How Davenport Masonry Wins GC's over with Time-Saving Technology

Davenport Masonry's projects are wide-ranging in scale and detail, requiring a breadth of skills and employees who are always eager to innovate and learn. The company compares this desire for continuous improvement to the Japanese concept of kaizen, the principle through which businesses constantly strive to change for the better. One result of Davenport's commitment to that principle: adopting PlanGrid.

A constant challenge to stay up to date

Kyle Lochonic, Project Manager at Davenport Masonry, has seen a lot of change during his 25-year tenure with the company. But even until a few years ago, one of the biggest problems that Kyle and the Davenport team faced on a daily basis was that people in the field could not work and collaborate effectively because they often did not have the latest drawings.

Before PlanGrid, Davenport had tried out several other technologies to try to help the team go paperless and access drawings from mobile devices, but nothing seemed to stick. "We tried a few different solutions on previous projects, but the problem didn't go away. I'd walk up to our estimator's office and still see paper all over the place."

Davenport might have a dozen or so projects going on at a particular time—they've recently worked on the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business, numerous high-rise brick student housing projects and the Driving Dynamics Lab at the Ford test track. On each project, one or two sets of updated bulletins might come in every week. But getting those updates to the workers laying the bricks or installing granite slabs would require hours of work for Lochonic.

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"To get them the latest, I would need to first sort, then print, then distribute. And when I'm busy — which is always — I would put that process off, for weeks sometimes. There was always something else that was even more important, but meanwhile, the guys wouldn't have what they need."

— **Kyle Lochonic**
Project Manager, Davenport Masonry
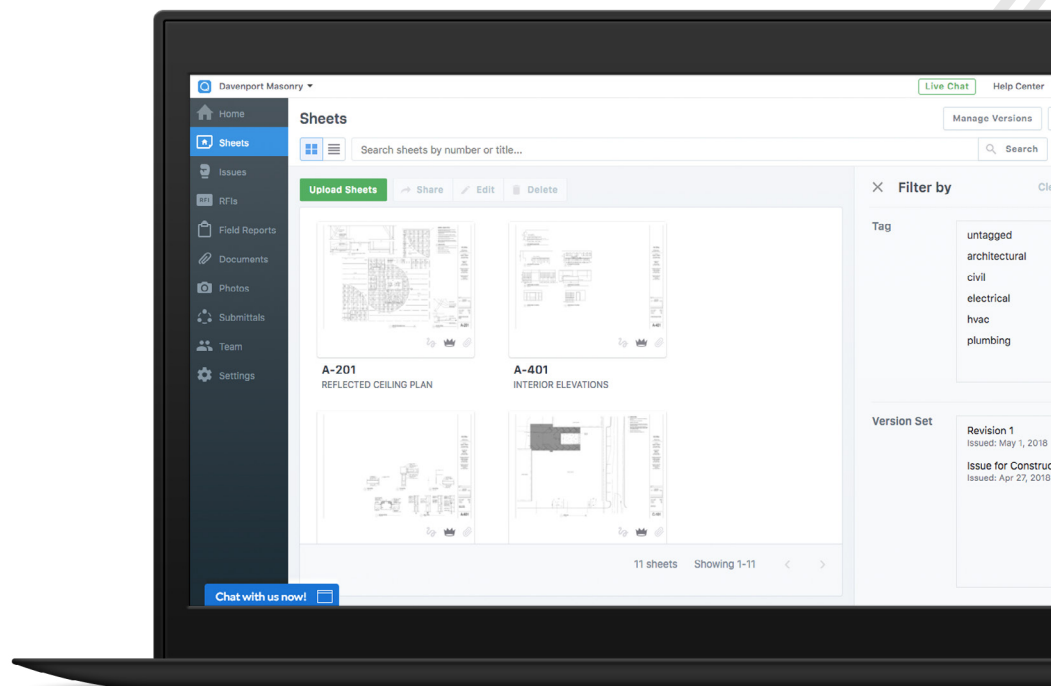
Sharing information immediately and bringing consistency to workflows

Davenport first tested PlanGrid with just a handful of employees two years ago and hasn't looked back. Even in cases where the general contractor on a project uses a different technology solution, Davenport uses PlanGrid on all of their projects to more efficiently manage their own work. "With PlanGrid we have confidence in a system that not only gives us a digital paper trail of what's happened on each project, but a clear chain of custody and smoother workflows from the estimation stage to turnover."

