

CONSTRUCTION COMPANY BUILDS A MORE PROFITABLE FUTURE WITH SMARTSEARCH

CASE STUDY



BUSINESS:
Construction

COMPANY:
Pezzo Construction Inc.

OBJECTIVES:
Manage project documents more efficiently, get better organized and "go paperless"

Affordable, user-friendly SmartSearch helps a prominent "brick and block" firm convert cumbersome project documentation into a competitive asset

Construction companies rely on documents as much as they do on bricks, concrete and steel. To be competitive today, these firms must manage information as efficiently as possible. An electronic content management solution like SmartSearch can help.

Pezzo Construction Inc. chose SmartSearch to help it organize and better manage its large volume of project documents, as well as its human resources and accounting records. "SmartSearch has been the perfect solution for our company," said Tania Prestia, Pezzo's treasurer. "SmartSearch was surprisingly affordable and—unlike a previous computer-based solution we had tried—extremely easy to learn and use. Almost immediately, SmartSearch began helping us achieve our goal of being more organized and efficient and taking the office paperless. By slashing the time required to manage important documents, this user-friendly solution is saving Pezzo tens of thousands of dollars annually, while streamlining our operations and making us more competitive in the marketplace."

Founded by Onofrio and Joanne Pezzo in 2001, Pezzo Construction is a family-owned and -operated company specializing in masonry—"brick and block" in industry parlance. The firm works on large commercial projects such as schools, hotels and medical office buildings; high profile projects include the John Gilbert Reese Center at Ohio State University in Columbus and Dublin Methodist Hospital. Depending on the season and projects under construction, Pezzo may employ up to 100 or more people. "Our general contractor customers really appreciate the fact that we are a family-owned business and are very responsive to their individual needs," said Prestia. "Onofrio Pezzo's 40 years of experience in the construction field is evident in the quality of our work and in his customer relationships."

Like most construction companies, every project undertaken by Pezzo generates a large volume of documents critical to managing the project successfully. These include contracts of various kinds, general correspondence, internal memos, pay applications and numerous other kinds of paper records. Prior to installing SmartSearch, Pezzo used "job books"—three-ring binders with five-inch spines—to manage the never-ending flood of paper. To keep hundreds of documents organized, each binder was subdivided into 15 sections by document category. All incoming paper documents had to be marked with both job and section numbers and then inserted into the binders by hand.

"Pezzo works on up to 20 projects each year, some of them so large that they require up to five job books," Prestia explained. "That adds up to a tremendous amount of paper!"



ABOUT SQUARE 9 SOFTWARES

Square 9 Softworks is a leading developer of innovative, business-centric software solutions including the award-winning SmartSearch Content Management Suite. Dedicated to making content management available to organizations of all sizes, Square 9 Softworks designs solutions built on open architecture and cutting-edge technologies that drive efficiency and productivity across all business applications.

Through decades of experience with content management technologies in business enterprises of all kinds, Square 9 Softworks has acquired a thorough understanding of document-driven business processes. Intensely customer-focused and highly responsive, the company delivers effective, value-driven solutions and has achieved a reputation for excellence in meeting the rapidly evolving needs of its customers.

Square 9 Softworks distributes its solutions exclusively through a network of highly skilled channel partners from its corporate office in New Haven, Connecticut. For further information, visit www.square-9.com

This cumbersome system had many drawbacks. Setting up the job books and then filing and retrieving documents consumed an enormous amount of time. Documents could be misfiled, misplaced or lost. Papers got accidentally ripped out of the binders. Overused job books broke or were themselves misplaced. When projects were finally completed, all of the documents had to be removed, boxed and stored outside of the office. Eventually, the boxes had to be moved offsite to a rented storage facility costing about \$3,000 annually.

Determined to find a remedy, Pezzo purchased an electronic solution, but it proved unworkable. "The system was extremely complicated to use and I couldn't find anything," Prestia lamented. "It seemed like we had a technician here every day." Prestia then discussed Pezzo's requirements with a trusted office technology company that replaced the product with SmartSearch. "It was immediately clear that SmartSearch was a superior solution," Prestia recalls. "Using SmartSearch was so much less confusing and time-consuming. With SmartSearch, finding a document is as easy as using an Internet search engine. You just type in one or two key words and—presto—there it is!"

Now, Pezzo employs SmartSearch as a "virtual job book." Using a multifunction printer, Pezzo's office staff simply scans incoming project documents into the appropriate SmartSearch Inbox, capturing them electronically as PDF files. Upon returning to their workstations, staff members immediately index the documents with the job name, job number and section number, making it easy to retrieve them instantly when needed. Pezzo is capturing all their new documents and is planning to archive older ones as time permits over the next several years. "I can't wait to make the last rent payment on that offsite storage facility!" Prestia said.

With Pezzo's entire office staff trained in SmartSearch, the firm is realizing a substantial return on its investment. Clerical-level office staff devoted 15 hours each week to managing project documents using the job book system. After only six months of use, Prestia conservatively estimated SmartSearch had slashed this by at least half and believes the company may be saving \$10,000 or more annually based on these workers' wages alone. For managers and for Prestia, a corporate officer, productivity gains have been equally dramatic. "Factoring in company-wide productivity increases, SmartSearch will probably pay for itself in one year or less," Prestia said. "SmartSearch has helped us serve our customers better and this has had a positive effect on our bottom line, too."

Would she encourage others to adopt SmartSearch? "Yes, one hundred percent!" Prestia exclaimed. "I have recommended SmartSearch to other businesses. Any company can go paperless and get organized quickly and affordably as we did with SmartSearch. And SmartSearch is a scalable solution. As we grow, SmartSearch will grow right along with us, helping us to continue being competitive and profitable."