

## Customer Case Study

# Pinnacle Construction Support Group, LLC



### **Prolog® Software Helps Pinnacle/CSG Go Paperless – and Grow their Annual Revenues from US\$5M to \$18.3M in Just Two Years**

Pinnacle Construction Support Group, LLC (Pinnacle/CSG) is a Tallahassee, Florida-based construction management and general contracting firm that specializes in federal, state and private contracts, along with joint venture work. As its name suggests, the primary goal at Pinnacle/CSG is to provide the pinnacle of personalized service to clients. This is achieved by taking the time to comprehensively understand the client's goals and concerns, and implement the procedures, tools and services needed for success.

Pinnacle/CSG was originally organized in 2003 under the trade name Phoenix Construction & Fencing, LLC. In 2007, the business was reorganized as Pinnacle Construction Support Group, LLC. With new leadership and additional funding, the company expanded its offerings to include construction management, general contracting, design-build construction, and pre-construction and consulting services. The current Pinnacle/CSG principals have over 60 years of combined general business experience and over 35 years of combined construction industry experience. Pinnacle/CSG is locally recognized for its achievements within the business community, and has received a national award from Sage North America for best use of multiple product integrations.

To win more work in a challenging construction market, Pinnacle/CSG was looking for a competitive advantage. "In a fairly level playing field like construction," states company President, Cory McFarlane, "the one thing that can set you apart from the competition is technology." Implementing project management software was a top priority. But after trying various project management tools with minimal success, Pinnacle/CSG realized they needed a more robust solution that would increase staff efficiency, provide better support for their mobile field force, improve customer service and eliminate paper-based processes.

After a colleague from a different contracting firm offered McFarlane a demo of Prolog Manager software from Meridian Systems, he was sold on the solution. "In Prolog, I saw a complete construction management system that was exceptionally easy to use," he recalls. "It could document everything we needed, from project start to completion, and would be our foundation for going paperless."

**"Since putting our Prolog solution in place, we've grown our annual revenues from US\$5M to \$18.3M, while adding just two new employees and increasing administrative overhead by only 10 percent. A large part of this growth can be attributed to Prolog."**

*Cory McFarlane, President  
Pinnacle/CSG*

## A Paperless Prolog Solution

In 2009, Pinnacle/CSG purchased Prolog from Alliance Solutions Group, a Meridian Systems Value Added Reseller (VAR) headquartered in Brandon, Florida and with several additional locations across the U.S. and in Puerto Rico. Today, all 15 employees use Prolog to handle everything from writing contracts and managing budgets to monitoring requests-for-information (RFIs) and logging daily field reports. While Pinnacle/CSG did their own Prolog installation and configuration, Alliance provided valuable best practice guidelines and played an important consulting role in the software roll-out.

Pinnacle/CSG recently added Prolog Converge to its solution set. For the extended project team, Prolog Converge provides a variety of user-interface options to simplify information sharing, including Microsoft Office Business Applications (OBAs). If an architect isn't familiar with Prolog, for example, Prolog Converge allows Pinnacle/CSG to send that architect a preformatted Excel-based form. After the architect completes the form in Prolog Converge, the company's Prolog database is automatically updated with the information. "It's an excellent piece of software that paid for itself in less than three months," McFarlane says.

To further improve efficiencies and help meet the company's paperless construction management goal, Alliance recommended ProIntegrator, a product developed by Meridian Independent Software Vendor CubisOne that connects Pinnacle/CSG's Sage Timberline accounting system with Prolog. With ProIntegrator, financial transactions and contact lists generated in Prolog synchronize with Timberline to eliminate redundant data entry. When a contract is issued in Prolog, for instance, an associated commitment is automatically set up in Timberline.

Since implementing their Prolog solution, Pinnacle/CSG has achieved a 95 percent paperless operation. By eliminating paper, taking advantage of Prolog's automated electronic workflow and offering self-service capabilities through Prolog Converge, Pinnacle/CSG has become an extremely efficient and competitive organization.

## Skyrocketing Revenues

At a time when most construction companies report decreasing revenues and staffing cuts, Pinnacle/CSG is experiencing significant growth. "Since putting our Prolog solution in place," states McFarlane, "we've grown our annual revenues from US\$5M to \$18.3M, while adding just two new employees and increasing administrative overhead by only 10 percent. A large part of this growth can be attributed to Prolog."

Prolog collects and catalogs project information, while providing automated workflow for common tasks and enhanced collaboration through Prolog Converge. For example, before Prolog, Pinnacle/CSG's field staff would hand write daily job logs from the project site and fax them into the office, where administrative staff would eventually re-enter the details into a spreadsheet. Now, daily job logs are entered into Prolog Converge and the details are instantly available to the entire project team.



Pinnacle/CSG used to manually process pay applications, too, which took a week or more. Now, paperless pay applications are turned around within a single day. And if all related parties happen to be in Prolog at the same time, a pay application can conceivably be processed in minutes. Processing RFIs delivers similar results. Paper-based RFIs used to take two or three days to process. Now, answers are logged in Prolog Converge within hours – and sometimes even minutes.