Estimators at Davenport use PlanGrid to access photos and all project documentation, which are hyperlinked directly to the drawings in PlanGrid. During construction, the minute an email comes in with a bulletin, Lochonic opens PlanGrid, drags the drawings in and within

minutes the entire team is updated no matter where they are or what device they're using. Using Sheet Compare in PlanGrid accelerates this process even more by highlighting changes from older to newer version sets. "What used to take me hours, now takes me five minutes," he says. "The things that I used to procrastinate on are now what I get done the quickest." The people in the field now always have the most current drawings, and have all of the project documents available in PlanGrid, from reports to Excel spreadsheets."

Both during construction and at closeout, the Davenport team is able to easily export reports and as-built drawings that include all of the markups, photos and other information that was captured in the field.

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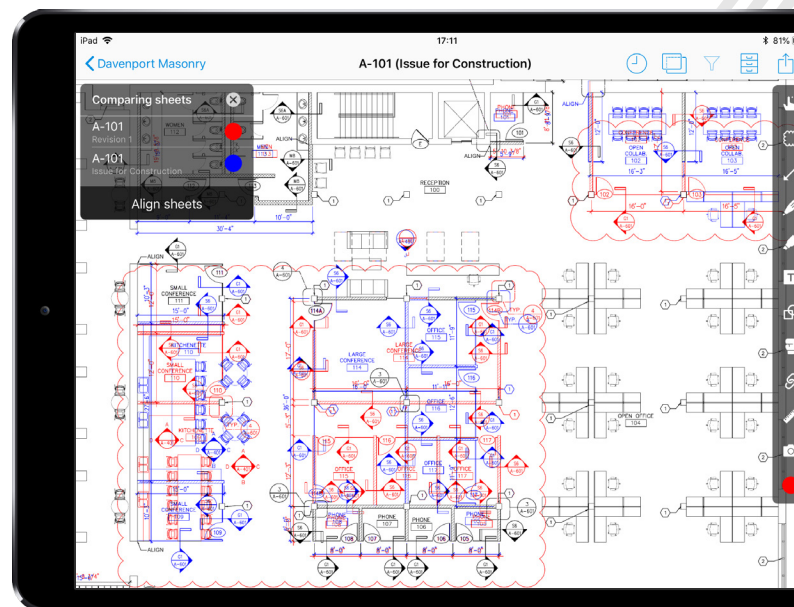
Eliminating costly mistakes and saving time

Giving the entire team access to up to date project information via PlanGrid quickly proved to be a valuable investment for Davenport. In the past, rework caused by building from outdated drawings was a considerable cost and point of frustration for Davenport as a business. Lochonic shares that, "PlanGrid aligns perfectly with the 'do it right the first time' goal that we had set for ourselves because everyone now has the current information."

Immediate access to drawings and documents has also saved individuals multiple hours per week, just by not having to go back to a trailer to find documents and immediately sharing markups. Bulletins are now distributed in a matter of minutes instead of several hours, which not only gives Lochonic more time to spend on important tasks but ensures that people aren't working from the wrong information.

Nowadays if a general contractor isn't using PlanGrid on a project, Lochonic tries to persuade them to at least try it, citing all of the productivity gains he and his team have realized over the years. "At the end of the day what really sets PlanGrid apart is that it's just dirt simple to use," Lochonic explains. "When it comes to technology in our industry, that is what's needed to get the whole team on board."

Key Benefits

- **Cut time uploading, editing and distributing each set of sheets down from several hours to only minutes.**

- **Ensures that new sheets or documents are provided to the field within 10 minutes.**

- **Automatic Sheet Compare cuts time and removes the extra step of going back-and-forth between sheets to manually locate differences.**

- **Having a single source of truth enhances conversations when speaking to foremen or estimators and reduces the amount of calls needed.**

- **Digital record means having a clear chain of workflows, from estimation to turnover.**