



Customer Success Story

Bird Construction

Challenge: With expanding markets and larger complexity of projects, Bird Construction (bird.ca) needed a better way to manage their project costs, field tracking, project procurement and customer billing.

Solution: Starting with the Industrial West division, Bird Construction implemented 4castplus as a unified platform for project controls, jobsite tracking, client billing and project procurement, giving all project teams deep visibility, collaboration, and control on construction projects.



About Bird Construction

For the past 100 years, Bird Construction has been a leading builder across Canada servicing multiple industries including mining, energy, commercial, industrial, renewables, nuclear and civil sectors. Their client-focused principles and hands-on approach have given Bird a leading edge in forming strong bonds and repeat business with major firms across the country.



The Challenge

In early 2020, Bird Construction was embarking on a number of major projects with greater complexity that presented a challenge to their current tools used for project management. Prior to adopting 4castplus, Bird was primarily using a collection of spreadsheets, reporting from their financial accounting system, along with P6 for scheduling, to manage all the details of project planning and execution. "Excel can be a great tool for certain things," says Fatima Allouche, Senior Project Controller at Bird Construction, "But it really breaks down when things get complicated." The complexity that Bird faces is that there are multiple teams that all need to work as a cohesive unit in order to successfully deliver projects to their clients.

There are, for example, the field teams at the jobsite, the project management and project controls groups in the office, as well as the individuals responsible for procurement and subcontracting, along with the finance personnel that are processing all the project accounts payable and accounts receivable information. "The sheer density of data that needs to be collected, analyzed, processed, forecasted and reported-on is staggering," Allouche notes, "And to attempt that in spreadsheets involves an overwhelming amount of manual effort."

To add to that, Bird was also experiencing a number of challenges with timely and complete customer billing. Being able to effectively recognize revenue on projects with complex contract models is clearly difficult without a system that has built-in logic to streamline that process.

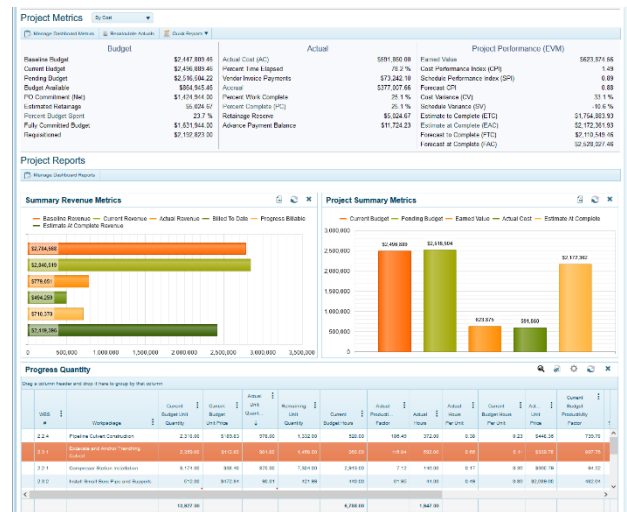
The Solution

The Bird team recognized that they needed a collaborative project management platform where they could manage all their projects and programs from a centralized place. They wanted a system that could do the heavy-lifting of connecting all the data and teams together while providing a powerful suite of tools for the various disciplines to make their jobs easier, requiring far less manual effort. They also identified a need to align their teams with the division's project cost control objectives and standards. The Western Industrial division found that 4castplus could meet their needs in these areas and much more. One key element that made 4castplus unique in comparison to competitive products, is that it can run everything standalone without the need for their financial accounting system to have to step-in to provide project structures and processes. "Having a flexible coding system in 4castplus," asserts Allouche, "Along with powerful project controls, project procurement, revenue management, and the



added bonus of comprehensive field tracking – all built-into the same system – is incredibly powerful for us.”

Some of the Bird project management team had used 4castplus in the past with previous companies, so it was an immediate candidate for the ideal solution. The 4castplus ease-of-use and appealing user interface, along with the comprehensive modules that fit their requirements, made it a relatively easy sell to the other members of the team.



