

Centric Projects maintains low overhead and high productivity with [Dropbox Business](#)

Centric Projects is a commercial construction company that approaches building with innovation, flexibility, sustainability, and craftsmanship in mind. With a portfolio that spans commercial, retail, health care, and institutional spaces, Centric differentiates itself from other builders through use of unique design, creative thinking, and emerging technology.



Laying the groundwork

When Centric projects was founded in 2010, the company consisted of three partners — Courtney Kounkel, Steve Swanson, and Richard Wetzels — sitting desk-to-desk in a temporary office space. Collaboration and file sharing were as simple as talking over laptop screens and passing flash drives from one person to the next.

However, the future of interaction at Centric was forever changed when a colleague suggested the budding team get a Dropbox account. The trio downloaded the application that afternoon and began using it so frequently, they had to get more storage space by the end of the first two weeks.

As the company's staff grew, the need for additional file storage did too, so Swanson moved everyone to Dropbox Business. With overhead and efficiency as top priorities, he explored some other solutions — even going so far as to begin the “painful” process of uploading files to a different cloud storage product — but ultimately he decided Dropbox was still the best fit. “Dropbox Business acts as our server,” he explains. “All of our company data is on it, and we can very quickly and easily use it to share a lot of information with a lot of people.”

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Richard Wetzels, Partner, Centric Projects

Simplicity and sensibility

Because about three-quarters of the Centric team is regularly working on job sites, it's critical for the company to have reliable ways to communicate and share. Dropbox allows employees in the field and in the office to connect instantaneously. For example, when project change orders get logged, they are stored in Dropbox, ensuring that everyone who needs them has them at the same time. Wetzels adds,

Company: [Centric Projects](#)

Requirements

- Secure file storage that grows with the company
- Mobile access to files from job sites
- Low overhead; no costly on-site equipment

Solution: [Dropbox Business](#)

Results

- Always-synced, accessible files
- Simplified interaction between remote and in-office staff
- Efficiency advantages over the competition

“People working remotely just open Dropbox and it’s like they’re sitting right there with us in the office. No one has to worry about logging in through a Citrix server. We get an immediate connection, and our files are always up-to-date.”

Remote team members also rely on Dropbox apps. Rather than having to lug around laptops, they can quickly access files right on their iPhones or iPads. Wetzel believes this kind of easy accessibility supports the company’s perspective on technology. “Our company doesn’t have a huge server or wires all over our office,” he says.

“Technology is all about making things easy, not complex — and that’s part of the reason we use Dropbox Business.”

In addition to using Dropbox internally, Centric staff relies on shared links to send important input drawings to subcontractors, and to share bids and proposals with prospective clients. Swanson says, “When I create a folder in Dropbox, I can share large files with subcontractors, and they can upload their submissions right back — so I have those as soon as they’re done. It’s a lot easier than using an FTP site.”

A key component for both internal and external collaboration at Centric is security. All three partners have enabled two-step authentication on Dropbox and appreciate the ability to quickly unlink computers, devices and web sessions. They also make sure employees set passwords on their mobile devices, and on the Dropbox app itself, so no one can get into their files. When it comes to the safety of their data, Wetzel jokes, “I would rather have it in secure, encrypted, redundant system like Dropbox, than put it in my office and risk losing local data. Now, if some disaster hit our office, we would be up and running in a remote location in 30 minutes or less!”

Competitive advantages

Because construction is a variable-cost industry, and revenue can change from month to month, Centric believes low overhead is an important standard to maintain. By using Dropbox, Centric is able to avoid hiring an IT

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Steve Swanson, Partner, Centric Projects

professional or investing in costly servers. Wetzel says, “In construction, the best way to maintain profitability is to keep overhead costs really low. Our overhead structure is one-half to one-third that of our competitors’, in part because of Dropbox. Competitors are stuck with legacy systems that drag down efficiency and increase costs. Buying a server nowadays just doesn’t make sense.”

Another edge Centric has over the competition is its employees’ ability to work quickly and effectively on job sites. Because employees at many other construction operations work remotely via server-based systems, they’re not able to access data at the same speed as Centric employees. Kounkel, whose team works primarily in the field, states, “Honestly, Dropbox defines who our company is today, technology-wise.”

Dropbox has become so essential to Centric’s processes and productivity, it’s almost as though the application was made for the company. Swanson admits, “You probably hear the word ‘Dropbox’ more than anything else at the company. We all know how to use Dropbox; it has become a part of our culture.”



About Dropbox

Dropbox lets you bring your docs, photos, and videos anywhere and share them easily. Keep files up-to-date across multiple devices and stay in sync with your team — effortlessly. Dropbox Business also offers administrative tools, phone support, and as much space as you need.

To learn more about what Dropbox Business can do for your organization, please reach out to your partner sales representative or visit www.dropbox.com/business for more product information.