

SUCCESS STORY

Bradford
Builders

OVERVIEW

Bradford Builders
bradfordbuilders.com
Greenfield, Indiana

BUSINESS CHALLENGES

Bradford Builders had large projects coming in quickly and needed to automate to keep up

The projects **required a day and a half to input** all the information and compare it with the budget

More process consistency was needed

BENEFIT OF SWITCHING

The greater efficiency and centralized information have **saved the team four weeks in labor hours**

Project information is input immediately, and the budget comparison is available instantly, **saving a day and a half in time**

All functionality in BuildTools is available at **one base price per month**

BuildTools Helps Indiana Builder Shift from Small to Large Projects

If you asked Bradford Builders sales representative Andy Isch about the company's main clients less than a year ago, you would have heard a very different story.

"There's been a pretty big shift in our projects in the last six to eight months," Isch says. "Until recently, our sweet spot has been kitchens, baths, and small additions. We are now starting to see a trend away from these projects to larger additions and remodeling projects. With the current cost of goods and labor rates, it seems as if these traditional projects are now out of many customers' budgets.

"It's interesting; if we bid on a project like a small bath remodel that was \$15K to \$20K, but because of the rise in costs of goods is now \$25K, we often don't get it because the extra money wasn't in the client's budget. However, if we bid a job that is \$200K, and it comes in at \$250K for the same supply reasons, they are usually okay with it; they tell us they were expecting the increase."

With this larger project business coming, as Isch puts it, "fast and furious," it was time to automate. "The old nonautomated way worked for 37 years, but not anymore," he says. "We needed the ability to get ahead of projects, get them organized quicker, and take action several months ahead of start dates to deal with increased lead times and market volatility."

So Isch brought ECI's BuildTools on board and has never looked back.



“BuildTools allows us to see the whole picture, and we can make much better strategic decisions.”

Improved visibility into the business and flexible scheduling

“We vetted several different tools, and for us, BuildTools made sense,” Isch says. “We were looking for something that would give us consistency in our processes and the ability to view business from both the micro and macro level. We were very good at managing details, but it was hard to see the bigger picture. It was like trying to see the whole prairie while crawling around in the weeds. BuildTools allows us to see the bigger picture, and we can make much better strategic decisions. It also allows us to communicate immediately to every lead, our designers, project managers, and others.”

According to Isch, this ability to communicate instantly has saved an immense amount of time. “We would win a bid and develop a design, and five months into the process, meet with the project manager and give him a hard binder,” he says. “He’d look through it and then order the product. With some materials being 5-1/2 months out, our backs would be against the wall. To keep projects on schedule, we’d end up sourcing selected products for whatever price we had to pay and choosing subcontractors that might be more expensive because they were available. BuildTools allows us to communicate what we need instantly, and the project manager can order what’s needed right away. It gives us more flexibility with scheduling for our customers and allows us time to shop price and vendors and better schedule our in-house and sub-contracted resources.”

Immediate options selection has saved four weeks of time

Isch particularly likes BuildTools’ selection function. “This tool has saved us a huge amount of time,” he says. “It allows the sales team to make the selection right there with the customer and send it immediately to procurement. Before, we had a lot of forms we had to fill out. We’d refer to this catalog or that brochure and tell the project manager it was on page 12, only to find out he had an old catalog, and it wasn’t on page 12, and back and forth we’d go. BuildTools eliminates all the questions because it’s all right there. There is a link to the vendor’s website, the product number, description, price, and picture. It’s just a much more efficient and accurate process.”



According to Isch, the result has been substantial time and labor savings: "When you are handling 60 jobs a year as we do, the savings really add up. Spread across the team, we get about four weeks of time back."

Immediate visibility into the financials helps projects stay on budget

The selections function is far from the only aspect of BuildTools the company finds useful: "We love the financials, budget, and change-order functions in particular," Isch says. "In the past, we kept good records. But after meeting the customer of a large project, it would take us half a day to input all the information and see if we were meeting the customer's and our budgets. BuildTools allows us to compare what a customer wants to the allowance; when there are variations, the cost is updated right away, showing us the budget. For example, it can tell the project manager if there is room in the budget to use vendor X, which might be a little more expensive but can get what we need quicker. It can also compare customer requested variances to the allowance. So, if the flooring budget is \$5K, and the customer chooses a flooring that is \$4.5K, we know there is \$500 left. If the customer selects one that is \$5.5K, we can tell right away it is \$500 over. This is huge for us. It helps us be a better partner with our customers; project managers can make better decisions, keeping us from leaving money on the table."

How much money does it add to the revenue stream? "We've only been using the system since February [2022]," Isch says. "But we anticipate the ability to compare costs to projects' allowances and change orders alone will help us capture another \$15K-\$20K a year."

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All the functionality in one base price

"The functionality of BuildTools was a big selling point for us," Isch says. "It is a simple user interface that visually and operationally repeats across the different sections. I oversee training, and I hear people say, 'Oh, this looks similar to the screen we learned about last week.' It is very user-friendly."

Isch especially likes the functionality because the company has access to it all. "The pricing structure of BuildTools sealed the deal for us," he says. "It is perfect for a business like ours because you have access to all the functionality for the base price. Other platforms had a base price that gave you access to 60% or 80% of the tool's functionality. One platform charged you several hundred dollars more a month to add change-order capabilities. Some platforms allow you to have unlimited users, but for small to medium-size companies that want more functionality like us, the BuildTools model is perfect."

Ready for an uncertain future

Isch isn't sure how long the current market will last. "This boom in business is great; we are on pace to annihilate our sales records," he says. "However, I don't see it as sustainable. I don't see these opportunities continuing indefinitely."

Whatever the future holds, Isch counts on BuildTools to help the company make the most of it.

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