



# BULLETIN

BC Construction Association

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## Building a CITi

Last summer BCCA was very involved with the sale of its electronic planroom, Docuserve, to a new company—Construction Information Technology Inc. (CITi). The sale was completed and CITi was up and running last October, with Dave Robertson (former president of BCCA) at the helm. BCCA maintains an financial interest in this new company, as do many individual members who got on board in the first round of financing for CITi, so perhaps the time has come to check in with Dave Robertson and find out how things are going.

We track down Dave Robertson at his new corporate headquarters in Victoria. He is full of enthusiasm, and appears to be working around the clock to put CITi on the map across Canada. His golf game is apparently suffering, but hey, he's in the real world now! We ask him how the company is doing? Not wishing to be anything but objective in his estimation of the company's progress to date, Dave chooses his words carefully. "We are on-track and continuing to make solid progress towards meeting the objectives set out in our business plan", he finally tells us. Despite Dave's admirable effort to keep the conversation low-key and reality based, there is an unmistakable air of excitement as we begin to discuss the growing potential of CITi.

So what is going on these days? Steve Sulpher, formerly of VRCA, has joined the company as Vice President of Marketing and Business Development, adding his considerable experience and contacts in the construction industry to the mix. Steve has been actively promoting CITi's services across Canada, and the doors are opening. Not only is CITi's **PlanroomServer** the electronic planroom of choice for BC and Saskatchewan, it is now installed in Manitoba and appears to be heading for a number of regions in Ontario. Interest in the system has been expressed from as far east as the Maritimes. Thanks to these new areas of exposure, CITi is well on the way to achieving its goal of being the industry standard in electronic ser-

vices for construction across Canada.

Here in BC, CITi's electronic planroom continues to expand, with a steady flow of new users signing on every month. As of April of this year, **PlanroomServer** in BC had posted over 3000 projects containing some 50,000 plus pages of drawings and over 500,000 pages of specifications. As it continues to grow, the company is actively updating its technology base to meet the needs of its clients. New value-added services are in the works that will serve to attract additional clientele, while solidifying the current user base.

One of these new value added services is **Q-Save**. With a proposed launch date of July 1, 2001, CITi, in conjunction with K. Edgar King Limited, will be offering a pre-bid online quantity measurement service for all the members of the BCCA. **Q-Save** is an online ready to use spreadsheet with accurate quantities presented in a format that is easy to use and understand for all members. According to Ken King, the originator of this concept, "Q-Save will provide take off information, online, for any job, more quickly and more accurately than any other system that is currently being offered. Not only that, this information will be insured by a third party and cost anywhere from 1/4 to 1/3 the actual cost to produce the same information in the traditional manner." Mr. King advised that additional features will be added in the near future that will further enhance the member's ability to get work and save money.

February 1, 2001 saw the official launch of CITi's **ProjectServer**. This much anticipated service allows construction projects to take advantage of an internet-based, interactive, project specific site. Posting a project on **ProjectServer**, enables effective and cost-saving communication between the various parties involved. **ProjectServer** provides an on-line tool that connects participants in a real-time environment and

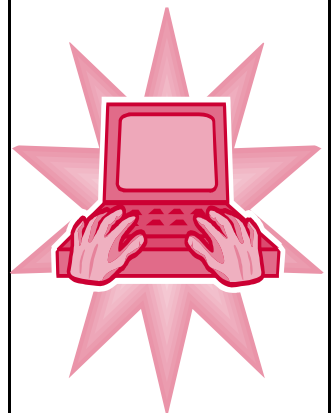
### Inside this issue:

Building a CITi Page 1

For Your Information Page 2

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## Building a CITi (cont')

monitors and documents communications throughout the project. This type of technology is quickly becoming "de rigeur" for construction in the United States, and CITi is helping to ensure that Canadian companies have the same competitive advantages. "We are very pleased with the early response to **ProjectServer**," Dave tells us. "It is a great service. We already have a number of projects using **ProjectServer**, with many more indicating they want to give it a try once their future projects get started."

We did not want to just take Dave's word for it, so we decided to have a talk with a few of **ProjectServer's** clients. We asked around to find out which of our member companies had decided to try this new "e-construction" technology. One of the first up to the plate was Kinetic Construction Ltd., a leading edge general contracting company based on Vancouver Island. We spoke with John Van Dyk, at Kinetic. He told us that the company is experimenting with the service, and so far the experiment has been a success. "**ProjectServer** allows us to handle more projects simultaneously, and we expect to see an improved profit margin down the road." He is hoping that the service catches on with more owners and consultants. Overall the impression given was a positive one: "Kinetic plans to stay on top of the game, and using this cutting edge technology is in line with that goal."

Farmer Construction Ltd of Victoria, a prominent and well-established general contracting and construction management company, also based out of Vancouver Island, has signed on to try **ProjectServer**. We spoke with Barry Scroggs, who advised us that Farmer had just recently begun to use the service on two projects and therefore it was difficult to give a really in-

formed opinion at this time. "Call me back in a month and I will know more," he said. "I do see that there will be an advantage to the trades having easier access to the construction documents, and we are looking forward to being able to administer shop drawings more inexpensively and in a more timely manner."

Third time's a charm, so we talked with one more user. Knappett Construction Ltd., yet another forward-looking general contracting company based out of Vancouver Island, is using **ProjectServer** on a BC Buildings Corporation project. John Knappett had a number of positive things to say. "Knappett Construction believes in investigating any new technology that might further its pursuit of excellence. We feel that **ProjectServer** offers such a technology. The service is getting a good workout on this project. We have had a pretty good buy-in by the trades and consultants on the job, which is essential for optimizing the service. We particularly like our enhanced ability to manage shop drawings at every stage of the project." Would Knappett Construction use this service again? "Yes," confirms John, "this is definitely the way we'll be doing business in the future!"

It is still early in the game for **ProjectServer**, but so far so good!

Overall things are looking decidedly positive at CITi. At a time when many information technology companies are experiencing a decidedly low ebb in the tides of the market place, it seems a company with a good product to offer can still survive and prosper. Here at BCCA we look forward to CITi's continued success. Improved services for the construction industry will inevitably be of benefit to all!

For those interested in finding out more about CITi's services:

Phone: 1-888-621-5333

E-mail inquiries to : [ssulpher@citinc.com](mailto:ssulpher@citinc.com)

CITi website: [www.citinc.com](http://www.citinc.com)

**For Your Information:** The BCCA Website {Bid Depository section} has recently been updated to include a listing of all Surety Companies authorized by the Financial Institutions Commission of BC. Also, the most recent amendments to the Bid Depository Rules have been posted in PDF format. This information can be accessed at: [www.bccassn.com](http://www.bccassn.com) by clicking on the Bid Depository link.



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The mission of the BCCA is to provide leadership and excellence in the representation of and service to British Columbia's construction industry