Systems

Battery energy storage releases contractors from the common traps of generator oversizing & overuse

BY RANDY SMITH

Mobile power solutions are the lifeblood of remote and off-grid jobsites. For decades, contractors have relied on portable generators to power equipment and tools, sizing them for peak loads and often running them 24/7. But forward-thinking companies are shifting their mobile power strategies as they recognize the ability of battery energy storage systems to dramatically reduce inefficiencies and put money back in the budget.

The Hidden Costs of Traditional Generator Sizing

The "better safe than sorry" approach of sizing generators for peak loads can lead to generators being oversized by as much as 75%. Large generators use more fuel and cost more to run than smaller generators, even when they operate at a fraction of their capacity. Diesel generators are designed to run near their designed load. At lower loads, combustion is incomplete, which decreases the efficiency of the engine.

Contractors may view this fuel inefficiency as the cost of doing business, but the dollars spent on diesel add up — especially when generators operate day and night.

In addition, the larger the generator, the larger the cost of the unit. Running a generator around the clock further increases the rental cost by triggering triple-shift rates.

Of course, on jobs with sustainability targets, oversized generators also make it challenging to comply with greenhouse gas emissions targets.

How BESS Technology Transforms Mobile Power

Battery energy storage systems (BESS) change the mobile power equation and often generate savings that far outstrip the cost of investment.

Rather than outsizing generators to meet the highest anticipated load, contractors can size them for average demands and let a BESS bridge the gap during load surges. This strategy is particularly valuable when loads are variable. For example, a BESS can power

REAL STORIES from the Construction Crew:

How simulation cuts time to operator readiness.



CONSTRUCTION BUSINESS OWNER webinar



Jim Ruhoff
Training Director
Real World Construction Training



Gary James
Construction Subject Matter Expert
CM Labs



Alan Limoges
Manager of Product Growth
CM Labs

Sponsored by

cmlabs

To be effective with training in construction, you must go beyond the traditional methods. It requires understanding how operators learn and apply skills on the job.

To explore this in greater detail, CM Labs and Real World Construction Training will dive deeper into real-world insights from the crew's perspective.

This webinar will explore how simulation-based training is transforming the construction workforce, bringing together perspectives from training directors and operators on the results they're achieving in the field.

Takeaways will include:

- How simulation-based training reduces operator onboarding and upskilling time
- On-the-ground workforce development experiences from Real World Construction Training
- How simulation improves safety, consistency and operational performance
- Proven strategies for building a scalable and efficient construction training program

FREE | ON DEMAND

Register at constructionbusinessowner.com/webinars

a welder while it's in idle mode and automatically activate the generator for arc starts and welding bursts.

When powering jobsite trailers, a BESS will keep the refrigerator cold at night and keep charging stations powered. During the day, the generator will run as needed to recharge the battery and power the HVAC, lights and computers when work is in full swing.

In some cases, a BESS can handle a full load on its own until it needs to be recharged. For instance, a large BESS can power a tower crane. When the battery runs low, the BESS will automatically turn the generator on.

Dramatically Reduced Run Times

As contractors begin to implement BESS units, reduced generator run times are yielding significant cost and fuel savings.

One firm reduced generator run time on a tower crane operation by 91%. The general contractor had been using a 300-kilovolt-ampere (kVA) generator 24 hours a day to power an 8-ton, 70-meter-tall tower crane. By switching to a hybrid power system that included a Termaco TREE 500-kilowatt (kW) BESS, they were able to downsize to a 125kVA generator and reduce generator runtime to just 2.5 hours a day. The shift produced an estimated 77% reduction in fuel use and carbon emissions.

Another company implemented a hybrid system to power several jobsite trailers and reduced generator run time to 2.5 hours per day. By pairing a POWRBANK portable energy unit with a 70kVA generator, the contractor saved over $12,000 per month in combined fuel and rental costs while reducing carbon dioxide emissions by nearly 34,000 kilograms.

Operational Advantages of Hybrid Power Systems

In addition to fuel and emissions savings, hybrid power systems deliver operational advantages.



