ELECTRONIC PROJECT CONTROL SYSTEM (E-PCS)

What the innovation is?

Data Builder's Electronic Project Control System (e-PCS) was developed for the field, by the field, to assist project teams in managing risks and documentation requirements associated with a construction project. Through e-PCS, all members of a project team centrally capture, distribute, retrieve, and archive information in real time through a password-protected website. At the end of the project, e-PCS offers sophisticated closeout solutions and customizable retention management capabilities.

Where and when e-PCS originated, has been used, is expected to be used in the future?

What does a general contractor do when they go shopping for a technological solution and it doesn't exist? General contracting firm, The Weitz Company, found themselves in this situation and decided to tackle this challenge head-on. Through a joint venture with Emerging Growth Group in May of 2003, Weitz formed Data Builder Inc. and set out on a mission "to change how the construction industry handles project documentation". Weitz then served as the beta company during both the development and testing of e-PCS. Data Builder officially launched e-PCS to the construction industry in March of 2005. Since the public release, Data Builder now partners with a number of leading General Contractors and Building Owners as their document contractor. In addition, in January of 2006 Weitz committed to using e-PCS on the majority of their large projects across the company and many locations. Today, e-PCS controls critical information for more than $1.5 billion in construction projects across the country.
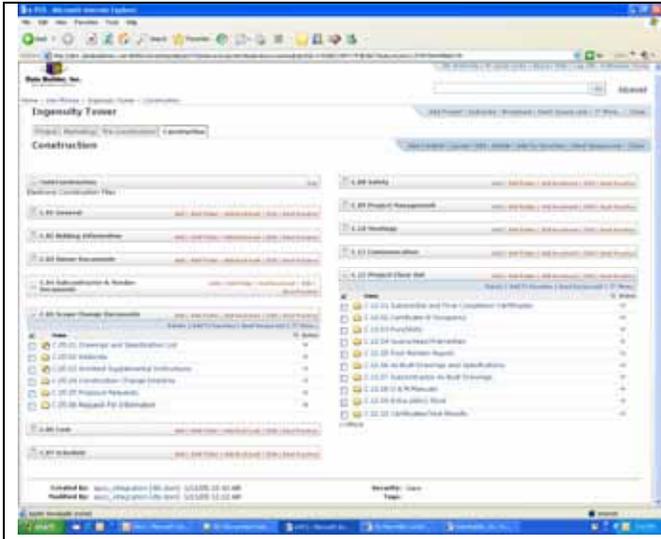
Why is e-PCS innovative?

As new technology becomes available and project teams (architects, general contractors, and owners) become more geographically dispersed, e-PCS is an industry-specific solution that offers integration with existing systems and processes, as well as the flexibility for customization. An electronic document management and retrieval system, e-PCS meets both the short-term and long-term needs related to document storage, retrieval, and electronic archiving. Some of the features and benefits of e-PCS include: a central repository for all project related documents, powerful search and retrieval capabilities ensure critical information is never lost or misplaced; document version control to ensure everyone is looking at the most up-to-date document; detailed document history for proper tracking; retention management with electronic shredding, and disaster recovery for added security critical information will not be destroyed. In addition, e-PCS offers a robust custom viewer that allows users to view over 200 document formats without having to have the original software installed on their system, as well as the capabilities to zoom, markup, and print/email directly from the viewer.
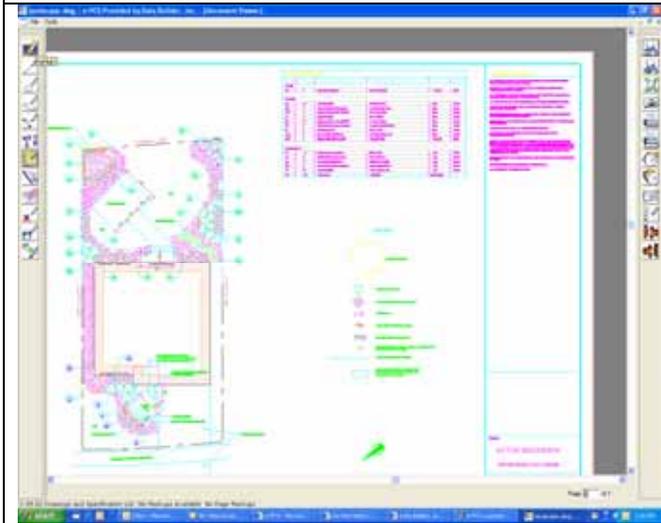
What e-PCS changed or replaced?

An enormous amount of documentation is created during a construction project. Traditionally, project documentation has been paper-based and information management was highly individualistic within project teams. General Contractors benefiting from e-PCS are enjoying: increased project team collaboration both internally and externally; improved risk management protocol companywide; a reduction in paper usage and printing costs; strengthened document security; and a reduction in the need for multiple file storage locations. In addition, General Contractors are saving a significant amount of time and money through e-PCS's sophisticated closeout solutions as well as in retention management with the electronic shredding capabilities. As the costs of materials continue to rise, project complexity continues to increase, and the construction industry finds itself in an era of rising litigation, the adoption of more effective document control technologies is a welcome innovation that makes strategic as well as operational sense.

Developed for the field, by the field, e-PCS is an industry-specific solution that offers integration with existing systems and processes, as well as the flexibility for customization.

Through e-PCS's custom viewer, system users can view over 200 document formats without having to have the original software installed on their system. The viewer also allows you to zoom, markup, and print, save, or email exactly what you see in the viewer.

The need for multiple paper copies of a project's close-out is eliminated with e-PCS's sophisticated close-out solutions. What used to take countless hours to assemble now can be administered through the click of a button.