UK CONSTRUCTION™
ONLINE

CONSTRUCTION SOFTWARE

Construction Industry Accounts and You

MORE and more, construction specific software is transforming the way in which we as an industry operate. The construction sector, so often derided over a perceived lack of innovation, is redefining best practice through software implementation, and this is especially true of accountancy - the innermost workings of any business. Today, once complex matters - such as job costing and accurate invoicing - are easier to manage than ever before.

For the uninitiated, job costing is the process by which the expenses incurred during a

project are tallied up against the revenue generated by that project. For those organisations that rely on a relatively low-volume of high-value projects - building contractors, subcontractors and architects, to name a few - job costing is a necessity. It enables businesses to accurately predict their profitability well in advance of a projects conclusion - providing the system in place has been implemented correctly, that is.

Here, accountancy software is proving the differentiator. New technology is enabling businesses to monitor a

multitude of factors and analyse the data collated to better inform the decision making process. Moreover, job cost reports are providing organisations with a fuller picture of their financial performance, while also helping to ensure that all contracts are invoiced properly, to the appropriate client and at the appropriate time.

Carl Purbrick, Managing Director for CLiP IT Solution's Construction Industry Accounts (CIA software), explains: "We have found that most of our users are more interested in day-to-day job costing than

their accounts. It's the jobs that make or lose money and that's where they need up-to-date, reliable information. Having this trustworthy, current data enables companies to identify and address issues in an ongoing and timely manner, rather than when it's too late to do anything about it at the end of the job."

The prospect of introducing new technology into established process can be intimidating however, and rightfully so. Poor implementation can have the reverse effect - negatively impacting financial performance. As such, the choice of software is absolutely critical.

Carl continues: "Implementation, training and ongoing customer support are key to any new software roll-out. We pride ourselves on the ease of implementation our customers report. When we launched in 2002, my mission was to produce a tool that met the construction market's needs, backed up by unrivalled customer support; and from the feedback we regularly receive, that is what we continue to deliver - a simple to use system and first-class support."

CLiP IT Solution's CIA software is a rarity; in that it caters specifically to the construction industry rather than attempting a cumbersome 'one size fits all' approach. This emphasis allows clients within the sector to manage costs effectively without the need for finicky add-on packages or superfluous spreadsheets. Instead, industry essentials such as CIS, applications, retentions and job costing can easily be accommodated by way of an intuitive user-friendly interface.

Of particular interest to contractors is the Construction Industry Scheme (CIS) - a HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) initiative which deducts tax directly from any payments made to subcontractors. These deductions contribute to the subcontractor's tax and National Insurance payments.

Crucially, all contractors must register for the scheme and those who fall behind may face substantial penalties. All the more reason to entrust this administrative burden to a tailored software solution.

Carl is again on-hand to explain: "CIA is able to verify your subcontractors and accurately calculate their deductions with a minimum of fuss. HMRC returns can be scheduled and monthly subcontractor statements produced, making CIS compliance a mere formality."

Applications for payment and retention accounting are key considerations also, with CIA providing an agile solution for dealing with stage payments to main contractors. The benefits of an industry specific accountancy software are readily apparent, and those businesses that choose not to invest risk missing out. The pivotal role software plays in good business practice can no longer be ignored. Carl concludes: "Normally, you'd expect to pay more for a tailored solution than something you can pick off the shelf. Whether handmade tools vs. a DIY store bargain or gourmet burgers vs. a fast food chain; we associate higher costs with higher quality but, with certain specialised products, these assumptions are not always true.

"Some might think, 'Surely a mass produced accountancy software will be more cost effective than something tailored to my industry?' Think again! Purchasing a construction specific accounting package can save you both time and money. In fact, the only comment our clients tend to make is that they wish they'd switched to CIA sooner!"

WHAT OUR CUSTOMERS THINK OF CIA AND CLiP IT'S SUPPORT TEAM

"We were attracted to the Software because the issues particular to our industry were clearly understood by CLiP IT, and it was not just a standard package with a construction add-on."

Robore Cuts Limited

"If any company within the construction industry was looking for financial software we would definitely recommend CIA for the smooth running and straight forward system this package gives."

Mannings Harlequin Ltd

"I would go as far as to say that it is probably the best single investment I have ever made on behalf of the company, it really is that good!"