- **Reduced equipment wear and tear —** Reduced generator run times translate to extended equipment lifespans.
- **Reduced maintenance —** Running a generator at low loads for extended periods can cause wet stacking, which reduces performance and may lead to equipment failure. Hybrid power systems prevent generators from operating at low loads. Moreover, unlike a generator, a BESS requires little to no maintenance.
- **Quieter jobsites —** Excessive noise can harm workers' hearing and create fatigue that affects performance. Quieter jobsites benefit the health of crews and enable contractors to meet noise restrictions and work at night in urban and residential areas.
- **Increased resilience —** Adopting a hybrid power strategy reduces dependence on a single power source, which preserves uptime in the face of mechanical failures and other outages. By reducing diesel consumption, hybrid power systems also help protect a firm's bottom line, especially during periods when fuel prices surge.

Strategic Considerations for Adopting Hybrid Power Systems

To realize fuel and cost savings from a hybrid power strategy, contractors can begin by analyzing the mobile power needs of a jobsite. Whenever generators are run throughout a shift or around the clock to power variable loads, adding a BESS may be worth considering.

A knowledgeable vendor with expertise in temporary power equipment, including battery energy storage systems, can play a critical role in helping contractors optimize their mobile power strategy. They can assist with accurately assessing power needs based on load profiles, duty cycles and other inputs. On connected jobsites, tracking the load of telematics-enabled generators can reveal generators that are oversized for the task.

Based on jobsite-specific power needs, a vendor with a large inventory of best-in-class temporary equipment can recommend solutions using optimally sized generators and BESS units. In some cases, the ideal solution may be a product that houses a generator and a BESS together. A BESS can also be paired with a renewable power source such as a solar array for a zero-emission solution.

Too often, mobile power strategies follow the formula of "do what we've always done." The common traps of oversizing generators and running them 24/7 locks contractors into ongoing overspending. For companies looking to reduce fuel use, cut costs and increase operational efficiency as part of their efforts to maintain a competitive advantage, looking beyond generators to hybrid power systems makes sense. ▲

Randy Smith is a product development manager, Power & HVAC at United Rentals. He has been with the company for more than seven years and helps customers with custom power and climate control solutions to achieve project goals and maintain profitability. Visit unitedrentals.com.



NEW!
SHOP TALKS & WALKS:
Equipment Maintenance Workshop

If you are a maintenance professional, owner/operator or industry technician, this workshop is for you! Attendees at this workshop will learn preventative maintenance and equipment efficiency by walking the show floor and participating in hands-on demos, Q&As and more.

CONEXPO CON / AGG

MARCH 3-7, 2026 / LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

LEARN MORE AT CONEXPOCONAGG.COM

SHOP TALKS & WALKS EXHIBITOR PARTICIPANTS

CATERPILLAR® HYUNDAI JOHN DEERE Kubota SANY Vermeer VOLVO



Photo Credit: Diversified Fall Protection

Choosing the Correct Connection Devices for Fall Protection

Safeguard your workforce with proper PPE

BY PHILIP JACKLIN

On construction sites, the fall protection equipment provided to crews is among the most important personal protective equipment (PPE) that can be provided. Falls are the leading cause of injury and fatality to occur on jobsites and kill nearly 2-3 workers per day, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Workers in every trade have reason to be vigilant!

However, the effectiveness of fall protection equipment is dependent on the user performing thorough inspections before use and ensuring they follow all manufacturer's instructions. Connection devices, such as lanyards or self-retracting lifelines (SRLs), have certain requirements that cannot be deviated from, or else the equipment may not work as expected during a fall.

ABCs of Fall Protection

Every personal fall arrest system (PFAS) is comprised of three components: anchor, body harness and connection device.

Anchorages are determined by the mounting substrate available (concrete, wood, steel, etc.). Body harnesses should be sized appropriately to fit the worker properly and must have the proper D-rings required for the worker's tasks. PFAS require a 5,000-pound rated anchorage device and a body harness to be worn by the worker at all times.

