

SIX WORKFLOWS DISRUPTING YOUR FIELD TEAM

E-GUIDE TO ENHANCING
FIELD TEAM PRODUCTIVITY



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FIELD TEAM PRODUCTIVITY IMPACTS YOUR BOTTOM LINE

THE ROLLING STONES ONCE SANG *Time Is On My Side*; they certainly weren't talking about the AEC industry. Unfortunately, project teams are in a constant war against time to successfully deliver projects while battling day-to-day challenges that arise while on site. The AEC industry has gained notoriety for continuous struggles with productivity. One of the greatest contributors is inefficient field team operations. According to McKinsey, large projects take 20 percent longer to finish than scheduled. There are uncontrollable factors (i.e., environmental, or economic) that can impact the ability to finish a project. However, there are other factors that can contribute to the delays or budget concerns, such as:

- ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS DUE TO MANUAL PROCESSES
- DISCONNECTED FIELD-TO-OFFICE APPLICATIONS
- FIELD-TO-OFFICE COMMUNICATION

Although mobile adoption within the AEC industry is increasing, companies often struggle with manual, inaccurate scheduling procedures that impact productivity. This creates unintended problems such as increased administrative tasks that impede efficiency and productivity and greatly maximizes exposure to risk.

We know field productivity is a common problem; we're here to provide more insight so you can combat this challenge! This eGuide is an opportunity to explore how you can keep your field teams on the job site doing billable work, not in the office checking schedules and approving invoices.





CAUTION: Workflow Challenges Ahead

IT'S NO SECRET that AEC professionals are challenged with productivity, which is attributed to several challenges previously mentioned, but often, increased administrative tasks is to blame. This workload multiplies when tasks that could be handled automatically with the right software tools are done manually. Not to mention it disrupts what your field team needs to accomplish. What common tasks are to blame for low productivity?

SCHEDULING

In the world of construction, the responsibility of project scheduling can fall on a small team or one person. Unfortunately, this person may be using outdated resource methods like spreadsheets that lower productivity and increase the risk due to human error. For those using Deltek Vision or VantagePoint, there is still a level of manual work that needs to be done.

FIELD TEAM COMMUNICATION

Scheduling delays stemming from RFI responses, approvals, inclement weather, or other unexpected site disturbances happen frequently. Yet, without a way to streamline communication and provide real-time updates between the field team and the office can prolong these delays. Miscommunication or delayed communication in the field can have a significant impact on budget and scheduling.

FIELD TIMESHEET APPROVALS

The problem with paper timesheets is well, everything! From incorrect job site and billing hours to manual collection and processing methods are costly.

LEVERAGING HOME-GROWN SYSTEMS

Home-grown solutions might seem like they do the trick, but they come with their own risks that could be perpetuating your internal processes. Software development depends on highly specialized engineers to keep up with maintenance to addresses bug fixes, but also enhancements to improve the product. Without a dedicated team, these solutions can lack new functionality or updates that may be impeding your team. There's also a chance that it does not sync up

to other critical applications that are used frequently throughout the project.

LACK OF INTEGRATIONS TO ACCOUNTING SYSTEMS

People often assume that the number of applications they use is to blame for the persistent data silos and growth in data itself. Yet, the problem isn't the myriad of applications firms are using – it's that tools don't have direct integrations with large-scale platforms. When it comes to field teams, scheduling and billing are managed through spreadsheets. Before uploading to an ERP, the project team plays a dangerous game spreadsheet badminton through multiple email exchanges where rework is conducted. While it's the most common form of communication, email isn't workflow-friendly. It relied on others to forward information to the right people at the right time. If a team member misses an email or doesn't forward to the right people, it creates further delays.

Although field management mobile applications are in abundance, they are not all integrated. Project teams are using scheduling applications that do not integrate with ERP systems thus perpetuating the never-ending manual data entry.

The American Payroll Association (APA) concluded that construction firms using electronic timesheets spent 2% less on their wage bill.

