

Why Consigli Went Low-Code for Project Management

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When a construction company takes on a job, the work can involve complex input from a host of professionals that include contractors, architects, and building committees -- but using a low-code platform for project management can alleviate some of the headaches that might arise in the process.

“We often, and most construction companies, struggle with the management of all that information,” says Anthony Chiaradonna, CIO for **Consigli**, a construction company and general contractor that operates across the northeast. Its projects can include large-scale hotels, commercial buildings in major cities, and high schools.

Some of the primary tech tools Consigli has used historically to manage its projects include PM Solutions, accounting systems, and modeling, Chiaradonna says. Over the years, side material such as spreadsheets and OneNote also had to be collected and managed, he says. Such a mix can become a bit chaotic to keep track of. Resources such as Excel and SharePoint were also put to work in the past to manage that data, Chiaradonna says, and even further back with Microsoft Access. “Data starts to sprawl all over the place,” he says.

Though Consigli did manage to work with such tools, Chiaradonna says consistency could be an issue at times and in some cases, the resource might not have web-based at the time. “That’s where we came into find Quickbase,” he says.

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Anthony Chiaradonna, CIO, Consigli

Initial Focus: Purchase Management

The transition to Quickbase’s low-code platform let Consigli follow the lifecycle of a project and be agile, Chiaradonna says. The initial focus for low-code implementation was for purchasing management, which included seeing how a subcontract awarded for part of a project related to the overall budget. “That’s something we had done in Excel, and then we migrated it to SharePoint,” he says. “That was the first app we moved into Quickbase.”

The initial move to Quickbase took about two months, if not less, to get up and running and stop using old resources, he says. Consigli soon found other uses for the platform, including staffing,



which was handled through Excel and a scheduling tool. That secondary transition took little over one month, Chiaradonna says. “Once we had the base project in there, it was easy to continue to add different components.” The implementation also did not require any additional IT staff hires, he says.

Consigli measured its ROI from adopting Quickbase, Chiaradonna says, in part on improved metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) from its jobs instead of asking a job to send over spreadsheets to generate KPIs. “We’re able to connect our Power BI environment to Quickbase and have our corporate dashboards automatically updated instead of having duplication of data,” he says, which saves time.

Consigli also tidied its resources up, Chiaradonna says, by reviewing functions and tasks that were being performed outside of its existing systems, were not secure, and did not have a place in a traditional ERP (enterprise resource planning) or PM (project management) tool. That allowed for the consolidation of different buckets of information into Quickbase, he says.

This also enabled faster modifications to be made in projects, Chiaradonna says. “We can make a change to a field, and everyone would see it. Before, we’d have to send out a spreadsheet or whatever it was.”

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The current hiring market is a challenge for the construction industry, as in other sectors, and Chiaradonna says using a low-code platform helps mitigate some of that need for new talent. “What I can do is give [our team] tools that are efficient, easy to learn, and easy to use to make their jobs better,” he says. When new talent is found, the availability of low-code tools can also make their work easier and more consistent, Chiaradonna says. “As we move people to different jobs, they

know how it works there. Someone didn’t create some spreadsheet on that job that they now have to learn and figure out.”

With Consigli striving to innovate, a tool such as Quickbase allows the company to pilot other project management tools, he says. “In some cases, once we pilot it, we don’t even need to buy that tool,” Chiaradonna says. For example, in risk management and safety, Consigli needed to collect data and stood up a pilot app in Quickbase, Chiaradonna says. Orientation data, which tracks workers taking safety orientation on a job site, can promote a safer work environment, he says. It can also track incidents that might happen on a job site, Chiaradonna says. “There’s a lot of one-off tools that do that but then we would have to stop, try to integrate those.”

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Anthony Chiaradonna, CIO, Consigli

There was another benefit Consigli discovered by making the transition to a low-code platform. Chiaradonna says he has opposed shadow IT seeping into the company, but Quickbase gave him a different outlook. “I am able to put some stuff into our departments hands and say, ‘Why don’t you try to pilot something?’,” he says. “I can be comfortable that it’s repeatable, it’s secure, it has something we can control and integrate to instead of them finding some tool that may or may not work, or may or may not be secure.”

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