Connecticut DOT

Bluebeam Case Studies

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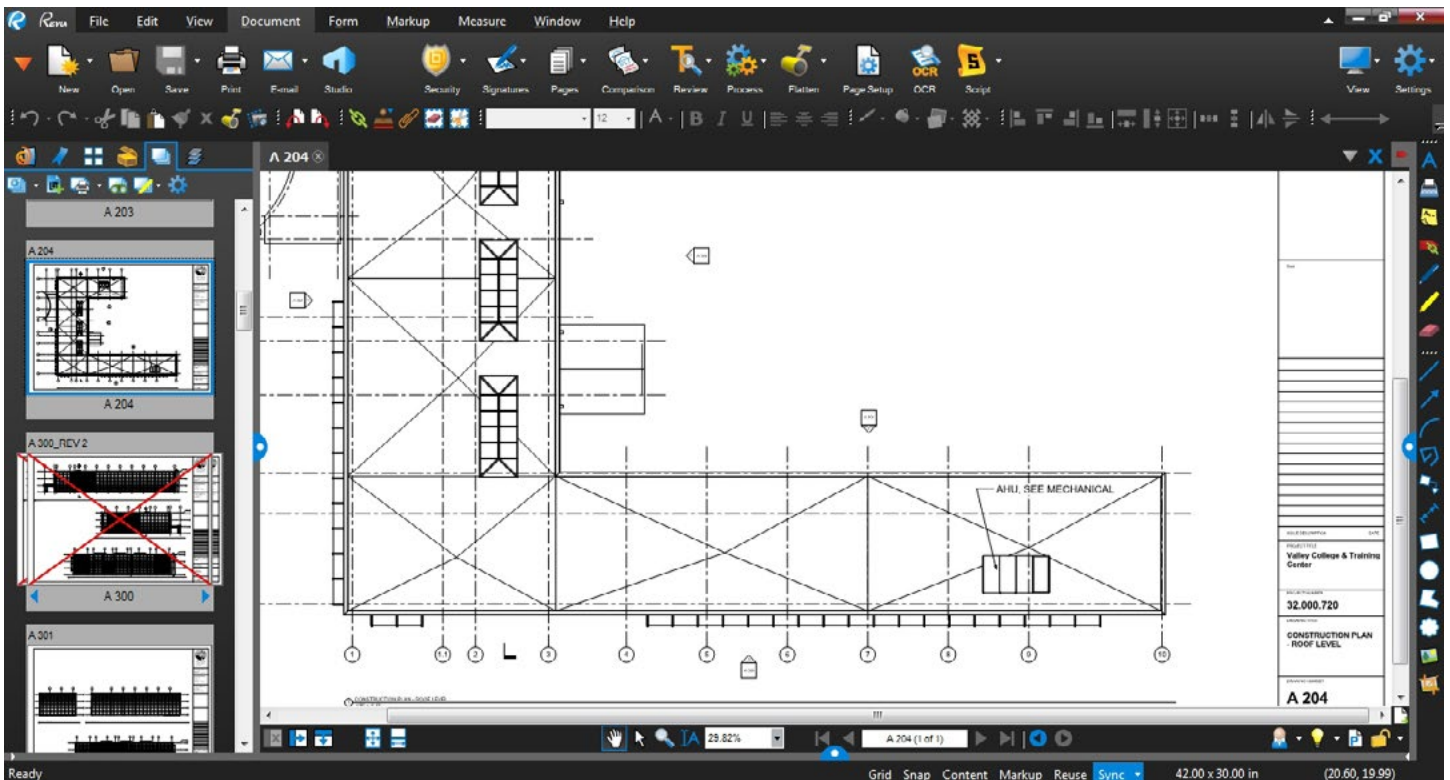# The Connecticut DOT Leverages Revu to Keep Project Files Organized

Background

The Connecticut Department of Transportation's (CT DOT) AEC Applications Division is a group of bridge, highway and traffic engineers responsible for developing and establishing electronic design standards and policies and supporting computer-aided engineering and construction applications. This responsibility includes evaluating and implementing the latest in design technology to continually improve their performance. While looking for ways to reduce paper and streamline operations, the team decided to go digital by deploying Bluebeam Revu to convert their contract plans and construction documents into PDFs. Not only did switching to Revu reduce their paper usage, but they also found that PDFs displayed more consistently in Revu than with other PDF programs, so they made it their primary PDF solution.

Challenge

While going digital with Revu greatly improved their communication processes, CT DOT later encountered a new workflow challenge related to electronic plan sets. Transportation projects are often complicated and require drawings for several disciplines, typically resulting in very large plan sets. CT DOT found it easiest to combine all drawings together in one consolidated file so they could quickly see related information.

However, as a government agency, all of CT DOT's contract plans must be signed before they can be submitted. To accomplish this electronically, they utilized the digital signatures feature in Revu, allowing them to sign documents using an authorized digital ID. After a document is digitally signed, it becomes unchangeable, thus insuring the fidelity of the approved document. Yet inevitably change orders or addenda would be issued for various plans, which posed a problem for the digitally signed PDFs. As Transportation Supervising Engineer, Bruce Bourgoin, put it, "People don't realize that changing a signed PDF is complicated! A revision to even one page in the document means the entire file needs to be reprocessed. So, even if you change only one page out of 100, the other 99 pages would need to be reprocessed too to verify that no other changes were made." This was especially difficult and time-consuming when large multi-page PDFs were involved. Although they wanted to continue viewing all project plans as if they were one document, they needed a better way to handle the last-minute changes that would unavoidably come up.

Solution

One of the things that makes Bluebeam unique is our passion for listening to our customers' needs and providing solutions that enable them to work the way they want to work. Through feedback from the CT DOT and other customers, we knew that working with large multi-page file sets was a common challenge among many in the industry. We answered the call with Sets, introduced in Revu 11, which allows users to view and access an unlimited number of files and then navigate them as a single document in a single tab. Even though Sets contains several different files, they can be searched as if they were one document, allowing users to easily find related information. To accommodate inevitable updates, Sets even allows users to filter and sort by revisions and addenda, so they can quickly see the most up-to-date information.

The CT DOT uses Sets to view, navigate and edit multiple files as if they were one.

Using Sets, CT DOT now saves and digitally signs their plans as separate files, all the while leveraging the Sets tab to view the plans together. This slight workflow change offers significant benefits. When a change order is issued or a page needs to be amended, CT DOT simply revises and resigns the affected file and adds it back to the Set. They no longer need to reprocess all of the project plans since one drawing's changes remain separate from the other files.

Continually Improving Performance

Since the introduction of Sets, CT DOT's digital workflow has greatly improved. Transportation Engineer Matt Calkins shared, "The Sets feature definitely helps us keep our project files organized and is a great way to view all of our signed plans in one spot without having to bounce around from file to file. We also love how easy it is to search across all PDFs in a Set without having to open each one."

Additionally, the team has continued to improve performance by implementing Bluebeam Studio for online collaborative reviews of contract plans during the preliminary design phase of a project. They are even standardizing the digital review process by creating custom markup tools and saving them in Revu's Tool Chest so that everyone on the team is using a standard format for their markups. To make sure everything is documented properly, they are tracking all comments and markups in the Markups list and then generating a report of all session activity for future reference. "We love that Revu was built with the AEC industry in mind," added Bourgoin. "Features like the Tool Chest, the ability to collaborate online in Bluebeam Studio, and especially the stability of the digital signatures process, are making our lives much easier."

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