By adding Encompass: enBid, a plug-in application for Prolog Converge developed by Meridian Independent Software Vendor Dimension 5 Solutions, to their Prolog system, Pinnacle/CSG has significantly streamlined their bid and procurement processes. Trade partners that are interested in doing business with the construction firm submit pre-qualification applications electronically via enBid from the Pinnacle/CSG Web site. That information, which synchronizes with Prolog Converge, can quickly be reviewed and approved online. Approved trade partners are then available to receive bid packages.

In addition to improving the pre-qualification process, enBid has enhanced procurement, from bid invitation through contract award. “enBid provides a 360 degree view of where we are in the procurement process,” McFarlane explains. Invited companies login to Prolog Converge to view bid packages and electronically submit responses. Using the contract award wizard in Prolog Manager, Pinnacle/CSG selects partners for the project and automatically generates contracts and/or a purchase orders. “Our trade partners have embraced our paperless bid process because there’s no printing or faxing involved. This technology not only increases our bottom line, it also provides savings to our partners and makes us more eco-friendly.”

Pinnacle/CSG has also used Prolog Converge to create a Web-based client portal, which has reduced owner-related phone calls by 50 percent. “This capability saves time and delivers an important service to our



customers,” McFarlane states. “Owners appreciate being able to monitor their projects in real-time from any location.”

### The Competitive Prolog Advantage

McFarlane praises Meridian Systems for having the vision to create a network of VARs and other technology partners that improve the power of Prolog. “Alliance is a valuable and trusted technology partner,” McFarlane says as an example. “They have been instrumental to our success with Prolog, and are always on the look-out for add-on tools that will save us time and help us grow.”

When asked to summarize the benefits realized from Prolog, McFarlane states that the bottom line advantage is a measurable increase in business volume. “By using our Prolog solution to increase efficiency, reduce costs and eliminate paper, we’ve been able to generate new work by submitting profitable project bids that are consistently three-to-five percent lower than our competition,” he says. “The other companies think we’re underbidding to win the work. But the truth is we have 15 people doing the work of 40, which cuts the fat from our estimates.”

#### Partner Profiles

##### **Alliance Solutions Group**

1210 Millennium Parkway,  
Suite 1045  
Brandon, FL 33511  
  
(888) 559-9540  
www.alliance-sg.com

##### **CubisOne**

21 Whitehall Way  
Bellingham, MA 02019  
  
(617) 848-9355  
www.cubisone.com

##### **Dimension 5 Solutions, Inc.**

300 Harding Blvd., Suite 210  
Roseville, CA 95678  
  
(916) 789-7007  
www.d5solutions.com



## Pinnacle Construction Support Group, LLC Project Profile

### Capital Cascade Park Segment 2 in Downtown Tallahassee, Florida

Pinnacle/CSG and Sandco, Inc. formed a construction management team that was selected by Blueprint 2000 (an intergovernmental agency comprised of the City of Tallahassee and Leon County, Florida) to oversee construction of the \$23M Capital Cascade Park project. Capital Cascade Park is the centerpiece of the Capital Cascade Trail Greenway project, and is designed to create a world-class park with significant storm water management facilities that provide flood protection and treatment of urban runoff pollutants.

Segment 2, which is one of four park segments, extends 4.25 miles through the middle of Tallahassee and consists of an amphitheater, several public spaces and numerous artistic storm water control features. The park is home to multiple historic resources for the City and State, including the Prime Meridian benchmark for the State of Florida, the point of commencement from which all official surveys in the State are calculated.

The project management team is tasked with effectively managing the project while meeting complex phasing and scheduling requirements. Pinnacle/CSG's oversight responsibilities include managing construction of the park's architecturally designed decorative fencing, site work, vertical construction of the restroom facilities, horizontal construction involving installation of 100,000 sq. ft. of brick pavers in the park's pedestrian plaza and construction of an underground vault to house the controls for a chemical injection system. Pinnacle's robust, integrated IT platform, PinnacleLogic, enables the company to perform multiple tasks simultaneously and quickly evaluate cost, constructability and schedule impacts.

#### Key Project Elements

- 100,000 sq. ft. pedestrian plaza
- Architecturally designed decorative park fencing
- Underground vault for chemical injection system
- Miscellaneous site work
- Restroom facilities



**Estimated Cost:** \$ 23M overall; \$2M for Pinnacle/CSG's project management services

**Scheduled Completion Date:** July 2012

**Results:** The multiple phases and milestones associated with the project require constant monitoring and schedule updating to ensure efficient delivery. Pinnacle/CSG is relying heavily on the submittal and schedule task features within Prolog to ensure that all of their deliverables are met on time.

Pinnacle/CSG is currently working closely with the engineer of record to substitute a controls and monitoring system for the storm water treatment vault. The system's original design had no redundancy and was lacking in accuracy and modern features. After extensive research, the company was able to provide a modernized, wireless system that provides complete redundancy, can be remotely controlled and has the ability to send automated text messages to maintenance staff if a problem occurs. This modernized system delivers a \$100K cost savings to the owner when compared to the original equipment specifications.

To date, the project has incurred many challenges, all of which Pinnacle/CSG and Sandco have been able to address with precision, efficiency and confidence. Prolog supports day-to-day task management and provides the forward-looking oversight needed to identify trends and make adjustments to ensure a safe project delivery – on time and on budget.



1720 Prairie City Road, Suite 120  
Folsom, CA 95630  
(800) 850 2660  
[www.meridiansystems.com](http://www.meridiansystems.com)

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