CASE STUDY

BBE (Bartlett Brainard Eacott)

CLIENT: BBE (BARTLETT BRAINARD EACOTT)

CHALLENGE: BBE needed standard tools and processes to provide advanced project management in the office and in the field. They identified their largest needs as document management and collaboration.

SOLUTION: After evaluating a dozen options, Procore was selected for its powerful feature set, superior support, and in-depth construction industry knowledge.

PROCORE

BBE is a construction management company for the commercial and institutional building markets, with some work in the industrial arena.

One factor that sets BBE apart from other firms in the construction industry is extraordinarily low staff turnover. Because of the long average tenure of its employees, BBE enjoys significant customer loyalty and repeat business. The company has long-standing relationships with many large, "blue chip" corporations headquartered in Connecticut and the Northeast.

A few years ago, BBE management recognized that they needed to take advantage of new methods, techniques, and technologies to help project managers and project teams consistently use best practices in their work. Technology was also needed to make it simple for employees to work together. BBE had used some construction management software in their headquarters operations, but management realized that the firm needed a tool that could be used by all employees, and not only by people working in the company's back offices. The company's superintendents – the employees "in the field"–manage a lot of documentation. BBE's executives realized that it was essential to have consistency from job-to-job, for both the paperwork and the construction project management processes.

In short, BBE's senior management recognized that they needed an information management tool that would help them to standardize business processes and provide all BBE employees with the ability to collaborate on project tasks.

BBE DECIDES ON PROCORE

When the idea of web-based management systems was first introduced to the construction industry many years ago, BBE was involved in a project for the State of Connecticut. The company used the construction management (CM) software that was mandated for the project. The project manager on that job reported back to BBE's Project Executive, Sue Eacott-Comer, on how easy it was to communicate using the software. At that time, however, BBE management felt that the technology was too expensive, and that it would be difficult for BBE's teams to use the available software. Nevertheless, that one experience made management aware of the possibilities for process improvement using web technology. Several years ago, BBE began to take a more in-depth look at the latest versions of construction project management software.

"We evaluated over a dozen different systems," says Eacott-Comer. "Procore was the system that met most of our needs. We've been using Procore construction project management software for over a year now, and we're delighted with the fact that we continue to find different ways that we can use the system that we didn't even recognize at the beginning!"

As the company began to transition to using Apple technology, including iPad tablets, it was important that everyone in the company was quickly upgraded and able to communicate. Access to Procore, as well as to all of the company's information, was moving to a cloud-based architecture; Procore's native cloud-based design was one of the most important reasons forBBE's selection of the software instead of the many older, client-server based systems that were evaluated.

The quality of the technical support and training that the company received from Procore was the second most important reason for BBE's decision to adopt Procore. Although most of the construction project management software vendors offered training for their products, Eacott-Comer and Gerry Holland, BBE's Chief Estimator, knew that it would be critical to have reliable, ongoing user support once the training was completed.
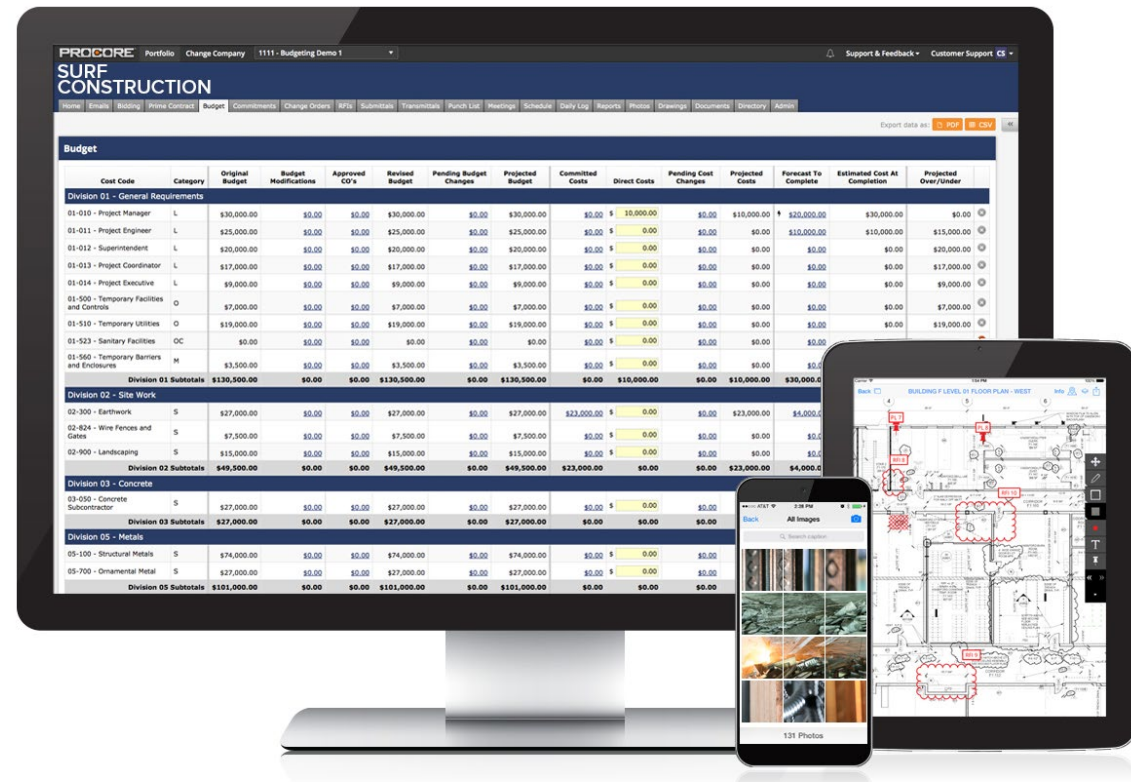
"The latest systems are so integrated, and there is so much to learn about them, that it would take many of us years before we'd be able to understand the entire system," notes Eacott-Comer. "Procore's support staff consistently answers our questions 'with a smile' and with the same enthusiasm with which they answered the questions the first time we asked them! We also get the sense that Procore understands our business and not just the project management software business."