Goodwin Tanks

"Any change in legislation is dealt with in a professional manner and changes in software are always user friendly. The whole package allows us to run our business efficiently and with confidence."

Sibley Bros LLP

"The installation and transfer of data from our old system was straight forward and we find the CLiP IT Software user friendly."

Perry & Son Ltd

"The at a glance reports are easy to access and read, payroll is easy to use and links in with HMRC so there is no need to leave the programme to go online to file the RTI."

Heritage Cornwall

"The system is constantly updated and any problems are sorted very quickly. CLiP IT Solutions have always seemed to move with their clients' needs, and deliver friendly and helpful support…"

Rosemead Developments Limited

"No problem is too BIG or too small, and more importantly you are spoken to calmly and professionally and not treated like a computer programmer who should know everything!!"

George Bros (Builders) Ltd

"…have revolutionised our Back Office systems, allowing us to improve the quality and speed of management information.

…Even with this growth we have not needed to employ any more office staff, due to the increased efficiency with the new systems."

Barnet Window Company Ltd

"It's as if CIA (Construction Industry Accounts) has been written by someone sat in my chair. I can't believe how easy it is to use."

Lloyd Clough & Sons Ltd

Find out more about what our customers have to say at:
www.clipitsolutions.co.uk/construction-accounting-software-reviews

CONSTRUCTION SPECIFIC ACCOUNTING PACKAGES CAN SAVE YOU BOTH
TIME AND MONEY

HOW?

- Construction specific packages are ready to go, out of the box (or after the download as is often the case).

- No need for hidden costs and add-ons for meeting CIS requirements, verifying subcontractors, managing and keeping track of applications and retention.

- Job costing solutions are fit for purpose to easily understand where your profit and risk is coming from.

- And, possibly even more importantly, the support staff are used to working with the construction industry so they understand your accounting needs and can even help keep you up to date with the latest HMRC legislation and information.

CONSTRUCTION SPECIFIC ACCOUNTING SOFTWARE

Costs – the same or less

Product – fit for purpose without costly add-ons or tailoring

Functionality – has everything you need in one simple package

Speed – Ready to go straight out of the box

Training and support – helped by people who understand your industry and your needs

GENERIC ACCOUNTING SOFTWARE

My accountant uses it for all their other clients

I know roughly what my jobs are costing me

Change is scary

I'd kind of miss the ongoing struggle to get it to work how I need (ok, maybe we made this one up)!

Get a perfect fit with your accounting software by picking the right tool for the job!

CLiP IT SOLUTIONS

Accounting Software

Designed for the Construction Industry

01935 434435

www.clipitsolutions.co.uk

info@clipitsolutions.co.uk

The State of Play:

RICS' Alan Muse on BIM, global standards and the year ahead

UK Construction Excellence's Matt Brown talks exclusively to the Director of RICS' Built Professional Groups, Alan Muse, about the UK's BIM journey, International Construction Measurement Standards and 2017 predictions.

Alan Muse has been leading RICS' response to the Government construction strategy and sits on the CIC BIM Forum. He is a member of the group established to develop the BIM protocol and leads project management, quantity surveying and BIM initiatives within RICS including the development of skills, training and guidance for RICS members.

Come April, we will be a year on from the BIM Level 2 mandate. How would you describe the construction industry's place on its BIM journey?

The figure I saw on the last comprehensive survey on building information modelling was around a 54% take up. That was in answer to the question 'are you using BIM?'

There's always the issue of the definition of what BIM actually means in practice when people are asked such a question. One of the concerns from our perspective is that a lot of the debate and thought leadership on BIM to date has been design-centric and related to the design professions.

There's nothing wrong with that, of course, because obviously BIM has replaced Computer Aided Design. Therefore it's quite natural for the debate to have progressed in that way. However, we do feel that in regards to business management – project cost and facilities management – there is much more work that needs to be done.

It is interesting that Level 3 aspirations and also some of the BIM Alliance work that is just starting up is geared more towards things like life costing operations than perhaps the work in the past. We feel that the industry has been nudged to take up BIM and the Level 2 mandate has been at least partially successful, but the real progress now depends upon changing the conversation about BIM into more of a business management setting.

