

Why Having an Integrated Construction Platform is Becoming the New Normal

Written by: Natalie Takacs, Product Manager for Connected Analytics reporting products, InEight

The world seems to turn faster around us every day. As a result, many construction companies are aggressively seeking ways to gain better efficiencies in an effort to save time and money. One way of accomplishing these goals is by adopting an integrated construction platform.

Truly changing the way we work on our projects, numerous gains in many areas can be realized through implementation of these integrated systems, bringing people and processes together like never before. And as more businesses discover these gains, such systems are beginning to become a normal expectation from users rather than simply a nice-to-have. To fully understand the “why” of this shift, let’s explore how these systems work and the benefits you can realize from them.

Filling Deep Knowledge Gaps

Leaning on specific individuals to own singular processes along with their respective technologies guarantees that those individuals have a deep knowledge of the process and the systems used, more so than anyone else would likely have. They become the main resource for troubleshooting, training, and general system knowledge. But what if they were to transition to a different role or leave the company? That would likely create a large gap that would then require another individual to come up to speed to be that specific subject matter expert. This requires not only time, but you run the risk



of the pattern repeating itself.

However, when you adopt an integrated construction platform, personnel will naturally become educated on the other pieces of the system because the pieces “talk” to each other. This means your team will have a deeper understanding of the upstream and downstream impacts to their parts of the process. This makes cross-training much easier and reduces the time it takes to fill gaps in knowledge and personnel as they arise. Not only that, but one of the innate features of an integrated solution is similar design and action patterns across the platform. This tends to flatten the learning curve. Indirectly, this can also help a company feel more unified as well as save time on training and spreading the wealth of system knowledge.

Building Trust by Breaking Down Silos

When your system does the work of passing data from one silo to another, it can eliminate many steps of manual intervention, saving you time and money as well as assuring data integrity. For example, in the event of a change order within a traditional point system, information needs to be maintained in the contract management system as well as the cost management system. But if these two processes are brought together via integrated systems, the transition of the data from its point of origin out into another silo will be seamless for the end user because the system is doing the work. In this way, silos are actually being broken down.


And the chances for human error are also greatly reduced. Think of the potential downstream impacts of the cost and contract systems being out of sync as a result of someone accidentally entering an incorrect value in one but not its other related siloed area. An added benefit? Consistency and integrity of the data flowing through your systems and processes is not only helpful for efficiency but allows you to trust the data you are using for reporting outputs.

The Power of Consolidation

You can also broaden the scope of your reporting with the ability to break down silos that in the past have been a barrier to cross-process reporting. When data is flowing in the system, this allows for the consolidation of data across processes, and is a unique benefit of an integrated construction platform.

This would be either impossible or very costly to accomplish utilizing commonly incompatible point solutions. However, as construction companies start to see the value in being able to leverage the data they are inputting into their systems, working within an integrated network of solutions is becoming non-negotiable when choosing and implementing a new system.

As exciting as integrated platforms are, just remember that adapting to new processes doesn't happen overnight, nor should it. Much like any important decision, it first requires introspection as an organization to understand what you want to produce from your system and then what kind of careful design you will require to get to that production goal. Implementing a new system or process not only takes time and patience, but also solid support from your company leadership.

The outcome will be well worth it when you find that your team is now answering project questions in minutes that used to take days, maybe even weeks, to answer before. The main payoff? You'll have more timely data to make better informed decisions. 



About the Author

Natalie Takacs serves as the Product Manager for the Connected Analytics reporting products at InEight. Her enthusiasm for data and analytics began in college. While working on a research project, she discovered how powerful capturing and drawing insights from data can be. She started at InEight in 2018 after supporting multiple company-wide reporting initiatives at Kiewit in the Technology Group. Helping users to eliminate multi-step, manual processes to save time and gain efficiency is one of reasons she loves the reporting and analytics space.

About the Article

This article is republished from the [InEight Behind the Build online blog](#). [InEight](#) provides field-tested construction project management software for the owners, contractors, engineers and architects who are building the world around us. Customers worldwide rely on InEight for real-time insights that help manage risk and keep projects on schedule and under budget across the entire life cycle.

Any views and opinions expressed in this article may or may not reflect the views and opinions of the Construction Management Association of America (CMAA). By publishing this piece, CMAA is not expressing endorsement of the individual, the article, or their association, organization, or company.