

CASE STUDY

RS&H Dissolves Disputes with Appia®'s Audit Trail



CHALLENGE

As the Construction Services Discipline Leader for RS&H, David Elliott and his team travel to job sites around the country to “kick the tires” and ensure projects proceed as planned. With responsibilities spanning the coast, Elliott needs to maximize his time and ensure project disputes don’t slow down progress or come back to haunt him.

SOLUTION

Appia® – Infotech’s leading solution for construction administration and inspection.

By storing daily reports and other project data in Appia’s easily accessible and searchable cloud database, Elliott and his team are more productive in the field and back at the office – where potential disputes are squashed thanks to robust recordkeeping.

RESULTS

Reduction in Research Time

Increased Productivity in the Field

Clearer Project Communication

RS&H and Appia: A Decade Strong



Elliott and his team have been using Appia for over 10 years to manage inspections and contracts on airfield projects throughout the country. Before that, Elliott notes that “we were just kind of old school.” An inspector would write up the report on paper, scan it, and email it in, where it would be printed and stored in a physical file. Moving to Appia, where inspectors can capture data in the field and transmit it back to one database in the cloud, has allowed Elliott and his team to maximize productivity.

“Inspectors can be more effective with their hours – as opposed to sitting in a trailer trying to do a pay app or checking paperwork, they can be in the field actually monitoring quality and giving a better product to the owner.”

When discussing how his field staff enjoys using the software, Elliott mentions that they enjoy the flexibility that comes with Mobile Inspector®, Infotech’s field collection app that feeds data back to Appia.

It’s easier to enter data into a phone or a tablet in the field rather than a bulky laptop back in the truck. Of course, every rose has its thorn:

“I’ve got a few inspectors who are going to projects that use Appia and a question I get from them daily – ‘when am I getting an iPad?’”

In addition to productivity increases during the project, Elliott notes that the totality of information within the system allows his team to closeout projects faster – not to mention eliminating the necessity for physical storage when the project is complete.

“We’ve always been big proponents of Appia, especially for our airfield work, where it’s a unit price contract and it saves a lot of time for us.”

**DAVID ELLIOTT,
CONSTRUCTION SERVICES
DISCIPLINE LEADER, RS&H**

“I think that closeout can go a lot quicker and easier with Appia because you can just package all of the data and hit print. Plus, having the advantage of burning everything to a disc means there will be a lot less space taken up when we have to archive project data and hold it for a certain length of time.”

Query Comes to the Rescue

In 2012, Elliott was working on a particularly problematic project in Tallahassee. Subcontractor disputes happen frequently enough that firms like RS&H are well-equipped for mediation and resolution. Sometimes, however, subcontractors will look to take advantage by misrepresenting quantities. The Runway 18-36 project in Tallahassee had one such subcontractor. Despite Elliott's multiple offers to assist with measurements on the project, the subcontractor continued to debate quantities and eventually made a claim against the project owner over a year after construction was complete. That's where Appia came in.

Elliott was able to generate query reports for the exact items in dispute in a matter of minutes and put together a report that would've normally taken days in one evening.

"8-10 hours of researching files the old way, I did in about 5 minutes. It happened to come in late on a Friday and we needed to get something to the owner by Monday. To be able to stay from 5-8 and complete the report on a Friday evening for what the old way would have taken the whole weekend, that was a tremendous benefit."

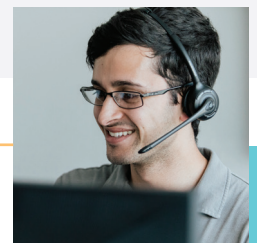
That incident isn't the only time that Appia's query function and comprehensive reports came in handy. Elliott recounts the recent experience of a project manager on a project in North Carolina.

"Just recently on a multi-phase project in North Carolina, they were having trouble finding a buried conduit that they had to connect in a later phase. They were saying it's not there. In 5 minutes, our project manager was able to pull up the report and the photo of where it was and go out to the guys and say: 'Stop telling me it isn't here. It's here. Here it is.'"

Customer Support and Implementation

Elliott endorses Appia as intuitive but does note that there is a bit of a learning curve. For questions and concerns, he and his team rely thoroughly on the Infotech customer support team. Elliott values their help, but above all, he appreciates their honesty.

"Customer support has been excellent. When I've had to call for various reasons, everyone has been very helpful or at least very honest. Sometimes, the answer is 'no, I'm sorry, that can't change,' and I understand that."



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