That will allow greater engagement with the private sector who, to date, have not been as enthusiastic the take up of BIM as the public sector. I think the other issue, which certainly crosses over with the RICS, is existing buildings' conversion, refurbishment, heritage and all that type of work that surveyors obviously get involved with extensively.

A lot of the BIM debate has been related to new 'sexy' projects and we need to expand that debate to include technologies that are available for scanning existing buildings into BIM and then using that digital information in a way that creates efficiencies for the process of existing properties portfolios and property management.

So that's where we are but actually we think we're in a good place in terms of continuing that debate and furthering the BIM take up in industry through professional discourse and professional knowledge.

Do you feel there is close collaboration between the BIM design and business management process?

Yes, in my experience the collaboration on BIM between the different professional institutions has been good. It's one area where professional institutions have shown they can collaborate well, probably because they have had to in order to further the BIM debate.

We do need to shift the conversation away from the design-centric nature of some of the debate to date over to business management. This would mean more engagement with the technologists' solutions and their response to market demand and impacting

client decisions. One issue that probably hasn't been addressed as much as it could be is the private sector client, the decision making process that he goes through and how BIM feeds into that process.
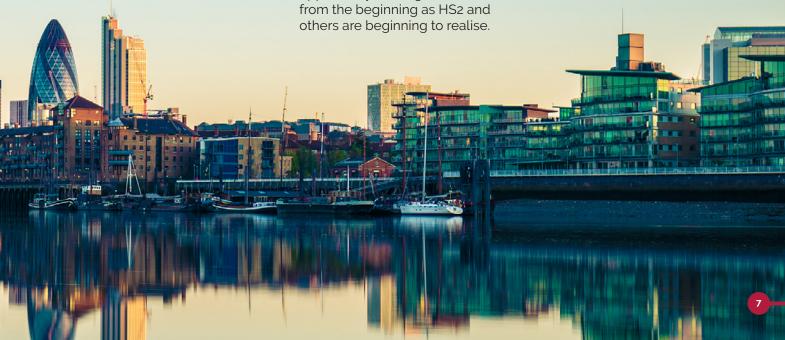
Some government departments, such as the Ministry of Justice, have analysed their processes in quite a lot detail. Private sector clients work in a state of flux and transformation in response to market needs, particularly private sector developers. There needs to be a lot more thought in how business management process is applied to and benefiting private sector clients.

Is the Government's commitment to significant infrastructure spending an endorsement of the huge advantages of working within the BIM process?
I don't think that it is necessarily cordial but it is correlated. The fact that we do need to spend a lot of money on infrastructure over the next 10 to 15 years in the UK and globally is a huge opportunity to integrate BIM from the beginning as HS2 and others are beginning to realise.

That large infrastructure spending allows the infrastructure market to realise the benefit of BIM in a way that might not have been possible in the repair and maintenance arena, which infrastructure spending in this country has been conventionally restricted to.
The three H's – Hinkley Point, HS2, Heathrow's third runway – all have a capacity and capability to bring BIM right into the process from the beginning and use BIM in a way that can produce a more efficient design process but, critically, allow the information for asset management to be controlled and structured in a much more cohesive and cogent way than has been possible in the past.

The advantages accruing from that will only be evident through time but if the Government is committed to the digitisation of the industry, then infrastructure is one arena where, because of the nature of the repetition and the industrialisation of the process is possible, the benefits of BIM maybe even more significant than in building.

Was the International Property Measurement Standards a stepping-stone to the International Construction Measurement Standards (ICMS)?

Well in so far as it's a suite of standards – yes. The context here is that following international financial reporting standards, we thought as a professional institution involved in land, property and construction, that it was important following on from the global financial crisis that we developed global standards in the areas of land, property and construction.

As surveyors, the first standard developed was the valuation standard called the Red Book, which looks at standard ways of valuing property around the world.

Following on from that, the main input into valuation and property is floor areas and they also vary significantly around the world, so International Property Measurement Standards (IPMS) was the logical next step.

Obviously people amend, adapt and build new property so construction having a consistent standard for cost classification around the world at a high level was the reason we embarked upon International Construction Measurement Standards. In all these cases, it's been done through collaborative international coalitions.

ICMS is a coalition of 43 professional bodies around the world. We feel that professional bodies are the right people to at least initiate these standards and write them in the first place, although clearly we want industry to shape them.

