

Top tips for managing a remote capital project



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Construction projects and remote work almost seem counterintuitive. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, managing a team remotely wasn't seen too often, but as 2020 began, the entire world shifted the way in which people work. When dealing with construction projects, successfully managing your capital project team virtually directly translates to the success of your project.

While remote teams bring their challenges in

the construction industry, it also brings many positive qualities that can increase productivity and reduce costs. Construction is notoriously one of the least digitized industries, second to agriculture. Project sites across multiple locations, multiple contractors (and subcontractors), and many other variables make managing your team challenging. But, outlined below are the top tips to successfully overcome this hurdle.

Trust your technology

REAL-LIFE BENEFITS:

The City of Lincoln, Nebraska, increased productivity and document retrieval speed by 70% through the implementation of technology within their agency.



It's not a secret that the construction industry is slow to adopt new technology. Still, we've come a long way in recent years with the addition of tools like GIS mapping, scheduling software, project management software, e-signatures, and other productivity tools. These tools are great, but often get complicated when your remote team members use them in silos. Systems need to speak with one another to ensure you can trust the data you are receiving.

Trusting your technology to work together is extremely important in creating reliable data to avoid costly errors.

- Bring your technology together in one platform, so all team members work with the same, accurate information.
- Create approval workflows that work for your agency's specific requirements.
- Digitize forms to ensure team members can get the correct information into your system in real time.

Set up new remote employees for success

REAL-LIFE BENEFITS:

Ontario's Ministry of Transportation has moved all 1,000 internal team members online by using the same system to streamline how they collect, report, and validate data, making it easy for the new hires to quickly hit the ground running.



One of the essential components to successfully managing any remote team is, checking in with your employees frequently, especially new employees who have onboarded virtually. Poor onboarding of new employees can cost your agency valuable time, money, and resources. To get your new employees off and running, you'll want to ensure the experience is as seamless as possible.

- Using one system for all employees will ensure that your new hire can access accurate information critical to their new role. Create a detailed, consistent onboarding plan for all your new

hires, and collect feedback from each of them to continuously improve the experience.

- Assign an onboarding liaison that can help your new hire navigate the company's culture and expectations and learn a new system. Having a mentor explain how systems and processes are completed and answering any questions using digital tools will leave less room for error.
- It can be hard to determine where your role fits within the organization, especially when you join a team in a remote environment. Set clear goals and expectations, and check in often to ensure the employee has the right plans and tools for success.

Use modern, cloud-based solutions

REAL-LIFE BENEFITS:

Using a cloud-based capital program management system, the City of Las Vegas, Nevada, automatically generates its CIP book, saving three to four months each year during the capital planning process. In addition, everyone from project managers up through the City Council has real-time visibility into funding sources, project schedules, and budgets.



Using a cloud-based capital program management system to manage your capital programs will undoubtedly make managing a remote team more straightforward. By having all of your financial, scheduling, and funding source data in one location, you'll ensure that your entire team is working with the same information. Empower your team to plan, track, automate and manage funds, budgets, and schedules anywhere.

- Have the ability to know the status of your programs, with a bird's-eye view of

every project and program, with real-time reports and dashboards that give you the option to drill down to the most granular detail.

- Get everyone on the same page with an up-to-date view of the latest plans, documents, and changes for all internal and external stakeholders.
- A solution built 100% in the cloud can be implemented and deployed quickly, and can be used from any mobile device or browser.

Communicate, communicate and communicate

REAL-LIFE BENEFITS:

As we move into a post-pandemic work environment, organizations with clearer communications are seeing benefits directly tied to an employee's well-being and productivity, according to a recent McKinsey survey of employees.



Communication plays a crucial role in managing a remote team. Without face-to-face time, frequently keeping in touch with your team is of the utmost importance. Have a well-defined communication strategy in place, and tools to support your staff. With project team members scattered across worksites, offices, and home offices, you'll want to keep everyone in sync, and working towards the same goals.

- Encourage daily check-ins with your project

team and be available to address any questions or issues that may arise. Tools such as Zoom are a great way to quickly communicate back and forth with one another.

- Beyond the project, it's important to check in on your team personally and ensure they need the support to succeed.
- Be proactive with your team, set clear and concise expectations from the beginning, and try to keep your company's culture at the forefront, even if from afar.

Mitigate hold-ups before they can happen

REAL-LIFE BENEFITS:

Based on economic analysis, the Utah DOT is saving \$19.5M annually (or \$100M over five years) from greater visibility, increased control during planning, construction and maintenance, and better reporting, thanks to having the systems and processes in place to mitigate hold-ups before they can happen.



With the right technology in place, you're nurturing your new employees, you have a project management system in place, and you are emphasizing the importance of communication. Then, you have all of the tools you need to mitigate project risks and delays before they can happen. Your team is setup for success with the right tools in place.

- Staffing and resource management is a tricky affair. Make sure that each project and contract is allocated every necessary

resource and piece of equipment, and track associated costs across the course of a project. Leverage capacity planning to ensure that no one resource is over or under-allocated.

- Set up workflows that meet your agency's requirements to keep the ball moving. Reduce bottlenecks and waiting time for approvals with notifications that remind stakeholders to take action.
- Use productivity tools such as DocuSign to prevent any project slowdowns due to necessary signatures and approvals.

Don't forget your contractors

REAL-LIFE BENEFITS:

The Wisconsin DOT has brought consultants onto their e-contracting portal, which has improved transparency, collaboration, and efficiency across the contract pre-award and award processes.



It is also vital to remotely manage your contractors and subcontractors successfully, although you may not physically be at a project site. You need to equip them to deliver accurate and timely information to your agency to avoid schedule delays and cost overruns. Your goal is to reduce the amount of time spent managing consultants so that you can focus on the larger project at hand.

- Move to paperless contracts and start projects on the right foot with clearly defined contracts and itemized scope.
- Automating your pay estimates will help manage any changes and computing payments using those handy workflows

(as mentioned above). You can then quickly generate pay estimates based on the work done, materials on hand, advances, retention, and adjustments.

- Mobilize your contractors with permissions-based access to your systems, allowing them to update data directly from the field.

Use the tips and tools above to fuel your agency to success, remotely and in person. Communicating accurately and often with your team is crucial. Use available technology to set up new and existing team members, contractors, and subcontractors for success.

About Aurigo Software

Aurigo builds software that helps build the world. Aurigo is an AI-native company that helps capital owners connect planning, construction, and operations in a single environment, improving decision-making and execution. Trusted by over 300 organizations across infrastructure and facilities, Aurigo manages more than \$450 billion in capital programs, with over 40,000 projects throughout North America. Aurigo is a privately held U.S. corporation headquartered in Austin, Texas, with global offices in Canada, South Africa, and India.

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Schedule your demo today to learn how Aurigo Masterworks Capital Planning Solution can help your organization streamline information, accurately track and forecast, prioritize projects and help you save time and money.

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