



HOW AUSTIN COMMERCIAL IS USING ~~iTWO~~ cost~~x~~ TO REIMAGINE PRECONSTRUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The preconstruction phase is evolving. A challenging industry landscape has elevated the need for a precise preconstruction process, conducted by experienced professionals with the right digital tools at their disposal.

This imperative has driven many preconstruction businesses to rethink and digitally transform their service offering, unlocking greater benefits for themselves and their clients. While advanced software alone cannot guarantee success, these solutions can have a noted impact when deployed by construction professionals who fully understand the industry and the data at hand.

In this case study, we take a look at **Austin Commercial**, one of the larger and more successful construction firms in the United States. Austin Commercial has provided management and preconstruction services on a portfolio of major projects across Dallas/Fort Worth, Austin, Houston, Orlando, Los Angeles and Aviation, and they are not content to simply rest on their laurels as an industry leader.

The Austin Commercial team has sought to reimagine their preconstruction processes, with RIB products **iTWO costX** and **iTWO benchmark** to play key roles in their industry-leading offering. In the pages ahead, we will explore Austin Commercial's philosophy toward preconstruction, and their commitment to changing the game with the help of RIB products.



American Airlines Trinity Complex: An Austin Commercial project



MOVING ON FROM MANUAL METHODS

When it comes to estimating on major projects, the trusty scale ruler has long since gone by the wayside. In 2021, there are several all-in-one construction estimating platforms that can get the job done quickly and efficiently.

The best digital solutions in the construction space are designed and constantly developed to be future-proof. Without this commitment from the software supplier, the practicality of your investment will quickly begin to wane.

For Austin Commercial, the decision to implement iTWO costX came about due to their dedication to cutting-edge technology.

“We made the decision in 2017 to explore software packages that could continue to let us be a market leader in preconstruction services,” said VP of Preconstruction Brian Andrews.

“Our people and knowledge are at the forefront, but the estimating software we had been using was dated and wasn’t advancing in the changing environment. We wanted a software that could build on our accuracy and knowledge, improve our efficiency, and integrate 3D take-off, 2D take-off and estimating into a single platform.”

In implementing iTWO costX, Austin Commercial was able to support their team with a digital software solution that further empowers the strength of the business. Deep industry knowledge across commercial, real estate, aviation, healthcare and manufacturing is at the heart of the enterprise’s success.

“Our team has a commanding knowledge of the industry, throughout preconstruction and into construction,” said Brian Andrews.

“We believe in the accuracy, integrity and effort of our people, as well as putting our customer’s needs at the forefront and aiding designers in projects that are landmark in form and function. All of these elements combine to help us gain the customer’s trust.”

In the next section, we delve a little deeper into how Austin has implemented iTWO costX within their business as of late 2021.

Austin Commercial provided their services on the Bank Of America Plaza, the tallest structure in Dallas

REIMAGINING PRECONSTRUCTION WITH iTWO COSTX

Once a business is selected to lead the preconstruction phase on a major project, there are many vital aspects to consider. Everything from scope to feasibility, budget, scheduling and more must be established in advance. Projects that maintain a Building Information Modelling environment often uncover details that can have a positive impact on downstream planning

Austin Commercial utilize both the 2D and 3D/BIM capacity of iTWO costX, and this dual approach has paid dividends for their enterprise.

“With iTWO costX, we are able to use BIM model maps to pull quantities out of the 3D models. We use this as a check against our 2D take-off,” said Senior Estimator Allison Koester.

“Interrogating the model reveals materials and details that have not made their way into the 2D plans and finish list. This leads to proactive design RFIs that clarify the scope sooner and improve the accuracy of our estimate. Fewer surprises make for a better project.”

The practice of using both 2D and 3D/BIM workflows often represents the best of both worlds for iTWO costX users. Tried and tested 2D estimates continue to be preferred for most projects, while well-executed BIM modelling is a proven game-changer for our industry when it comes to creating value across a project’s lifecycle and boosting collaboration. The team at Austin Commercial concur with this assessment.

“Combining 2D and 3D take-off with the estimate allows us to be more efficient in our quantification and allows multiple estimators to work together simultaneously within the same take-off environment,” said Allison Koester.

“Having the ability to share real-time take-off between multiple estimators is a time saver, and ensures more accuracy with less opportunities for duplicated or redundant work.”

The enterprise is planning to expand their use of iTWO costX across other portions of the business in the near future.

“Our North Texas office has been working with iTWO costX developers to enhance the functionality of the software, and we will soon transition completely into iTWO costX for both take-off and estimate development,” said Brian Andrews.

“At full functionality, the estimate line items will be linked to our take-off and will allow for future updates in rapid progression. Beginning in 2022, we will transition our other business units to iTWO costX.”

Austin Commercial is also looking at implementing **iTWO costX viewer**, RIB’s free platform that allows chosen stakeholders to review projects in read-only format. Providing this kind of linked access to owners and architects can improve transparency and make it simpler to communicate estimates.

A BENCHMARK FOR THE FUTURE

For the Austin Commercial team, it's not just iTWO costX that is being utilized to help them reimagine their preconstruction. They are also currently working to deploy iTWO benchmark, another RIB product which supports quick and easy conceptual estimating and works hand-in-hand with iTWO costX.

iTWO benchmark is built to support organizations such as Austin Commercial, who possess high-quality historical project information from across the lifespan of their business. This historical data can be used to create conceptual estimates and perform functional analysis of a project, with older figures able to be adjusted for the present day through index factors.

