

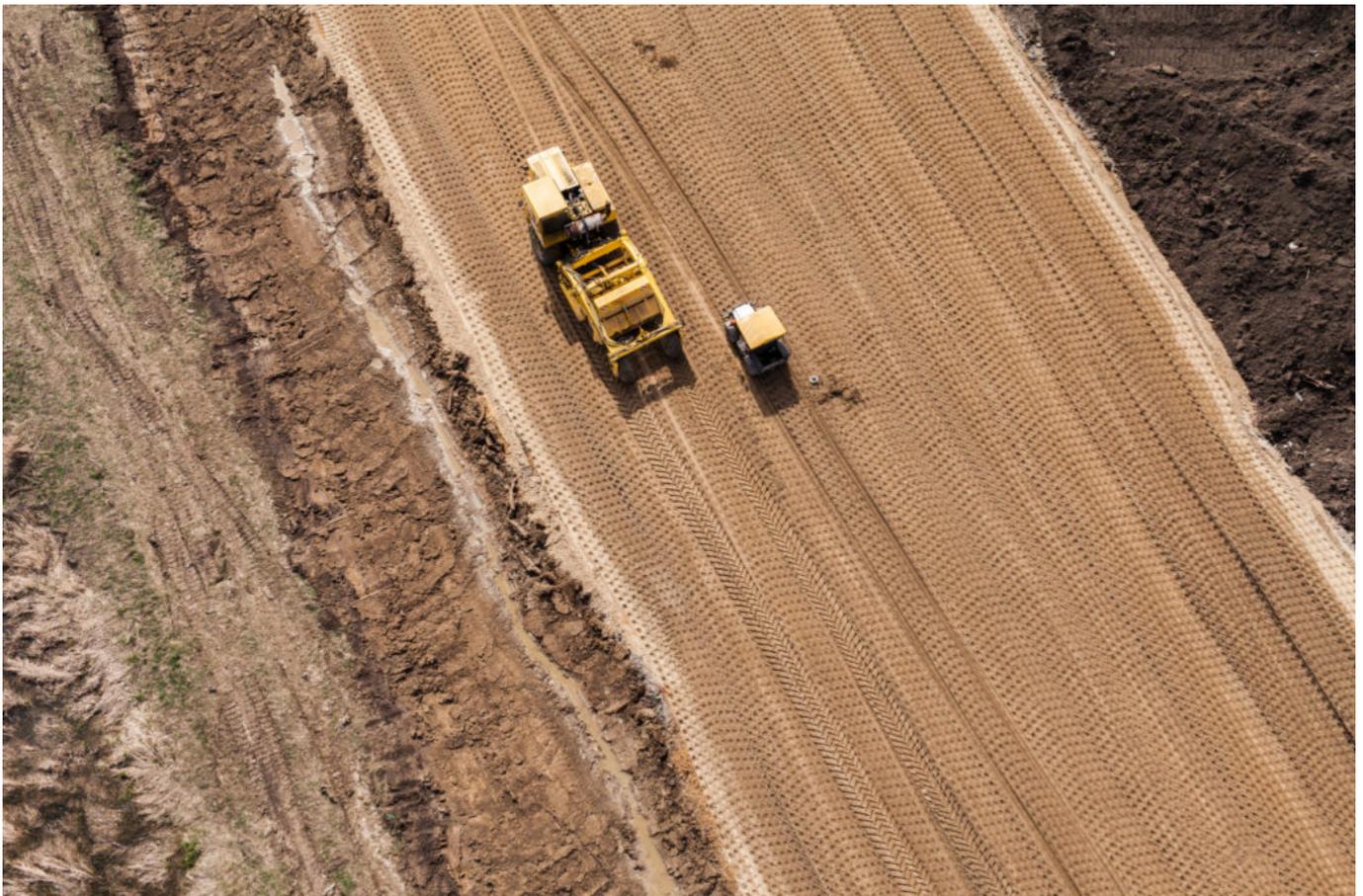
For the Future of Worksite Management, Look No Further Than Mobile Banking

This is a guest post by [Propeller](#) CEO and co-founder, [Rory San Miguel](#).

