



HOW TO COMPETE IN CONSTRUCTION WITH MODERN SOFTWARE

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The arrival of COVID-19 and the resulting worldwide shutdowns have affected everyone. The construction industry, though considered essential in many cases, was not immune to the pandemic's negative impact.

ACCORDING TO DELOITTE, the industry went from adding \$900 billion to the US economy in the first quarter of 2020 and employing over 7 million people in February 2020 to losing almost \$61 billion in GDP and shrinking total jobs to approximately 6.5 million. However, the audit, consulting, tax and advisory services company feels that "there are reasons to be optimistic for the future." Chief Economist for Dodge Data & Analytics, Richard Branch, concurs. He says in the [2021 Dodge Construction Outlook](#) that recovery will happen, but he cautions that the road "will be long and fraught with potential potholes."

The potholes may include some of the challenges that construction companies have already been facing, such as project delays and cancellations, permit challenges,

increased material and equipment costs and labor shortages. Even so, there is some good news for the construction industry.

It appears that the dollar value of starts for residential buildings, nonresidential buildings and nonbuilding construction is expected to increase. It also appears that the adoption of construction accounting software within a comprehensive Cloud ERP solution, both before and during the pandemic, is set to continue post-pandemic.

Construction companies that invest in a digital strategy that includes implementing industry-specific cloud software will have an advantage over the competition, especially when the barriers to success in construction are taken into consideration.



"The jump in tech adoption this year has exacerbated the gap between those who are leading in the adoption of new tools, and those who are falling behind. Those who already had the technology in place had a much easier time moving projects forward despite the disruption this year."

- Henry D'Esposito, Senior Analyst for Construction Research, JLL

Barriers to Success in Construction

WHEN YOU TAKE THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC out of the equation, there have been barriers to success in construction for decades. One of the biggest and hardest to overcome has been the continued reliance on manual, paper-based processes and multiple, disconnected systems to manage accounting, projects, bidding, estimating and scheduling needs. Many of these disconnected systems are what are referred to as legacy solutions.

Legacy solutions are outdated and unable to integrate with other systems. They are hard to learn and require logging onto multiple apps to complete routine tasks. Construction firms that rely on them suffer from data silos, multiple versions of the truth, poor visibility, human error and lack of control. Teams in the front and back office suffer from a lack of communication with the field team and do not have visibility into the project site.

The result? Late, over-budget projects and dissatisfied customers.

In comparison, cloud-based and open systems, specifically Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solutions, like Acumatica Cloud ERP, are constantly improved and enhanced; offer mobility, personalization and

integration; and take advantage of emerging technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML).

A cloud-based ERP solution is the core of a business, seamlessly connecting disparate applications. Information from every department flows in and out of the ERP solution, allowing it to be synchronized, stored, managed and analyzed in real time. Additionally, and very importantly, the system can be remotely accessed at any time, from anywhere via mobile capabilities.

The benefits of modern accounting and construction software and a [Cloud ERP](#) solution are key to remaining competitive in a complex and competitive industry.



“Businesses managing their projects with disconnected systems ultimately find themselves fighting the ills of delays, overruns and waste. The cure is cloud-based construction project management software housed within a comprehensive Cloud ERP solution.”

- Chris Milan, VP, NexTec Group

Modernizing Your Business with Construction Management Software

It's never easy or cheap to make a huge technology investment, but it is imperative as businesses operate in the new digital economy. [Technopedia](#) defines digital economy as “a term for all of those economic processes, transactions, interactions and activities that are based on digital technologies.”

Construction businesses need to modernize with digital technologies, such as [Acumatica Construction Edition](#), to compete in the construction industry. When they do, they will be able to do the following:

1 Streamline and Enhance Communication

Communication between every department (Financials, Project Management, Construction Payroll, Inventory Management, Service Management and CRM) and all team members is necessary for construction projects to succeed. Unfortunately, disconnected systems and paper trails do not streamline or enhance communication. In fact, they do just the opposite. This is why implementing cloud-based and construction-specific software is critical.

With the right [construction management ERP software](#), construction businesses have integrated project alerts that keep team members informed of what they need to do next. This not only minimizes downtime but also eliminates unnecessary costs and delays.

Acumatica Construction Edition provides users with an Outlook add-in, which automatically updates project activities and eliminates multiple communication processes. In addition, project information, including project drawings, photos and change orders, are stored in the Cloud ERP solution, which acts as a central and easily accessed storage repository for all users.

2 Track Projects in Real Time

A cloud-based ERP for construction handles project management, accounting, payroll and inventory in one platform. The data that flows into the solution is updated and synchronized in real time.

Project managers can track costs and compare them to budgets, view and sort important documents and collaborate with other users in a timely manner. With accounting and project management connected on a single platform, users have visibility into all aspects of a project, from actual costs to change orders and from subcontractor commitments to compliance issues and more.

Tracking projects in real time equates to increased efficiency and, ultimately, increased profitability.

3 Eliminate Costly Delays

Cloud construction management software streamlines the exchange of information between your office and field teams, eliminating costly delays that have hindered construction projects for years. The system syncs when someone makes changes to items such as RFID, project issues or timecards. Important issues are addressed immediately when everyone has access to the same information.

