



# FieldManager™ | Improving client relationships at USI Consultants, Inc.

**Needs analysis:** USI was seeking a software application to handle bid item-based projects. They wanted to reduce the time it was taking to generate pay estimates and close-out contracts. **Product implemented:** USI chose to implement Info Tech's FieldManager®. **Results:** The time it took to generate contractor pay estimates went down from the original two to four hours, to about 30 minutes. Compiling final records went from two weeks per contract to about two days. USI also experienced more complete and more accurate reporting. USI now has a reputation with contractors and clients of having fast and accurate turnaround.

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*“Most of the time, we simply present the report as produced in FieldManager. Sometimes we add a cover summary sheet, if there is a specific format that is required, and then use the FieldManager reports as the supporting documentation.”*

*“We definitely feel that FieldManager is a differentiator for us.”*

Scott Dick  
USI, Inc.

Being the entrepreneurial organization that they are, USI Consultants, Inc. first looked inward when they felt a need for a new software application. “We needed a construction management application to handle bid item-based projects,” said Scott Dick of USI. The company began looking at ways to develop an application based on Microsoft® Access™, but soon realized that the plan was not economically feasible.

The number one issue USI was facing was related to processing time. It took two-to-four hours per contract, per pay period, to generate contractor pay estimates for the multiple contracts they were managing. Also, the compilation of the final records during contract close-out was taking too long - about two weeks per contract. These were valuable hours spent dealing with tedious paperwork and making the customer wait. There had to be a better way.

The search began for an off-the-shelf software product that would fit the bill. USI's major needs were clear: they wanted to have a single point of data entry for cumulative project data, the ability to generate concise reports, and they wanted the application to have a Windows®-based graphical user interface.

Info Tech, Inc., a software development company had just the software tool USI was seeking. FieldManager®, a construction contract management system jointly developed by Info Tech and the Michigan Department of Transportation, was a perfect match for their needs.

The FieldManager software contains data on all aspects of the contract, including complete day-to-day details of progress on the work site, benchmarks for the contract and payment history. Using this information, the FieldManager software can quickly produce over 70 standard reports, respond to ad hoc inquiries, and effortlessly generate contractor pay estimates. In addition, the FieldManager software has instant access to the percent complete for each contract bid item, as well as easy tracking and documentation of contract modifications and materials certifications.

The decision to implement the FieldManager software meant immediate benefits in terms of efficiency for USI. “With FieldManager, we can manage more contracts, for more clients per person in the field, and still maintain competitive fees,” said Scott Dick. “A single project manager can manage multiple contracts, and FieldManager is also adaptable to individual client’s payment processes.”

After implementing the FieldManager software, the time it took to generate contractor pay estimates went down from the original two to four hours, to about 30 minutes. Compiling final records went from two weeks per contract to about two days. USI now has a reputation with contractors and clients of having fast and accurate turnaround.

Accurate reporting was important to USI and the FieldManager software delivered on that front

as well. FieldManager reports were very well received by USI's clients. "Most of the time, we simply present the report as produced in FieldManager. Sometimes we add a cover summary sheet, if there is a specific format that is required, and then use the FieldManager reports as the supporting documentation."

Mr. Dick goes on to explain that the FieldManager software provides more information on each report than they had in the past and that there is less input required to generate a report since the project data has already been entered. The addition of station location information has reduced the need to incorporate as many 'as-built' sketches, which is a real time saver.

USI uses the FieldManager software on a wide variety of jobs, including transportation, sanitary sewers, storm sewers, subdivision inspection and site work. "FieldManager works very well for all municipal capital and infrastructure projects," Mr. Dick said.

Brad Boaz was USI's project manager on a large project for the City of Noblesville, Indiana. The \$6.5 million job was run using the FieldManager software. "I could not imagine running that job with two people without FieldManager," Mr. Boaz said.

Mr. Dick added that the client was very satisfied with the outcome. "Noblesville was extremely happy with our services."

Implementing a technology solution is one way that USI is staying ahead of their competitors. With an increase in contracts stipulating qualifications-based selection (QBS), it is even more vital to present the best package to agencies when preparing a proposal, and including high-tech solutions can be part of that package.

Mr. Dick says that USI now uses the FieldManager software as a talking point in their interviews. "We definitely feel that FieldManager is a differentiator for us," he said. •



photo courtesy: USI, Inc.

USI's project on Little Chicago Road in the City of Noblesville, Indiana was successfully completed using Info Tech software.



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