



CASE STUDY

SSB Construction, Inc.

After a Cyberattack, SSB Construction Finds Silver Linings in the Cloud – Improving Efficiencies, Decision-Making and Peace of Mind with ProContractor



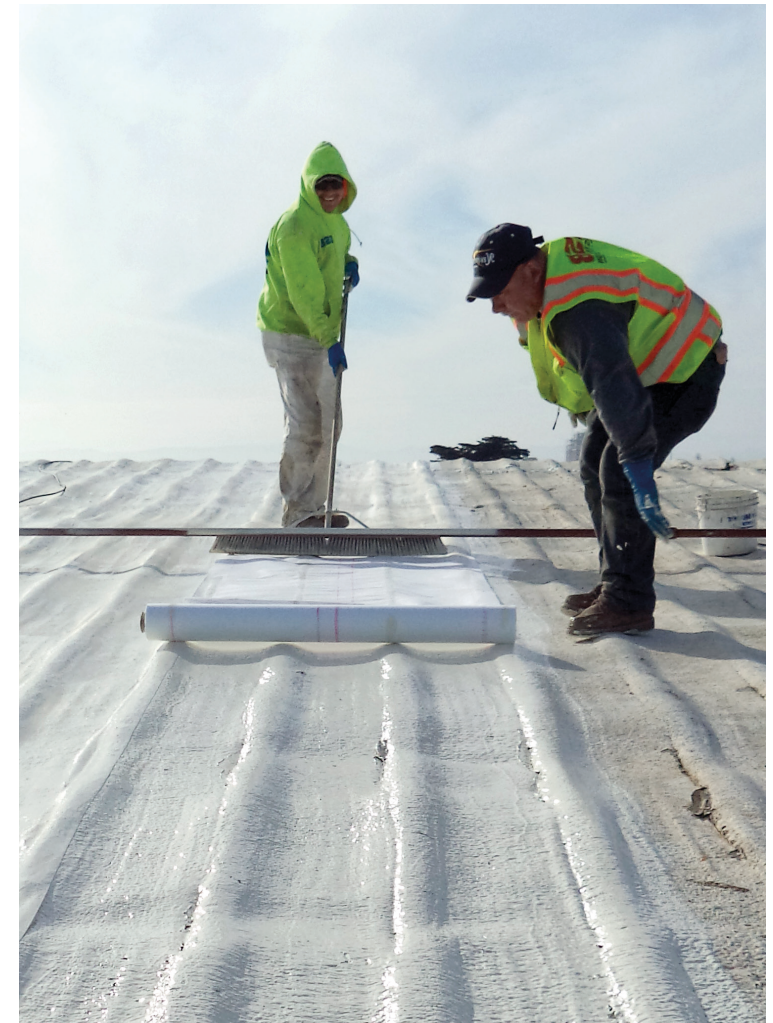
SSB



About the Company

A third-generation family business, **SSB Construction, Inc.**, has been a trusted design-build contractor for agricultural, industrial and commercial buildings throughout California since 1945. Based in Salinas, the company has earned a reputation for solid, sustainable building, successfully completing hundreds of agricultural, industrial and commercial projects – from warehouses and wineries to schools and office buildings. SSB also operates a growing maintenance services business and provides roof coating, solar panel cleaning and painting services to customers in California, Arizona and Texas.

The company's future is bright, but in past years, SSB struggled in the same ways that many construction firms do with collecting, sharing and analyzing data. Financial, HR and project information was siloed, leading to inefficiencies and occasional errors. The firm's previous accounting and project management solutions were stepping stones toward its eventual digital transformation, but they were outdated and lacked the capabilities SSB needed to make the most of its data and take its operations to the next level.



Challenge

Finding a Better Solution

“We were collecting data, but it was a cumbersome process,” recalls SSB Controller Alicia Byers, who oversees finance, HR and safety. “Even with the data in hand, our old software didn’t have the analytics capabilities we needed to better understand job costs or plan upcoming marketing based on sales needs, among other things. We couldn’t extract information, run reports or analyze our data. It was very painful.”

SSB began looking for a solution that would make it easy to capture and analyze data and track benchmarks from year to year. In 2016, the firm began using Trimble Viewpoint’s ProContractor, an all-in-one business management solution for small to medium-sized construction firms that streamlines business processes with dedicated accounting, estimating and mobile field support modules. “With ProContractor, our accounting and project management workflows were more efficient, and we were finally able to dig deeper into our data,” Byers says.