Connection device selection can be a more tedious process, especially on construction sites, when anchorage options can change daily. The correct connection device should primarily be determined by anchor location and available fall clearance.

What Is a Connection Device?

The connection device plays an important role during fall arrest. Once a fall occurs, the device absorbs fall forces and decelerates the fall victim until their fall is fully arrested. These efforts significantly decrease the amount of force a user feels during a fall. The worker will then remain suspended by their connection device until their team performs its rescue plan.

Types of Connection Devices

There are three types of connection devices for fall arrest: shock-absorbing lanyard, Class 1 SRL and Class 2 SRL. Shock-absorbing lanyards must be fully extended before shock absorption and deceleration will occur for the user. This time (after a fall occurs and before fall arrest begins) is referred to as "free fall." The longer a user spends in free fall, the stronger the forces the victim will feel. The more force generated, the greater the risk of serious injury to the fall victim.

Minimum Required Fall Clearance: Lanyards

Workers must always confirm that they are working above the minimum required fall clearance for their device to prevent serious injury. This information can be found in the manufacturer's instructions or on the connection device's label.

As described before, 6-foot shock-absorbing lanyards increase the amount of free fall users experience and will require at least 18.5 feet of fall clearance. This number can be calculated by combining the length of the lanyard (6 feet), deceleration distance (3.5 feet), the approximate height of the worker's dorsal D-ring (5 feet), typical harness stretch (1 foot) and a precautionary safety factor (3 feet). When calculating fall clearance with shock-absorbing lanyards, measure from the anchorage height.

Minimum Required Fall Clearance: SRLs

SRLs require less minimum required fall clearance than lanyards and are measured from the base of the walking-working surface. Personal SRL units offer much faster deceleration and absorption distances than lanyards, with some units only needing roughly 5.5 feet of minimum fall clearance to guarantee safety. When overhead anchorages are used with SRLs, users will experience virtually no free fall during fall arrest. However, this is only possible when overhead anchorages are used. In fact, a recent update to the ANSI Z359.14 standard now requires overhead anchorage for certain SRL units.

Class 1 vs. Class 2 SRLs

In August 2023, the Class 1 and Class 2 update to ANSI Z359.14 took effect, no longer allowing fall protection manufacturers to produce SRL units referring to the old standard of "Class A and Class B" SRLs. Before this update, SRLs were differentiated by their stopping distance and shock absorption capabilities. Class A SRLs would decelerate a user within 2 feet and limit the fall forces felt by the user to no more than 1,350 pounds. Class B SRLs would decelerate a user within 4.5 feet and limit the fall forces to 900 pounds. This is helpful information, but it did not do enough to prevent equipment misuse.

Class 1 and Class 2 SRLs are now differentiated by which anchorage locations are permitted for use. Class 1 SRLs must be used with anchors located at or above the user's dorsal D-ring. Class 2 SRLs can be used with anchors at or above the user's foot-level. What are now classified as Class 2 SRLs used to be referred to as leading edge SRLs, or SRL-LE. The clear label markings required by the ANSI update can discourage accidental misuse and help users quickly determine if their SRL is compatible with their anchorage provided.

In recent years, the popularity and demand for SRL-LE (now Class 2 SRL) has only increased — especially on construction sites. Class 2 SRLs use cable lifelines and contain an additional shock pack to absorb the extra forces that the PFAS and user will experience when connected to foot-level anchorages. In these falls, users experience free fall, and increased fall forces are generated. The additional shock-absorption capabilities added to Class 2 SRLs benefit the SRL itself and help protect the cable lifeline from severing. Falls from foot-level anchorages will always generate greater fall forces than those from overhead anchorages and potentially increase the risk of injury to the worker.

If users find themselves in a circumstance when they have an SRL but only anchor points below their dorsal D-ring are available, they should immediately notify their organization's competent person. Class 1 SRLs do not contain the increased shock absorption necessary for foot-level anchorages and could fail during fall arrest.

