



Construction Management Software Buyer's Guide

Step-by-step guidance to help businesses
make better software decisions



PROCORE



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Introduction

Construction businesses across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region have significant opportunities for growth. Strategic plans such as [Vision 2030](#) in Saudi Arabia and UAE megaprojects including the [UAE Rail Programme](#) are key examples of the ambition and opportunity in the region. But fully converting these opportunities into success stories will mean changing the ways construction businesses work.

At the heart of the MENA construction challenge is the need for greater efficiency and collaboration, supported by shifts in the use of technology.

Procore is a leading construction management software provider. Our recent report — [How We Build Now report \(2023\)](#) — shows that many MENA construction businesses accept the need for fundamental change in their operations. Some 34% of businesses across MENA plan to introduce a construction management platform in the next 12 months, while almost half (47%) are already using one. This figure rises to 56% in Saudi Arabia.

However, only 11% of the MENA construction businesses we surveyed consider themselves a “digital-first business”, with the UAE leading the way at 20%. In fact, some 43% of businesses across MENA said that they are only at the beginning of their digital transformation journeys — for regional comparison, 40% of firms in UAE are just starting out; in Saudi the figure is 47%.

One of the biggest challenges for construction decision makers is choosing the right software solution to support this transformation process. Leaders know they can't delay this decision for too long, but the picture on how to proceed is often unclear.

There are hundreds of different solutions on offer, each promising to solve a single issue. But choosing multiple tools leads to a tech stack of applications that don't talk to each other or integrate. And this can easily mean:

- Disparate data being collected from different software
- Documentation that requires double entry from software to software
- Multiple sign-ins across a suite of apps with a lack of integration
- Time and budget wasted (and admin overload) using multiple sources of siloed data to inform decisions

An integrated, multi-functional platform that supports all stages of the construction lifecycle can address these issues and drive a business's wider digital transformation. Some 61% of businesses we surveyed in the MENA region said they favoured integrated solutions — a figure that rises to 68% in Saudi Arabia.

What follows is a step-by-step guide to help you make better decisions about which software solution is right for you.

— CHAPTER 1

Where You Are vs Where You Need to Be

One of the first things to do is to analyse and assess your current processes, pinpointing areas that can be improved with construction management software. Alongside this review, it's important to consider who should be involved in the decision-making process.