By doing it through professional institutions, we can get the right expertise around the table to write the standard efficiently and quickly, then put it to the market and shape it through industry feedback.

How has the lack of such a system as the International Construction Measurement Standards restricted the construction industry?

First of all, the problem that ICMS is solving is a lack of a consistent classification or standard to compare construction costs around the world. Although we've had in recent times political populism with people retracting behind their own borders, there is no doubt that globalisation has a large effect on the world.

Investors in construction are increasingly global and want to compare the cost of projects and infrastructure on an international basis and there is no common standard for doing so. You will recall the debate on HS2 and how it compared with other high speed rail networks around the world. There simply was not a comparable standard that could be used to make those comparisons.

Sometimes people think of international as somewhere else and not relevant to the UK market but look at the amount of Chinese investment we are about to receive in the UK, both in railways and nuclear energy.

Chinese investors in the UK will want somewhere to compare their costs that they're going to undertake for construction in this country with costs in other parts of Asia. The need for a global standard and regulation in the profession is important because, unlike accountancy and the medical professions, quantity surveying is quite fragmented and does not have global standards. This is a first step in creating that framework and unifying the quantity surveying profession.

Harmonising the language will also be key. For example, cost engineers working in some parts of the world think they are doing a different job to quantity surveyors in the UK but actually, when you analyse the skills of those two different professions, they are very similar.

The introduction of International Construction Measurement Standards makes a lot sense. Has this been the general reaction you have received? We have just finished the first public consultation on the 15th January. I was looking through the comments received and one of the questions that we put to the consultation was 'What do they think about the need for this standard?' Almost without exception, we received an awful lot of very positive comments.

Most people, regardless of their market in the world, seem to immediately see the need for this and the benefit of it.

What has been the reaction of SMEs?

Positive. Once it's explained to SMEs how it interfaces with existing national standards, such as the new rules and measurements, people do understand the need for this.

I was speaking to an SME director in quantity surveying a couple of days ago, who hadn't actually seen the consultation on ICMS.

I asked him to have a look at it and he came back to me within a couple of hours. He thought it was a no brainer and was extremely positive about it. Even if you work at an SME level and think that large international projects are not something you necessarily are involved in, the issue is that we now have global supply chains. We have certainly got supply chains in this country in quantity surveying where some of the larger practices are using the smaller practices.

If the larger practices are talking about this standard on an international basis then the smaller practices need to understand it and how it is being used.

As RICS is primarily made up of SMEs, we are very keen to make sure they are engaged in this standard and that they understand its place in the market and how they can become involved in it.

Does Brexit make having these standards all the more vital?

I think that is an extremely good point. When we were developing ICMS, we actually went to the European Commission and their construction unit is very much in favour of it because it allows them to harmonise rules across the European economies.

That's important for us but at the same time allows harmonisation and a standard for the profession on a global basis.

With regards to Brexit, as Theresa May said, we need to be seen as a truly international nation now and one of our major export potentials is in professional services.

Global standards in professional services is something that we should be involved in, just as a general principal.

Some of the other professions have been involved similarly so it makes absolute sense that the surveying profession – something that the UK is well known for – is involved heavily in the globalisation of standards.

Has the resilience of the construction industry in the face of uncertainty surprised you?

There have been some ups and downs along the way and there is no doubt that the depreciation in the pound is going to affect input prices.

That is probably going to feed through into costs but in construction, price doesn't always follow cost. Whether that can be subsumed within the industry to some degree, time will tell. The construction industry was in pretty good shape in terms of demand in the UK and therefore it's not really surprised me that it's been generally resilient.

There is a lot of uncertainty surrounding business decision making because of Brexit but at the same time there isn't anything fundamentally wrong with the economy. We do still have a low interest rate environment although people are expecting inflation to increase because of the exchange rate.
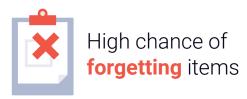
The issue is that shouldn't be insurmountable and therefore the idea of industry suffering a major recession is unlikely.

What are your predictions for the construction industry in 2017?

It's going to be a bit of a curate's egg with regards to sectors. Obviously we have a lot of momentum in the infrastructure arena and we all know the need for housing, so those are two sectors that will do particularly well.

