

The Steel Detailer's Guide to Surviving the Great Resignation

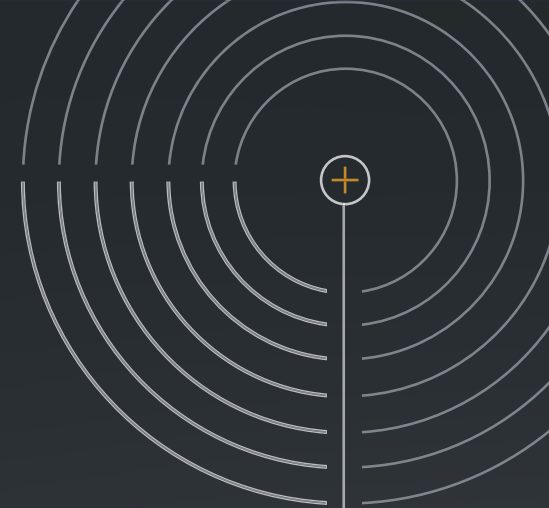
Three proven ways technology can help





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Introduction:

Current Market Conditions

Facing labor shortages in the steel industry may not be a new issue, but recent factors have aggravated the situation. Inflationary pressures combined with the growth in new construction have increased the demand for detailers and driven up the salary range for this vital position. This has led to an even greater number of detailers moving to new firms, and since the industry appears to favor hiring seasoned pros over building new detailers from scratch, the shortage is only going to get worse.

The companies that find a way to navigate the Great Resignation will have huge competitive advantages, including having the ability to scale operations to take on more work. Those adversely affected by the growing shortage of steel detailers will struggle to consistently follow efficient workflows, be distracted by constantly hiring and onboarding new employees and struggle to cultivate a productive culture in their firm.

The goal of this ebook is to help you avoid these issues by providing some insight into how technology can help you retain your current detailers, attract and create new ones and ultimately survive the Great Resignation.

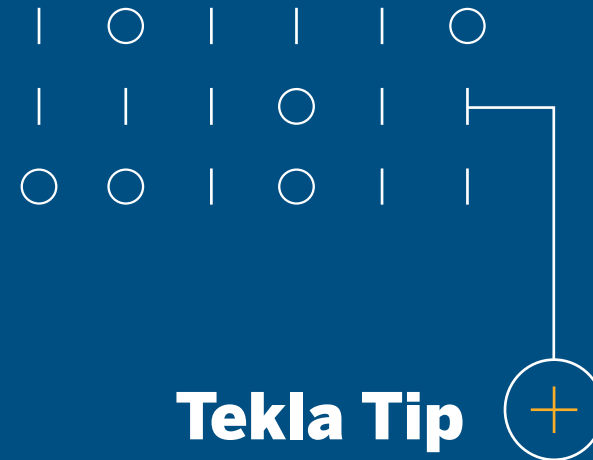


Chapter 1:

Driving Efficiencies Through Technology

An obvious goal for organizations that are hampered with bandwidth issues due to open positions is to maximize the productivity of existing resources—including human resources. Typically, this objective is much easier to identify than it is to accomplish, but technology can play a key role in meeting this challenge, especially when it comes to steel detailing.

Steel building information modeling (BIM) software is one such technology that will help your detailing team to reach peak efficiencies. It mitigates the risk of errors you'll need to go back and resolve later and automates all the necessary changes made with only a single adjustment through parametric design.



Tekla Tip

The use of properly configured BIM software can dramatically increase the productivity of your team. For example, almost every aspect of Tekla Structures is customizable. Easy to modify shape libraries and hardware catalogs, connection settings and the ability to create fully custom parametric user connections allow you to create a model that exactly represents your project. Tools are included to create and modify reports, BOM's and title blocks means your deliverables to your shop or your customer have exactly the appearance and data they need that sets your company apart. With all of this set up company-wide or as a specific customer standard, your team hits the ground running when starting a new project.