Overhead Anchorages

How much of a difference can overhead anchorages make during fall arrest? After all, a fall is still a fall, and the user must still be retrieved, lowered to safety and receive medical attention. But the location of the user's anchor can have a significant impact on how quickly their fall is arrested, how much force is generated during their fall and the risk of injury. The higher the anchorage, the sooner the SRL will activate during a fall. The sooner an SRL activates, the less distance the user will fall before being fully arrested. Many Class 1 SRLs on the market now can decelerate and fully arrest a user within inches when used with an overhead anchorage. While these units are known to work very quickly, users should always maintain the minimum required fall clearance as indicated on the device to guarantee for worst-possible fall scenario.

SRLs operate optimally and most efficiently when they are underneath their anchorage. When anchors must be installed at the user's foot-level (or anywhere beneath their dorsal D-ring), as is common in construction, it means the user will is likely to experience an increased amount of free fall during their fall. The more time spent in free fall, the more force is generated that must be absorbed by the equipment.

Fall protection equipment can be effective in protecting workers from severe injury and preventing avoidable fatalities. But if incorrect equipment is provided or misuse occurs, tragic results will eventually occur. Using the correct equipment can be the difference between life or death.

Every organization's fall protection needs will be different, but the common goal of wanting to protect workers from harm is shared among us all. ▲

Philip Jacklin is continuing education program manager for Diversified Fall Protection. He is an American Institute of Architects continuing education provider, QSSP certified, Occupational Safety & Health Administration-30 trained and has been a partner to the fall protection industry since 2018. Jacklin has a background in worker advocacy, team leadership and fostering camaraderie among peers. Visit fallprotect.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.



◂ EARTHCAM

Mobile StreamCam Robotic

Released: 10/8/25

Availability: U.S. market

What's new? This high-quality camera in a compact package offers a unique combination of live-streaming video, pan-tilt-zoom (PTZ) control, 500-megapixel panoramas and environmental sensors, delivering valuable data with artificial intelligence (AI) insights for interior construction. For the first time, EarthCam's Pano VI Panoramic Visual Intelligence is optimized for indoor applications. Pano VI analyzes ultra-high-resolution 360-degree panoramic images to identify and annotate jobsite activity, construction materials and safety compliance. Mobile StreamCam Robotic makes it easy to validate progress, document milestones and resolve disputes.

Specs: Can be quickly deployed and is easy to relocate, making it ideal for active interior projects that change rapidly day to day. Built into a compact package, it combines advanced technology with wireless 4G/5G connectivity for instant broadcasting of jobsite status. The system includes battery backup for uninterrupted operation, along with continuous video recording and 4K time-lapse. Users can scan entire rooms and zero-in on critical details with an optical zoom to capture far more data than fixed cameras. fully integrated with EarthCam's Control Center platform.



◂ BOSCH POWER TOOLS

4V Max Rechargeable Screwdriver (GSD4V-35)

Released: 10/2/25

Availability: North American market

What's new? This new tool features a lightweight, slim and compact design. Portable, easy to store and ideal for tackling jobs in tight spaces. Equipped with manual screwdriving option so it can be used without power.

Specs: Has a USB-C port and charging cable for quick and convenient charging. Integrated battery with 2 AH capacity for increased number of applications per charge.

HILLTIP ▸

IceStriker 4500 SSA/SSC

Released: 9/11/25

Availability: North American market

What's new? This stainless steel salt spreader offering a 4.5-cubic-yard capacity for use on trucks with a minimum rating of 15,000 GVWR. Designed for precision and maximum corrosion resistance, the new model is ideal for contractors looking to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of their winter maintenance services. The IceStriker 4500 comes with Hilltip's exclusive HTrack tracking software, which uses two-way GPRS communication for remotely tracking and managing all software-installed spreaders.

