

5 Reasons Why Cloud Financials and PM Make Sense



Very few construction projects happen without subcontractors. Although some general contractors do choose to perform all of their construction work themselves, it's far more common for major and minor trades to contribute most of the labor and materials on a project. This approach makes perfect sense. Why not hand over installation of a concrete foundation to specialists who do it every day? The same goes for trades such as electrical, plumbing, cabinetry, and roofing.

As your subcontractor business works alongside general contractors, you share their goals of keeping projects running smoothly and turning a reliable profit. How can you connect your teams, manage cash more carefully, and keep your customers and employees happy?

Here are five ways you can transform your business with cloud software:

1. Connect All Aspects of Your Business to Drive Profitable Growth

Subcontractors typically use six to 10 software applications in tandem with their main accounting system. If these applications are legacy systems, they probably aren't very well integrated—if they're integrated at all.

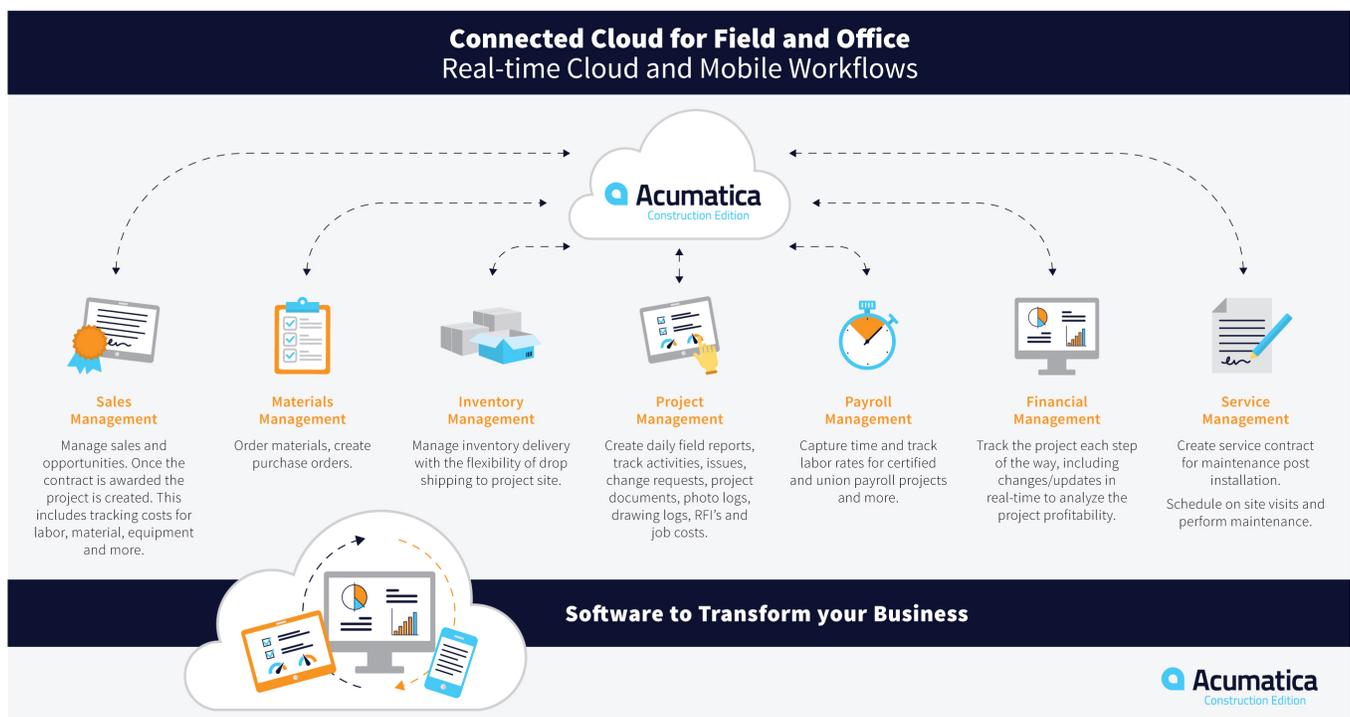
As a result, the entire staff will have to waste time jumping between applications just to perform routine tasks. For example, employees may

“As our business grew its footprint and complexity, we realized our legacy ERP solution was not serving our needs. We needed a solution that was more sophisticated to handle our financials. We also wanted a tool that seamlessly connects the different aspects of our business and gives us greater transparency. Lastly, we wanted a solution that would integrate with best-of-breed third-party specialty solutions. Acumatica Construction Edition met all of the requirements for us and we are extremely excited about the possibilities Acumatica gives us as we continue to grow our business.”

**John Weibke, Director of Finance,
Envelop Group**

be using a series of spreadsheets or standalone applications to complete common workflows such as managing sales opportunities and leads, ordering materials, creating purchase orders, or tracking daily activities and change requests on a project. Meanwhile, finance and management teams lack the visibility they need to analyze the profitability of each project. Spreadsheets and applications may be well suited to individual tasks, but they also generate siloes of data that make it hard to see what's happening with projects day-to-day.

With cloud software, subcontractors can connect all aspects of their businesses, including sales, inventory, materials management, project management, payroll, finance, and service management. This not only increases everyone's visibility into business processes, but also reduces the need for tedious data entry.