Challenge

continued

Getting Caught Off-Guard

Things were going great until March 2020, when – right at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic – the company’s servers were hit with two cyberattacks a week apart. “We discovered the first attack when we couldn’t access job files. We tried to access an offsite backup, and during that process, we were hit by another attack.”

The hackers encrypted the company’s files, leaving SSB with potentially several years of lost data. “We used a third-party IT provider and didn’t realize the backup they had in place wasn’t secure,” Byers says. “Our IT resource tried for weeks to pull data but couldn’t recover anything usable. Realizing that we had lost job history dating back to 2009 was unnerving.”

Before the cyberattack, SSB hosted ProContractor on-premise. “As a small company, we thought we were doing the right thing by keeping everything in-house. It seemed like the most secure option. We thought the data was in our control and that our servers were safe. It took the cyberattack for us to see how behind the times our IT management was.”



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Alicia Byers | SSB Controller

Solution

Migrating to the Cloud

SSB decided to move to the cloud after the attack and began working closely with the Trimble Viewpoint team to make the transition. “It took the attack for us to realize that the cloud offers more robust security and protective measures that make it safer than on-premise software,” Byers says. This was evidenced by the backup files of SSB’s records from 2016 through 2018 that Trimble Viewpoint had created during a ProContractor update. “So we really only lost 2019 and my team and I could reconstruct 2020 to that point from other files.” Their application settings had also been backed up, which made getting back on their feet even faster.

Fortunately, the loss of data didn’t result in project delays. “We were in the midst of COVID, so other than maintenance, almost everything was shut down anyway,” Byers says. “Our biggest hurdle was payroll. We had to manually calculate and cut payroll checks for a few months.”



Solution continued

Putting Their Minds at Ease

Migrating to the cloud began in April and finished in May. “I was pleased with how Trimble Viewpoint stepped up during our emergency, even with the pandemic. The cloud migration was fast and easy, and despite the circumstances, it was pretty seamless.”

By moving to the cloud, SSB eliminated the need to maintain servers, roll out software updates across the organization, perform daily backups and monitor for security threats. ProContractor offers better data security with immediate access to system updates as well as encrypted, user-level permission controls and multi-factor authentication.

Moving to the cloud has put the SSB leadership team’s minds at ease. “We thought we were saving money before by hosting ProContractor on-premise, but the attack opened our eyes,” Byers says. Migrating to the cloud may cost a little more, but “the peace of mind we get from knowing our data is secure is worth it.”



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Alicia Byers | SSB Controller

Results

Streamlining Operations

Moving to ProContractor in the cloud has streamlined operations for SSB. “We’re running so smoothly now in the cloud. Our day-to-day operations are so dialed in that it’s allowed us to create a routine so that people can easily transition into a new role and new hires can get up and running on their first day. Whether it’s accounts payable, end-of-the-month reporting, or accounts receivable and invoices, our processes are nearly on auto-pilot with ProContractor. End-of-month reporting used to take three weeks, but now we get it done in three days.”

ProContractor eliminates manual processes and automatically generates reports that reflect major cost categories with integrated data for accurate, easy-to-understand metrics. “Our job costing and billing are more efficient,” Byers says. “With our previous software, any cost code submitted on a timecard would be entered into the system. There were no controls in place. With ProContractor, everything aligns to cost code headers. It’s much more streamlined, and the project managers like the ability to see total cost based on category.”



Results continued

Making Better Decisions

With access to real-time project data, SSB is making smarter project and business decisions and planning for more profitable projects. “We can run overhead cost comparisons year over year and dive into the data to understand the factors that impacted it,” Byers says. “I love that I can slice and dice the data to discover the trends driving sales growth or maintenance expenses. I can easily create pivot tables and run reports that compare performance over time, and that benchmarking data is moving the needle for our business.”

With ProContractor, everyone at SSB can access the same up-to-date information. “Across the board, our staff has confidence that cost and billing data is accurate,” Byers says. “We don’t have to waste time second-guessing ourselves or other members of the team. Instead, we can each focus on the job at hand and how to get it done faster and better.”

Learn more about Viewpoint viewpoint.com



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ABOUT TRIMBLE VIEWPOINT

Trimble Viewpoint construction software solutions, part of Trimble Connected Construction, allow contractors to better manage their projects, processes and people, using the data gathered to lower risk and improve margins. With more than 40% of the ENR 400 on our platforms, Trimble Viewpoint innovations are transforming the construction industry by connecting operations across financial and HR systems, project management tools and mobile field solutions. For more information, visit: [Viewpoint.com](https://viewpoint.com).

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