A Unique Approach

To implement a robust software solution like 4castplus typically requires several months of upfront implementation effort for areas such as process design, configuration, workflow, report design and training, amongst others. The situation this team at Bird was facing, however, was that they couldn't wait for that to complete as they had a \$300m project that was starting, and a solution was needed immediately. "The guys at 4castplus were incredibly flexible, responsive and open to the idea of implementing on-the-fly," says Allouche, "So we effectively implemented using a live project!"

While this is typically not a recommended approach, the 4castplus team was up to the challenge and committed the resources to meet the needs of Bird in real-time as the project played out. As can be imagined, there were hiccups along the way, but the strong bond that was forged between the Bird and 4castplus teams created an environment of productive communication and rapid turnaround of required features and enhancements as they were encountered.

Successful Outcomes

Moving out of spreadsheets and into 4castplus as a centralized platform for managing their construction projects, Bird is now managing a whole portfolio of projects across various industry verticals. Throughout the entire lifecycle of a project, the Bird project teams are empowered with robust tools for monitoring budgets, tracking hours and



costs, forecasting outcomes and identifying issues early on to take corrective action and minimize any material impact.

The Bird team can now not only dive into the details of any phase of a project, but they can also view multiple projects together in an aggregated portfolio view to assess cash flow and make critical informed decisions. [As well, the Bird Finance team engaged with the division projects now has immediate visibility into project accruals, key for accurate and effective reporting as well as cashflow management]

More than just project management, 4castplus brings the full suite of tools for the careful oversight of projects including:

- **Project planning and estimating:** They can now work from standardized work breakdown structure (WBS) and cost breakdown structure (CBS), along with leveraging the powerful Estimating capability built-in to 4castplus with resource costing databases.
- **Revenue management:** The Bird team can setup projects to reflect the complex contracts of their clients for revenue recognition and project billing. Like many contractors, Bird can operate under various contract models including, Unit Price, Fixed Price, Time & Materials, Cost Plus, along with a combination of any of those.
- **Project procurement and subcontracting:** One of the key differentiators of 4castplus is the comprehensive procurement and subcontracting capability built directly into the project. This provides the project team with visibility into contractor cost and performance, along with metrics on both committed costs and accruals.
- **Project budgeting:** Project budgets for cost, revenue and labor hours are vital for project managers to compare budget with actuals, along with monitoring profitability. Bird can also do baseline revisions, scope change orders, budget transfers, and time-phasing on the budget to see the cost, revenue and hours over a timeline for accurate curve reporting and spend forecasts.
- **Project forecasting:** Project controllers can enter iterative progress measurements and forecasts for projections of project outcomes.
- **Real-time field tracking:** All the Bird field crews in the western industrial division are using 4castplus to track their daily costs, hours, expenses, progress, documents and more. This information is fed to the project management team in real-time.
- **Project cost controls including EVM:** The project controllers in the Bird organization now have a system that calculates Earned Value Management



metrics as a core capability of the system. This feeds the team with KPIs that indicate ongoing project health.

- Change order management and Budget Revisions
- **Integration with Viewpoint:** As the project teams are planning, tracking, reporting and managing their projects, the corporate ERP, Viewpoint, is being updated with key information to reconcile information between systems to make certain everyone across the enterprise is on the same page.

Higher Standards of Excellence

With 4castplus, the Bird team can apply standards for quality, service, and overall excellence in project delivery. "We're using 4castplus as a key differentiator in all our competitive bids now," asserts Ms. Allouche, "It gives our clients the extra confidence in our ability to provide the highest standards in performance and reporting. Some of our clients even require all contractors to have a PM system in place, so it opens doors for us that were previously shut."

Learn More

If your company is in need of cloud-based project cost management software as a unified platform for your project teams to successfully deliver projects, we'd love to hear from you! Contact us today at the following:

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[Click here to sign up for a live demo](#)

