

A FIELD REPORT FOR ARCHITECTS, DEVELOPERS & BUILDERS

VOLUME 1

HEAT CHECK

Eight Shifts Every Architect and Developer Should Know

RNGD

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NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

■ INTRODUCTION

Commercial construction is changing. Not because buildings are.

Projects today face a different set of pressures than they did even five years ago. These forces aren't isolated—together they're reshaping how projects are conceived, designed, priced, coordinated, and delivered.

THE PRESSURES RESHAPING THE WORK



“Delivery strategy is no longer something you think about after design. It’s become part of the design conversation itself.”

ZAKEIA PAYNE *Director of Business Development*



The Eight Shifts

RISE

The patterns reshaping how projects get conceived, priced, coordinated, and delivered.

01

Why Owners Are Demanding Faster Schedules

Financing, insurance, and market pressure turn schedule from a construction metric into a business strategy.

05

Labor Shortages Are Changing Design

Workforce realities shape detailing, installation, and how buildings are designed for execution.

02

The Shift From Site-Built to Manufactured Components

Work moves off-site as manufacturing reshapes quality, safety, and how projects get delivered.

06

Accountability Has Become a Competitive Advantage

Integrated teams and fewer handoffs reduce complexity and improve certainty on demanding projects.

03

Designing for Manufacturing, Without Sacrificing Intent

Teams collaborate earlier to improve constructability while preserving the design vision.

07

Cost Certainty Begins During Design

Continuous pricing and real-time collaboration replace costly redesign cycles.

04

Constructability Begins Before Construction

The most valuable constructability conversations happen during design, not after drawings are done.

08

Architects Are Gaining Influence, Not Losing It

Earlier collaboration gives architects more insight, more options, and greater confidence.

Who You Will Hear From

The RNGD voices behind these eight shifts.



Zakeia Payne

Director of Business Development



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Design Manager



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Steel & Manufacturing Sector
Leader



Joe Yenni

Chief Commercial Officer



Will Cotton

Vice President of Innovation

THE TAKEAWAY

“The future of commercial construction won’t be defined by who has the best process. It’ll be defined by the teams willing to start the conversation earlier, collaborate more openly, and make better decisions together.”

JUSTIN HUGHES Business Development Manager

Schedule is now a financial metric.

WHY OWNERS ARE DEMANDING FASTER SCHEDULES

Owners aren't chasing speed for its own sake. They're responding to a financial landscape where higher borrowing costs, procurement delays, insurance volatility, and tighter capital markets make every additional month under construction more consequential.

“

The biggest schedule gains don't happen in the field—they happen before construction ever begins. When design, engineering, estimating, and construction are making decisions together, we're solving problems while they're still inexpensive to solve instead of expensive to correct.

CHRISTOPHER DUPRE

Project Executive

HEAT CHECK

- Schedule certainty now rivals cost certainty.
- Preconstruction has become a financial strategy.
- Earlier decisions reduce downstream risk.

ONE DEGREE HOTTER

40%

Integrated delivery has cut schedules by up to 40%—overlapping design, manufacturing, procurement, and construction.



Construction is starting to behave like manufacturing.

THE SHIFT FROM SITE-BUILT TO MANUFACTURED COMPONENTS

Work is moving into controlled production environments where quality, labor, and weather are managed with greater consistency. This isn't about replacing skilled trades—it's about letting site preparation and component production happen at the same time.

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Rather than a design then cost approach, our goal is to marry the two—so benefiting one does not lead to sacrificing the other.

ERIN COMEAUX

Commercial Sector Leader

HEAT CHECK

- Manufacturing enables parallel workstreams.
- Weather no longer dictates production.
- Design decisions drive manufacturing efficiency.

ONE DEGREE HOTTER

2 WEEKS

On Lewter District, fabrication continued despite severe weather—so the exterior wall system installed in only two weeks.

Manufacturing knowledge can protect design intent.

DESIGNING FOR MANUFACTURING, WITHOUT SACRIFICING INTENT

Design for Manufacturing and Assembly is often misunderstood. It isn't about bending architecture to the factory. It's about introducing manufacturing knowledge while the design is still flexible enough to benefit from it. The result isn't standardized architecture—it's fewer compromises later.

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Estimating, management, and construction is an artform. There's tremendous value in understanding the practical nature of construction while preserving the integrity of design.

JULIA HODGINS

Design Manager

HEAT CHECK

- Design intent and manufacturability align.
- Cost data should inform design, not dictate it.
- Early collaboration protects architectural vision.

WHY IT HOLDS

When engineers, architects, manufacturers, and builders collaborate early, small decisions improve constructability without changing architectural intent.



Constructability is not a review. It is a design input.

CONSTRUCTABILITY BEGINS BEFORE CONSTRUCTION

Too often, projects wait until design is substantially complete before involving builders, estimators, operators, or specialty trades. By then, the opportunity to influence cost, logistics, and sequencing has largely passed. Earlier input turns constructability from correction into strategy.

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The operator understands how the hotel needs to function day to day. When they're involved early, we avoid reworking scope, protect the schedule, and ensure the design aligns with how the property will actually operate.

