

Cleveland Construction Sped Up Submittal Reviews with Trunk Tools. New Business Followed.

CLIENT



CHALLENGE

Across projects generating terabytes of data, Cleveland Construction's teams were losing hours each week manually searching through specs, drawings, RFIs, and submittals — and a cumbersome submittal review process left less experienced staff prone to missing critical details, exposing projects to costly rework and delays.

SOLUTION

By deploying Trunk Tools with Autodesk Forma Build, Cleveland Construction gave field teams instant, document-backed answers from the jobsite and equipped project engineers with an AI-powered reviewer that systematically checks every specification requirement, **with estimated savings of 790+ hours and \$60K+ across four projects.**



Introduction

Jobsite 101: Small Delays Result in Compounding Risk

Construction projects at Cleveland Construction range from \$1 million to over \$130 million and the documentation burden scales accordingly. A single project might carry more than 1,000 RFIs, several thousand submittals, and a specification manual running thousands of pages across drawing sets that can go through 20 or more revisions over the life of a job. By closeout, a project can accumulate terabytes of data.

Projects rarely fail all at once. They fail incrementally: in the gap between a superintendent's question and the answer that never arrived in time, in the submittal that sat in review for a week before anyone caught a non-compliant detail, or in an unclouded revision no one spotted amidst the documentation crunch.

"It's usually not one big failure — it's a series of small ones," says Elliot Christiansen, SVP of Operations at Cleveland. "A typical submittal timeline will be 10 days for a sub to submit, 5 days for GC review, 15 days for the architect to sign off. That's already 30 days. If you redo it, now you're at 60 to 90 days."



The Cost of Information Overload

For Assistant Project Manager Bryant Caporale, submittals alone could consume 50 to 60 percent of his working day, and that's before architect coordination, subcontractor follow-ups, and tracking what came back against what went out. A missed non-compliance doesn't show up on paper; it shows up in the field, after the work is already in the wall. And Christiansen is clear the risk runs up the org chart: "It is also the management staff overseeing the work, managing contracts, and ensuring that the work is going in correctly, which is just as critical to the project."

"Honestly, it feels like information overload," says Caporale. "You're handling multiple subs, multiple submittals, multiple disciplines and you're constantly getting interrupted."

The impacts, adds Christiansen, can lead to confusion on the site and costly rework: "Far too often, work is installed incorrectly simply because people don't have the right information at the right time," says Christiansen.

Cleveland also recognized the broader challenge driving all of it: construction has a deepening experience problem. Seasoned project managers and superintendents carry hard-won instincts. They know which patterns signal risk and when a schedule is dangerous in practice. But experience doesn't transfer easily, and when that knowledge isn't in the room, the gaps show up on the margins.

Cleveland identified several manual processes that could help less experienced staff manage review more effectively: comparing product data against specs and checking new submittals against previously approved ones to catch conflicts before they reached the field. The question was how to make that intelligence available at the pace the work demands.



The Solution

Actionable Intelligence from Connected Data

Cleveland Construction had already standardized on **Autodesk Forma** as the connective tissue of their project operations, a single project management system where drawings, specifications, RFIs, and submittals live together, accessible across teams. By integrating Trunk Tools as an intelligence layer atop Autodesk Forma, Cleveland unlocked the ability to automatically compare submittals against specifications, surface discrepancies before they reach the architect, and put accurate project answers in every team member's hands

Two tools do the primary work.

TrunkSubmittal automates the first-pass review process: when a submittal comes in, it analyzes the document against project specifications and relevant RFI responses, flags non-compliant line items, and generates a structured recommendation in minutes.

TrunkText allows anyone on the team to query project documentation in natural language from a phone on the jobsite, no trip to the trailer required. Autodesk Forma remains the source of truth throughout, so every review and every field query draws from the same current data the rest of the team is using.