Determine Pain Points and Plans for Stakeholder Alignment

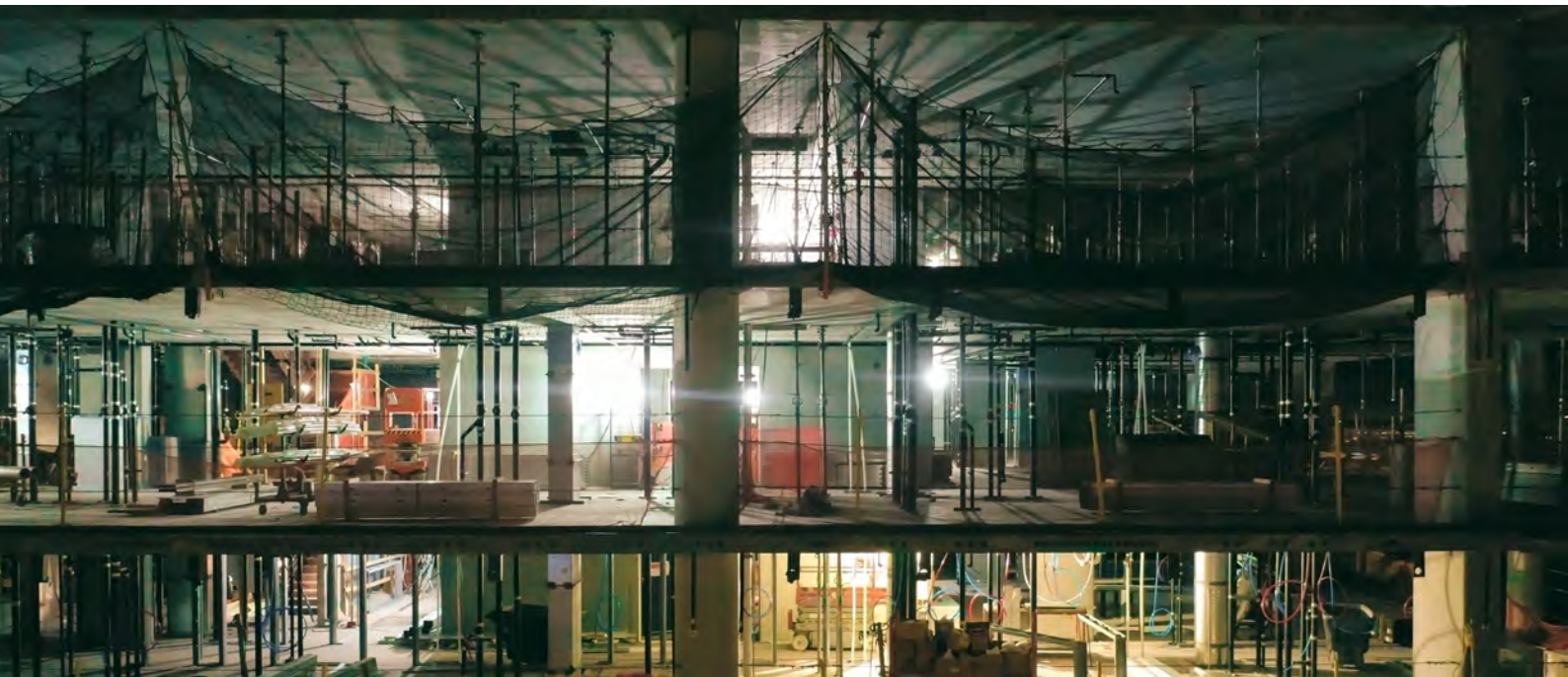
Successful software selection means understanding and defining your firm's current gaps and needs. An excellent place to start is outlining what creates inefficiencies and lack of visibility. Is there duplicate data entry, for example, or delays when it comes to tracking down project information?

Once you've identified the pain points, it's helpful to put them in an order of priority. Which ones create the most inefficiencies across teams? Which processes impact team communication and collaboration? Or cause the most damage to client trust or reduce visibility across the portfolio? What brings the most risk and keeps the biggest opportunities out of reach?

Managing change: map and align stakeholders

Even before you start your process review, begin to map all the stakeholders — including employees — that will need to be involved in the research, consideration, testing and decision making. You don't need to complete this before you start, but it is an essential parallel process.

A good construction management software provider will join you in this journey, acting as a consultant and partner to advise you on how to ensure internal buy-in and adoption. Transformation projects are most often unsuccessful when would-be change makers don't consult others or fail to take key people with them on the journey.



**To ensure you select the right software,
be explicit about what problems you
expect the technology to address.**

Common pain points include:

- No clear view of the financial health of your portfolio
- Low user/employee adoption of existing tools
- Business functions are manual or require the use of multiple, siloed systems
- Lack of reporting capabilities across data sources
- No central repository for documents
- Dealing with outdated information
- No (or limited) integration of existing tools
- Lack of access for key stakeholders due to limited user licences





“Some businesses think the traditional isn’t compatible with the digital. But we see it as enabling new ways of doing the traditional.”

Seif Ragab

Board Member at SIAC Construction

Prioritising pain points

Prioritising pain points keeps your search focused and prevents key evaluation criteria from becoming too broad.

- **Step 1:** Identify the problem.
- **Step 2:** Rank your goals and criteria. This will help you weigh the pros and cons of the different solutions you evaluate.

Achieve stakeholder alignment

Achieving genuine stakeholder alignment is a critical step to ensure the right people are involved in the search for the best solutions. You might connect with end-users (both on-site and office staff), IT, security, software administrators, finance, procurement, engineering leads, construction executives and legal teams to help you evaluate the software with multiple use cases in mind.