UNIT BILLING

Manual field team workflows have a tremendous impact on cost recovery, as it relates to cash flow. Billing for equipment or safety resources (including PPE to comply with COVID-19 protocols) needs to be billed accurately. If an item is not charged correctly, it impacts the total cost and can affect payment. The most common example is charging rental fees for equipment; if the company is not charging a rental, that's a missed opportunity for increased revenue.

THE GREATER IMPACT – YOUR CASH FLOW

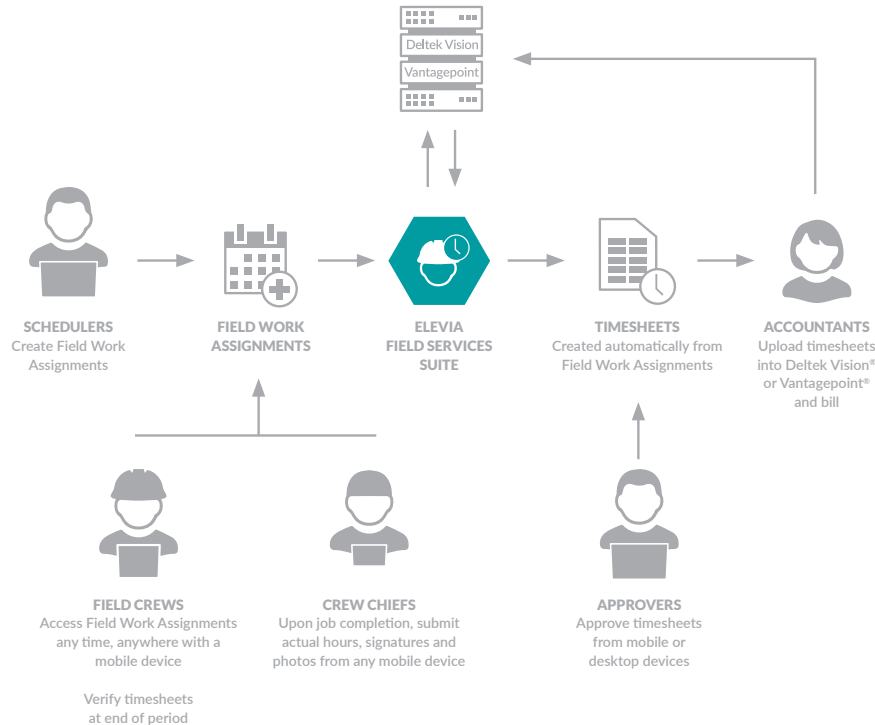
BUSINESSES ARE CONTINUOUSLY EVOLVING to optimize cash flow. Yet, the field services challenges outlined can stir up trouble and impede progress for increasing cash flow. When using manual processes to manage critical details related to cash flow, it's not quick. And in construction, it's all about recovering costs fast.

When it comes to field work, one of the biggest drains is the amount of time spent on work that is not billable; time sheets are a perfect example. If it takes twenty minutes for each crew member to prepare their weekly paper timesheets multiplied by the size of your crew team, that's a lot of time dedicated to a task that is not considered billable. When it comes to cash flow, it's critical to have your field crews doing what they're paid to do, not the overhead that goes with it.



IMPROVE COMMUNICATION AND WORKFLOW WITH FIELD CREWS USING ELEVIA FIELD SERVICES SUITE (FSS)

FULLY INTEGRATED with Deltek Vision and VantagePoint, EleVia's Field Services Suite, field teams can work electronically in real-time to improve efficiency and field team productivity.



PRODUCTIVITY AND UTILIZATION

Ease and streamline communication with field teams by providing Field Work Order information accessible via tablets and mobile devices.

AUTOMATE FIELD WORKFLOW

Quickly, easily, and accurately schedule and track time for billing or costing.

AUTOMATE EXPENSE RECOVERY

Simplify and accelerate invoice preparation through automated assignment of project expenses.

