

Case study: Encore Electric

Encore Electric switches to Powerproject for better profitability



Regional leader in electrical construction services, Encore Electric, uses Powerproject to determine staffing levels on each job (including the Four Seasons Hotel & Private Residences in Denver pictured above), spot potential delays early, and maintain profit margins. The software's ease of use and quick reporting features help the company stay on track and keep its clients happy.

Electrical subcontractor leads the way on project planning

Colorado and Wyoming builders have relied on Encore Electric to bring power to their projects for more than 25 years. The electrical contracting firm has developed a reputation of quality for a wide range of electrical pre-construction and construction services as well as 24-hour-a-day electrical maintenance services. As a result, the company has been able to grow exponentially to include three Colorado offices and more than 300 electricians, service techs, and foremen.

Encore's focus on project management has been a key point of differentiation against its competition.

"One of the things we've always done, for instance, is to provide regular reports to the GCs we work with," said George Kettlewell, director of project resources at Encore. "They don't typically ask for it, but it's a value-add they really seem to appreciate."

Of course, having the right project scheduling and management tools is necessary to do the reports and, even more importantly, to keep the projects on track.

In 2012, Kettlewell was tasked to find a new system that Encore could roll out organization-wide. The company was using Suretrak but found it cumbersome to use and inadequate for effective enterprise resource planning.

After an extensive search, Encore selected Powerproject and provided shared licenses for project managers and foremen.

Better processes and better tools

Encore Electric took the search process as an opportunity to review their

“Powerproject helps us maintain our margins – even on complex jobs.”

*George Kettlewell,
Director of Project Resources,
Encore Electric*

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project management goals and then set about to refine their process. Out of that exercise, Kettlewell and his team found that the average job had 29 discrete tasks, not just one for “running conduit”.

With senior management support, Powerproject was introduced to the staff on a project-by-project basis as more of them became trained on use of the new system.

Several half-day training sessions on Powerproject were conducted in Encore’s Denver office by ElecoSoft’s regional distributor, Project Integration, which was also instrumental in helping Encore develop a standardized template that mirrored the way Encore planned their manpower. This allowed faster adoption of Powerproject across the company.

The system was so intuitive to use, Kettlewell and his team has been able to train future sets of users in that office and the company’s other two locations.

To date, about 40 project managers have been fully trained on Powerproject and it is expected that the rest will be trained by early 2015. Between 8 and 10 jobs use Powerproject at any given time with plans to adopt the tool for every job moving forward.

Added visibility leads to better profitability

The switch to Powerproject delivered positive results for Encore nearly immediately.

Encore executives are now able to spot areas of slippage early and assess how

“It’s easier to use than Primavera and way more powerful than Suretrak. Powerproject has lots of bells and whistles but is still simple to use.”

Encore Project Scheduler

it might impact the on-time completion of the job. If that delay is caused by another contractor, Encore is able to make their case to the general contractor for additional funding for additional staffing to make up for the delay and get the project back on track.

“30 staffers might be required for a job usually but, if we’re late because of someone else, it may take 49 people,” explained Kettlewell. “Powerproject acts as our early warning sign.”

Because quality electrical staffing is at a premium in Colorado, the company also uses Powerproject to be able to better predict it’s overall staffing needs well in advance so they can plan for recruiting.

The company can now also provide those regular status reports to the GCs and owners in a fraction of the time with quick reporting tools. And, they’re able to easily import and export the most common project scheduling file types to share with GCs.

Encore’s accounting team also loves the cost savings with Powerproject’s concurrent licensing which allows 3-4 users to share a single license, saving

the company tens of thousands of dollars over competitive systems.

The company plans to complete training and equip each of its project managers, supervisors, and foreman with Powerproject by mid-2015.



About Encore Electric

Encore Electric, Inc. is Colorado’s leading electrical contractor. The company provides a wide array of electrical construction and maintenance services. Encore has earned the reputation of high quality, innovation and customer satisfaction throughout Colorado and Wyoming. The company provides design/build and design/assist services including extensive pre-construction cost analysis and constructibility reviews. Their proven project management and skilled workforce assures quality and safety as part of every job.

Encore has completed scores of high-profile jobs including the Ralph L. Carr Judicial Complex (above), the University of Colorado Center for Community, Porter Adventist Hospital, and the Four Seasons Hotel in Denver (on pg. 1). Visit www.encoreelectric.com for more information about Encore Electric.

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Powerproject: The power behind successful projects