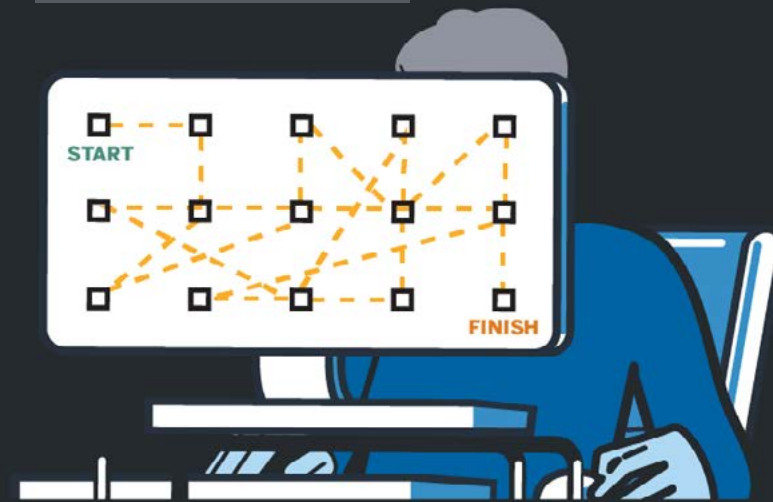
“When we were detailing steel in 2D CAD, we could expect to have a dozen or more mistakes on a 100-ton job. With Tekla Structures, we rarely have even one. It’s nice not to get calls from the shop or erector about things not adding up or not fitting.”

Mark Haywiser
Vice President, Seech Industries

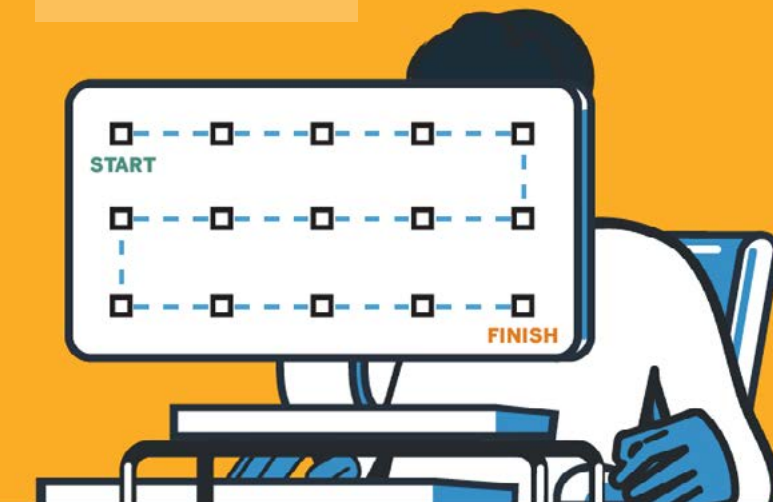
3D detailing software also serves as a great platform to implement standardized processes and ensure your desired workflow is followed with every project—no matter if the detailer is a seasoned veteran or the greenest of rookies. By using this technology to standardize processes, you make common tasks easy to replicate.

For these reasons, organizations that leverage all the features of their steel detailing software can optimize the throughput of the detailers they have on staff and onboard new detailers at a much quicker pace.