D.J. BENEDETTO

Mid-South Sector Leader

HEAT CHECK

- Operations should influence design.
- Constructability is cheapest during design.
- Better coordination reduces redesign.

IN PRACTICE

Hospitality shows it clearly: involve the operator early and the design aligns with how the property will actually operate day to day.

04

CONSTRUCTABILITY

Design must account for the workforce that installs it.

LABOR SHORTAGES ARE CHANGING DESIGN

The industry's labor shortage isn't temporary. It's influencing detailing, sequencing, manufacturing, and installation. Increasingly, buildings need to be designed for efficient installation by today's workforce. That doesn't mean simplifying architecture—it means simplifying execution.

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We're not just prefabricating components—we're designing the work so crews spend less time handling materials, less time waiting on other trades, and more time installing with confidence. That's where schedule, safety, and quality all improve together.

STEPHEN ABADIE

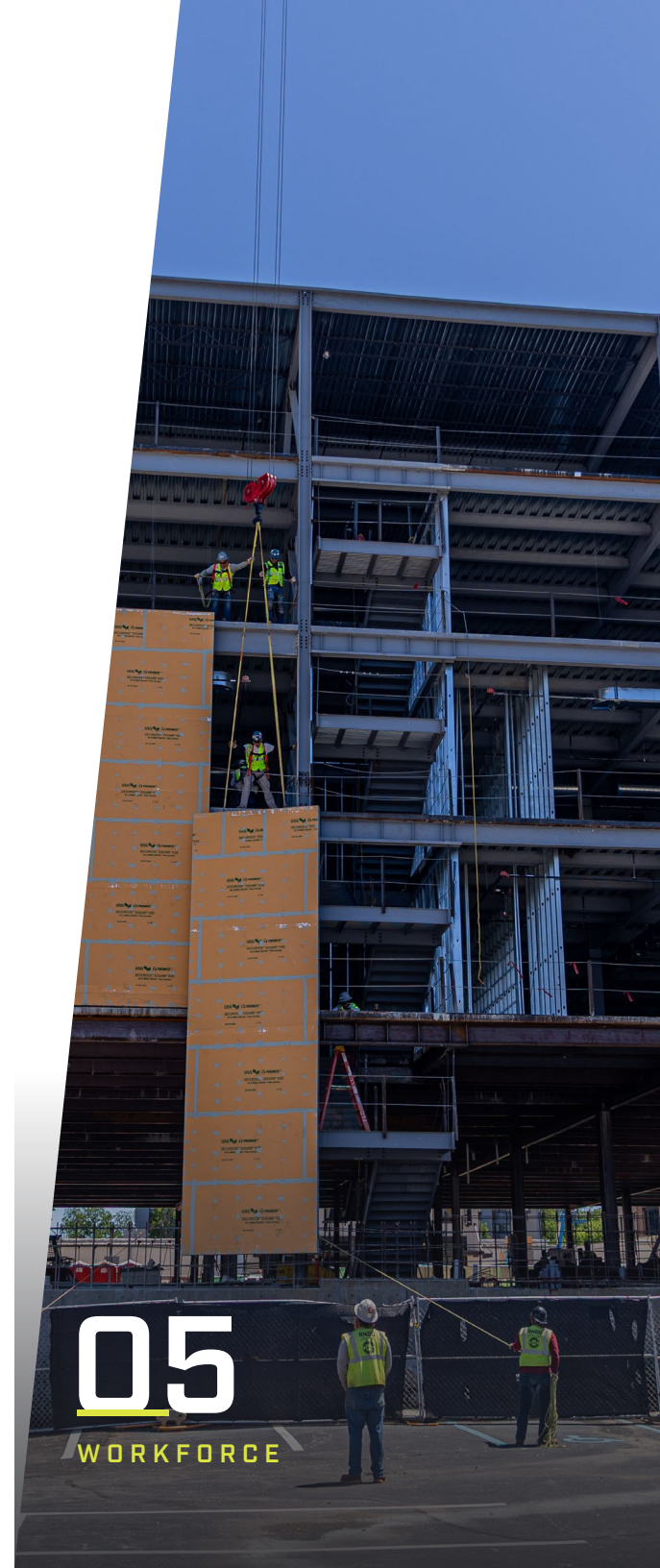
Executive Vice President, Infrastructure

HEAT CHECK

- Better detailing supports skilled labor.
- Manufacturing reduces field complexity.
- Simplicity improves consistency.

THE AIM

The goal isn't simpler architecture. It's simpler execution—so crews spend more time installing with confidence and less time waiting on other trades.



05

WORKFORCE

The problem is not more people. It is more interfaces.

ACCOUNTABILITY HAS BECOME A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Commercial projects keep growing more complex—mission critical, healthcare, hospitality, and advanced manufacturing all demand coordination across more disciplines. The challenge isn't managing more people. It's managing more interfaces. Every handoff is another chance for information to slow, fragment, or disappear.

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Every handoff between companies is another opportunity for information to get lost. The goal isn't simply to reduce the number of contractors—it's to reduce the number of disconnects that slow projects down.

