Haines & Kibblehouse Uses Project DocControl to Ensure All Billable Work Gets Tracked and Invoiced

Haines & Kibblehouse Inc. (H&K)

- Headquartered in Skippack, PA
- One of the largest construction-materials and full-service site contracting companies in the Mid Atlantic
- Implemented Project DocControl in 2000 and today has more than 100 employees using the system

BACKGROUND

Headquartered in Skippack, PA, Haines & Kibblehouse Inc. (H&K) is one of the Mid-Atlantic region's largest construction-materials and full-service site contracting companies, with more than 40 years of business excellence in the region. Since its incorporation in 1968, H&K has experienced steady, strategic growth and presently includes more than 80 vertically integrated companies in four states. With a focus on heavy highway and civil work, H&K works on a wide variety of projects, including road work, paving, concrete bridges, grading and underground utilities.

THE CHALLENGE

In 2000, H&K's biggest document management challenge was keeping everyone on the same page. Projects were being managed by estimators, and each estimator was using a different tool—everything from Lotus 1-2-3, Excel, Microsoft Word and WordPerfect to file folders and three-ring binders—to generate and track project documents.

"Our documentation was all over the place," said Bob Smith, project manager at H&K. "I was the company's first project manager and it quickly became obvious that having documentation scattered among different applications, formats

and locations was not going to work for a company our size that was also growing rapidly."

To alleviate the problem, H&K built an internal spreadsheet-based tracking system for document control. Although the company tried to make the tool user friendly by creating "macros" to automate many of the functions, Smith said that most of the staff wouldn't adopt it because of a fear of change and because of their comfort level with long-held manual processes.

Not long after, however, H&K was awarded a very large and challenging project loaded with potential problems, including a number of environmental hazards. "This was the turning point for us," said Smith. "We knew that we would need a system for this project that would help us streamline document management and keep all the documentation centralized in one location. The homegrown spreadsheet-based application we had developed wasn't going to cut it here."

THE SOLUTION

H&K first heard about Project DocControl at a trade show. Although the system looked very promising, Smith and his colleagues investigated a number of other options, including some of the biggest names in document-control software.

Project DocControl

"Every one of these other systems was just way too much product for us," commented Smith. "We were already having technology adoption issues, and implementing a system that was anywhere near as complex and cumbersome as those others would have been a waste of money—no one would have used it. We needed something we could deploy and learn quickly so we could hit the ground running fast. Project DocControl met all these needs, so we moved forward with the purchase in late 2000."

THE RESULT

More Complete Documentation Leads to Lower Risk

After piloting Project DocControl during that initial project, H&K gradually rolled out the system to its growing project management team. Within two years, it was being used across the company for most project documentation. And today, H&K is one of Project DocControl's largest customers, with more than 100 users throughout the company.

Initially, H&K asked its project managers to use the system for tracking all change order requests (CORs). Over time, H&K also began to use Project DocControl to generate and manage RFIs, submittals, transmittals, correspondence, change order requests, drawings and subcontract contracts.

Project DocControl has enabled H&K to document projects more thoroughly and to submit information in a timely fashion. "We no longer have to flip through three-ring binders to find what we need," said Smith. "Project DocControl allows us to keep all information related to an issue linked together. And the system's filtering capability helps us find the documentation we need simply by typing a keyword or term. This level of organization and the ability to respond quickly make a big impression on our clients, and they help reduce our project risk."

All Billable Work Gets Tracked and Invoiced

Project DocControl has also been instrumental in helping H&K manage and track change orders. With so many of the company's projects having time and material (T&M) work, it's critical that H&K project managers have a reliable way to track all work being performed. Project DocControl makes it easy to record T&M work and stay on top of change order requests.

In fact, at the company's monthly financial meeting, Smith and his team use a detailed report generated by Project DocControl that tracks outstanding change orders. The report enables them to easily review potential change order issues during the meeting. It clearly outlines how much T&M work is outstanding and identifies any disputed CORs. It also details where the company stands with each project and helps the team ensure that all billable dollars get invoiced and collected.

"We recently worked on a project that had 502 change order requests," commented Smith. "Now imagine if we hadn't had a formal way of tracking that stuff. Much of that would have been money down the drain!"

Improved Productivity

From a productivity standpoint, Project DocControl has enabled H&K to streamline its processes and do more with fewer resources. For instance, by simplifying the submittal-tracking process, H&K has been able to take that burden away from the project managers; now the purchasing team can handle much of the submittal generation and management.

The system has also kept H&K from having to hire administrative staff to create and track project documentation. Each project manager can efficiently create and manage his or her own documentation. And because it's much easier to document an issue with Project DocControl than with traditional manual methods, the documentation tends to be much more thorough and accurate.

Smith added, "From a management standpoint, our leadership feels more comfortable knowing that our projects are fully documented in one centralized database, and that we're providing our people with one standardized way to document and one place to get it done—faster and in a uniform fashion."

A Software Company That Implements Customer Feedback

Smith commented that one of the most important aspects of working with Project DocControl is the open line of communication it has with the team behind the product. "For us, it's important to partner with a software company that actually listens to our feedback and allows us to guide the direction of the product—a company where we know the people on a personal level," Smith said. "We have that kind of relationship with Project DocControl."

CONTACT INFORMATION

To learn more about how Project DocControl can help your business succeed, visit us at **www.ProjectDocControl.com or call 813.903.9446**.

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— Bob Smith
  Project Manager
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