The general macroeconomic environment should keep retail, commercial, and industrial sectors fairly level. I don't anticipate there's going to be same type of skill shortages and high demand that we saw a few years ago but I do think that might be prevalent in one or two sectors where work is more in demand such as housing and infrastructure.

Across the board and taking the overall position, it will be steady as she goes; our forecast is construction output rising 2% in 2017.

The elephant in the room, however, is the pressure on input prices from the lower pound. There are various scenarios there, but we expect to see price levels contained within construction because the industry is not necessarily operating at full capacity.

There may well be cost pressures in certain sectors that are seeing higher demand such as housing and infrastructure, where there is clearly a potential for capacity constraints in both trade skills and professional skills. So the capacity of the industry to deliver what is demanded by the economy might start to push up prices in certain sectors.

Did Theresa May's recent Brexit speech provide business with enough clarity?

It was a big step forward in terms of the clarity that has been provided to date. Is it enough? Industry would always ask for more information; but that's just the nature of industry.

My personal view is that, given the situation Theresa May is in, it's as much as she could give at the moment. The fact remains it takes two people to negotiate and you don't know what the other party is going to say.

Overall, I would say it's positive not in so much what she said but the fact that she said it.

What is the problem
builders and tradesmen face?

Spending long hours on estimating **and no guarantee they'll even win the work**

Lack of accuracy

High chance of **forgetting** items

Length of time to produce written quotation and other reports

WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

SOFTWARE THAT:

- is EASY to use
- doesn't let you forget ANYTHING
- wins business with the impressive reports
- automatically produces reports at the click of the bottom
- helps your business run efficiently - know what to order & when!

WHY CHOOSE EASY PRICE PRO?

Free support for 1 year

Free upgrades

Free Live Price updates forever

BUY Merchant links

Easiest software on the market

Proven to win more work

Rated 4.9*

80% Cut time spent estimating by 80%

Easy Price Pro
Estimating software for the building industry

Easy Price Pro was first developed over 30 years ago and has progressed with the latest building methods and computer technology ever since. Our main focus is ease of use. The software is laid out in the order of the build. It is logical. The different sections integrate with one another to help do the thinking for you. It prices a 4 bedroom house in 45 minutes and extension in 25 minutes *Including full written quotation, summaries for each section, material order sheets, bill of quantities, work schedules, payment schedules and more*

ESTIMATING BUILDING COSTS?

FACT: ACCURATELY ESTIMATING BUILDING COSTS DOESN'T HAVE TO BE DIFFICULT, TIME CONSUMING OR TRICKY.

There are some very straight forward ways that will enable you to get this often tiresome job done, dusted and off your desk. Better still both of the methods outlined below are accurate fast and can assist you when it comes to winning that job.

Option 1: Estimating Software - Easy Price Pro have a complete range of estimating programs that quickly and accurately calculate all the plant material, labour and hours for all types of building work and trade specific tasks. Can your current estimating system accurately price a complete extension with a full set of reports including a written quotation in about an hour? Easy Price Pro's New Houses & Extensions Plus program can.

Easy Price Pro programs are designed by a builder, making them practical, logical and realistic. The pricing sheet is laid out in the order of a build, so the learning curve is short. Their intuitive nature means nothing is forgotten, giving you peace of mind, but you are always in control; you can see how the program is working things out and fine tune it to your preferences if required. At the click of a button you can generate a complete set of job winning reports including payment & work schedules, summaries, material lists and a written quote. Clients can't help but be impressed and you will have a set of job management reports to smoothly run the build.

Contact Easy Price Pro today for more info or a free live demo. Call 03333 321502, email info@easypricepro.com or visit www.easypricepro.com

Option 2: Estimating Services - If you don't want to do the estimating yourself or if you just want a back-up Pro Estimating Services can help. All types of work can be priced including new builds, extensions, refurbishment, alterations and conversions.

