



ruffin_ready, Chicago - "L" train, 2010



CASE STUDY

**Renovating the
Dan Ryan branch
with Era Valdivia**



Zdenek Svoboda, *Chicago Skyline*, 2003

Era Valdivia

Chicago-based **Era Valdivia Contractors, Inc.** was founded in 1987 on the principle of high-quality service at a fair price. Their portfolio includes work on some of the Windy City's most iconic structures, from Soldier Field to O'Hare Airport. In April of 2013, Era Valdivia participated in the renewal of the Dan Ryan branch of the south Red Line.

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The project

The restoration was part of Rahm Emanuel's \$7 billion **Building a New Chicago program** aimed at upgrading the city's aging infrastructure. In addition to upgrading more than 100 stations operated by the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), some portions of the Red Line were scheduled for complete replacement.

The south section of the Red Line, referred to as the **Dan Ryan branch**, is the oldest train line in the city—carrying passengers for more than 40 years. As a result of its age, riders of the line experienced longer travel times, crowded trains, and less reliable service, according to the CTA.

Construction occurring on the Dan Ryan branch between May and October was dubbed "Mission Critical," meaning the track renewal had to be completed by the end of October.

Era Valdivia used TruQC to assist in streamlining the quality control and documentation process, helping them to complete the job on time.



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How TruQC helped

Era Valdivia came to the Red Line station renovations armed with TruQC's quality control and job-site documentation software. While crews found the **Weekly Environmental Report**, **Daily Inspection Report**, and **Safety Checklist** to be especially useful, it was the overall organization afforded by TruQC that provided the largest benefit.

"Reports are organized, available anytime, and they clearly indicate missing fields. They come in legible and allow you to add relevant information and embed pictures. These were features that were unavailable with previous forms," said Abel Valdivia, Vice President of Era Valdivia.

Because the app operates on a familiar interface, EVC crews adapted to the software quickly.

"All the guys already knew how to use iPhones and iPads. It was an easy transition. We just gave the guys a quick run through and let them explore the software," said Jesus Alvarez, Safety Coordinator at Era Valdivia.

"The biggest change was establishing a new reporting process, but overall it was a smooth transition," added Saul Valdivia, Senior Project Manager at Era Valdivia.



"More than anything, we've streamlined the documentation process. We now have field workers helping to keep the office on task because they know where their reports are in the approval process. From start to finish there's increased accountability."

– Saul Valdivia, Senior Project Manager at Era Valdivia

The program acted as a central repository for all job-related documentation, eliminating the need for paper files on-site.

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“Going paperless makes everything easier. There’s now only one place to go to find what you are looking for. Reports from remote jobsites, which used to take two weeks to get to the office, can now be accessed instantaneously.”

– Jesus Alvarez, Safety Coordinator at Era Valdivia



The Chicago Transit Authority and the Illinois Department of Transportation remarked that they received much more information from EVC than from other contractors.

“Even those not on the job-site can really get a feel for the project with photographs, documents and reports,” Saul Valdivia said. “TruQC provides a great snapshot.”

With TruQC, EVC was able to get paperwork to owners quickly—even as early as the next day in some cases. Where the submission of daily reports was a contractual obligation, TruQC allowed EVC to get paid more quickly by providing these reports in daily emails.

“TruQC has accelerated our commitment to technology,” Abel said. “Without a program like TruQC, I doubt we would have deployed iPads to the field. Now we’re using them both for quality control documentation and for features like FaceTime and email.”

“This level of investment in technology affirms Era Valdivia’s commitment to remaining at the forefront of the industry.”

– Abel Valdivia, Vice President of Era Valdivia

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What they saved

Era Valdivia estimates QC workers saved 8 hours per week on paperwork, which they could now complete on the job-site, as opposed to in trucks or hotel rooms. That amounts to an immediate \$640 per week per field worker in savings.

Between the Safety Manager and the QSM, they estimate that the time saved in tracking down reports from the crew added up to the equivalent of one full-time staff member's weekly hours—an additional \$2,800 in savings over the course of a month of working on various jobs.

Additional money was saved on a mobile office trailer, including computers, printers, scanners, fax machines, Wi-Fi, electricity, the trailer itself, and additional expenses. TruQC, with the iPad, was able to perform all these functions at a fraction of the cost.

Even after TruQC's monthly fee of \$149 per user per month and the initial cost of iPads were factored in, the switch still resulted in a significant return on investment.

"What may not show up on the bottom line is all the stress TruQC helped to eliminate on the Dan Ryan job. Instead of scrambling to ensure all our paperwork

was in order for an SSPC audit, we organized it through the job-site documentation software and went in confident that we were prepared," Saul said.

How savings were calculated

- 8 hours/week at \$80/hour (labor) = \$640/week
 - \$640/week x 2 users = \$1,280
 - \$1,280 x 4 weeks = **\$5,120**
- +
- 40 hours/week at \$70/hour (QSM and SM) = **\$2,800**

-

[((\$149x4) + (service \$20x4))

=



\$7,244
TOTAL PROJECT
SAVINGS
PER MONTH

ROI: Hourly cost includes wages + benefits + insurance + taxes

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Contact us with questions

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About TruQC

TruQC is the cloud-based app built for the iPad that's taking job-site documentation paperless. Originally built for a top industrial painting contractor, TruQC was designed to be easy-to-use, compact, objective, and to conform to common industry standards and certification requirements.

Learn more about TruQC

Visit our blog at truqcapp.com/blog to learn more about product updates, industry news and all that we're doing to make our app one of the strongest tools in your toolbox.

For more ROI

Download another case study featuring a historic bridge renovation project, this time with the industrial painting and coatings specialists at Thomas Industrial Coatings. Find it at truqcapp.com/ThomasIndustrialCoatings.

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