

3 Key Takeaways from the PlanGrid Construction Summit

By PlanGrid • June 13, 2018

How Access, Collaboration and Insights Will Drive Needed Change in the Construction Industry

The first ever PlanGrid Construction Summit was an exciting gathering of over 1,000 forward-thinking minds in the industry. From exciting product announcements to invaluable keynotes and sessions, the conference was an insightful glimpse into the past, present and future of the building industry.

While we could go on forever about the incredible conversations and insights we saw from Summit, we'll share a few the top highlights below.

The Future of Construction: Change Drives Us Forward

For the last decade, the construction industry is slowly evolving. Emerging innovations, digitalization and new mindsets are all helping to drive construction's transformation. Nonetheless, resistance to change is a common theme in many companies that inhibits technology adoption.

At the fireside chat during the opening keynote of the PlanGrid Construction Summit, Tracy Young, co-founder and CEO, PlanGrid, and Doug Leone, Global Managing Partner, Sequoia Capital, sat down to discuss the importance of embracing risks and technology. Doug commented, "Things are changing faster and faster—technology is infiltrating every market segment. Industries are being uprooted and changed by technology." He continued, "If you don't try to change the world, you're going to get left behind."

At Summit, attendees experienced first hand just how change and innovation are moving the construction industry forward.

PlanGrid Product Announcements

The concept of change drives PlanGrid products. What worked several decades ago in construction, isn't working today. As a result, our software is continuously changing to refine construction processes, provide richer data and increase workforce productivity.

At the Construction Summit, several exciting additions and changes to PlanGrid were announced. Each and every one of our new products and features is designed to move the needle in construction so teams can build faster, safer and cheaper. Here are a few highlights from the upcoming product releases.

Revit Integration (BIM)

Audible excitement was heard from the crowd when PlanGrid's latest Revit integration for BIM was revealed. The coming feature will allow sheets to be synced from the model directly into PlanGrid, eliminating the manual steps required to transfer PDFs from Revit.

Tasks

PlanGrid's Tasks will be the evolution of Issues and allow construction teams to track both proactive and reactive work. When giving show attendees a first look at the feature, Leslie Francisco, Product Manager at PlanGrid said, "Our new 'Tasks' feature is making it easier to manage your projects and milestones so you can stay ahead of schedule."

Change Management

Change Management will be PlanGrid's newest product line to manage change orders from start to finish. Kevin Cheng, PlanGrid's Product Strategist, first revealed details of the upcoming product in the morning keynote. He commented, "Soon, with PlanGrid, you can track real-time cost impact from the field."



Our new features for our continued integration with @PlanGrid are making it easier to manage your projects tool Import photos from your #PlanGrid projects directly into our #software. Combine with all your project documentation content for simplified management. #PlanGridSummit

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"Our new 'Tasks' feature is making it easier to manage your projects and milestones so you can stay ahead of schedule," Leslie Francisco, Product Mgr at PlanGrid. #PlanGridSummit



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RFIs

In the “New Features Deep-Dive” with Tom Alterman’s session, Product Lead at PlanGrid, a sneak peek was given on what’s next for the evolution of the platform including:

- Easily draft RFIs in the field
- Easy to track workflow
- Architects can respond via email
- Fast distribution

To learn more about PlanGrid’s newest product announcements, read our blog [here](#).

Groundbreaking Integrations

PlanGrid is not only adding new features, it’s also growing its partner ecosystem with new integrations from leading construction software applications. Integrations allow the best of breed software solution to give construction teams greater access to jobsite imagery, project management data and critical documentation to increase productivity throughout the project lifecycle.

During the session, “Key Integrations to Use with PlanGrid,” James Cook, Director, Strategic Alliances & Partnerships at PlanGrid took the stage to showcase the value of PlanGrid’s integrations. “We are trying to work with the best of breed of applications that are out there,” he said.

At Summit, several of PlanGrid’s partners were in attendance to highlight how they work and connect with PlanGrid. Our partners and sponsors played a significant role in making Summit, as well as our product’s growth, a success. We’re incredibly thankful of the time and resources they contributed to the event. James added, “The recent acceleration of partners joining our ecosystem demonstrates that while we can accomplish a lot independently, together with our partners, we’re a force multiplier.”