"We are implementing iTWO benchmark to create historical, cost-based and high-level template estimates, which are then imported into iTWO costX for development of conceptual budgets," said Preconstruction Manager Jacob Seyb.

"Using benchmark to generate these detailed parametric estimates will help with target value design and management throughout the preconstruction process. When we fully develop this database of historical projects across market sectors, we can allow for a tie-in with Power BI and analytics for a deeper dive on trends, escalation and value engineering."

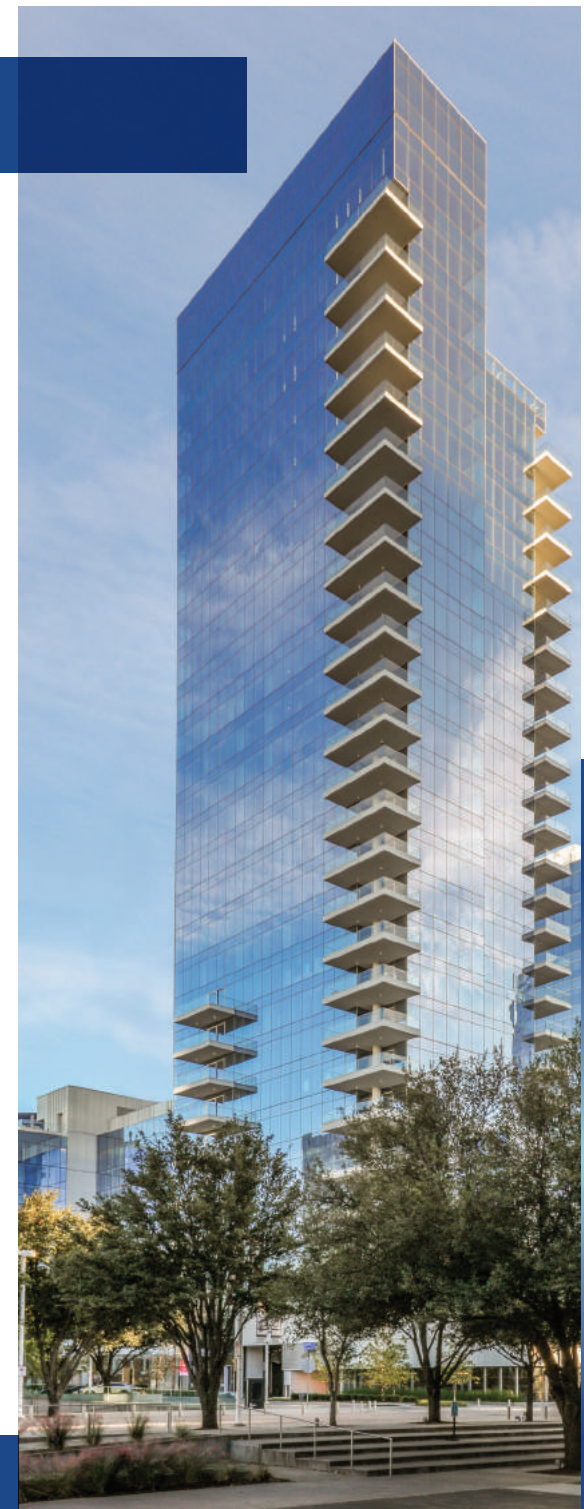
Brian Andrews said that the combination of iTWO costX and iTWO benchmark will provide actionable data and insights for stakeholders at the earliest possible stage.

"At Austin, we begin using iTWO costX as soon as we have drawings, sketches, or conceptual models to work with. By adding iTWO benchmark, we can fine-tune and target our historical information to use as a guide even earlier in a project - before there are drawings even."

"We have had this knowledge for years, but costX and benchmark turn that knowledge into data that we can get to the hands of owners, architects, and designers to help them make better informed decisions about their projects."

"These platforms are a component of a broader plan to continue to refine our industry leading preconstruction services. The accuracy and efficiency afforded by these platforms is part of our **Austin TRUE** philosophy... **Trusted Results, Unmatched Effort.** We are continuing to raise the bar on what we can do for our clients and the timeframe required to provide accurate information that they can make decisions with."

A 28-story luxury residential tower, part of HALL Arts Residences in Dallas



CONCLUSION

Construction has never been quite so complex, and a well-executed preconstruction phase is simply integral to the success of major projects in this era. This phase is more than a mere precaution in 2021, as industry leaders are scaling new heights in their output by strategically collecting and deploying data to great effect.

Enterprises such as Austin Commercial are leading the way by deploying advanced digital solutions that are underpinned by extensive industry knowledge and a commitment to service. While many businesses are reluctant to move away from their tried and tested methods, Austin Commercial has committed to a software revolution without undermining the values that have driven the company's success.

Large and small businesses across the United States and around the world have implemented iTWO costX and iTWO benchmark to advance their estimating. The platforms have utility for everyone from small subcontracting firms to major enterprises taking the lead on large commercial projects.

Similar to other processes and activities in our daily lives, construction is continuing to change. Using new tools and software platforms is going to be key to being successful and having the ability to adapt to the changing market. Like Austin Commercial, you can enhance your offerings and the opportunities before you by utilizing data to make more informed decisions.



Q2 Stadium, Austin's first major league sports stadium and home to MLS club Austin FC

For more information on the advanced 5D BIM technologies offered by RIB, visit www.itwocostx.com

To see a full portfolio of Austin Commercial's work, visit www.austin-ind.com



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