

Project Management

Strategies to Optimize Lead Times for a Successful Construction Project

The construction industry has been grappling with inflationary pressures on materials, which are now starting to normalize. However, supply chain disruptions remain a significant challenge that can have severe impacts on construction projects if not managed properly.

It is crucial for every construction project to have a well-defined procurement strategy to ensure that longer lead times don't result in disastrous consequences. Here are some tips and best practices that can help you navigate these choppy waters and increase your chances of overall project success:

Be Proactive

Begin to identify longer lead items at the beginning of the project.

Confirmation is Key

Have design consultants confirm lead times with suppliers prior to specifying and engage a construction manager early who can double-check lead times with applicable subtrades.

Maintain a Long Lead List

Regularly review your long lead list. Maintain constant communication with suppliers to understand any changes to lead times and update the register and schedule accordingly.



Pre-Purchase When Possible

Consider pre-purchasing materials and equipment early either by Construction Manager, Engineer or Owner. If possible, set up vendors in advance to allow for prompt issuance of the purchase order.

Have Options

Consultant team to ensure all basis of design is well optioned for greatest flexibility. Consider buying local or domestic to reduce shipping timelines.

Monitor Approvals

Monitor consultants' shop drawing review and approval process, in many cases the clock does not start until shop drawings are approved. Evaluate a design assist strategy with MEP trades. Ensure the construction manager has mitigation strategies in place that will allow work to proceed on site in the event of lead time changes for certain items (e.g. install curbs, complete HVAC distribution in advance of RTU showing up on site).

» If you would like further information on how to protect your project against long lead items, please reach out to Cresa's project management team.



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