To learn more about PlanGrid integrations, view our partner ecosystem [page](#).

How to Solve Construction’s Biggest Problems: 3 Key Takeaways

During the opening keynote at Summit, Tracy identified three of the most significant drivers of productivity improvement in the construction industry; access, collaboration and insight. Beyond opening remarks, we saw these trends being discussed and demonstrated throughout the conference in other keynotes and sessions.

Access

Traditionally, access to information, tools and data on jobsites has been fragmented. As a result, projects are failing to perform because they can’t keep up with changes. Thus, more technology and tools are needed to provide the entire team with real-time visibility and access to information. In the session, “Standardizing on PlanGrid,” Marti Schrauben, Project Manager, Granger Construction, explained, “If you don’t fully utilize your tools, if you’re standing still, you’re behind already.”

During Summit, speakers also detailed how exactly technology should drive access to information. Session after session, speakers identified that technology needs to be easy to use if it’s going to be adopted at all. “Keep it simple—new technologies have to work and have to have a great user interface,” noted Glenn Granger, CEO, Granger, in the “Executive Panel: The Business Case for Technology.”

Sash Seco, Director of Business Applications and Intelligence, Moss & Associates, spoke about how access to information benefits projects as well as the entire construction company. In the session, “Building an IT Budget with Your Customer in Mind,” she said,

“The more you know your story and the story of others, it will direct the way that you think about the organization, the future and IT.”

Collaboration

During the panel session, “Setting Up Your Subs For Success,” Kaitlin Prendergast, Superintendent, Dome Construction, addressed a major pain point of many construction jobs—a lack of coordination. “Communication and coordination are what make a successful project,” she noted.

While seemingly a buzzword in the construction industry, collaboration is essential for teams to stay productive and meet project budgets and schedules. Kyle Majchrowski, Senior Project Engineer, Banner Health, recapped the importance of bringing teams together in the “Executive Panel: The Business Case for Technology” session. He explained, “Everyone’s success is important—throughout the whole construction cycle. We need to become more fluent, and more open to inviting everyone to the table.”

While technology is a major driver for enhancing collaboration on the jobsite, it’s only successful with leadership and buy-in from employees. In “Executive Workshop: Establishing Your Technical Roadmap,” construction thought-leader, Jay Snyder, Technology Practice Leader, FMI, described the components for a successful digital transformation through collaboration. “Allow your people to be part of the process. Make them aware of the plan and celebrate short wins. The will of the people, the buy in to use new tech is an important component for a successful digital transformation.”

Insights

“The long-term goal is for each of our customers to gain actionable insights into how projects are currently performing and to improve outcomes for every single project in progress,” said Ralph Gootee, CTO and co-founder, PlanGrid. In addition to the Insights product announcement at the opening keynote, how to utilize and leverage data remained a hot topic throughout Summit sessions.

While insights and data are essential to improving the construction process itself, it’s also critical for project lifecycle management. In the “Executive Panel: The Business Case for Technology,” Kathryn Weisner Construction & Contract Engineer of the US Department of Transportation questioned, “How can we collect data during construction to use it during operations and maintenance?” She added, “The days of building something with a 20-year lifecycle are over. We need accessible data beyond the construction project.”

Now What?

A conference excitement comedown is real. You had a taste on how you can start improving productivity and efficiency on projects whether that’s through new technology, workflows or organization. Now is the time to turn insights into action. Make the change that drives your company—and our industry—forward.

Start collecting your thoughts on what you learned at Summit and how you can start applying change to teams, projects or corporate level initiatives. Even if you just start in small, but meaningful ways, any improvement you can start to make today can pay off massively down the road.

In the next few weeks, we’ll be releasing videos from select keynotes and sessions to Summit attendees. If you registered and attended Summit, keep an eye on your inbox.

Who’s Ready for the 2019 PlanGrid Construction Summit?

We can’t express our gratitude enough for all our attendees, speakers and sponsors who made the inaugural PlanGrid Construction Summit such a success. For now, we’ll just count down the days to next year’s event. We can’t wait to see you at the 2019 PlanGrid Construction Summit!