This accurate affordable service provides a complete job cost and full set of reports for you and your client. With quick turnarounds and next day delivery options available just send in your plans and Pro Estimating Services will take care of the rest.
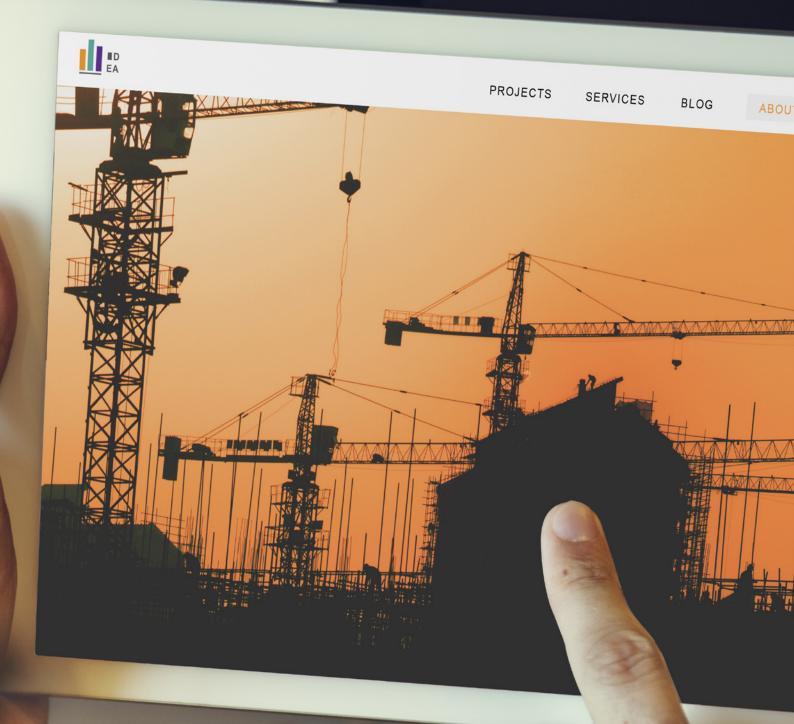
Call Pro Estimating Services now on 03333 321518, email info@pes.ltd or visit www.pes.ltd

Easy Price Pro
Estimating software for the building industry

Future-proofing Today's Industry:
Navigating evolving workforce, technology and operations

INDUSTRIES today are under pressure from tighter regulations, increasing market speed and volatility, and the need to modernise ageing systems. In order to keep pace, our industrial environments must adapt to improve agility, attract new talent and provide employees with the insight they need to maintain productivity. While Industry 4.0 and the Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT) are becoming two of the most overused industrial automation buzzwords today, they serve as a positive reminder that we must advance.

Understanding the potential that the IIoT and automation technologies hold in helping businesses to move more quickly and avoid falling behind the competition is a critical first step. Applying this potential in order to future-proof existing environments is the second important step. In order to both understand and apply new technologies effectively, businesses within the industry market must consider the impact of operations, technology and people in the workplace and how these impact on success.

TACKLING THE PACE OF INDUSTRIAL CHANGE

Today, industrial operations must respond to market changes in real-time. Critical business variables have begun to fluctuate with more frequency and the price of electricity might change every 15 minutes. This is impacting the production value and costs of an operation. In order to overcome this, process designs need to be changed by improving agility. For automation systems to play a role in this, they must be designed from their inception to be extremely agile and flexible enough to process change quickly and easily. As these process changes are implemented,

object-based industrial service-orientated architectures can help companies to adapt flexibly, future-proofing their operations while maintaining the operational integrity of their plants.

A TECHNOLOGY EVOLUTION, NOT REVOLUTION

Using modern process automation systems also future-proofs the technology in use. The most effective automation systems embody a 'continuously current' approach, allowing plants to evolve to the latest state-of-the-art technology, while preserving existing hardware, software and applications. This approach supports the notion that teams must accommodate change by introducing new solutions alongside existing applications, rather than conducting a 'rip and replace' exercise. This ensures greater business control and drives the evolution towards a smart environment that is more efficient, safe and sustainable. While many see the IIoT as a revolution, in reality it is an evolution of technologies and functionalities developed by visionaries over a decade ago. Therefore, rather than scrambling to replace existing technology, taking a considered approach to update existing investments is essential.

Anticipating the workforce exodus Added to these challenges, across all industries today there are fewer and fewer skilled operators inside the plant, as the older, expert workforce moves into retirement. This creates a challenge for both attracting and retaining talent. New recruits naturally seek employers with modern working practices and the latest technology. That means industrial organisations must empower them with the intelligence they need to be productive and the tools to make their experience richer,

irrespective of where they are. By using industrial automation applications, businesses can provide simpler, easier to use, and deeper insight to make plants user-centric (not machine). Furthermore, enabling employees to work using a mobile device provides better connectivity, with instant access to their system and plant floor.

