caused by an improperly installed roof) Owner Insite's automatic archiving system offers access to key information. "Users can find information about any project, active or archived, in just four clicks or less," promises Harper.

"No one wants their relationship with their architect or contractor to go bad, but I've seen it happen more often than not," says Harper. "As soon as there's a problem, the first question asked is: who has the information? Because a contractor's attorneys will probably advise them not to share any information unless it's through legal discovery. That means you're at a huge disadvantage in any litigation."

Bridging the knowledge gap between owners and their projects

Having spent 15 years studying human behavior, Harper is inspired by solutions that unite people and organizations to achieve common goals. His underlying desire is to drive a more transparent culture, especially in the construction of educational institutions.

That's why (in addition to their free litigation hold and warranty tool), the Owner Insite team also created a free calculator to allow owners to forecast cost overrun and schedule slippages. Data shows that only 31% of projects were completed within 10% of their budgets in the last 3 years. This means that the remaining 69% were completed with budget overruns of over 10% — a trend that could significantly impact the owner's bottom line.

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> Steve Harper, Owner Insite CEO

"We can't eliminate risk, but we can help owners more successfully mitigate it," says Harper. "Public funds should not be spent fixing avoidable mistakes caused by bad communication."

Harper's vision is that Owner Insite supports the development of essential structures within communities, while also improving construction culture by removing fear and uncertainty from the construction process.

"Our job is to help owners to be good stewards of public funds by ensuring that construction projects are completed on time, and ripple effects of uncompleted projects are avoided," he says.

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How One CEO Is Combining Accountability and Software to Change the Future of Construction

AUSTIN, TX / It's the announcement that no school district superintendent or campus principal ever wants to make:

We regret that due to unforeseen construction delays, your child will not begin the school year in a new, state-of-the-art school as planned. We are considering temporary alternative arrangements: portable buildings, temporary retail space, or housing students on other campuses.

Owner Insite CEO Steve Harper believes that owners need more transparency and accountability before, during, and after the construction process.

Worse than these delays is the guaranteed PR nightmare from frustrated parents, angry taxpayers, and impatient stakeholders that often follows. Delayed construction projects inevitably evolve into unmet expectations and witchhunts, whether it's a new school, hospital, or government building in question. Unsurprisingly, the buck stops with the project owner who usually discovers the true extent of the project delay at the eleventh hour — along with everyone else.

"The problem," says Steve Harper, CEO of Austin-based Owner Insite, "is that owners trust their contractors to give them an accurate assessment of their project's status. But if they're not getting reliable information . . . well, it's garbage-in, garbage-out at that point."

General contractors are crucial to every construction project, and there's no shortage of project management tools designed to make their jobs easier. The reality, however, is that most of these tools aim to maximize the contractors' convenience, not necessarily to protect the project owner's interests. So, should project owners simply hand over their projects and hope for the best?

This is the dilemma that Harper founded Owner Insite in 2009 to address. Designed "for owners by owners," the cloud-based software-as-a-service platform puts owners in charge of all aspects of their project. By giving owners full project visibility from pre-construction through to close-out, it empowers them to anticipate and mitigate potentially disastrous schedule slippages and budget overruns.

While the platform has supported a myriad of projects, the company's solutions are especially well-suited to the needs of K-12 schools, colleges and universities, hospitals and healthcare providers, municipal governments, and commercial real estate developers.

Nelson Middle School in Frisco ISD. FISD is one of several fast-growth school districts in Texas to use Owner Insite's construction management software.

Owner Insite's tools help owners track and monitor the activities of architects, engineers, general contractors, sub-contractors, and other stakeholders while retaining critical documentation, data, and trackable records of all the communication involved in each construction project. This means that owners are not left at the mercy of discretionary information from contractors, and unable to take preventative action when necessary.

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Armed with a high degree of transparency, owners can hold contractors, architects, and consultants accountable from planning through closeout to a degree that cannot be replicated with contractors in control. Ultimately, this transparency prevents project owners from missing small problems today that could turn into huge problems tomorrow.

Remote collaboration and documentation for construction projects

Studies show that 35% of construction professionals' time is spent unproductively — on reworks, looking for project information, conflict resolution, etc. The collaborative platform that Owner Insite provides for all project stakeholders streamlines communication and keeps all parties updated. For contractors, this can significantly boost productivity. For owners, it can be the difference between a timely/on-budget project completion, and finger-pointing in front of constituents.

"Owner Insight was created to give project stakeholders a bird's eye view to track and manage all the project data, communication, and budget information that impacts on the end result," says Harper.

> **As soon as there's a problem, the first question asked is: who has the information? If it's not you, the owner, then you're at a huge disadvantage in any litigation.**
>
> Steve Harper, Owner Insite CEO

With full control of the project data, the platform also gives owners the flexibility to enable collaborators' access to required information. Customized access levels prevent collaborators from operating out of "siloes," and safeguard sensitive financial information from unauthorized viewing.

"It's a communication tool that holds everyone accountable and keeps everybody on the same page doing what needs to be done to ensure that we deliver the project success that we've all signed up for," says Harper. "It's not handing over the keys to the car and hoping that it comes back scratch-free, which is what most other contractor-oriented platforms do."

Research also shows that up to 30% of initial design and construction data is lost by project closeout. In the event of litigation, this can pose a legal problem for owners who are then non-compliant with state legislative requirements to retain documentation. As a public service, Owner Insite's team created a suite of free tools to help project owners identify what documentation must be retained in each state.

Owner Insite's collaborative project management software is used by K-12 schools, colleges and universities, hospitals and healthcare providers, municipal governments, and commercial real estate developers.

For owners forced to take legal action against contractors (e.g, for damages