Additionally, connected [accounting and construction software](#):

- » Cuts down on administrative overhead
- » Removes manual processes
- » Eliminates the need to re-enter data into other software

Every employee will be working with the same data. Decision-making will be faster and based on updated, accurate information.

“Acumatica Construction Edition has helped us grow revenue because we’re much more efficient at managing projects. We’ve torn down the silos we had with the client-server solution, so now we have access in one view of the data. We’re now able to see where we are cost-wise with our existing construction projects. We’re able to look at the profitability of each project, look at the customer base and understand how we are most successful.”

- Jeff Hamilton, Owner/President, Roberts Glass & Services

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Automate Workflows to Increase Collaboration

Complex, manual workflows create roadblocks. Likewise, when subcontractors, architects and contractors communicate through different methods, workflows are negatively impacted.

Industry-specific cloud software provides workflows that increase collaboration by automating tasks and processes, making data entry a one-time task and eliminating potential human error. Intuitive dashboards and alerts ensure action items will be addressed and project data will remain current.

And powerful BI tools provide a real-time analysis of current projects and intelligent forecasting of future ones.

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Gain Access to Data Anytime, from Anywhere

Connecting the field team to the front-and-back-office teams is a necessity. Cloud technology and mobile applications make a connected business possible. It's critical that construction businesses choose cloud-based construction management software that provides an integrated mobile application.

With Acumatica Construction Edition, every user can access the system from anywhere and at any time on any web-enabled device. They will have their own user experience based on their role in the company. Items can be turned on and off as needed, which makes it both flexible and secure.

Field teams are no longer required to wait to update projects or input expense claims manually. Project technicians will have an open connection to stakeholders. Projects will keep moving forward as employees shave hours off their day by viewing RFIDs, change orders and project plans directly in the mobile app.

Perhaps most importantly, businesses with remote access capabilities have remained resilient during the unexpected COVID-19 crisis. The shifting of unessential workers from the office to home was a smooth transition and ensured business continuity.



Take the Next Step

MODERN CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT EMPOWERS companies to keep projects running smoothly and profitably by helping them connect teams, manage cash flow and access critical business data from any location and at any time. Taken together, these benefits give construction companies a powerful edge over their competitors.

However, [Deloitte](#) reminds construction professionals that an investment in digital technologies, while a way to differentiate themselves from the competition, must “deliver value and return on investment.” For that to happen, construction companies must do their due diligence by thoroughly researching their Cloud ERP and accounting and construction software options.

There are many features to look for, but the most important is finding a comprehensive solution that seamlessly integrates Accounting, Project Management, Field Management, Customer Resource

Management (CRM) and Mobile Access. Acumatica Cloud ERP and Acumatica Construction Edition is just such a solution.

Acumatica is a user-friendly ERP solution that was built for the cloud, which means it's a flexible, scalable and future-proofed option for businesses in every industry. Unlike other Cloud ERP vendors, Acumatica charges for computing resources used and not for each user added, so it is an affordable option for small-to-medium-sized businesses (SMBs).

Users can access their centrally stored and real-time business data via the Internet with Acumatica's mobile application. Acumatica also provides SMBs a full suite of integrated business management applications, such as Acumatica Construction Edition, and also supports seamless integration with third-party applications, such as Procore, ProEst and DocuSign.

For construction professionals, Acumatica Construction Edition can help:

- » Organize their business (e.g., links opportunities, contracts, change orders, subcontracts and compliance) on one screen
- » Easily manage financials
- » Manage job costs with Job Cost Accounting
- » Focus on the project, not paperwork with document management
- » Make effective and wise business decisions based on synchronized project data

The bottom line? Comprehensive cloud-based [construction ERP software](#) increases organizational efficiency and customer satisfaction.

As a consulting partner with over 26 years' experience implementing modern ERP solutions, [NexTec Group](#) highly recommends Acumatica Cloud ERP and Acumatica Construction Edition for modernizing construction firms. It's an intuitive and native solution with a consistent user experience across applications. And as a firm grows, Acumatica will grow with them without charging for per-user licensing costs.

To learn more about Acumatica Cloud ERP, [contact](#) NexTec Group. NexTec is committed to helping SMBs get the most out of the software they choose. We leverage our experience in ERP and the industries we serve to support your key initiatives and drive tangible growth across your business.



“It's important to look for ERP software that gives you greater control over all aspects of your business on the executive, operational and project levels. That's the kind of control that only comes from using cloud-based construction project management software that can deliver real-time information on any web-enabled device.”

- NexTec's [Construction Management: ERP Selection Guide](#)



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About the NexTec Group

NexTec Group is an award-winning business software consulting firm with over 27 years of experience in implementing both Cloud and on-premise Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software and integrating them with Business Intelligence (BI) and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) solutions. With deep industry experience in construction, NexTec understands the challenges construction companies face and provides solutions tailored to their specific needs.

As a gold-certified Acumatica partner, NexTec has one of the largest teams in North American and has been implementing Acumatica for customers since 2015.