

Sage Construction and Real Estate

Go Where the Work Is:
Enabling Mobility in
Your Construction Firm



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Go Where the Work Is: Enabling Mobility in Your Construction Firm

Your construction or real estate company balances back office functions—billing, paying invoices, running financial reports, payroll, planning logistics, etc.—with the physical presence needed on the job site or in a client’s office. Just like you, the entire construction industry is well-known for its mobility of assets, materials and workers¹. Like other industries, construction is increasingly relying on real-time updates and the constant connectivity offered by mobile technologies to improve operational efficiency². Today’s technological solutions must be able to serve users like you in both work settings.

Improvements through mobility

New technology that optimizes operations has been welcome in the construction industry, but only when contractors know they will be able to see real improvements and a strong return on their investment³. Flawless scheduling that properly coordinates all aspects of a construction project—making sure the plumber comes before the drywallers are expected, for instance—is vital to preventing cost and deadline overruns. When delays do happen, it’s equally important that the field manager is able to alert every group which could be affected in order to prevent a backup³.

Having constant access to information from the back office, no matter where you are, can help inform supervisors in the field and assist them as they manage construction projects in any location. Companies are looking to connect their mobile workforces and share information between anyone within the business almost instantly⁴.

The use of mobile phones in the construction industry is nothing new, and it has long been helpful for keeping a dispersed workforce up-to-date on the latest developments of a project⁵. Keeping in contact with employees can be a challenge, particularly for construction firms running projects remotely. Establishing a mobile framework for staying in contact with a scattered employee base can help managers maintain productivity and keep track of top talent.

Reporting and time tracking from the field

The idea of tracking timesheets with mobile technology is gaining greater traction in the construction industry². Having the ability to keep workers out in the field instead of anchored to the jobsite trailer office has been especially appealing as every sector struggles to maintain productivity while having fewer workers on the payroll².

According to Linda Eastridge-Jordan, Sprint’s industry marketing manager, construction firms could benefit greatly from mobile time-tracking technology, as the functions can cut down on errors and paperwork by automating the payroll and time systems, letting workers clock in and out via their phones.

1 wifo1.bwl.uni-mannheim.de/fileadmin/files/publications/Deibert2009-MobileTechnologyInConstructionIndustry.pdf

2 www.constructech.com/news/articles/article.aspx?article_id=8873&SECTION=1

3 us.blackberry.com/business/needs/field/Wireless_Technology_in_Construction.pdf

4 www.3tsystems.com/LEARN/Blog/EntryID/4.aspx

5 www.pwc.com/en_GX/gx/engineering-construction/pdf/international-mobility.pdf

“Any solution that increases productivity, whether on the jobsite or in the back office, improves profit margins for construction firms that are still recovering from the recent economic conditions,” Eastridge-Jordan says².

More than 67 percent of companies that responded to a ConstructTech survey in 2011 said that they remotely report from the field, and more than half—54 percent—said they manage projects remotely. While only 20 percent said they use remote solutions to track and maintain equipment, 37 percent report on monitoring safety remotely and 40 percent use mobile time tracking⁶.

Construction companies have reported from the field for many years, but more are moving away from the pen-and-paper method and are beginning to use a variety of mobile devices to deliver those reports in a cost-effective way⁶.

Mobile devices

As noted by ConstructTech's 2011 IT survey, contractors take project information “out to the jobsite with mobile devices as well as applying a host of applications on these mobile devices.”⁶ As the survey notes, construction companies are reporting from the field as well as “carrying out project management, scheduling, punchlists and time tracking tasks in the field today.”⁶

This is evidenced by the growing momentum of mobile technologies in the construction industry. Yet, the type of device varies as much as the job sites do. According to the survey, “the smartphone is still one of the most commonly used devices at the jobsite (81 percent of survey respondents). Laptops (69 percent) and tablets (26 percent) also receive a significant response.”⁶ Given the advances in and adoption of tablets such as Apple's iPad over the past few years, growth is anticipated in the use of the tablet in the construction industry as well.

Being mobile with Sage Timberline Office

Given the fast-moving nature of mobility, today's business management solutions need to support the highly mobile workforce of the construction industry today and into the future.

More than 1000 Sage construction and real estate customers use mobile or web-based solutions from the following authorized Sage development partners:

- About Time Technologies
- Austin Lane Technologies
- BuilderMT
- Concord Technologies
- Data-Maxx Technologies
- Digital Business Integration (hh2 Web Services)
- Econz Wireless
- eTenantCare
- FieldConnect
- HomeFront Software
- JumpStart Wireless
- mJobTime Corporation
- Technology Partners Group
- Property Solutions

² www.constructech.com/news/articles/article.aspx?article_id=8873&SECTION=1

⁶ www.constructech.com/resources/subscriber_services/Default.aspx

For more information, visit <http://www.sagecre.com/Products-and-Solutions/Additional-Solutions>

This year, Sage announced that it will further extend its cloud-based offerings with web-based tools to help construction companies better manage their projects, communicate between team members and vendors, and deliver information whenever and wherever it's needed—in the office, on the jobsite or at a client's office.

With web-based tools for time capture, project management and service management for general contractors, subcontractors and owners, Sage will deliver a comprehensive cloud-based solution to address the evolving construction management needs of its customers.

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