Starting with a business case can be helpful to get buy-in and support. The business case also serves as a vital roadmap for evaluating solutions and ensuring the purchase will align with your strategic vision.

— CHAPTER 2

Aligning Your Evaluation Criteria to Your Software Options

Once you've determined what problems you want to solve and the gaps you want to fill, it's time to consider what features you need from software to do this. Start at a high level, then get progressively more specific.

Remember, one of the biggest considerations is usability. The software you end up with must be easy and intuitive to use, or your employees and stakeholders are unlikely to fully adopt it (or perhaps they won't use it at all.)

If you are successful, your business and its ways of working will change after the platform has been adopted. You will need a plan to support the changes you can foresee, and the flexibility to deal with those you can't. In terms of organisational change, not everything can be predicted in fine detail, especially pre-software selection.

Point Solution vs Platform?

Singular-focused solutions, or point solutions, only address one problem, without regard to related issues. In such a scenario, many businesses find themselves buried by the number of software applications they need to manage the multiple facets of a single project.

As a general rule, try to limit the total number of applications your staff need to use on a daily basis. There may still be some point solutions in your overall tech stack for specialised purposes. However, finding solutions that integrate on a common platform will limit app fatigue and stress for your people, as well as the time needed to train current and future staff to use your business's technology.

Managing change: think strategically

Think strategically as well as tactically. Which features would have the biggest impact on the firm? Which ones are essential or potentially game changing for the business, and which are merely nice-to-have?

Feature checklist for construction software

Some of the most sought-after features in construction software platforms are listed below.

Decide if each one is a 'must-have', an 'ideally, yes', or 'not important'.

✓ **Connect your collaborators**

Eliminate the site-to-office divide by bringing your collaborators together with software that offers third-party integrations. If you decide to expand your toolset, all data will be accessible in the same integrated solution.

✓ **Access real-time data**

Gain granular, up-to-date visibility into project progress, budget and more. Unlimited storage to host, manage and analyse your data.

✓ **Open API and integrations**

These allow you to easily connect additional applications to your existing system.

✓ **Unlimited user software licences**

An unlimited user model enhances collaboration and accountability by eliminating traditional individual licensing barriers. It also prevents data silos and lost data, while providing consistent support for projects of all sizes.



✓ **Mobile functionality**

Fully functioning, native mobile applications to maximise project efficiency. The latest project documentation available 24/7.

✓ **Offline accessibility**

Since many construction sites do not have WiFi, project management tasks must be achievable offline.

