

Case Study



Background

Baxall is a well-respected regional contractor with 50 years experience in the construction industry. The company works across a variety of sectors in London and the South East on new build, refurbishment and design and build projects, as well as operating a project management function. A member of the National Federation of Builders, the business is focused on continual process improvement and industry best practice across all its operations.

Problem

Baxall's IT system was suffering from information overload, with duplicated data, complicated personal folder stores and a reliance on manual processes stretching it to the limit. As a result Baxall's staff were wasting time searching for documents and emails, failing to share client information (despite many projects coming from repeat business) and generally lacking integration and consistency across the business.

The Directors recognised the need to introduce a centralised approach to the management of contacts, documents and emails and set about procuring a system best suited to the business.

Solution

Originally Baxall focused its search on an email management solution to deal with the growing volume of email communication across the business. Unable to find anything that could match its requirements Baxall broadened the search into information management software. After several demonstrations and careful consideration the business selected Union Square for Construction. The system provides construction businesses with a centralised approach to the management of data, documents and emails.

The industry-specific functionality matches the way that Baxall works and prompted the business to consider other processes that could be integrated into the system for improved efficiency.

Company

Baxall Construction

Business

Main Contractor

Number of staff

42

Solution

Union Square for Construction

"The business was wasting time searching for files, failing to share client information and generally lacking integration and consistency."

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Implementation

Baxall chose to implement the Union Square system for all 25 office and site based members of staff. Classroom training was carried out, which worked well and saw employees encouraging and supporting their colleagues through the learning process. The response from users was positive and led to many suggestions for further opportunities to streamline and integrate processes. Staff members who joined the business from larger organisations have commented on how much better Baxall's systems are.



Benefits

Union Square provides Baxall with multiple benefits including:

- **Ease of information access** – previously finding information relied on it being filed in the right place, now emails and documents can be found in seconds wherever they have been saved.
- **Increased efficiency** – some fundamental process improvements have had an impact on the bottom line of the business. Processes that were time consuming, involving numerous people and paper based methods, are now completely streamlined with online approvals and notifications. As a result printing costs have reduced from £6,000 to £600 each quarter.
- **Streamlined approach to tendering** – processes associated with tenders are all completed online through an integrated sub-contract tender management system, where all bid related information can be viewed centrally.
- **Reduced risk** – staff access the latest versions of drawings, complete the correct health and safety certificates and view the latest project information (including RFIs, work packages and project directories) ensuring accuracy at all times. Increased transparency ensures procedures are followed and the Performance Rating module lets the business record the performance of sub-contractors in a central system, reducing risk on future work.
- **Underpinning core values** – the system has been designed to support Baxall's core values; allowing the management team to be proactive rather than reactive, creating a sense of teamwork and improving quality.

A Q&A with Malcolm Clarke, Managing Director

Has Union Square helped growth or added value?

We can now offer more for less. Through greater efficiency we need fewer resources and can deliver the same high levels of service. Enquiry processes which used to take days are down to hours, and filing and admin work is down from days to minutes. Since implementing Union Square the company has grown without increasing the number of support staff.



How have things moved on since the initial implementation?

Union Square provides us with an efficient framework for running the business. We can now focus on managing projects rather than looking after processes.

What challenges did you face along the way?

Getting people to understand the benefits is a recurring challenge. You can't rush staff training. We strive to constantly improve usage and ensure the system develops along with the business.

Are there any new ways of working?

There is better and more frequent sharing of contract information as it's easier to distribute. Drawing specs are now sent via email at enquiry and contract stages. Auditing for ISO9001 is much easier and is now done from the desktop thanks to centralised storage.

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