

Three Risks of Using AI in Construction

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EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL PITFALLS OF TECH AND HOW TO AVOID THEM.

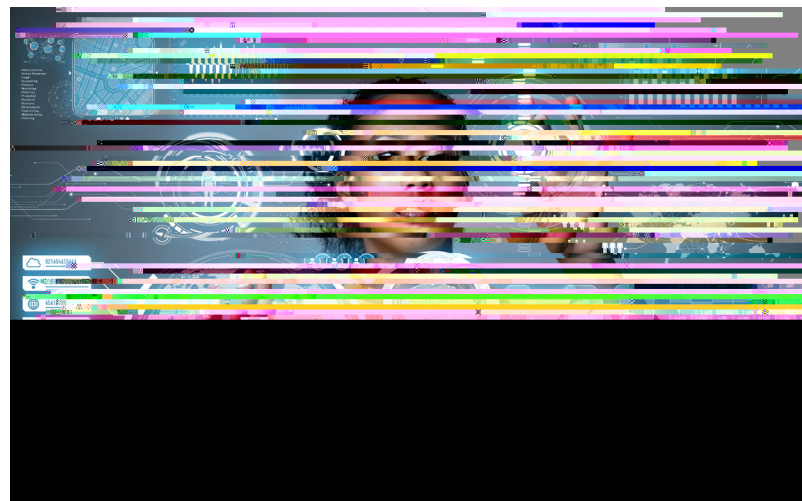
Artificial intelligence (AI) can bring benefits to the construction industry. But like any new technology or equipment on a jobsite, you need to learn how to safely operate it to get the most from the investment.

Based on conversations with executives at mid-sized and large construction companies, it's clear that AI is already boosting productivity. For example, consider the complexity of a large-scale construction project and the need for accurate, real-time information across every aspect of the build. This includes finding and assigning skilled labor, ordering and tracking supplies, filing proof of compliance, and more. Every part of the project has multiple steps, many of which can be automated and streamlined using AI. This has proven to be a considerable time saver. If the efficiency and productivity can accelerate project

without compromising safety, it is a win.

But there is a catch.

Getting a return on AI requires the underlying data to be accurate, consistent, and current. When data comes from a variety of sources, such as apps downloaded on a jobsite, ad hoc forms or a spreadsheet, there is a higher likelihood of inconsistency. Even if these tools and apps are driven by AI, they are faster—but poor-quality data will not produce highly valuable insights. Remember, AI is an evolutionary technology, constantly being trained and improving based on the input it receives.



Now imagine that same large-scale construction project has information about a delay in the supply chain. That detail is kept separate from information about the availability of skilled carpenters available on a Tuesday. When the carpenters show up on the assigned day, they find they have nothing to do because of that delay in supplies. The cost of this oversight is significant, and it is especially frustrating knowing the issue was avoidable. If the information in digital tools and apps is not brought together in a cohesive way, it increases financial, operational and safety risks.

When considering the risks of AI in construction, they typically fall into three areas.

1. THE RISK OF GRAY WORK

The first risk, and the one with the strongest ripple effect, is known as gray work—the time and resources lost using

workarounds, ad hoc solutions, and other processes when technology and established methods won't work for you. A common symptom of gray work is time and resources lost trying to reconcile various sources of data and information located in a variety of tools and apps. Gray work makes it hard to collaborate, effectively manage all the parts of a project, and make the right decision in a timely manner.

To address gray work, take a closer look at the technology being used in the office and on the jobsite, and look for redundancies, workarounds, and information silos. Bringing information together on a dynamic work management platform makes it easier for employees to find what they need, when they need it, at the speed and scale of the project.



About the Author

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About the Article

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