



USING AERIAL MAPPING TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS

Business owners need to utilize technology effectively in order to compete. Whether you want a steady flow of work or to grow your business, adopting technology is the key.

Yet despite advances in related industries, the construction industry is still a pen-and-paper business. While more specialized employees such as architects have been using technology like computer-aided design (CAD) and building information modeling (BIM) for years, [construction has been one of the last industries to digitize](#), ahead of only the agricultural sector. But just because the industry as a whole has been slow to adopt technology, that doesn't mean you have to be, too.

One new technology that is generating big wins for small companies is high-resolution aerial mapping.

This innovation makes it easy and affordable to accurately capture the condition of a project site. And because the images are digital, the reality on the ground is available via the web, giving you and your team access to valuable data anytime and anywhere.

Aerial mapping adds value across your business, from prospecting and quoting to planning and communicating with clients.

PLAN AND COMMUNICATE WITH PRECISION

High-resolution aerial maps make resource and logistical planning faster and more accurate because everyone associated with the project has the same, clear visual of the project site.

The images create a visual context for the work being done and can easily be annotated with notes, sketches and measurements to provide additional information. As a result, mistakes, miscommunication and misinterpretations are less likely.

For example, a project manager can easily review access points and see how work areas can be situated on the site. That information can then be shared with the customer and with other stakeholders, before the project's expectations are set, to prepare project management plans and coordinate operations. At this point, clear guidelines could win or lose a project.

PROSPECT WITH CONFIDENCE

Small business owners invest a lot of time prospecting, often via traditional marketing (mailers, fliers and ads) and sales tactics (cold-calling, knocking on doors and eyeballing opportunities near current projects).

When you consider that [a recent survey](#) found that 50% of prospects aren't a good fit for a particular business, anything you do to improve this part of the process reaps material benefits. And aerial mapping dramatically changes the prospecting game.

Say you're a solar installer. [Data shows](#) that the strongest motivator for people to "go solar" isn't income or cost savings, it's whether one of their neighbors has already done it. If you can quickly locate residences with solar panels, you can use nearby addresses for your marketing outreach. These stronger prospects are more likely to turn into closed deals.

Another problem is traveling to prospective sites. It's frustrating and costly to get to a project location only to realize the job isn't a good fit because of the size, access issues or other factors. But with aerial mapping technology, you can assess potential jobs ahead of time and decide if the lead is worth pursuing. Qualifying a job remotely means less time on the road and more time pursuing viable contracts.

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THE FUTURE WITH AERIAL MAPPING

Companies such as Nearmap are advancing aerial image technology to produce even more value for users with:

- **WEB-BASED DIGITAL TOOLS** that support creation, sharing and collaboration across teams. The tools enable you to assess and qualify a job before setting foot on site, and then pass this information to a colleague who creates a site plan using the MapBrowser app.
- **MACHINE LEARNING-DERIVED DATA** helps you find marketing opportunities from adjacent properties in a neighborhood with solar panels or poor roof conditions as well as opportunities for landscape work at active construction sites.
- **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE** does the quoting and site planning based on aerial imagery. You establish standard job templates, and AI auto-deploys to create the estimate or report. You just verify.

QUOTE WITH SPEED AND ACCURACY

In a competitive environment, response time and customer satisfaction are valuable differentiators. Delivering a fast and accurate quote improves your chances of winning the job and establishes a strong foundation for potentially long-lasting client relationships.

The current way of gathering information for quotes is time-consuming and cost-ineffective. A roofer makes four in-person visits per day to inspect and measure for repairs or maintenance. That's typically a one- to two-hour commitment on site (plus travel and administrative time) at an hourly cost of \$12 to \$20 per contractor per hour. You could purchase a roofing report, but those are \$20 to \$40 each and may not be up to date. High-resolution aerial maps make it cheaper and easier to gather this information without leaving the office.

Even when you must do a site visit, aerial images streamline your workflow. For instance, a roofing contractor can annotate and mark up a virtual rooftop after an onsite assessment, which can be included in the proposal and used to create the quote. Solutions such as Nearmap's MapBrowser have built-in tools that allow you to measure line, area or radius of ground features using its high-resolution aerial imagery on-demand. Because the measurements are accurate within inches, workers have a virtual tape measure that allows them to work much more efficiently.

Your sales team can also benefit from the use of high-resolution aerial mapping. Reps could spend a third of their day interacting with prospects. [A huge chunk of their time is eaten up on tasks like data gathering that could be optimized with technology.](#) With high-res aerial images, they can see the site remotely and with enough detail to understand the situation on the ground and work up an accurate estimate while they're talking to prospects.

In addition to more new business, web-based images reduce the amount of time your employees are on the road, which can improve your margins by decreasing associated costs for insurance, vehicle maintenance and fuel.

TRANSFORM YOUR BUSINESS

A [McKinsey Global Institute report](#) estimates that digitization and other industry shifts in construction and related trades could boost productivity by 50% to 60% through activities such as improving onsite execution, advancing automation and integrating technology.

These benefits accrue whether you're an established company or a small firm with an appetite for growth. Digital gains empower you to get more done with better accuracy, to prospect and close more effectively, and to generate larger return on investment.

Being an early adopter of technology, such as high-resolution aerial mapping, puts you ahead of the rest of the industry and will put you in a better position to exceed your revenue goals.

"Mapping will be very different in the future as we fast approach dynamic, real-time, AI-driven and self-correcting maps," notes Kevin Kwok, a Nearmap technical product manager.

Kwok says he sees the future of mapping as capturing information at a precise moment in time — whether it's live traffic and road conditions or construction as-builts — and then seamlessly integrating this data with BIM as well as GIS via virtual, augmented and mixed reality.

One example: Upcoming enhancements to Nearmap products will allow accurate measurement of roof pitch and area, says Natasha Ridley, a technical product manager. "Customers will have a complete set of tools to measure the height, width, pitch and area of buildings and other structures, which gives them even more flexibility to assess and plan a job or project before going on site."

Further, easy access to high-fidelity ground truth aerial data bridging the gap between site-specific (drones) and global (satellite) data collection will continue to transform the construction trades.

"The ability to use imagery to unify mass amounts of data and 3-D to conceptualize the entire construction lifecycle is revolutionary," says Kwok. "We are not quite there yet, but we are close." ■

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About Nearmap

[Nearmap](#) brings the real world to you. We capture, manage and deliver the most current location content in the world, allowing businesses and governments to explore their environment easily. With Nearmap, organizations unlock opportunities that consistently inform decision-making and transform the way they work. Our high-resolution, frequently updated aerial imagery is 2.8-inch GSD, better than satellite imagery. Delivered within days of capture, Nearmap shows changes over time. Users save time and money, reduce site visits and efficiently plan with current, clear imagery.

Nearmap is delivered through a refreshingly easy-to-use interface called MapBrowser™ or accessed via Esri®, Autodesk, or other third-party applications.

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