How BSA | Allstaff uses PlanGrid to standardise construction collaboration

Mechanical | BSA | Allstaff | Case Study

Since its founding in 1975, BSA | Allstaff has continued to be a market leader in the field of air conditioning and mechanical services, establishing a reputation for high quality work in both design and installation. To carry out their tradition of being innovative and collaborative, they made PlanGrid their solution to keep a better record of materials, add markups, and document inspection records.

Problem

BSA | Allstaff is known for designing and delivering service installations, which are efficient, easy to maintain and the best value for the cost. The company has operations in every major capital city in Australia including Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Canberra, Adelaide, Port Headland and Darwin, making it the largest provider of Design & Construct mechanical services in Australia. Driven to ensure proper document control amongst all of the contractors working on the same project, BSA | Allstaff's Construction Manager, Andrew Decker, went in search of a construction productivity software that would allow the team to be more collaborative and to build confidently. He also sought a tool that would help to maintain a record of construction materials, which could all be stored in a central repository.

When an unrelated building in Melbourne caught fire due to usage of incorrect materials, BSA | Allstaff did a deeper dive into their search for a construction software that would help them keep a robust record of all materials being used across the project site by their field team. They also required that the software make it easy for their team to standardise this material record system across their entire organisation. By being able to track the impact of certain materials on a specific construction project, the hope was that they could learn from that experience and plan better for future projects to prevent other disasters or delays. For example, knowing that flammable material was previously used at the Melbourne building, they wanted a software that would allow them to easily identify the material, recognise the risk, and take action accordingly before the same result could occur at any of their other 85 projects currently in construction.

Solution and Implementation

Andrew Decker and the BSA | Allstaff team decided to use PlanGrid to help them carry out construction for the Sage Hotel at Eastland Shopping Centre in Victoria. Sage Hotel Ringwood, located in Melbourne's East at the gateway to the Yarra Valley, opened its doors on Tuesday 10 October and is the first hotel in Victoria to sit atop a shopping centre. The brand new 120-room, full-service Sage Hotel Ringwood spans five floors above the Eastland Shopping Centre and includes a restaurant, bar, conference and co-working facilities comprising of a boardroom, function room and a co-working space with a capacity of 80 people.

"Being able to send photos to the drawing office team, plus document issues, assign and show the exact area to be repaired has made the team more productive... as they say a picture is worth a thousand words and these automated words have been a huge productivity saver"

– **Andrew Decker**, Construction Manager, BSA | Allstaff

Prior to using PlanGrid, BSA | Allstaff's foreman and field team only utilised laptops onsite. They were not making use of mobile tablets at all. Introducing PlanGrid was a game changer, allowing them to fully experience the value that tablets bring to a construction site. Due to its portability and convenience, the PlanGrid mobile app on a tablet made it easier and more effective for all materials and deliveries to be checked and recorded. To do that, the BSA | Allstaff made use of PlanGrid's Issues to track information in near real time. Specifically, the team was able to take photos of materials instantly and seamlessly pin these photos to a relevant issue, which could be accessed at a later time or shared with the team via email or in PlanGrid. While they primarily added stamps to record materials that could result in fire penetrations, PlanGrid's Issue Stamp labeling made it easy for the team to filter by category or easily spot the issue stamp on a drawing or sheet. Previously, this process would take days.

In addition to looking for a construction software that could help them track and manage materials, Andrew and the BSA | Allstaff team wanted a tool that would allow them to easily add markups to drawings in order to note minor changes to blueprints. After downloading PlanGrid, the team learned very quickly how easy PlanGrid was to use and how many other features existed to help them be more productive on the job. In short, they were not limited to using PlanGrid only for document storage or markups.

Another goal for the BSA | Allstaff team was to ensure that other contractors, who may or may not be as technically savvy, would be able jump in and pick up PlanGrid right away. Because PlanGrid was so user-friendly and intuitive, there were no problems with widespread adoption amongst the other contractors, which helped further the team's mission to standardise to one software and workflow. With additional support provided by the PlanGrid team, the other contractors were keen to jump on board and were able to make full use of the mobile software.

> *"The PlanGrid staff was helpful in demonstrating the additional functionality to the crew, which helped grow usage of the other features onsite"*
>
> – **Andrew Decker**, Construction Manager, BSA | Allstaff

As soon as PlanGrid was introduced to the original project, Eastland Shopping Centre Sage Hotel, it quickly became entrenched in BSA | Allstaff's other major projects. Even for larger projects, which can take as long as 12 months to two years, the BSA | Allstaff team found that PlanGrid continued to enable collaboration among all of the contractors and trades. Specifically, it allowed all individuals to mark up drawings, indicate progress and note claims and errors, which would require a change. And finally, PlanGrid made it easy to document inspection test records.

BSA | Allstaff's Site Foremen, Project Managers and others have all commented positively on how PlanGrid increased communication flow between team members and ensured that everybody was working off the correct version of a sheet or document. Gone were the days of having to sit around and wait in order to transport or deliver the latest version of construction documents, this information was now immediately available in PlanGrid.

Results

BSA | Allstaff successfully implemented PlanGrid into their organisation as a construction collaboration tool that is now the standard for how their team adds markups and documents inspection test records. They have also managed to influence partner subcontractors and clients to use PlanGrid to effectively communicate from anywhere and at any point throughout the entire project lifecycle.

Key Benefits and Results

- Easier and more effective to check and record all materials and deliveries.

- Take photos of materials instantly and seamlessly pin photos to relevant issues, which could be easily shared with the team.

- No problems with widespread adoption of PlanGrid, better allowing them to standardise to one software and workflow.

- Even for projects that took 1-2 years, the BSA | Allstaff team kept up collaboration among contractors and specialty trades.

PlanGrid

"PlanGrid is like having the whole project in your pocket"

– Andrew Decker, Construction Manager, BSA | Allstaff