Once industry organisations have hired new talent, they face a second challenge. They must now ensure that the intellectual property and operational insight from the 'grey market' is available to inform a new generation of engineers. This requires the use of software to capture and embed IP into the system environment before employees retire. Organisations can then build on this by combining operator training simulators and contextualised virtual reality training to help new operators achieve certification levels quickly. In fact, by embedding lifetime training capabilities into the online environment (using performance feedback and prediction software), new operators can actually reach higher levels of performance than their predecessors.

Adopting the smart approach Those who begin making adjustments to the way they operate now will be much better equipped to deal with the IIoT. By phasing in new processes and tools to complement existing structures, industry businesses the world over can create smart environments that are well connected, optimised to process change and meet fluctuating market demand. Manufacturing in particular is undergoing significant technical change, so future-proofing systems to maintain momentum and remain competitive has never been more critical.

Integration and Communication:

The evolving role of the construction security director

SECURITY is one of the oldest professions in the world, followed close behind by construction. For as long as these two occupations have co-existed, the security director has been tasked with defending the perimeter, keeping unwanted visitors off the site and ensuring the safety of curious children, for example, or ill-wishing opponents. From ancient Egypt to 20th-century Manhattan, construction companies have always had a role for someone focused on the border fence, ensuring that intruders were dissuaded and, if necessary, apprehended. That role is still as essential as ever in the 21st century - but with the rise of connected security systems, the remit of the security director has suddenly expanded to include the whole cybersphere.

Now the concept of the perimeter is almost limitless - a cyber-breach, in which attackers take control of security gates, cameras or identity checkers, could be every bit as damaging to the business as a more traditional blunt instrument, if not more. Many physical processes, such as surveillance and access management, are now increasingly being managed from a central control facility with responsibility for multiple sites - which may not even be on the same continent. As a result, there's a great deal of communication and information relay now surrounding construction sites, which is highly vulnerable to attack.

New boundaries in construction
In this new world, the role of the traditional security director and his or her team remains crucial, no matter where security headquarters are located. There is not now, and likely never will be, any substitute for physically interceding between a violent perpetrator and his intended target in a timely manner. Whether the perpetrator is holding a hammer, a suspicious package or a grudge; muscle on the ground is always vital. However, with new definitions of security, that role is now joined by a host of others. In many construction companies, professionals from back-room functions like IT, HR, legal and logistics are all now implicated in security, because all of these functions are digitally interlinked. A breach in the logistics department could lead a hacker through to the security frontline - for example, accessing entry passcodes.

So where does that leave the traditional security director? In many cases it is still true that there is no one in a better position to lead overall security efforts than the experienced security director. However, it is equally true that, in order to do so, he or she must now be the leader of a multi-disciplinary team, with a group of professionals delivering what might be to them unfamiliar types of expertise. Moreover, that team will likely be located across several different sites, so effective collaboration and information sharing are essential.

WIDENING HORIZONS

This era of convergence is creating an enormous, albeit temporary, window of opportunity for the security director to grow the responsibility and importance of his or her role in the construction industry. However, in order to lead the newly expanded team, many security directors may need to expand their knowledge base first. This does not necessarily mean having to become an IT expert, or a shipping expert, or a legal expert, but for many security professionals it will mean gaining a better understanding of the technologies utilized by those disciplines, as well as the language they employ.

This can be done readily through training, and many large organisations in the construction industry may offer courses that can help close the gaps in a security professional's knowledge. These organisations often also have books and manuals that relate to these issues, and these are often especially geared towards the needs of experienced, on-the-job professionals.

LEADING FROM THE FRONT

The security director's imperative now is to open, and, hopefully, lead, the dialogue with IT, logistics and other security-intersecting enterprise operations on how to integrate security applications with the rest of the business, and improving how risk is managed overall.

Security professionals need to take the lead and initiate the discussion. They can offer their security roadmap and business plan to peer leaders in the other departments and see where plans intersect, and how they can work together to provide the best overall security services to the enterprise.