✓ **Reporting and analytics**

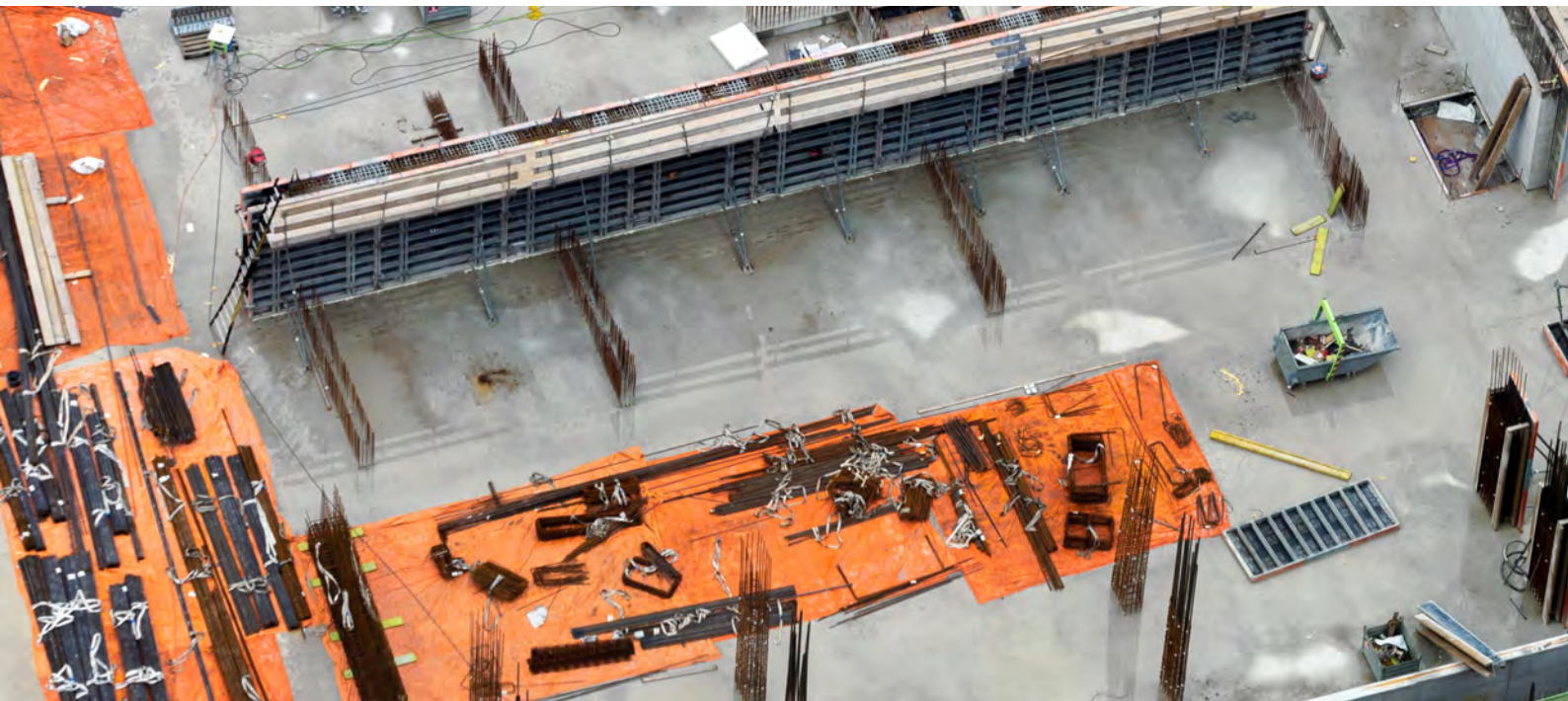
Streamline, aggregate and report on data flows between people, companies, systems, devices and software applications for better, faster, more agile decision making.

✓ **Security**

A vendor dedicated to providing you with the highest degree of service in security, availability and privacy of data — including third party reviews of data privacy frameworks (e.g., penetration and vulnerability testing).

✓ **Data ownership**

Ensure there is a clause in your service level agreement (SLA) that states unequivocally that you own your data.





— CHAPTER 3

Vendor Evaluation: Choosing the Right Partner

Take a step back at this stage. You've completed an honest assessment of your company's requirements and the features you need. Now it's time to create a shortlist of vendors dedicated to supporting your organisation in the long term.

Here are some tips, besides features and functionality, to consider when choosing a software partner.

Considerations before purchase

Ease of Use

Every aspect of the software needs to be intuitive in design so that users need minimal or no training.

Tip: Study the software interface and workflow to judge how easily it can be incorporated into your own daily workflows, as well as how easily it integrates with your existing tech stack. Speed of roll out is a good indicator of software usability.

Implementation and adoption

With continual software updates and new functionalities, you need resources dedicated to keeping your teams up to speed. Consider ongoing free educational offerings such as:

