BuildCentrix

CONSTRUCTION IN THE CLOUD

March 2022

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DISTANCE

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BuildCentrix Phases Tool Helps Companies Hit a PB on Data Collection

By / Jessica Kirby

Serious runners have it dialled in when it comes to data. They measure time, pace, distance, nutrition, breathing—the hardcores even keep track of the miles on their running shoes. In running, data is the stuff champions are made of. (And by "champions," I mean everyone from Olympic track stars to weekend warriors, as long as improvement is the goal.) They watch the numbers for patterns and they compete, mostly against themselves, for better times, longer distances, or a more efficient pace—all in the quest to meet a respectable PB (personal best).

But gathering all that data only makes sense if the athlete knows what to do with it. A runner who sees their time improve without knowing they went a shorter distance, or who feels great about going an extra two miles without realizing it took them an hour more than usual, aren't getting the kind of feedback from their data that they need to meet their goals. They may as well be measuring how many telephone poles they pass or time spent washing their running shorts.

In the business world, data is one of the most valuable assets a company can cultivate. Having accurate numbers on key metrics can make or break a company's success, but, like it is in running, the key is collecting the right data on the right data points.

If you're a runner and you're only thinking about distance or time, you're not accurately measuring your performance. To improve, you'll want to know how you've performed so far (distance vs time), what's ahead of you (distance remaining), and whether you need to change your approach (speed).

The same concept applies to data collection in the MEP trades. If the data collection platform only focuses on material without

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time or vice versa, the user will not have enough data to make important, business-changing decisions.

Starting with the estimate, the user must associate the time and material, and since projects will have hundreds if not tens of thousands of hours, it becomes a lot of data to manage. BuildCentrix tackles that challenge by tying estimated data into phases or groups of similar work that can be compared to the actual numbers and from which important information can be extracted.

"On a big project, if you don't have markers, you just end up with totals," says James Beveridge, CEO of BuildCentrix. "The BCX phases tool is a way to break the project into logical areas."

The value of phases is that it provides numbers to compare with when bidding a project. When setting the budget, phases incorporate the estimate, the time keeping for the shop and field, and materials, and gives a full picture of the project's performance.

"Runners compete with themselves and, over time, want to see their time and distance metrics both improving, and the same idea applies to companies measuring the phases on all of their projects," Beveridge says. "They want to see how they are performing and use that information to understand how the data metrics work together and how the actuals continue to improve."

Like runners, company owners and project managers are all about the data, but without a way to interpret it, all the information in the world won't lead to improvement.

"Often, business owners don't understand the data or how to analyze it in a meaningful way," Beveridge says. "One of our strengths is that BCX generates data and records the information individually and in relationship to other key metrics so it is easy to read, compare, and report on."

Learn more about the BuildCentrix platform and how phases can up your data collection game at *buildcentrix.com* ∎

See the BuildCentrix Assembly Builder in Action

▶ VIDEO

Have you wondered how the BuildCentrix Assembly Builder works? Watch the new video showing how easy to use and accurate this new feature is and how it can benefit your company.

If you'd like to see the power of BuildCentrix, visit *buildcentrix.com* and book your appointment for a full demonstration.
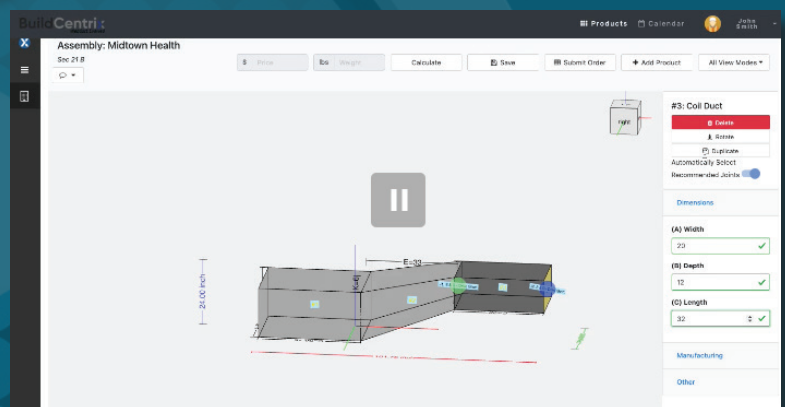
What Dynamic Hole?

Dynamic holes are something every CAM operator or VDC draftsperson should understand. Dynamic holes are set on specific fitting patterns to determine how large and where a hole will be placed on the fitting/product. They were initially created to apply rules for where holes are placed on fittings, so if a fitting has a hole in the model, when it came through to fabrication software, the fabrication software would apply the hole according to that logic. That process introduces constraints, and sometimes those constraints are too rigid or too limited because they only work on certain products.

