CASE STUDY

McCown Gordon

Challenge

McCownGordon's team members needed to easily access project costs and budgets on jobsites to make timely decisions that keep projects moving forward.

Solution

Procore's Sage 300 Connector made it easy for McCownGordon's field staff to monitor budgets and forecast project costs from anywhere.

PROCORE®

Founded in 1999, McCownGordon provides construction management services throughout the Midwest and is considered one of the highest technology construction companies in the region. The company focuses on commercial construction, specifically healthcare, higher education, museums, and municipal buildings.

Dustin Burns, Director of Information Technology (IT), wants to make McCownGordon Construction truly mobile. "My strategy is to get everything out of this office to increase our team's efficiency."

Mobile devices and cloud-based software applications are helping the Kansas City-based construction manager virtually eliminate overhead costs related to keeping in-house servers and maintaining equipment. Plus, Dustin says, additional savings are being realized in reduced travel time and project downtime. Team members do not have to commute back to the office or even spend time in a trailer logging onto an oftentimes slow VPN (virtual private network) to access vital project information such as RFIs and change orders.

The key to making the company mobile is to provide remote team members with instant access to the most current project information and documentation. This includes project costs, estimates, payroll, and other accounting data.

Now, since Procore project management software and mobile apps can integrate with Sage 300 Construction & Real Estate (CRE), Dustin feels the company is much closer to achieving their goal.

"We've been waiting quite a while—years—to have a cloud-based and mobile project management solution that integrates with Sage accounting software," Dustin says. "Now the financial data is right there in front of our field staff, and having that up-to-date, real time information when making decisions is a big advancement."

For instance, if a project manager runs into an issue while on a job site and estimates that it will take so many man-hours to get a task completed, he can use a mobile device to look at the project budget and retrieve labor costs. From there, he can decide if the task can be completed within budget, or if a change order is needed.

The integration allows cost data from Sage 300 CRE accounting software to automatically feed into Procore's cost management tools. This function gives project managers control over project budgets, allowing them to accurately forecast project costs and monitor project health from the field.

The Crossing @ UCM, Warrensburg MO

Going Mobile

With the company's previous project management vendor, Prolog, going mobile was not possible. The software had a lot of inefficiencies, says Dustin, and though it was able to integrate with Sage, the process was cumbersome and the data was difficult to access.

"We also got a lot of push-back from our architects and subcontractors because it was not a system they could easily use. It required detailed, extended training."

In 2012, McCownGordon switched to Procore. Although the software did not yet connect with Sage, it provided immediate improvements by:

1. Delivering a user-friendly interface. McCownGordon's subcontractors have embraced Procore because it is easy to use and does not require a lot of training.

2. Replacing the spiral notebook. Superintendents previously used pencil and paper to jot down issues, and later logged the information into a software program or in an email to team members. Now they use their mobile devices to digitally log issues, snap photos to illustrate them, and create RFIs. Procore immediately shares the information across the team.

3. Enabling mobile document and photo sharing. Team members no longer need to locate a computer to access contracts or emails with attachments. They also do not need to use a digital camera to take project photos, which would then require uploading images to a computer in order to share with team members. "Now we just use Procore's mobile app," says Dustin.

4. Innovative drawing management. Many of McCownGordon's projects generate up to 1,200 new sheets of drawings over the course of 12 to 14 months. To cut costs and ensure the most current drawings are being used, the general contractor uses electronic drawings for every job. Dustin's team has developed a digital plan table, which is a 60-inch TV mounted onto a mobile cart with an iPad locked into a kiosk mount. The iPad is logged into Procore, and subcontractors on the jobsite can get the drawings and documents they need without a hard-line Internet connection. A more rugged and secure version of the digital plan table can be rolled around the actual jobsite.

5. Cost savings with unlimited users. With previous vendors, one user license cost McCownGordon from $3,000 to $3,500. "With our increased headcount, we would be spending $60,000 in internal staff licenses a year, and at least the same amount with external licensing," says Dustin.

Prior to Procore, the construction manager had virtually no external collaboration on projects due to high licensing fees. Even among internal staff, the company had to choose which team members would receive licenses and constantly move those licenses around to suit individual projects. Many team members did not have access to the project management software.

With Procore's unlimited users for one annual fee, the company can provide access to all team members and project partners without having to pass on any licensing fees to subcontractors. "The foreman for the concrete subcontractor can access Procore to get the latest drawings and all the documentation he needs to get his job done," Dustin explains.

A Game Changer

"Procore has raised our game to the point that we compete with companies ten times our size, because we can deliver the same type of client experience as companies with a huge IT staff of custom software," says Dustin. "I think we provide a better experience by using Procore."

This is because the cloud-based software allows Dustin to focus less on maintaining the technology and more on using it to improve operations. Not having to maintain the software, or any associated hardware that goes with it, also means less troubleshooting to keep projects moving.

"If the electric company cuts my fiber line, like they have a couple of times, and we lose power, the work at the jobsite continues because we don't host the software and haven't lost access to project information. Or if someone's computer dies, they do not need a specific machine to get back to work—they just need Internet access."
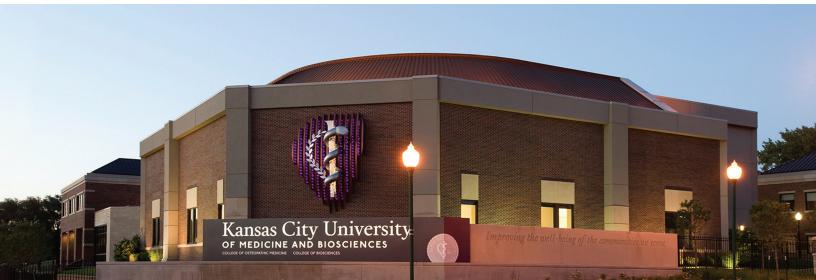
Although many sites do not have hard lines for Internet access, all that's needed for connectivity is a 4G LTE broadband card and a router. "Couple that with a streamlined mobile app and a website that's easy to navigate, managing projects from the jobsite is revolutionized," says Dustin. Case in point––Procore is the company's portable, digital plan table.

"Construction has always been behind in technology, but we offered these solutions to our contractors and they just ate it up," says Dustin. "Our team members can take on more projects if I can make them more efficient in the ones that they are currently running. With Procore it take less manpower to run a job."

With Procore's Sage 300 CRE Connector, Dustin says McCownGordon finally has the missing piece they've been waiting for to take project management in the field to the next level. "My project managers say that it's so much easier than what we were doing before. Having everything available to you on one screen is great."

"It truly does differentiate us from our competition and we've won numerous jobs against bigger companies."

Kansas City University Academic Center, Kansas City MO

"We moved from brick and mortar apps to Procore. With Procore's all-in-one functionality, we're saving $60k. Add that to what we're saving on licensing fees, and that's a grand total of $120k+ that Procore is saving us each year."

DUSTIN BURNS

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