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Landmark Properties on using talent and technology to help improve project schedule performance

Janet Poses
SR. MARKETING MANAGER



*Finding talented people and the right tools is instrumental to an organization's success, and **Landmark Properties** is no exception. Based in Athens, Georgia, the nation's leading developer and builder of student housing is always searching for new and innovative ways to improve.*



One area Landmark Properties wanted to continue to improve was project delivery. In particular, the company wanted to refine how they create and manage their project schedules and standardize on new processes across their projects to optimize project delivery.

The construction division of Landmark Properties is organized into three groups— cottage in-house, urban in-house, and urban third-party division —each with differing approaches and needs, but a common vision of delivering world-class student housing.

Allowing each group to leverage their differing strengths, while also maintaining the company’s goal of standardization of processes and tools, posed a unique challenge.

Bringing scheduling expertise to Landmark Properties

Landmark recruited Jeff Milo as their senior scheduling manager to reimagine scheduling for the company’s construction group. With over 28 years of industry experience, Milo is the chair of the planning and scheduling subcommittee for the American Association of Cost Engineering (AACE), which recommends scheduling, planning, and cost control tools for the industry.

Milo began using the Primavera Project Planner DOS core as a new college graduate in the early 1990s. He moved to Primavera Project Planner (P3) before progressing to [Primavera P6 Enterprise Project Portfolio Management \(EPPM\)](#) during his career.

Oracle team members met Milo and developed a special partnership as Oracle developed their project and portfolio planning and scheduling solution, [Oracle Primavera Cloud](#). The Oracle Construction and Engineering team heard functional priorities firsthand from Milo, who shared his wish list from decades of experience and system use.

Landmark is achieving great results

Process	Benefit
Reporting	3-4 times faster
Coordinating internal and third-party job walks	Getting inspections as needed without conflicts or delays
Quality coordination and communication	Improved access and visibility
Internal handover	Smoother information flow
Schedule health	Project health reflected using a visual color-coded graph

Oracle Primavera Cloud supports setting up multiple standard views that can repeatedly be used, empowering users to create full look-aheads two, four, or six weeks out in just a few minutes. “We just hit print,” says Milo.

For reporting, users only need to set the reports up once using the Oracle [planning and scheduling solution](#). In the past, reports had to be set up each time, and there were no rolling dates. Landmark Construction had to set up new time periods each week which took a few minutes for each report, each

time.

Users can easily re-create a view in Oracle Primavera Cloud by setting it up at the organization, project, or personal level, including printing or sharing the view to report. The print preview function is also greatly improved. Everything can be seen and updated in one screen such as title, block, time scale, etc.

“This reporting is up to three to four times faster than our previous process. We save this time twice per week and on all the active projects,” says Milo.

The Oracle solution is also starting to help the handover process and communication between internal departments and external partners. Processes run more smoothly with all information now consolidated into one central system.

Improved communication and coordination

Communication between Landmark Properties design, construction, and operations teams has improved because of the easy access to the [construction scheduling](#) tool and the coordination between the company’s schedules and their quality-control program.

Landmark Properties is using the Oracle tool to improve their entire Quality Management Program (QMP) on all projects. All parties’ visibility is increased by collaborating on one project-wide, cloud-based system.

“Everyone is on the same page and can access the most up to date information in real-time and accurately plan and perform their work without relying on layers of offline communication.”

-Jeff Milo, Senior Scheduling Manager, Landmark Properties

The company can plan out and control the entire process by incorporating material submittals and procurement, American Disabilities Act (ADA) inspections, third-party inspections, punch lists, first work inspections, production benchmarks, mock-ups, and standard of quality (SOQ) walks into their schedules.

These processes are conducted at multiple points during the construction process. The onsite visits from the various team members responsible for carrying out the tasks are coordinated and aligned with the project schedules.

These stakeholders include executives, members of the development, design, preconstruction, construction, and operations groups, as well as outside inspectors, and other parties.

Coordinating the timing of the tasks based on construction progress and the teams’ schedules had been challenging on these large, complex projects. Now, the coordination and scheduling is completely automated using Oracle Primavera Cloud, saving a significant amount of time planning

out and coordinating each visit.

Internal, city, state, and third-party inspections can be confidently scheduled weeks in advance instead of just a few days and there are no surprises or errors in timing.

“The entire Quality Management Program is more valuable using Oracle Primavera Cloud because the components of the program are always done at the optimal time. Now, the right people always show up when they should.”

-Jeff Milo, Senior Scheduling Manager, Landmark Properties

Landmark’s quality management team members can now easily keep track of the inspections, testing, and other components of the program across their projects, to support the project teams. The company says they have improved their overall quality management process using the Oracle solution.

The power of data

As a veteran scheduling professional, Milo understands just how important data is to a successful project delivery. He and his team have been building monthly custom dashboards to track both performance against schedule and the quality of the schedule itself.

Landmark’s construction operations team can track the quality and performance of their schedules and subcontractors on both a project-by-project and enterprise basis using specific schedule activity coding in conjunction with Oracle Primavera Cloud’s health check and analytics tools.