BCX can apply rules for dynamic holes, but we also don't limit it. So, if you needed to place a hole on a certain fitting pattern that dynamic holes doesn't support, we can allow it, if it's viable. If you want to add a tap, simply place a hole and connect the tap.

Dynamic holes were built for the 'design line' tool in the AD CAD world. With a shared fabrication database, they come through into CAM, as well. It is easy to see why dynamic holes were architected for original fabrication products, but they've been an issue outside of that shared database. Within BCX, holes can be applied on piping, plumbing, and sheet metal products, as long as they abide by the manufacturing standards. Learn more at *buildcentrix.com*. ▪

Ordering Piping and Plumbing vs. Duct

Creating a stand alone engine to calculate sheet metal fabrication time, weight, manufacturing specs, cost, and price is no easy task. On the flip side, piping and plumbing are commodity products purchased through a supplier or foundry. Holes are burned, taps are welded on, and pieces are joined together. It's not fabricating from a flat sheet.

Both databases have their challenges. For the dry side, it's turning that flat piece of metal into a 3D object. For piping and plumbing, it's the size of the database and all the parts that are purchased from suppliers. You have a single geometric shape like a tyee, but that tyee from OEM A and OEM B are going to have different prices and possibly different technical specs, thicknesses, or even allowed diameters. It's not apples to apples.

Piping and plumbing products are also 'product listed'. That means since they are purchased parts, there are pre-determined/pre-set sizes. That tyee has three openings, which means the possibility of hundreds if not thousands of variations in sizing—and since it's a purchased product, if you want to use OEM A and OEM B, you need to have all of them listed in your database.

BCX for Piping and Plumbing has solved this issue by creating catalogues of parts from leading vendors in North America. BCX just need to select which vendors they want in their database and what parts they want included. Learn more or request a free demonstration at *buildcentrix.com* ▪
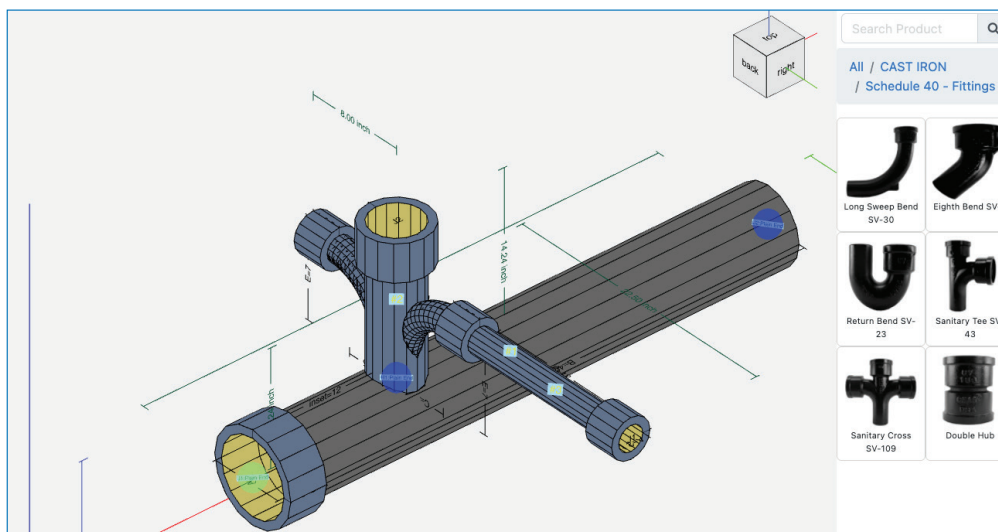
QR Codes

Why use legacy bar codes? Although bar code scanners are attached to window stations and are still used to track material, this is a Stone Age solution.

It is an ingrained idea that scanning is equivalent to good tracking. But when you think about it, why should good tracking rely on handheld scanners and installed software?

Every BCX order has configurable statuses for manufacturing, shipping, and receiving on site. Users from the shop and field can use any smart device with a camera to scan and update the status of each product on an order (or the whole order) based on that user's role in the organization. Look into the future at *buildcentrix.com*. ▪

New Production and Delivery Calendars

BCX is the only production management tool that provides a calendar view of budgeted labor hours by job, order, trade type, and activity. The initial calendars were launched in 2015. They've recently been revamped and moved into a new technology stack.

Using new technology allows the BCX team to continually add new features and enhancements and provide a better user experience. With the new version, the Production and Delivery calendars can now tie orders to a specific loading bay and/or trucks, push notifications to external email calendars (Outlook, Gmail), stretch fabrication over multiple days, and more. Learn more or request a free demonstration at *buildcentrix.com* ▪