WITHOUT BIM



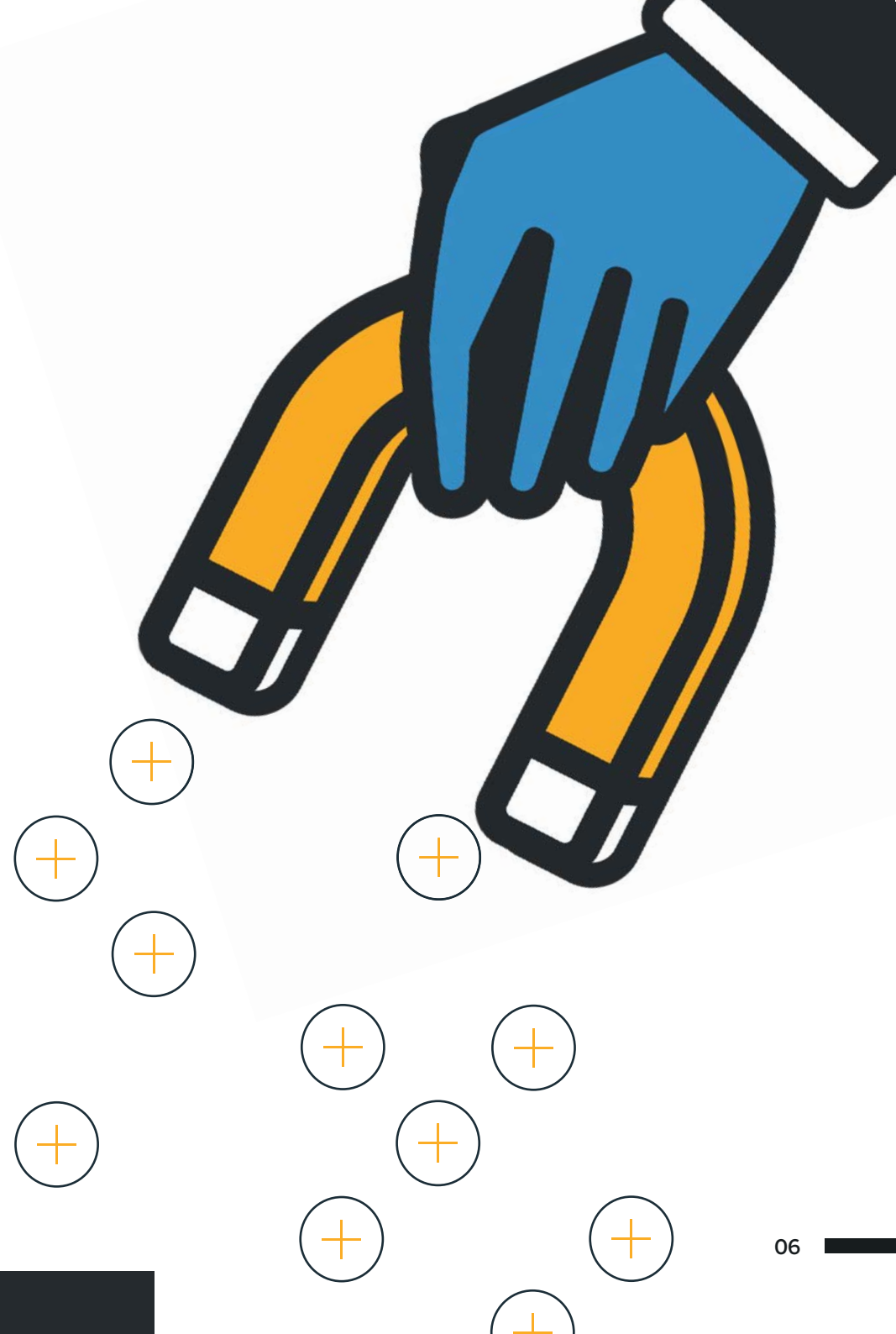
WITH BIM



Chapter 2:

Maintaining Current Staff & Attracting New Talent

In today's marketplace, understanding how to leverage the latest technology to achieve desired outcomes has a huge effect on an employee's value. This principle now applies to virtually any position in an organization but none more than for steel detailers. As the industry continues to adopt new technologies, and as a result more efficient workflows, the demand for tech-savvy detailers also continues to rise. This of course has not gone unnoticed by detailers who are now looking for opportunities to work with advanced technology and increase their compensation.



EMPLOYEES ARE LOOKING FOR:



For organizations still clinging to old processes, this is bad news. Their detailers are more likely to jump ship to an organization that exposes them to software whose users are valued in the marketplace. Progressive organizations that embrace new technologies are more likely to keep their detailers in place provided they're properly compensated. On the other hand, if you do happen to lose a detailer, the advanced software you use will make it more likely to attract the right talent.

Of course, just having BIM software available for use is not enough. Organizations need to invest in their BIM users by training them on how to best utilize this powerful tool on an ongoing basis and not just when they're new to the organization. The most successful firms leverage existing training offered by software companies, as well as internal best practices training, to both onboard new detailers as well as to turn moderate users into advanced users. The software you use and the training you provide are huge selling points to new hires and should be promoted in job listings in order to attract the best candidates.

