How CoveKinloch delivers projects before schedule and maximises profits

Subcontractor | CoveKinloch | Case Study

CoveKinloch New Zealand Limited is a long established, leading building consulting group delivering professional and technical expertise to those working within the built environment sector. Today, they have grown to a 40+ person team of experienced professionals who represent a range of multi-disciplinary skills. Due to internal complaints about having to carry around paperwork onsite, CoveKinloch was driven to implement PlanGrid across the company.

Problem

Based in Auckland, CoveKinloch operates from three regional centers and provides services all throughout New Zealand. Their services range from technical building consulting, commercial building surveying, building compliance, fire engineering and fire evacuation. It is the strength of the quality and experience of their staff that underpin their reputation for technical and professional expertise.

Of their many services, one aspect of their work is passive fire surveys, which is an inspection of fire and smoke separation within a commercial building. This line of work requires identifying and locating all defects within a building, creating a comprehensive report, and advising clients on what to do to rectify the defects. To do this, building compliance inspectors typically come prepared with a myriad of items, including paperwork, folders, cameras, and mobile phones.

Due to internal complaints from their building compliance inspectors about having to carry around loads of paperwork and other materials, CoveKinloch was driven to evaluate mobile software solutions. Having already moved their company in the direction of cloud-based software for desktop, a mobile solution was a natural next step, allowing them to keep up with innovative technology and accelerate progress across their locations.
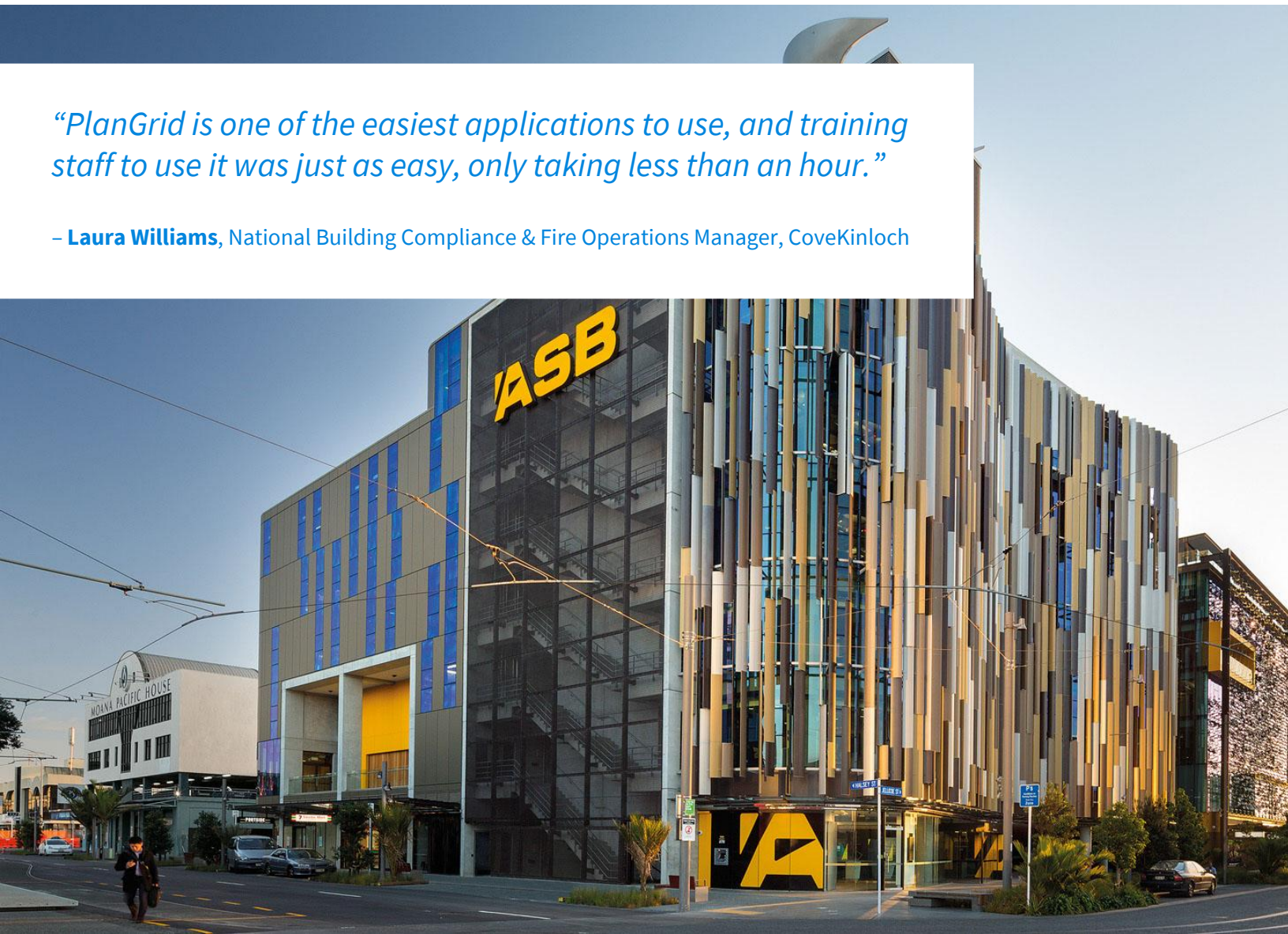
Solution and Implementation