This diagram shows how Acumatica Construction Edition can connect your teams by offering access to real-time information on any desktop or mobile device across your business.

When subcontractors run their businesses in the cloud, they can easily share data between the office and field. This means every decision made in the field can incorporate accounting data, and every back-office decision can consider what's happening in the field. The result? Smart, strategic decisions that drive the business forward towards profitable growth.

2. Manage Cash Flow More Effectively

Every construction project task comes with a functional price tag—a tag that typically passes first through the hands of the subcontractor. For smaller firms, problems associated with cash flow can easily mean the life or death of the company. Yet even the largest subcontractors may face struggles in this aspect of the job. And a shortage in cash flow affects timely job completion, which is a problem for general contractors as well as subcontractors.

With cloud software, you can combine bank balances, billings, and invoices into a comprehensive view of cash flow that enables you to make contractual commitments, meet payroll, and manage your business. You can respond in real time as business conditions change, updating your cash position and providing immediate access to the details behind it.

When you connect your accounting and project management teams in the cloud, you give them real-time views into expenses versus budget. They can track all aspects of a project, including active and completed tasks, time by employee, and project profitability. Everyone can drill down to see budget versus actual, change orders, subcontractor commitments, compliance issues, and payroll details.

A modern cloud solution connects the field and office with modules designed to exchange data in one cohesive software solution.

3. Establish Tighter Project Controls

When systems are disconnected, business processes become more complex than they should be. For example, if you must pull reports from multiple systems to collate them into one report, you're not only wasting time but also leaving your business vulnerable to errors.

Cloud technology—especially construction and accounting in the cloud—gives you total visibility into your business. Real-time dashboards enable you to keep projects on track and on budget by logging in from anywhere at any time. As a result, your firm can increase its profitability.

Using a dashboard with drill-down capabilities, you can identify and share changes in project costs. By defining key project metrics, making them visible to your entire team, and measuring them as each project progresses, your firm can reduce risk, increase productivity, and improve customer satisfaction.

Cloud construction and accounting software can make accurate data available consistently across your organization—whether you're pulling data from other applications or from spreadsheets. With drill-down dashboards, you gain the visibility you need to run your business more smoothly.

Real-time data synchronization in the cloud ensures that no matter where you are, data will be seen and reported on throughout your organization. All your teams can then respond more quickly and efficiently to needs.

4. Enable Remote Connectivity

In the past, teams had to complete paper-based processes (such as timesheets and project tasks) in the office. This resulted in inefficiency and misalignment among project stakeholders.

Today, cloud-based software can enhance the flow of information between your teams in the office and out on jobsites. Changes made in the mobile app to items such as RFIs, project issues, and timecards will be updated and synced automatically in the cloud software. This helps ensure that your business will run as smoothly as possible. Cloud software can also proactively alert your team of any issues and enable effective collaboration. When everyone has access to the same information at the same time, they can prevent delays and address important issues immediately.

When you're not in the office and there's an important purchase order that needs to be approved to keep a project moving, cloud software gives you a distinct advantage. You can even set up an alert and have the approval waiting for you. Most modern cloud software also provides approval routing capabilities, giving you greater control over purchases.

"I'm really glad we made the decision to go to Acumatica's cloud-based construction and accounting software because our teams are doing purchase orders, change orders, and everything else remotely. Project managers can get into the system to see what's going on with their projects. Cloud software is the way to go because it's so easy. You just log in and it's nothing different than if you were sitting in your office."

**Dawne Meijer, Controller,
Pin Oak Corpus Christi**

5. Integrate Your Teams and Streamline Your Workflows

Many subcontractors track and source their supplies and equipment using a collection of disparate applications, spreadsheets, documents, and PDF files stored in different locations. This makes it difficult to gain visibility into materials status and maintain an accurate, real-time view of progress.

A typical workflow may involve a procurement or supply coordinator tracking inventory of materials and components off-site. Once materials have been delivered to the jobsite, materials managers and quality controllers

inspect installation by making notes on paper logs and then manually updating progress reports next time they're back in the office.

Cloud software provides collaboration across the entire project team. It automates tasks and processes to replace multiple steps or duplicate data entry. It provides intuitive dashboards and alerts to ensure that action items will be addressed and project data will remain current. And it delivers powerful business intelligence tools that use automation and workflows to provide accurate, real-time analysis of current projects and intelligent forecasting of future ones.

With workflows, teams can streamline and automate repeatable tasks, increasing overall efficiency and minimizing opportunities for errors. Managers can make faster, smarter decisions. Employees can collaborate in a more productive and agile way.

Take the Next Step

Cloud software empowers subcontractors to keep projects running smoothly and profitably by helping them connect their teams, manage cash more carefully, and keep their customers and employees happy.

Acumatica Construction Edition is a complete, native, and cloud-based construction and accounting software solution. This easy-to-use software includes powerful financials, job cost accounting, project management, payroll, inventory, order management, service management, CRM, mobile, and more.

Built on the world's best cloud and mobile technology with a unique all-inclusive user licensing model, it enables a complete, real time view of your business anytime, anywhere. You'll increase collaboration, streamline time-intensive processes, and increase project visibility and profitability.

To learn more about Acumatica Construction Edition—and request a free custom demo—[visit us online.](#)