



# FMI's Guide to Choosing and Successfully Implementing Technology Solutions for Construction Owners

---



Gretchen McComb

## FMI Corporation

5151 Glenwood Avenue  
Suite 100  
Raleigh, NC 27622  
Tel: 919.787.8400  
Fax: 919.785.9320

55 Madison Street  
Suite 410  
Denver, CO 80206  
Tel: 303.377.4740  
Fax: 303.377.3535

5301 West Cypress  
Suite 201  
Tampa, FL 33607  
Tel: 813.636.1364  
Fax: 813.636.9601

[www.fminet.com/owners](http://www.fminet.com/owners)

**L**everaging technology to cut cost and schedule out of the program delivery process is the key to achieving a competitive advantage today. Hundreds of examples of ineffective implementations and unrealized results litter the world of design and construction. Before you embark on the journey to find the right technology solutions, there are several defined critical steps. This white paper gives you an overview of those critical steps.

### **One: Department Evaluation**

Technology is not the silver bullet and will not solve every departmental problem. Before you even think about technology, you must have an understanding of what you currently do well and what you don't, and how technology will either enhance performance or promulgate a problem. Conducting an assessment can take time and external or internal resources, but it is well worth the up-front investment considering the cost of a failed implementation.

### **Two: Department Performance Metrics**

Before you determine *how* to effectively manage information through technology, you must first understand *what* information is critical to your business. How does your department affect the overall organization's profitability or effectiveness? How is your performance judged? Is it purely schedule driven? Schedule and ROI? Minimizing change? The department must do a thorough job of determining the performance metrics that are the most critical.

### **Three: Performance Gaps**

Based upon your assessment and the critical metrics, how are you performing? What do you do well? Where do you need to beef-up performance? Where will you get the biggest bang-for-the-buck with technology? For example, if you determine through the assessment process that the average cost of change orders during construction is 8%, and that one of the critical metrics for your department is controlling change, you might determine that an ability to reduce that to 4% is

critical to future successes. How can technology help you?

#### **Four: Process Definition**

One must first understand how the process in question is currently defined, and how it should be defined in the future, to enhance performance. Then you can effectively answer the question of how technology will enhance performance. Creating a highly efficient process that is wrong only takes you in the wrong

direction faster! Re-engineering processes AFTER the implementation of technology is costly. Instead, consider the wasted cost, potentially hundreds of thousands of dollars, in choosing the wrong technology for the wrong problem, the right technology for the wrong problem, or the wrong technology for the right problem. Every owner wants the same things—to be able to more effectively control cost and schedule, and to be able to efficiently collaborate with A/E and construction service providers to enhance overall program performance. While the end goal

---

*“Before you even think about technology, you must have an understanding of what you currently do well and what you don't, and how technology will either enhance performance or promulgate a problem.”*

---

direction faster! Re-engineering processes AFTER the implementation of technology is costly.

#### **Five: Technology Solution**

Finally, the good stuff! Now you have the information you need to truly understand what technology you need to enhance performance for a given metric and associated process, and you can make informed decisions about the right solution. You've done your homework, know what you need, and can be an informed, educated buyer who makes the right choice and can successfully integrate technology into your process.

Do not be daunted by these steps.

is the same, the means of achieving that goal are unique to the needs of the organization. Take the time to make the right choice—you won't be sorry.

---

*Gretchen McComb, managing director of FMI's Owner Services Group, is based in FMI's Denver office. She works closely with owners to develop effective strategic technology strategies. She can be reached at 303.398.7203 or via e-mail at gmccomb@fminet.com.*

2002 FMI Corporation. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form, or by any means, without permission from the publisher, FMI: 919.785.9220.

## About FMI

Founded in 1953 by Dr. Emol Fails, FMI provides management consulting, training, and capital services for the worldwide construction industry.

FMI delivers innovative, customized solutions to contractors, engineers, architects, environmental firms; manufacturers and suppliers of building products and construction equipment; construction materials producers; private owners, government agencies, utility companies; surety companies; and trade associations.

FMI's experienced consultants can assist your business with compensation planning, leader and organizational development, business development, strategic market information, acquisition integration, mergers and acquisitions, ownership transition, private equity financing, project delivery improvement, management and field-level training, strategic planning, strategic sourcing, and productivity improvement.