CoveKinloch had high standards for a mobile solution. During their evaluation, they looked for a tool that would improve efficiency for employees, both for individuals in the field and for those in the office, making their day-to-day easier. They also wanted their business to be more digital by finding a solution that would empower them to eliminate the use of paper. They knew if they implemented the solution correctly, there was a high chance that productivity on their projects would improve, saving their business money and improving profitability.

To ensure that nothing went unaddressed, they wanted the ability to markup where there were defects or issues so they could share the information with clients. They also wanted to be able to take photos on their mobile device and easily attach them to reports for context.

In 2017, CoveKinloch discovered PlanGrid and soon after, decided to implement PlanGrid on a passive fire survey for a 17-storey commercial building. Learning how to use PlanGrid was quick. Laura Williams, National Building Compliance & Fire Operations Manager at CoveKinloch, and her colleague were able to pick up PlanGrid in a matter of a few short hours and in turn, were able to quickly train other team members. While they started their software search focusing on mobile tools, they quickly learned how they could benefit from PlanGrid's web functions as well.

Convincing CoveKinloch employees to use PlanGrid was easy. By informing team members that PlanGrid would save them time on the jobsite and in the office, and would also allow photos and notes to be synced instantly, everyone was immediately willing to try it.

"PlanGrid is one of the easiest applications to use, and training staff to use it was just as easy, only taking less than an hour."

– **Laura Williams**, National Building Compliance & Fire Operations Manager, CoveKinloch

Results

Based on the team's quick adoption of PlanGrid for passive fire surveys, CoveKinloch has expanded their use of PlanGrid for other services they provide. Since they implemented PlanGrid, their team has added thousands of annotations, photos, and issues.

The PlanGrid feature that their team has utilised the most is Issues. Using the Issues feature, they can clearly mark where various passive fire (i.e. fire and smoke separation) defects occur and then export summary reports, which can be emailed to clients or shared in meetings. This has greatly enhanced their relationship with clients because CoveKinloch has been able to deliver their service with greater quality and operate on a higher level, as compared to when they relied on a manual model of work.

In terms of costs and time savings, CoveKinloch utilises a program called WorkflowMax, which tracks the time they spend on projects (from start to finish) using a timesheet model. Using this program, employees log time the amount of time they spend working on specific projects. At the completion of their first project using PlanGrid, they compared how much they contracted for that project (priced using hourly rates) compared to the actual work time that employees logged in WorkflowMax. They did this in order to determine their return on investment and to see if they could truly justify rolling out PlanGrid across their organisation. Turns out, they could.

From their analysis, they objectively found that PlanGrid saved them time on the jobsite and in the office, leading to greater profitability as they were able to complete the job earlier than scheduled. Now, due to the success of using PlanGrid, passive fire surveys are now a part of their core service, providing them with another avenue to grow their business.

40% reduction in schedule

Reviewing the number of work hours logged, CoveKinloch proved they saved 8 hours per inspection.

60% profit margin increase

CoveKinloch experienced greater profitability as they were able to complete jobs earlier than scheduled and with the same workforce.

Key Benefits

- Able to complete jobs earlier than scheduled, leading to greater profits based on contracted price.

- Provides proof to clients that CoveKinloch delivers high quality service and operates on a high level.

- Generate reports in an easy to access and read format, reducing data manipulation and time wasted.

- Provide peace of mind and proof of quality performance to management and clients.