This visibility supports real-time decision making related to improving the projects under construction and optimizing the plans for future project durations and subcontractor selection.

Oracle’s Early Adopter Program

Oracle’s Early Adopter program is a true partnership between Oracle product development and organizations that are leading the industry in innovation. The program creates a symbiotic relationship, benefiting both organizations.

Oracle gains invaluable feedback from the market and leaders help specify the functionality of the solutions they need and use.

Milo and Landmark were the perfect fit. Milo brought deep perspective based off his experience on both the general contractor and owner sides across small and large organizations.

Landmark Properties, a fully vertically integrated company that develops, designs, builds, and operates their properties, provided input to Oracle on the entire project lifecycle.

The beginning of a beautiful friendship

As part of the Early Adopter program, Milo and his team worked closely with Oracle's Jen Coyle, director of product strategy, and her team. "Jen and her team are amazing. They listen and respond. They really want to know how the solution is used," says Milo.

As part of the program, customers become integral to the product design and development. Coyle and Milo meet regularly to discuss use cases, design, and prioritization.

Milo influenced product development and Oracle tapped into Milo's years of experience and current needs, benefiting both Landmark and Oracle.

Landmark Properties view of Oracle Primavera Cloud

"Oracle Primavera Cloud has come a long way in the past year, and it has been a great experience to be a part of that progress," says Milo. He finds that team members can use the Oracle solution with relative ease. "You don't have to be a professional scheduler to use it."

It is also quite easy to get up and running on the [construction scheduling software](#). Project managers and engineers have access and ownership to build and maintain the schedule without waiting for the scheduler to update the schedules.

This ownership helps the project team understand the planning process and the job at a deeper level with more planning upfront, even before the project starts. The solution's display makes it easy to read and understand.

Teams can break elements down to see the details. Landmark Properties is saving time on training thanks to the simpler interface and organized data.

Schedule health check

"We measure and report out on performance against schedule using a weighted scoring methodology," Milo says. Management can see at a glance how things are going on each project.

The items Landmark's construction team measures include the following:

- Planned vs. actual starts
- Planned vs. actual finishes
- Planned vs. actual task durations (taking quantity and production rate into consideration and adding in the risk factor)

Each project's health is shown using a visual color-coded graph. A score under 50 is shown in red, 50- 65 in orange, 65-85 in yellow, and 85 -100 is shown in green.

An item is automatically marked as critical if there are 22 work days or fewer of float (i.e. can become the critical path within an update period).

Milo and his team assign responsibility codes to each activity within the Oracle tool's schedule, both by functional area—such as mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP)—as well as by subcontractor, for actionable

snap shots. These quick snapshots help Milo's team quickly identify and resolve bottle necks before the project is negatively impacted, thanks to this heightened visibility.

The Oracle Primavera Cloud dashboard is currently built monthly for each project. Landmark Construction's operations team is currently exploring opportunities with the Oracle Construction and Engineering team to automate this process using [Primavera Analytics](#), Oracle's business-intelligence solution, built to provide insights into projects and portfolios to identify trends and proactively identify issues

Assessing schedule quality

It is important to not only measure the health of the projects, but also the quality of the schedules to continue learning and growing as an organization. Milo has specified key elements to trigger attention and help generate a "score" for schedule quality. These items highlight quality issues with the schedule itself.

1. Open ends (no successor)
2. Open starts
3. Open finishes (nothing contingencies)
4. High float
5. Long durations (anything over 15 days raises a flag as this length is hard to measure)
6. Leads (negative lags)

What's next for Landmark?

Landmark Properties is collaborating with the Oracle Construction and Engineering team to specify additional functionality for Primavera Analytics that will help support best practices in monitoring project and schedule health and improve the dashboard process and management.

The company plans to create weekly dashboards along with their project schedule updates. Access to this valuable weekly information will further reduce risk by highlighting areas that need attention on a more frequent basis.

Milo is also excited about incorporating the Lean planning tool included in Oracle Primavera Cloud into their scheduling program. "To me, the missing component in the Lean weekly work plan/pull plan process has been that it does not tie directly to the Critical path method (CPM) schedule," says Milo.

"In the past, the construction industry has never seen the benefits or ramifications of making or missing commitments in the CPM schedule," says Milo.

Now, Landmark Properties can link the tasks in their weekly work plan to activities in their CPM schedules with Oracle's [Lean scheduling](#) tool.

"Oracle Primavera Cloud allows us to directly see how the weekly work plan is impacting the CPM, providing us with a tremendous amount of control over the entire construction process," says Milo.

Learn more about [Oracle Primavera Cloud](#).



*Oracle Construction and Engineering, the global leader in **construction management software** and project portfolio management solutions, helps you connect your teams, processes, and data across the project and asset lifecycle. Drive efficiency and control in **project delivery** with proven solutions for **project controls, construction scheduling, portfolio management, BIM/CDE, construction payment management, and more.***

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