Elevating Our Aces in 2024: Three Trends For Continued Success in Construction

Written by: Jake Macholtz, CEO, InEight

After a season of global labor shortages, supply chain challenges, and evolving regulations, the construction industry remains as optimistic as ever. According to [InEight's Global Capital Projects Outlook, Third Edition](#), 92% of owners and 99% of contractors worldwide are optimistic about the future — and it is easy to see why. We are living in an era of unprecedented opportunity. Domestically, the Infrastructure and Jobs Act dedicated nearly $550 billion to improving American roads, bridges, and utilities while expanding opportunities for alternative energy. Globally, the rise in renewable infrastructure, mining commodities, and modernized facilities like hospitals and classrooms ensures that anyone who wants work can undoubtedly find it.

But what does that mean for us? How can we maintain organizational growth while servicing this swell in opportunity — despite a receding labor pool? I've noticed a few trends within the industry that we expect to continue in 2024.

The Success of Small Transformation

We've seen many large-scale digital transformations fail. Organizations start with grand ambitions, but those stakeholders get tied down in outside projects and cannot give the change the attention it deserves. The effort continues for a few weeks, but without executive guidance, the project is left rudderless and eventually fails.

But failure isn't inevitable. Instead of taking on everything at once, focus on one area of the business — one low-risk process

that stands to improve — and dedicate the necessary resources to seeing that change through. Functions like document management, estimating, and project controls are primed for transformation.

The idea isn't to reduce our transformative aspirations but to approach our current environment with realistic expectations. This bite-sized approach to transformation lowers the stakes and eases your organization into a new workflow. Small changes demand less attention, fewer resources, and show clear benefits once the transformation is underway.

While it's smart to take things one step at a time and approach transformation in a digestible manner, having a long-term vision in mind when starting your transformation is key. You want to identify resources that integrate, rather than siloing your data and operations into ad hoc solutions. Adopt one piece at a time until you've completed that integrated environment.

The Rise of End-To-End Solution

Until recently, resource integration wasn't on anyone's mind. Instead, our industry adopted the tools they needed when they needed them, did the job, and moved on. As our tech sophistication has matured, we're beginning to realize the benefits of an integrated toolbox. We can't just acquire ad hoc solutions anymore. We need an end-to-end solution.

The tech resources of tomorrow rely on standardized data. As our focus shifts from acquiring technology to automating the tools we have, we need solutions that can provide that standardization. While artificial intelligence is still a long way from practical construction applications, there's ample opportunity here for existing machine learning engines to step in and help organizations structure that data for future use.

End-to-end solutions allow organizations to create a single source of truth for every project — a consolidated dashboard with each variable accounted for and displayed in real-time. As a result, this standardization can help improve transparency across stakeholders and supports greater accountability between owners and contractors.

The Increase in Collaboration

We are seeing greater collaboration between owners, contractors, and engineers, and I don't expect that to change any time soon. The old model of owners and engineers collaborating on a design and then kicking it over to the contractor to figure out just results in more change orders, unforeseen risks, and unhappy partnerships than it's worth. This increase in data, transparency, and accountability supports a more collaborative partner ecosystem where contractors can bring their expertise into the design phase to create the best designs for the project. As the build progresses, owners have greater project certainty and can share the burden of risk to minimize the impact of unforeseen challenges.

Greater collaboration can improve schedule scope, reduce risk, and maintain costs throughout a project's lifecycle. Stakeholders inevitably deliver a better project by working together from day one.

Looking Forward

These trends tell a story — that our industry's future is built on communication and foresight. Our ambitions — whether digital transformation or delivering the best final product — rely on strategic planning and a touch of grace. We must be patient with ourselves throughout these changes and remember that those changes connect to a greater vision. Then, feed those innovations into delivering better services to our partners. While improved efficiency and productivity are always at the front of our minds, the true benefits of transformation lie in our ability to empower teams with the best tools and affirm customers with improved visibility into how we use their resources to achieve a shared vision.

The data couldn't be more straightforward — 2024 is a great time to be in the construction market. I look forward to seeing what we can create.

About the Author