

# Improving Construction Project Documentation and Communication Through Implementation of a Document Management Software in a Collaborative Environment

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## **Introduction**

Two components at the heart of a successful project are effective communication and comprehensive project documentation. Both have long been recognized as methodologies, which can help to prevent a project from ending in costly litigation. Construction industry sources suggest that 85% of a Project Managers time is spent on communication, 70% of project documentation is paper based and 50% of all construction projects involve litigation. So as the project team becomes consumed generating a myriad of documents to effectively communicate and document the construction progress, who is left to look ahead and build the project. It is because of these factors and concerns that there is a need to improve the process of communication and documentation on construction projects.

This paper presents an approach employing technology that has proven to be effective in addressing many of the challenges faced on construction projects in the areas of communications and project documentation. It is based on the experiences of JJG as it dealt with the challenges, looked for alternatives, and implemented a solution.

## **Communication & Documentation Challenges**

Construction projects require the interaction of numerous project team members including, but not limited to, the project Owner, Design Engineer, other design professionals, Construction Manager, General Contractor, Specialty Subcontractors, and Vendors/Suppliers. This interaction is a contractual requirement, which cannot be avoided. In most cases the team members have not worked together in the past and each member on the project has to learn how to interact with other project team members. Inevitably the team members come to the project with their own set of procedures reflective of their respective corporate cultures. Procedures must be established and adopted by the project team that clearly define the workflow process of documents beginning with their initial generation.

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