"To put it simply, we want to get in and drive the car; we don't really care how the car is built," adds Holland. "The support that Procore gives us makes it really easy for us to 'get in and drive.'"

Procore's cost-effective licensing model was another important deciding factor. After conducting an analysis of several systems, management identified the "pay per user" licensing model of the other construction project management software applications as a barrier to adoption by trade partners and externally-employed members of the various construction project teams.

"A lot of our project owners want to log in to the system, and once they see what they can do, they want other project team members, including trade partners, to use Procore...and if we had to pay by the user, it would cost us a small fortune!" exclaims Eacott-Comer.

Both Eacott-Comer and Holland remark on how Procore software facilitated an important change to BBE's business model, enabling the company's clients to become its partners.

"Our business paradigm has shifted from the days when we were primarily a general contractor with our client sitting across the table from us, to our current role in construction project management with our clients sitting right alongside of us," explains Holland. "Procore's software is inclusive and it's very reliable. It has features that we couldn't get in other construction project management software, such as allowing us to integrate a Microsoft Project schedule file and keeping that schedule updated over the web. These features allow us to improve our service to our clients, and that's not a little thing."

TAKING ADVANTAGE OF PROCORE FUNCTIONALITY AND SEEING THE BENEFITS

BBE is now using Procore across-the-board for their projects: project owners, project managers and design teams, subcontractors, superintendents and everyone in the field are all using Procore on a daily basis. The project owners appreciate having access to photos through the system, functionality that is especially useful for the company's out-of-state projects and owners. Instead of having to travel to the job site, owners simply log in to the system to review photographs, meeting minutes, and the latest set of project documents.

Procore makes it simple for senior management to track who has access to the information. Eacott-Comer explains, "Because we're able to post all the drawings, and they're accessible through Procore, nobody on the project team has to say, 'I didn't get that.'"

"We've started to think of Procore as a file cabinet that everybody's using," says Eacott-Comer. "Inside that file cabinet are a lot of things that we can use for our business and for our clients' projects as well."

BBE management lets its superintendents know how critical it is to complete daily reports in Procore—the company's "filing cabinet"—to ensure that project data is available when needed. Back in the office, management can log on and see whether the daily logs are filled out or not. During the day, the evening, or on a Sunday afternoon, any project team member can log in to the system and find every piece of information that he or she needs for a job. Just having all the project data—documents, changes, and financial information—at their fingertips, available to the right people at the right time, has proven to be invaluable.

Procore also helps BBE's superintendents to work efficiently and to be successful in managing exceptions. For example, in the case of the daily report, superintendents use Procore features that let them quickly record basic status information. Instead of writing and rewriting reports, they spend their time managing exceptions, and their

time is used much more effectively. Eacott-Comer knows that the superintendents see the value in using Procore, and she is pleased with the extent to which the superintendents have embraced the system.

Commenting on the training offered by Procore, Eacott-Comer notes that the superintendents did not need much training initially because they only used Procore for their daily logs and access to documents. Having used Procore for a year now, BBE is currently taking more advanced training. For example, BBE employees are working with different types of files and tracking changes and revisions more closely. Holland and Eacott-Comer point out that the employees have been very receptive to additional training, especially in conjunction with the company's roll-out of smartphones and iPads.

The benefits have extended to BBE's office environment as well. Procore has helped BBE to standardize its workflows and redistribute some of the responsibility for administrative tasks. The company's biggest challenge now is to connect Procore to the BBE accounting system. Procore has been working on custom accounting integrations for BBE's unique accounting data structure.

Eacott-Comer and Holland praise Procore's support team members for their responsiveness to how BBE wants its workflows and its processes to be designed and for adapting the system to BBE's needs.

"Procore may not always agree with our approach," says Eacott-Comer, "but they're very open and willing to listen to how we do business, and the people at Procore who we deal with are very pleasant and helpful. We are continuously refining how we use Procore, and the construction project management software is also becoming better over time."

Eacott-Comer and Holland highly recommend Procore construction project management software and services. On their own initiative, these senior managers talk to their trade partners and external project team members about the benefits of Procore, acting as voluntary evangelists for the software. They point out the benefits to the industry and to their company's operations, concluding, "If BBE's design teams and the companies we work with every day started using Procore, there wouldn't be any learning curves at the beginning of a project. In fact, the more that other companies use Procore too—the more universal Procore becomes—the better it is for all of us!"

"We evaluated over a dozen different systems. Procore was the system that met most of our needs."

Sue Eacott-Comer
Project Executive

WHO USES PROCORE?

General Contractors // Owners // Engineering Firms
Specialty Contractors // Construction Management Firms

BENEFITS

Improved Communication
Mobile Access
Increased Productivity
& Accountability
Flat Rate Pricing
Unlimited Users
Unlimited, Secure File Storage
Easy to Use
Superior Customer Support
Risk Prevention

FEATURES

Drawing & Document Management
Accounting Integration
Contract & Change Management
Bidding
Daily Logs
RFIs
Submittals
Punch List
Meetings
Photos

PROCORE