CASE STUDY

Oregon Department of Transportation Embraces Paperless Construction with Doc Express®

CHALLENGE

The general inefficiency of paper processes motivated Oregon DOT to find a cloud-based, paperless solution for their construction and bidding activities.

SOLUTION

Doc Express - Infotech's cloud-storage platform designed specifically to handle construction administration document workflows.

RESULTS

Oregon DOT implemented Doc Express to achieve their goal - one source of truth for documentation.

☑ **Productivity in the Field**

☑ **Improved Stakeholder Collaboration**

☑ **Role-Based Accountability**

The information in this case study came from discussions with Vanessa Baker, the e-Construction Project Manager for Oregon DOT. This case study is not an endorsement of Doc Express®, but an examination of how the software helps Oregon DOT achieve its e-Construction goals.

Finding the Right Fit

Taking construction paperless had long been a goal of leaders at the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). When the FHWA launched the Every Day Counts e-Construction initiative in 2014, it prompted the DOT to begin further vetting options to take construction activities paperless. The DOT was looking for a collaborative cloud solution that could act as a "single source of truth" for all of their construction documentation. In December of 2017, the DOT began piloting Doc Express, with a staggered rollout beginning in January 2018.

e-Construction Project Manager Vanessa Baker shared a few of the reasons why Doc Express became the DOT's paperless platform of choice:

"As far as why we chose Doc Express over other options, **one of the biggest things was no cost to the contractor.** That was huge. And then notifications, the ease-of-use, how clean it looked visually - those were all very appealing."

Evolving the Letting Process

Prior to Doc Express, email was the go-to tool for awarding projects and finalizing contracts. **"Contractors would email their completed forms into the Resident Engineer (RE) office or mail them in, then we would print the email and put it into a binder. So we'd have cases of books with paper in it and we would look through and pull out the quantity and quality documentation when it was needed,"** said Baker. This process often led to a variety of miscommunication issues, outlined in the table below.

CHALLENGE	SOLUTION
Project stakeholders working on different or outdated documents	One version with up-to-date changes in Doc Express
Missing documents between the contractor and ODOT	A clear audit trail of what has been sent and signed within Doc Express
Delays in getting signatures or making alterations	Collaboration in one platform with all essential parties
High-level stakeholders having to search for information by reaching out to RE offices	Read-only stakeholder access for instant information on project progress

With Doc Express, a contract is built as soon as a bid is awarded. ODOT's paperless process is as follows:

1

Build a contract using a project template in Doc Express once a bid is awarded. ODOT simplifies project set-up by using templates that have drawers and workflows pre-built ready to go.

2

Add the necessary Resident Engineer office. Oregon is grouped into five regions with 16 Resident Engineer offices, so each office is a "group" in Doc Express that can be assigned all at once.

3

Add the other project stakeholders. For example, ODOT has created groups for their region assurance specialist and for FHWA.

4

Add the contractor and other authorized signers to the contract (training if necessary).

5

Project stakeholders will receive notifications when an action is required of them.
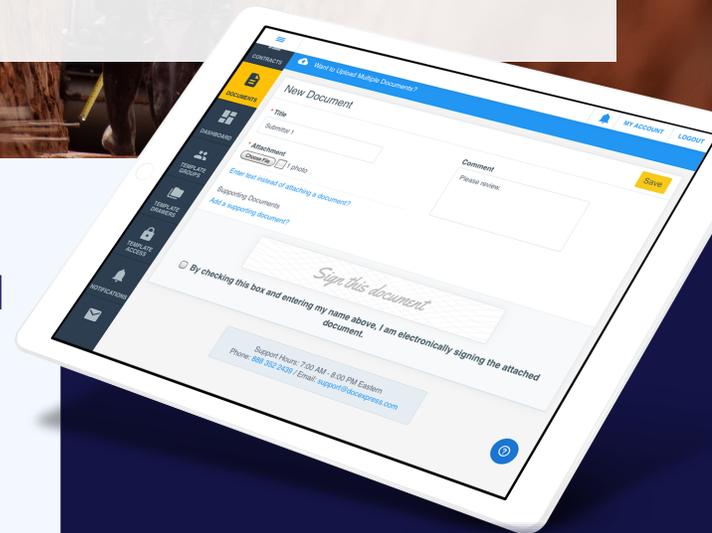
Getting Contractors and Staff Up to Speed

Rolling out new software internally brings certain challenges - overhauling old processes, figuring out new workflows, overcoming the learning curve, etc. The high level of organizational buy-in at ODOT made tackling these challenges easy. But how do you implement new software and processes with an external user that may not immediately see the benefit - namely, contractors?

ODOT began the process of implementing contractors by simultaneously attending

"Train the Trainer" sessions with Infotech and developing their own set of ODOT-specific processes. This process allowed the ODOT team to gain the internal expertise necessary to perform their own contractor training. After a couple of months, ODOT took over the entire training process and began instructing contractors in ~3-hour sessions. Two years after going paperless, ODOT is still occasionally training new contractors, but the majority can be added to Doc Express automatically.

One of the most important functions of Doc Express is the ability to sign forms electronically.

Doc Express uses digital signatures to ensure proper verification and security when contractors, owners, and ODOT personnel are signing off on change orders. A quick start guide has made getting up and running with digital signatures easy, even for users that aren't computer savvy.

Increasing Productivity in the Field

While going paperless with Doc Express has streamlined ODOT's letting and contracting process, it's also made fieldwork more expeditious. As a cloud platform, Doc Express can be accessed anywhere there is data or an internet connection available. This connectivity has enabled ODOT's crews to efficiently fill out paperwork in the field and eliminate unnecessary travel.

Capturing and recording data at the source also decreases the likelihood of transcription errors or information being lost in transit.

Accessing Infotech Customer Support

As with all implementations, ODOT worked heavily with Infotech's customer success team during the rollout of Doc Express. Because the ODOT team stores all of their project information in Doc Express, they often rely on Infotech's customer support to figure out what is and isn't possible. "They must be like 'oh no, Oregon is calling again,'" joked Baker. **"We put all of our documentation into Doc Express, not just change orders, it's all of our project documentation, so we've had a lot of different questions and support has been fantastic."**

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Paper Less with Doc Express

Fully embrace e-Construction with a secure platform for paperless contracting, designed specifically to handle construction administration document workflows.

With vital project documents stored safely in the cloud, everything from audits to certifications goes off without a hitch.

+ Sign documents and contracts quickly with verified signatures

+ Configure your workflow to determine how documents move to varied stakeholders

+ Markup documents to easily collaborate with your team

Learn more at infotechinc.com/doc-express