FLEXIBLE UNIT BILLING

Easily accommodate unit billing with flexibility to configure a broad spectrum of capabilities specific to any field team.

SIMPLIFIED COST RECOVERY

Reduce missed reimbursables and improve cost recovery and accurate client billing for equipment and tools used in the field.

“Now, our field crews enter time directly into the EleVia mobile app. It simplified everything and eliminates the need for us to handle the same into two or three times. It has dramatically cut down the amount of time I spend on this task – about 80 percent.”

–Gary Kraus, Principal and Director of Surveying, Hunsacker and Associates.

CASE STUDY



FOR MANY YEARS, Hunsacker & Associates, San Diego, Inc. scheduled field work with a customized system developed in house. After a decade, however, the firm lacked the internal IT resources to keep the home-grown system running. What they needed was an off-the-shelf solution that would integrate seamlessly with Deltek Vision or VantagePoint, and provide the capabilities field crews needed, and offer mobile support.

Hunsacker turned to EleVia Field Services Suite, an add-on mobile solution for Deltek Vision or VantagePoint that automates field workflow, including timesheets and scheduling.

ELIMINATING REDUNDANT DATA ENTRY

EleVia FSS has made the biggest impact in terms of time saved, which is critical in an industry driven by billable hours. Previously, crews had to carry paper copies of every job number, then record their hours on paper tickets, often at the end of time. This stream of paper would then be re-keyed into a payroll system, then later moved into Deltek Vision.

MAKING LIFE EASIER FOR FIELD CREWS

While there was a learning curve for surveyors as they got accustomed to the new software, today they enjoy seeing who they will work with the next day and

where the assignment will be. They also appreciate not having to come into the office to drop off timesheets. Removing redundant, paper-based processes also reduces simple human errors, decreasing the risk of time spent on change orders and corrections, and making both equipment tracking and billing more efficient and accurate.

DEALING WITH CHANGES IN THE FIELD

The EleVia mobile app helps remove paper from the workflow when the work at the job site does not match the original assignment. For example, a crew might be called to stake out a sewer, but upon arrival learns it also needs to stake water lines and storm drains. “Crews can add the new work directly through the app,” said Gary Kraus, Principal and Director of Surveying at Hunsacker. “They go into the app and get the correct lines. They used to have to pull out a laptop and look it up or call into the office. Or look up to the correct project. Our crews are much more efficient with all that information available through the app. It saves a lot of time.”

In addition, EleVia FSS saves time with respect to scheduling. Internally, the scheduler can see where all crews are working each day. This makes it easier to understand which crews can take on more jobs and which are at maximum capacity before assigning new work.

UNSHACKLE YOUR FIELD TEAM FROM OUTDATED PROCESSES

DELAYS IN CONSTRUCTION ARE INEVITABLE but improving processes can cushion the unpredictable. Now more than ever, it is essential to have integrations with your accounting systems like Deltek Vision or VantagePoint, especially solutions that allow you to be mobile. While administrative tasks seem like a remedial problem, it remains a formidable but resolvable challenge.

Minimizing or eliminating administrative tasks that disrupt field team progress allows your team the ability to:

- ✓ **SCHEDULE ELECTRONICALLY**
- ✓ **IMPROVE COST RECOVERY**
- ✓ **TRANSFER ALL PROJECT RELATED DOCUMENTS ELECTRONICALLY**
- ✓ **EASY COMMUNICATION TO AND WITH FIELD TEAMS**
- ✓ **LEVERAGE PHONE, TABLET, OR PC**
- ✓ **SIMPLIFY TIMESHEETS**
- ✓ **PHOTO TRANSFERS**

With the right software that streamlines the field scheduling workflow, you will save time for everyone from schedulers and crews to approvers and accountants. This adds up to better cash flow!

Ready to Elevate Your Field
Scheduling and Workflows?

Connect with an Expert Today!