As the CEO and co-founder of Propeller, a lot of people ask me about the future of the industry. For me, it comes down to surveying and worksite management. The best metaphor I've found to explain the evolution of worksite management is the shift from traditional to mobile banking.

Today, people monitor their money's movement using bank websites and apps. Knowing how much you have available allows you to spend, plan, and generally live life.

Understanding material movement (as opposed to money movement) is also vital for the construction, mining, aggregates, and waste management industries. People do that with complete site surveys. If you're moving or measuring earth (or trash), surveys tell you the lay of the land—literally.



Yet for most of the modern age, it's been time-consuming and expensive to collect complete site survey information. This is not surprising; the size of a site and its physical terrain can prove time-consuming to survey by foot with a base and rover. (And many surveyors we work

with have shared how time-poor their teams are.)



It's a tradeoff between speed and accuracy. You can get data quickly, but it might be inaccurate or you could take more time to get an accurate measurement. In many industries complete site surveys happen monthly, traditionally. But a lot can change in a month.

It's like how paper bank statements used to be. Before smartphones and the internet, you got a statement from your bank monthly. That's it.

How do you conduct business, buy goods, and remain solvent if you only get an update on your bank account monthly? You meticulously balance your checkbook until the next statement comes.

Doing so for yourself is doable, if inconvenient from a modern perspective. But imagine having to balance the "checkbook" for everything and everyone on an entire worksite.

Balancing your checkbook

With the commercialization of modern GPS technology like RTK in the 1990s, surveying tools took a big leap forward. After the mid-2000s, a base and rover became more commonplace

on worksites.

With them, foremen could measure general progress by shooting a point. Like balancing your checkbook by hand to see if you have the funds to get a new car, it's an improvement.



But innovation hasn't continued to increase. In construction, for example, there's a widening digitization gap with other industries that's grown in the past 40 years.

As of 2019, construction is one of the least digitized sectors in the world, [according to McKinsey](#). This gap, among other things, has led to a lack of construction project data that's [costing businesses \\$177B annually in the US alone](#).

So how do we go from “balancing our checkbooks” to something more up-to-date?

Instant account balances—anywhere, anytime with mobile banking

In the last five years, commercial drones have become cheaper and more reliable; airspace has been deregulated (or, in some places, more regulated). Coupled with processing and visualization software, drones are changing the site management game.



Previously, continuous updates in survey hadn't existed because we've never been able to do them. Surveyors capture only what is absolutely needed on a site because it's time-intensive to capture data in the first place.

Once captured, it was the sole responsibility of surveyors to process and share that information across worksites. Existing tools don't really support a future of many data sources, where we stream in bits and pieces on an as-needed basis.

But when technology can make that data-collection pain go to zero, continuous updates become standard. Your complete site survey goes from being a snapshot in time to a near-live version. You go from monthly bank statements to knowing your account balance instantly by checking online.

This is where worksite technology is catching up to mobile banking. Today, you can get fast and accurate site models as frequently as you want to fly a drone. This opens up complete, accurate site surveys to non-surveyors, enabling site management.

“Low balance” alerts, fraud notifications, and more

But what about tomorrow? If you know the complete status of your site (or bank account) right now, it's not too hard to see how technology can be more predictive.

With up-to-date data, you can start forecasting and preparing for tomorrow. If you know where your site is at right now, figuring out if you need another machine for the week or if someone's digging in the wrong location becomes easier.



Just like getting “low account balance” alerts or fraud warnings for unauthorized purchases, current account info helps you better plan for tomorrow’s spending. Or, as the case may be on site, a warning that you’ll be under on cubes moved or an alert to move an unneeded machine offsite would be extremely helpful.

This is where worksite management technology is headed. Just like the banking industry, worksites of all kinds are making the journey out of simple reactivity using older survey data to proactivity using up-to-date complete survey information that’s easily accessible.

The next step, as hardware and software advance, will be predictive with data-driven warnings, alerts, and suggestions to make work more efficient.

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