Specs: The IceStriker 4500 can be powered by either 12- or 24-volt dual motors. Model 4500 SSA comes with a 6-inch stainless steel auger, or customers can select the 4500 SSC, which uses a 14-inch pintle chain system to deliver material to the spinner. For long-lasting corrosion resistance, the hopper body is entirely submerged in an acid bath for clean welds and surfaces. The stainless steel finish is easy to maintain while enhancing material flow of bulk sand and gravel, bulk or bagged salt, or sand/salt mixes.





◂ KOMATSU

PC220LCi-12 excavator

Released: 9/2/25

Availability: North American market

What's new? This new machine features a cab and controls designed for operator comfort, efficiency and productivity. It includes IMC 3.0, Komatsu's latest intelligent machine control technology, incorporating automation enhancements designed to enhance operator productivity throughout each shift. Ideal for residential and commercial contractors, either performing basic land clearing and general earthwork or more advanced GPS design-driven site development

Specs: Includes factory-integrated 3D boundary control. With this tech, operators can now set a work-restriction surface for height, depth, front, back and side boundaries. The machine is designed to stop automatically when it approaches a restricted zone. 3D boundary control helps operators work efficiently across the entire jobsite by remembering multiple restriction zones specific to each work area.

KEEN UTILITY ▸

Skokie

Released: 9/1/25

Availability: U.S. & Canadian markets

What's new? The Skokie delivers classic hiker looks, reimagined with comfort and safety technologies for any workday. Built to perform at work, the Skokie is available for men and women in several colorways, as well as in a soft-toe option.

Specs: Highlights include a KEEN.ReGEN midsole providing up to 50% more energy return than standard EVA foam, a tough leather and mesh upper featuring a KEEN.DRY waterproof, breathable membrane for maximum dryness, and a 90-degree heel. Other safety features include an EH-rated outsole that is oil- and slip-resistant and lightweight carbon toes to maximize productivity.





Build Bigger.
Borrow Smarter.

CoFi

Contact Us:
(435) 557-0412
loans@cofilending.com
www.cofilending.com

Earthwork and Utility Takeoff

Precise Takeoffs in Record Time!

2X FASTER MORE ACCURATE

INSITE ELEVATION PRO

InSiteSoftware.com | 877-746-7483
Bid Confidently. Request your demo today.



▲ NIALLI

Nialli Visual Planner

Released: 9/23/25
Availability: U.S., Canadian & European markets
What's new? This product has moved to a fully web-based platform, allowing access to Visual Planner from Chrome or Edge without installations or updates. Teams can plan seamlessly wherever they work. Added support for single sign-on (SSO) simplifies secure access, while a new API enables integration of Visual Planner data with other applications and analytics tools.
Specs: Core product updates to Visual Planner include a fully web-based platform (access via Chrome or Edge, no installs/updates), simple pull planning (import milestones for plan vs. actual comparisons), improved jobsite collaboration (update tasks, log constraints, real-time conversations), SSO support for secure access, and a data API for analytics and integrations.



▲ TAKEUCHI

TL11R3 compact track loader

Released: 8/1/25
Availability: U.S. market
What's new? This new machine features new electric-over-hydraulic (EH) controls for greater precision in loader arm, bucket and travel speed operation. The TL11R3's advanced EH controls also enhance jobsite productivity by making several new features possible. The self-leveling up-and-down feature automatically keeps the bucket or attachment level while raising or lowering the loader arm for improved load handling. In low-clearance environments, the arm height limit feature prevents the TL11R3's loader arm from exceeding a predetermined height, protecting attachments and surroundings from accidental damage.
Specs: Available in both standard- and high-flow configurations, the TL11R3 allows operators to adjust flow rates and attachment presets from inside the cab. The high-flow configuration delivers up to 40 gallons per minute of auxiliary flow for use with more powerful attachments like mulchers, cold planers and stump grinders. Both configurations come equipped with a 14-pin connector, enhancing versatility and functionality for a wide range of attachments. A 270-degree rearview camera comes standard on the high-flow configuration and is optional on the standard-flow configuration.