Accelerating Review Cycles

Caporale's team received a submittal that was partially compliant: certain product specs checked out, others didn't. Before Trunk Tools, identifying the precise points of non-compliance would have taken two or more hours of cross-referencing specs against submitted documents, longer still for a junior PM or PE encountering the product type for the first time, with no guarantee everything was caught. The risk wasn't just time; it was the possibility that something slipped through and showed up later as a field problem or a change order. With TrunkSubmittal, the first-pass analysis was ready in minutes.

"Within about 10 minutes of receiving it, we had the analysis. Within 30 minutes, I was able to respond to the electrician and say, 'Hey, we need you to update this one item.' They got it back within a couple hours, and we turned it around in about 2-3 hours total. That's huge, because normally you're waiting days just to respond, and then days for them to respond back." — Bryant Caporale, Assistant Project Manager

What was once a multi-day loop became a same-day cycle with a compliant result in hand. Subcontractors get feedback faster, procurement decisions accelerate, and the project retains its momentum rather than losing days and margin to administrative latency.

The Most Up-to-Date Project Data, at Your Fingertips

Chad Gibson, a veteran superintendent, has spent enough years on jobsites to know exactly where time disappears. A question about a spec detail, a dimension, or a material requirement used to mean stepping away from the work and walking back to



the trailer, pulling him out of the field for 20 minutes or more every time a question came up. That round trip, repeated across a workday, costs more than most project schedules account for.

TrunkText changed the equation. Gibson can now query live project documentation in Autodesk Forma directly from his phone and get a precise answer in the time it once took him to find his place in the spec book. "Something that would normally take me 20 minutes or more to thumb through and find what I needed, I punched it in and I had it in two minutes," says Gibson. "Exactly what I needed."

For Christiansen, that's exactly the point. "TrunkText keeps our superintendents in the field where we need them, because they have everything with a simple prompt." The trailer trip that doesn't happen, the answer that arrives before the question becomes a delay: those are the moments where schedules are protected.

By the numbers: TrunkSubmittal Helps Cleveland Protect Schedule and Margin

As review cycles have accelerated, the rhythm of Cleveland's projects has changed. When GC reviews took several days, subcontractors responded on similar timelines. When feedback arrives within hours, that standard shifts across the whole cycle. Faster, more accurate submittals signal that Cleveland's teams are organized, thorough, and responsive, a perception that sets the culture for the jobsite.

	Before Trunk Tools	After
Initial submittal review time	2+ hours	~10 minutes
Full submittal turnaround	Multiple days	2–3 hours, same day
Document search time (field)	20+ min	2 minutes
Hours saved via TrunkSubmittal*	790+ hours across 4 projects	
Estimated cost savings	\$60K+ across 4 projects	

*Based on analyzed usage and Cleveland Construction benchmarks across 4 construction sites

The Results

Better Site Coordination Smooths the Way to New Business

Thousands of hours reclaimed. Submittal cycles compressed from days to hours. Entry-level engineers producing reviews with the accuracy of colleagues five years their senior. And a reputation winning Cleveland new work from the architects and owners who've seen it firsthand.

"We've already had architects recommend us for more work because of how we handle submittals," says Caporale, who is seeing better performance in the field translate to tighter relationships and smoother running sites.

Teams that used to spend their days searching and validating are now asking, reviewing, and acting. For Christiansen, extending Autodesk Forma's connected data foundation with Trunk Tools' AI agents, has changed what its teams are capable of, while positioning Cleveland as the kind of tech-forward builder that the next generation of major projects will be looking for.

"If we didn't trust it, we wouldn't use it."





"TrunkText keeps our superintendents in the field where we need them. It reduces the need for them to run back to the trailer to sift through plans or specs, or the need to look at their larger monitors trying to find information — because they have everything with a simple prompt."

Elliot Christiansen

Senior Vice President of Operations, Cleveland Construction

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Bryant Caporale

Assistant Project Manager
Cleveland Construction



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