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Construction Management - Tablet PC Inspection Reporting



D&B Engineers and Architects, P.C. (D&B) continues to lead the way in the application of innovative and streamlined construction management and inspection techniques. Ever pursuing the latest technologies and most efficient methods, we have embarked on a Tablet PC Inspection Reporting Initiative. Throughout this initiative, our approach has been keeping the big picture in perspective, occasioned by a combination of strong management and innovative technical experts that were developed through value engineering practices designed to save time and money.

The maturation of mobile computing hardware and software has allowed documentation efforts normally restricted to an office to be conducted entirely in the field. Equipping our inspectors with the latest technology has allowed them to compose daily reports with pictures and transmit them to any destination. In addition, information in the form of pictures, drawings, permits, RFIs, RFCs, formal direction from the engineer, or any electronic media can easily flow between the job site, client and home office. This technology not only allows for the greatest efficiencies in labor cost, keeping the inspector on site as much as possible, but also reduces paper and printing costs to nearly zero. D&B has been using and developing this technology on working construction sites for some time now and is seeing great success.

Each of our tablets includes a high-resolution camera, allowing for photographs to be taken and transmitted to the likes of remote Project Managers, clients, regulators and design engineers. Observations, conflicts, proof of delivery or installation, or simply, reference photos can be taken and transmitted to any recipient in a matter of seconds, along with any other document attachments that may be needed. In return, the designer, manager or regulator can send direction, clarification, changes or other written communication directly to the field.

Our inspectors have been using tablets in the performance of daily inspection for some time now and are continuing to find efficiencies and novel applications for this technology. We have developed new Inspection Reports that are more user friendly in the field, easily carry attached files in one transmission, and can be signed electronically and securely, such that the report need never be printed. The savings in paper and printer ink alone is substantial. In many cases we have already seen resolution to a field conflict occur within minutes, minimizing potential for delay to the contractor's work, thanks to the instantaneous two-way communication these devices allow, which have resulted in significant cost and time savings, as well as improvement to inspection practices.

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