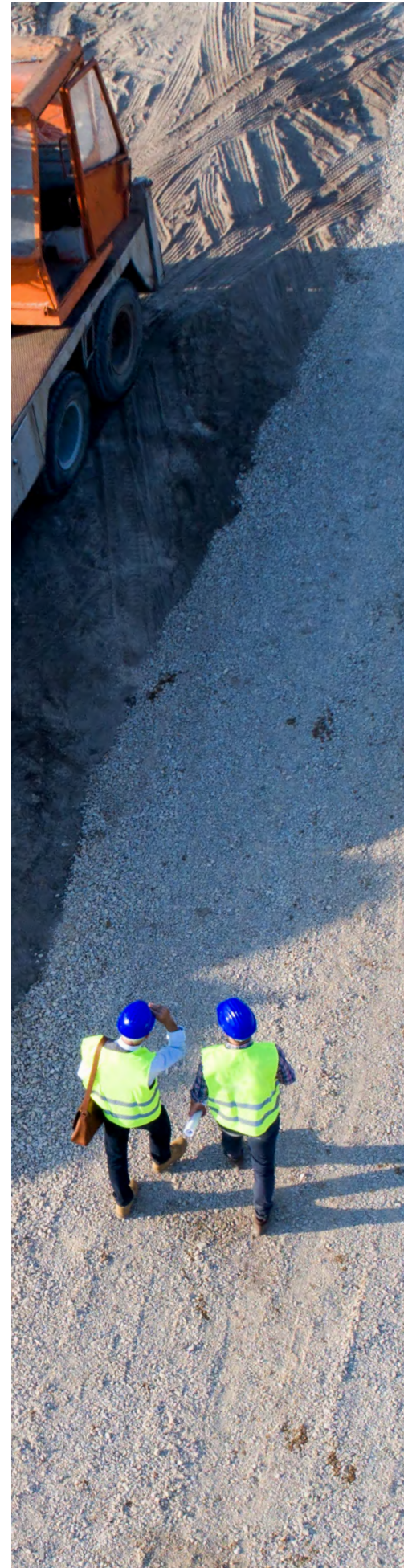
- Support documents
- Training webinars and certifications.
- Onsite training

Tip: Look for companies that go above and beyond traditional onboarding processes such as kick-off calls and training documentation. Seek out providers that offer ongoing software education for all users throughout the lifetime of your licence.

Technical Support

Every vendor has world-class support during the sales process, but not necessarily after you've signed a contract. You need a supplier able to answer your team's questions and queries quickly and constructively. And you need support that is provided locally, by people who understand your region and speak your language.

Tip: Check support is on-demand either via email, chat or phone (or preferably, all three) and is included for anyone with a login, whether or not they work directly for your company. Check that they have good experience and insight into your region, as well as speaking your preferred working language.



Scalability

No one wants to test, deploy and customise software only to find out they've outgrown it and need a replacement solution a year later. Review your company's 3–5-year business and growth plans and ensure you select a partner that can support these.

Tip: Seek out software that is always improving a pipeline of new features and product updates. You want solutions from companies that constantly innovate within their cloud-based products and services, so you receive updates without having to purchase the latest version of the software or new licences.

Product Development

Software development that encompasses customer feedback responds to your business needs more quickly, resolving universal system issues and platform enhancement from a single code base.

Tip: Ask the vendor if/how they collect feedback from customers, and how they use it.

Reference Check

When you're managing deployment risk, it's comforting to know you're not the first organisation to implement the software, and in this particular configuration. Customer testimonials speak volumes about a vendor, and customer satisfaction is often a clear indicator of long-term success.

Tip: Pick up the phone. Ask your vendor for a handful of referenceable clients, ideally of a similar size and in your sector, that you can speak to about their experiences of working with them.



Investment vs expense

The right software is an enabler of business processes that delivers strategic value, not just an IT purchase. You may need to explain this to people within your organisation, and more than once. A senior, supportive stakeholder can be very useful for this. (See stakeholder mapping, p.2)

With an integrated platform capable of managing all aspects of a project, the value is far beyond a dollar amount you can tie to something like saving printing costs by digitising drawings. It includes everything facilitated by the software, such as safer job sites thanks to improved visibility into near-misses, or higher employee morale leading to better employee retention.

