

Case Study

Plumbing Contractor finds “it’s all in one place” with Trimble Materials



Introduction

Best Mechanical Plumbing is a distinguished provider of comprehensive mechanical services for large-scale projects. With a focus on high-rise residential and commercial buildings, particularly those with 50 units or more, Best Mechanical Plumbing’s offerings span a broad range of applications—including plumbing, sprinklers, and other mechanical systems. Over the past 10 years, Best Mechanical has honed its expertise and evolved its services, largely catering to the new construction segment, a niche that has cemented the company’s standing in the industry.

“It [Trimble Materials] saves everyone involved time and money so we can focus on doing our best work and growing our business.”



Best Mechanical Plumbing’s commitment to quality, technical proficiency, and a strong understanding of the ever-evolving market demands contributes to their success. Through its decade-long journey, the company has navigated various trends and challenges in the plumbing and sprinkler industry. Yet, it is their dedication to consistently delivering top-notch services, even in the face of rapid industry changes, that distinguishes Best Mechanical as a trusted partner for their clients.

Despite their success and growth Best Mechanical Plumbing was not without its challenges. As the number of their projects and the scale of operations increased, the company recognized the need for a more efficient and organized system to manage their procurement processes. This was when they turned to Trimble® Materials.



Identifying the Problem

The team at Best Mechanical Plumbing faced the common, yet critical, business challenge of managing their procurement processes effectively. With every foreman operating differently, often dealing directly with suppliers through individual methods such as text and email, the process was chaotic. Tracking orders, identifying bottlenecks, and maintaining visibility of the process became exceedingly difficult.

These hurdles were not merely administrative. With numerous jobs running concurrently, the inability to efficiently track orders and identify where potential issues may lie meant that projects could be delayed, and resources mismanaged. Questions such as whether materials had been ordered, when they were ordered, who placed the order, and whether the supply house was late became increasingly difficult to answer. The lack of a unified platform was leading to inefficiencies, confusion, and miscommunication.

“If things are not organized, eventually it is going to cost you more. There are going to be double orders. There will be a lot of issues if orders are not in one place or are not organized. We can’t have a foreman doing it one way, a project manager doing it another, and the office doing it yet another.”

- Shaya Weinberger, Office Program Manager





Moreover, some employees still relied on paper-based methods to track their work, which often got lost in the shuffle. This not only exacerbated the problem but also presented a serious risk to project timelines, efficiency, and ultimately, cost-effectiveness.

Beyond these operational challenges, the lack of an organized system was leading to more serious issues. They noticed an alarming trend of double orders and other costly mistakes. Unorganized and unclear processes were leading to financial losses and heightened frustrations among team members. The company knew they needed a streamlined solution—a single platform to manage and monitor their procurement processes effectively and efficiently. They needed Trimble Materials.

Challenges



Manual purchasing
and invoice processing



Unclear cost
visibility



Late delivery
of materials



Deciding on Trimble Materials

Best Mechanical Plumbing knew they needed a solution tailored to their needs. They wanted a purchase order system that was specifically designed for the construction industry. The market offered various tools, some targeted at plumbing or construction, but most were aimed at vendors rather than contractors or subcontractors.

Trimble Materials’s construction industry focus caught the attention of leadership. Trimble Materials not only offered a comprehensive purchase order system, but was also designed specifically for contractors and subcontractors, aligning with Best Mechanical’s requirements for collaboration, communication, and even integration with their ERP system.



Solving Problems with Trimble Materials

With Trimble Materials, the workflow at the company was transformed. The foreman on-site can place an order request using the Trimble Materials mobile app. This request is then forwarded to the approving authority. After approval, the order is sent directly to the chosen vendor.

On receiving the order at the job site, the team uses Trimble Materials to document what was received. Any problems or discrepancies, such as back orders, are recorded in detail, allowing for edits on each line item. If 100 units were ordered but only 50 received, the system allows for these changes to be documented accurately.

Once the vendor invoice arrives, it is sent directly to Trimble Materials, where it is matched with the corresponding purchase order. Best Mechanical can easily compare their PO with the invoice, verifying that they matched perfectly. If all was in order, the invoice is approved.





The Benefits of Trimble Materials

The process of approving invoices became significantly more efficient with Trimble Materials. Discrepancies, such as being charged for a backordered item, could be easily identified and rectified. A dashboard feature provided a quick overview of orders per job. This was helpful for checking orders of specific items, like couplings, for different jobs.

Furthermore, Trimble Materials saved line items from invoices, essentially creating a catalog synced with vendor invoices. This feature enabled Best Mechanical to quickly generate reports on any item, assessing costs, and comparing actual usage against estimates.

Adopting Trimble Materials also impacted Best Mechanical’s interactions with suppliers. All suppliers receive orders via Trimble Materials. This uniformity ensures that important updates, like backorders, are communicated efficiently.





Conclusion: A New Era of Efficiency with Trimble Materials

The partnership between Best Mechanical Plumbing and Trimble Materials marked a significant turning point in their operational process. The integration of Trimble Materials into their workflows ushered in an era of unprecedented efficiency. The move to a unified ordering and invoicing system reduced discrepancies, improved supplier communication, and created an accessible repository of orders and invoices. It made tracking of orders, even in the field, a seamless task.

Indeed, Trimble Materials has been a game-changer for Best Mechanical Plumbing. It has simplified complexities, increased transparency, and enhanced operational speed. The adoption of Trimble Materials has not only proved beneficial in the immediate term but has also set a foundation for continued success in the future. The initial resistance to change has been replaced by a collective recognition of the value that this powerful tool brings, and Best Mechanical Plumbing is now more efficient than ever before.



I would absolutely recommend Trimble Materials. They streamline the process, the orders... there’s nothing like it on the field. You always know what orders you have already placed, what you’re waiting on, when it’s coming, what’s going on with deliveries...it’s all in one place.”

— **Shaya Weinberger**,
Office Program Manager,

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About Trimble

Trimble is developing technology, software and services that drive the digital transformation of construction with solutions that span the entire architecture, engineering and construction (AEC) industry. Empowering teams across the construction lifecycle, Trimble's innovative approach improves coordination and collaboration between stakeholders, teams, phases and processes. Trimble's Connected Construction strategy gives users control of their operations with best-in-class solutions and a common data environment. By automating work and transforming workflows, Trimble is enabling construction professionals to improve productivity, quality, transparency, safety, sustainability and deliver each project with confidence.