Chapter 3:

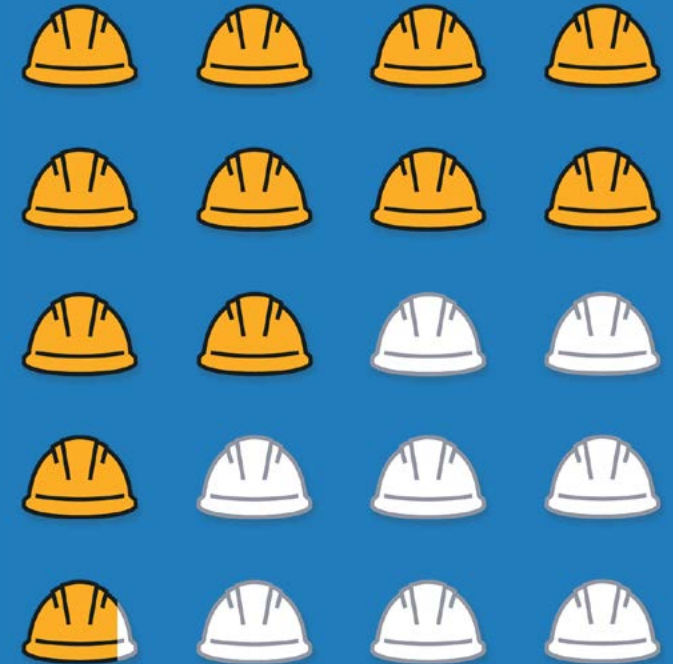
Quickly Building New Detailers

Traditionally, firms have grown their detailing capabilities by enticing an existing detailer at another firm to join their organization. This of course creates a domino effect—the firm that's now down a detailer recruits a replacement from a competitor's firm, the merry-go-round continues, and then without training programs for new detailers, results in an overall a lack of talent.

This trend of trading detailers over training new ones is not sustainable. The consulting firm McKinsey & Company reports over 41% of US professionals within the construction industry will retire within the next 10 years.¹ “Construction professionals” is a fairly broad term, but it feels like this statistic translates well to steel detailers. It is time for even the best of talent-recruiting detailing shops to prepare for this eventuality.

How to best build new detailers and what qualities you should look for in prospective candidates is a very hot subject right now in the industry. Look for a future eBook from your friends at Trimble on the subject in the near future.

▶ ▶ ▶ ▶ ▶ ▶ **41%**
of the US construction
workforce is expected
to retire by 2031¹



Tekla Tip



Tekla supports their users by offering training and useful tips in multiple formats. This includes live in-person and remote training as well as on-demand digital learning plus tutorial videos and user forums online. The Tekla User Assistance website is a very useful resource for both rookies and veteran users.

Tekla Structures is much more user friendly than the first modeling program we tried and it lends itself to learning during production.

Doug Malm
Owner, Steel Detailing Services

Bonus:

Embracing Diversity

While this does not tie directly back to technology, we thought it important and impactful enough to discuss embracing diversity. Being competitive today requires revising your idea of what the “ideal worker” looks like and expanding the pool you pull prospective candidates from. Today’s leading companies are beginning to use a technique called “blind hiring” where they only pay attention to the skills applicants have, rather than their biographical data.² This allows you to be more objective and hire applicants who can excel in the role you’re hiring for but might otherwise have been overlooked because they don’t fit the idea of the “typical worker” for that role. The larger the pool of prospective candidates, the greater chance you’ll find the optimal future detailer for your team.

Plus, several studies have indicated that having diversity in your workforce leads to better team problem solving and improved financial outcomes for the organization.^{3,4}

Conclusion:

Leverage Tech to Thrive

Organizations that leverage technology to maximize peak efficiencies while retaining current detailers and recruiting the best future detailers when needed will position themselves to thrive. Those that do not react quick enough or fail to incorporate technology into their game plan will expend all their time and energy dealing with bandwidth issues, never-ending onboarding delays and countless candidate interviews.

The market conditions that are exasperating the current steel detailer shortage are complex and hard to predict, but you can be certain they will not be short-lived. Even in an improved economy with lower inflation and sustained growth, there will still be more detailers leaving the market than entering. There are several things you can do to survive The Great Resignation, but no matter what your game plan is, incorporating the use of the latest technology—including BIM—software should play a significant role in the strategy.



Schedule a demo today to learn more about how Tekla Structures can help you survive The Great Resignation.

Schedule a demo



Sources

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