

How J. Calnan & Associates, Inc. standardized on PlanGrid to boost project efficiency and collaboration

Construction Management | J. Calnan & Associates, Inc. | Case Study



As a construction management firm, J. Calnan & Associates (JC&A) drives the entire building process from RFP and design to owner move-in, managing owners and subcontractors on a range of large commercial projects. With complete responsibility for coordination and scheduling throughout each project, the risk is on them if things fall behind.

The Problem: How to align all project stakeholders and trades

From ground-up Corporate Headquarters to fast-track commercial office space projects, to Manufacturing facilities, Science and Technology projects and Academic buildings, the more effectively project stakeholders can share information and communicate on these projects, the better the outcomes are for JC&A's clients and each project as a whole.

In 2010, the company started exploring ways to bring technology to the job site to help manage projects more effectively. Dan Charest, Project Executive with JC&A shares how before they found PlanGrid, "The first few years were tough. We couldn't sync our company email with iPads at that time, and sharing pdf's over email just wasn't cutting it." JC&A sought a solution that would facilitate communication and coordination across trades, make it easy to track progress and deal with design changes on the fly, and do everything in between to ensure that projects stay on schedule.

The Solution: One source of truth for information and mobile collaboration

In 2012, Charest discovered PlanGrid and had several of his teams using it weeks later. "It was amazing how quickly people took to it," he explains. "PlanGrid was so easy for anyone to use and had this 'cool factor', others started asking me if they could use it too." Because of the impact PlanGrid has had on communication, collaboration, and transparency at every stage of its projects, JC&A has now standardized the use of PlanGrid on every project, and even mandates that subcontractors buy it for all projects.

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PlanGrid was first used project-wide on a \$38-million project, a new headquarters for Schneider Electric in Andover, MA. Project Executive Jeff Cameron explains, "With PlanGrid everyone always had the most up-to-date plans, specs, and any other information they could possibly need, from any mobile device, anywhere."

Additionally, PlanGrid quickly became the company's de facto quality management tool. Work-to-complete lists and Punchlists were a breeze because photos, descriptions and other information were all immediately accessible and neatly organized; and if any problems arose, an issue could be created in PlanGrid with a required fix, photo, and be assigned to the necessary specialty contractor.

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JC&A is now more transparent with all stakeholders than ever, and they attribute this in large part to PlanGrid's ability to track the progress of each project. Commenting on the Issues and Photos tools in PlanGrid, Charest explains, "You can almost create time-lapse photography because we're tracking the progress, seeing what it becomes over six month's time. From a control standpoint, anyone can look back a previous month or year and see for instance, when they started closing up the walls after inspection."

Most importantly, PlanGrid allows JC&A to mitigate risks in coordinating the work of various trades. For example, the electrical crew can overlay the electrical plans with the mechanical plans to track changes and any potential conflicts. "No one can say, 'well, I only got the electrical plans, so I couldn't cross-reference the mechanical,'" said Charest. "All of the project information is in one place and accessible to everyone."

Results: Making individuals more productive improves the bottom line

JC&A has now standardized the use of PlanGrid throughout the organization--everyone on every project is expected to use it—and have already completed hundreds of projects using PlanGrid. The decision to adopt and mandate PlanGrid across all projects was driven by three critical factors: increased transparency for all stakeholders, increased efficiency and time savings on a variety of tasks for every member of the project team, and ultimately, helping to increase revenue and profitability.

In terms of efficiency of people and tasks, JC&A has boosted productivity in a number of tangible ways. For example, processing a potential change order (PCO) used to take a month or more; but with PlanGrid they now take a week or week and a half at most. Improvements like this enable individuals to cut out wasted time and focus on important work. Project Executive Jeff Cameron shares that, "Before PlanGrid, APMs were flooded with pushing lots of paper on every project. With the efficiency of PlanGrid they have reduced time spent on administrative tasks by up to 50 percent, and can now focus more of their time on other critical tasks."

PCOs processed 4x faster

Processing potential change orders went from taking more than a month on average to one week.

Up to 50% reduction in time spent on administrative tasks

Assistant Project Managers are now able focus more of their time on critical tasks.

JC&A sees PlanGrid as a partnership, growing together, aligned through technology. "PlanGrid continues to deliver innovative features and capabilities that align with our needs," says Charest. "It's truly changing the way that work gets done."