INDEX OF ADVERTISERS

CONSTRUCTION BUSINESS OWNER

ADVERTISER INDEX

Advertiser Name ..... Page

ACA 33
Armstrong World Industries 15
Attentive Inc. (BeamAI) ..... IFC
CM Labs 39
CoFi 48
Columbia Southern University (CSU) 23
CONEXPO 41
DEVELON 1
Foundation Software 29
Freedom Forge Coaching, LLC 48
Insite Software 46
Isuzu Trucks 5
MechMaxx ..... BC
Penta Software, LLC ..... IBC
Progressive Commercial Auto Insurance 3
SAFE Project 45
Schweiss Doors 48
Uline 34
World of Concrete 35

PRODUCT INDEX

Company Name ..... Page

Bosch Power Tools 44
EarthCam 44
Hilltip 44
KEEN Utility 45
Komatsu 45
Nialli 46
Takeuchi 46

**This ad index is furnished as a courtesy, and no responsibility is assumed for incorrect information.*

RS2512

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

With your FREE subscription to Construction Business Owner's monthly magazine and weekly CBO Alert e-newsletter, you'll get:

- Practical advice for running a successful company
- Tools for solving common problems
- Expert insights into today's industry trends
- Tips for improving productivity and efficiency
- Management strategies to build your business

CONSTRUCTION BUSINESS OWNER
constructionbusinessowner.com/subscribe

YOU MUST SIGN AND ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS TO QUALIFY FOR A FREE SUBSCRIPTION

Qualified subscriptions begin at the publisher's discretion. Incomplete forms cannot be processed or acknowledged.

We will use your email address to send your annual renewal notice and other related products and services.

○ Check here to opt out of email messages from our marketing partners.

○ **YES! I wish to receive or continue to receive a FREE subscription.**
○ **PRINT edition** *(U.S. only)*
○ **DIGITAL edition** by email
○ No. Cancel my FREE subscription.

REQUIRED for SUBSCRIPTIONS

Name

Title | Company

Address | City/State/Country/Zip/Post

*Phone | *Email

*Signature | Date:

1. Your company's primary business is:
(Check only one)
❑ 12 General Contractor – Commercial
❑ 02 General Contractor – Residential
❑ 10 Construction – Special Trade Contractors
❑ 03 Highway and Street Construction
❑ 04 Water, Sewer and Utility Construction
❑ 05 Heavy Construction
❑ 06 Concrete Work
❑ 07 Excavation Work
❑ 08 Wrecking and Demolition Work
❑ 13 Architecture, Engineering and Construction Management Services
❑ 11 Consulting Contractor
❑ 99 Other (please specify)

2. Your primary job title is: *(Check only one)*
❑ 10 Owner, Partner, President, CEO, CFO, COO, Vice President, Director
❑ 11 General Manager, Manager, Foreman, Superintendent, Purchasing Agent, Controller, Accountant
❑ 12 Engineer, Architect
❑ 06 Consultant
❑ 99 Other (please specify)

3. Approximate annual contract sales volume:
(Check only one)
❑ 01 Less than $500,000
❑ 02 $500,001 – $1,000,000
❑ 03 $1,000,001 – $2,500,000
❑ 04 $2,500,001 – $5,000,000
❑ 05 $5,000,001 – $10,000,000
❑ 06 $10,000,001 – $20,000,000
❑ 07 $20,000,001 – $50,000,000
❑ 08 More than $50,000,000

4. Which of the following products/services are you planning to buy during the next 12 months?
(Check all that apply)
❑ 01 Earthmoving Equipment
❑ 02 Trucks, Trailers and Accessories
❑ 03 Compact Equipment
❑ 04 Lifting and Hoisting Equipment
❑ 05 Safety Equipment and Apparel
❑ 06 Attachments
❑ 07 Concrete and Paving Equipment
❑ 08 Survey and Site Prep
❑ 09 Compressors, Generators and Pumps
❑ 10 Financing and Accounting Services
❑ 11 Software and Technology
❑ 12 Insurance and Bonding
❑ 13 Training and Education
❑ 14 Telecommunications
❑ 16 Greases, Lubricants and Filters
❑ 17 Jobsite Lighting
❑ 18 Building Supplies
❑ 19 Rental Equipment
❑ 21 GPS Equipment and Security

ONLINE
For fastest service, complete this form online constructionbusinessowner.com/subscribe.