Changing the dynamics of a role and incorporating new skills can seem a challenging prospect, but especially in the essential work of the security team, it is often the price that must be paid for effective service in a changing business. At the end of the day, if security becomes a closeted world with no insight into the company it is designed to protect, then the defence it provides risks being mismatched, outdated and ineffectual. As collaboration and digital activity increasingly become the norm, the most successful security directors will be those who take the initiative and gain the skills necessary to integrate with other divisions.

The construction industry is benefitting from digitalisation in many areas. But security directors must be alert to the dangers that come with it. They must consider how to integrate cyber-security considerations into their perimeter protection. If they don't defend the company's cyber presence as well as its fences, then they might as well hand over the keys to the first intruder who tries their luck.

Why you should start using digital construction reports

SMARTPHONES and other mobile devices has become an important part of our daily lives, with statistics revealing that one in every three people own one. Smartphones were built so we can improve our lives, be more connected and more productive. However, not everybody (especially in construction) is using their smartphones to be more productive in their daily work. Research has shown that over 60% of construction workers are still using traditional methods of data collection while on site. This could be down to the fact that they don't know that these apps exist or they are not sure which features the app should have. Although these traditional methods have been working for a long time, using a mobile app on your smartphone will increase your productivity and efficiency.

RECORD DAILY CONSTRUCTION EVENTS AND GENERATE REPORTS.

Everyday things happen on construction sites that need to be written down for future reference. Today, most companies will use a construction journal or diary to record these events. The process of using paper diaries is longwinded because the field worker writes an event then takes time to reach the appropriate person to be approved and in some situations it gets lost. By using an app to record an event, the data is synced among all team members and can easily be approved by the team leader. Therefore, using an app is the primary source for saving time on construction reports. Contractors and sub-contractors can resolve claims easily because all events recorded are time stamped.

There are several features that all construction report apps must have. Here is a list of these key features:
REPORT FORM / TEMPLATE

The report form is the most important feature of an app because this is what you use to record events. A very detailed report will provide you with the arsenal you need to protect yourself against claims. The form needs to be quick and easy to use with all the necessary information to fill out. Generally, the form should contain all of the following information but there can me more.

1 Date and time
2 Automatic weather reporting (based on site location)
3 Contractor name
4 Equipment used
5 Labours
6 Description
7 Take / attach photos

ALLOCATION

How much time did he take to complete that task? This question is asked at the end of every week when it's pay day. At this point, you have no choice but to take the workers word for it and pay them. With an allocation feature, each worker records the amount of time they take each day on a particular task. This will then be approved by the site manager so there is an accurate time log.
REAL-TIME CLOUD SYNCHRONIZATION

One of the key benefits of using an app is the ability to see instantaneously the reports created by the other team members. This way, field workers don't need to go to the office to submit a report. Also, site managers have a clear overview of all the work that been is done and what issues need to be addressed.

SUMMARY REPORTS (EXPORT)

There are many times when you will need to share information with the construction site owner or people outside the company. Having nice PDF summary of all the events recorded to send to your clients is vital. The PDF reports should be nicely presented and easy to read. We now live in a digitalized technology driven age with the use of digital devices are so common. Construction apps are built so that you can improve your productivity. Don't let the fear of change be the reason why you don't try a new or better solution. You use your digital devices every day to make calls, send emails, surf the web etc. Now it's time to use those same devices to improve your work efficiency and productivity.

Article by Khaldon Evans, International Marketing Manager at Script&Go

COMMUNITY

STAKEHOLDER

E-BOOKS

VIDEO

WHAT DOES THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY NEED TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR ORGANISATION?

WITH 110,000 CONSTRUCTION PROFESSIONALS EAGERLY AWAITING YOUR GUIDANCE, WHAT WOULD YOU SHOW THEM TODAY IF YOU COULD?

For more information please contact us on
01257 231900 or email enquiries@promarkmedia.co.uk

UK CONSTRUCTION ONLINE

PROMARK media Ltd
ENGAGE THE MARKET

CONSTRUCTION
M E D I A

UK Construction Media, Stirling House, Ackhurst Business Park, Chorley, PR7 1NY
01257 231900 • admin@ukconstructionmedia.co.uk • www.ukconstructionmedia.co.uk