You may find you need to name check the benefits of implementing the right construction management software. These include:

- Lower IT costs
- Predictive analytics
- Enhanced employer brand
- Improved forecasting
- Reduced rework
- Better employee experience
- Visibility into the health of project portfolios
- Fewer internal training staff
- Safer construction sites
- Faster project delivery
- Reduced risk of litigation
- Talent retention
- Increased efficiency and productivity

Managing change: triple check terms for updates

Make sure the quoted price includes implementation, training, updates and customer support for all software users — including external stakeholders and collaborators — and that there are no hidden fees.

— CHAPTER 4

Presenting Your Partner of Choice

Selecting a software partner is a significant undertaking, so take your time. Conducting the proper research and gathering feedback will pay dividends in the end. Better a longer, thorough journey to pick the right partner than to select the wrong vendor too soon, and have to start your search all over again.

Presentation time

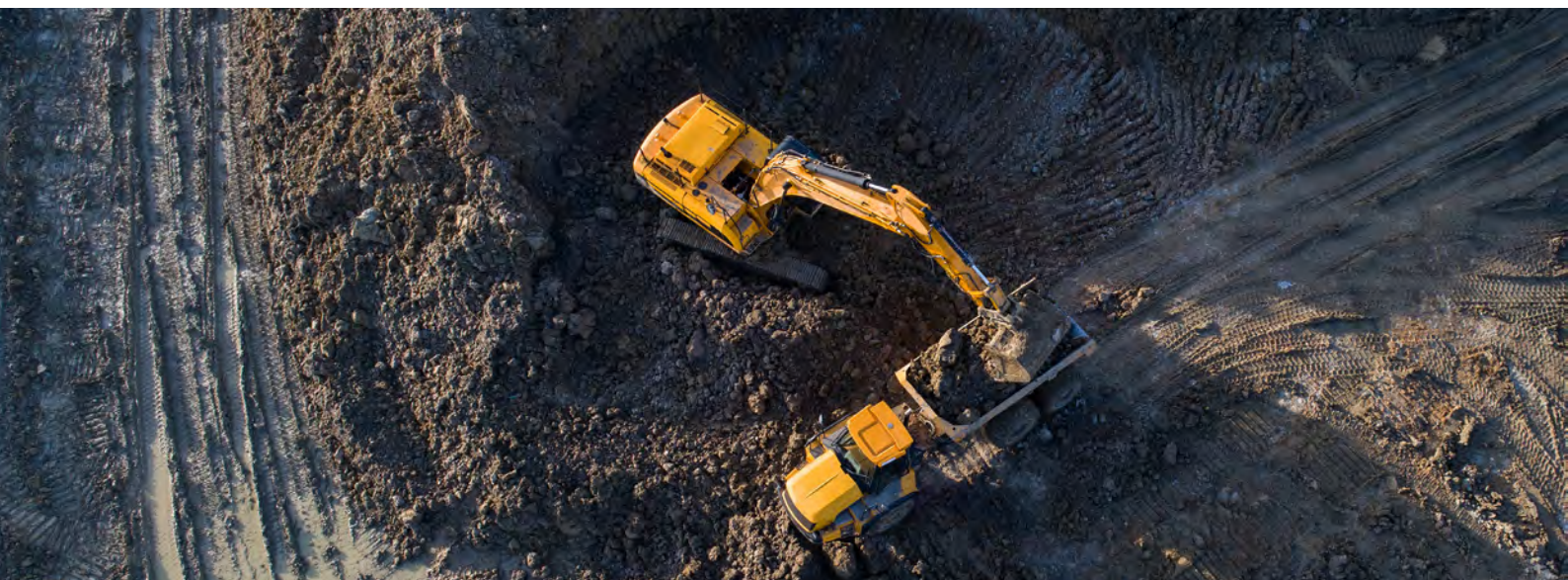
It's time to formalise your findings and present your partner of choice to your decision makers.

Update your initial business case for construction software with the findings from your research.

Make sure it's clear why your selected software partner is the best choice on the market for your business.

Revisit the stakeholder mapping and communication you were doing before and during your software selection journey. This will be a valuable asset to you now, and hopefully most (or all) of the key decision makers will already be onsite.

Good luck.



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If you have any questions, email us:
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