EMAIL
Complete this form and email to: constructionbusinessowner@omeda.com

MAIL
Complete this form, tear out, place in an envelope and mail to: Construction Business Owner P.O. Box 271, Lincolnshire, IL 60069

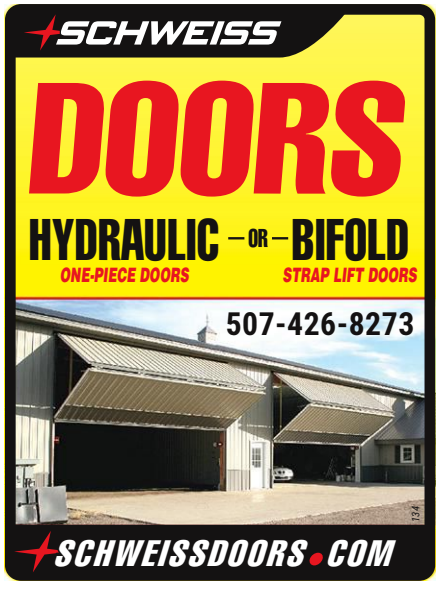
AIA Architectural Billings Index (ABI)

National			*Regional - Billings				*Sectors - Billings			
Month	Billings	Inquiries	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	Multifamily Residential	Commercial/ Industrial	Institutional	Mixed
Apr-25	43.2	48.0	40.2	44.4	46.2	42.1	40.8	40.5	46.3	47.6
May-25	47.2	51.4	43.6	43.5	49.2	44.3	46.1	43.8	46.2	45.4
Jun-25	46.8	53.6	46.5	45.7	50.6	45.8	43.8	47.4	49.2	45.5
Jul-25	46.2	53.4	47.8	45.1	47.5	46.4	43.7	49.9	47.9	42.8
Aug-25	47.2	50.3	46.2	48.0	49.9	43.5	49.9	50.8	44.5	43.3
Sep-25	43.3	50.1	43.8	49.8	47.9	40.6	47.2	46.6	44.3	44.0

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.

"Unfortunately, business conditions remain relatively weak at architecture firms," said Kermit Baker, Ph.D., AIA chief economist. "There was some **erosion in project backlogs** this past quarter, with the greatest slippage coming from firms with an **institutional** specialization."





Editor's Note: At the time this issue went to print, the government shutdown prevented new data on the annual value of construction put in place.

PROfiles

ARE YOU A PRO?

Want to see your company's leaders featured in the PROfiles section of our next issue?

Email Editor-in-Chief Megan Beam at mbeam@cahabamedia.com to share the story of your growing business and its people, practices and strategies.

penta SOFTWARE

CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE AND ERP

HELPING SPECIALTY CONTRACTORS FOR OVER 50 YEARS

- FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
- CONSTRUCTION PAYROLL
- JOB COST MANAGEMENT
- FIELD SERVICE MANAGEMENT

THE ANNUAL IMPACT OF PENTA SOFTWARE



590K+ WORK ORDERS ADMINISTERED

60K+ EMPLOYEES PAID

$10B+ REVENUE PROCESSED

82K+ JOBS MANAGED

WORLD OF CONCRETE®

VISIT US AT BOOTH #N1820

www.penta.com

CBO EXCLUSIVE SAVE $100 ON $2,000+ WITH CODE **CBO25** VALID UNTIL 12/31/2025

BUILT TOUGH



MechMaxx

At MechMaxx, we don't just sell equipment — we deliver industrial-grade machines built to work as hard as you do. From sawmills to stump grinders to wood chippers, every unit is designed for heavy-duty performance, efficiency, and long-term value. Our promotion code is one-time use and valid until 12/31/2025.

(315) 750-4008

mechmaxx.com