JACE KUHLMANN

Steel & Manufacturing Sector Leader

HEAT CHECK

- Complexity grows through fragmentation.
- Fewer handoffs create better outcomes.
- Accountability improves communication.

MISSION CRITICAL

In the most demanding work, success depends less on reacting quickly and more on eliminating uncertainty before construction begins.

06

ACCOUNTABILITY

Estimating is becoming continuous.

COST CERTAINTY BEGINS DURING DESIGN

The traditional sequence is familiar: design, estimate, over budget, redesign, estimate again, repeat. The projects with the greatest certainty today aren't eliminating estimating—they're making it continuous. Developers aren't looking for the lowest first cost. They're looking for the highest level of certainty.

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Instead of pricing a completed design and reacting to cost overruns, we provide real-time pricing, constructability feedback, and schedule input as the design evolves.

JOE YENNI

Chief Commercial Officer

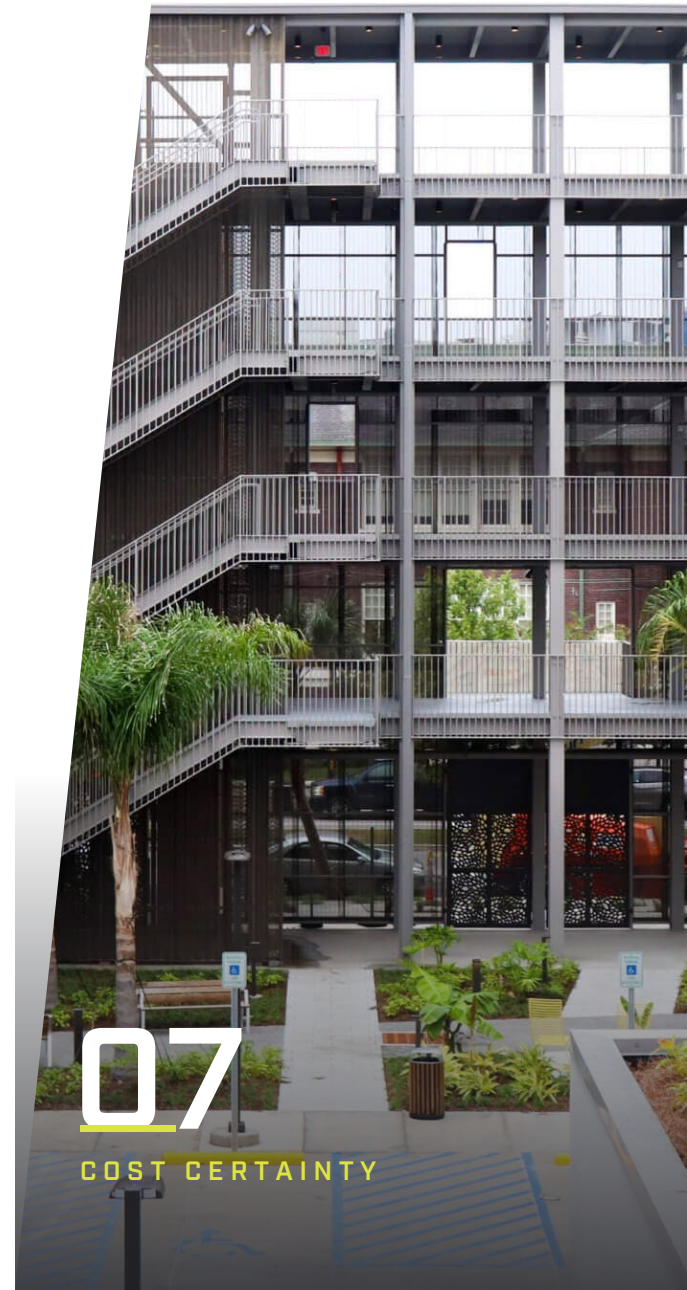
HEAT CHECK

- Cost certainty starts in preconstruction.
- Continuous estimating reduces redesign.
- Budget conversations run throughout design.

ONE DEGREE HOTTER

\$7.5-8M

A 200+ unit multifamily development in south Louisiana may spend \$7.5-8 million on insurance over a ten-year hold.



Better information strengthens design leadership.

ARCHITECTS ARE GAINING INFLUENCE, NOT LOSING IT

One misconception about integrated delivery is that earlier contractor involvement diminishes the architect's role. In practice, the opposite is happening. Architects gain access to more pricing insight, constructability expertise, manufacturing knowledge, and operational feedback earlier in the process. Better information doesn't reduce design leadership—it strengthens it.

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Surround yourself with a trusted team of people that approach the same problem differently. Nothing is quite as impactful as absorbing information from subject matter experts and broadening your knowledge in the process.

WILL COTTON

Vice President of Innovation

HEAT CHECK

- Architects remain the design leader.
- Collaboration expands design possibilities.
- Earlier insight leads to better buildings.

WHAT ARCHITECTS GAIN

Earlier involvement means more pricing insight, more constructability expertise, more manufacturing knowledge, and more operational feedback.

08

DESIGN LEADERSHIP