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# How Handoff Transformed Cost Estimation for Atelier 7



## CASE STUDIES

Here's how Atelier 7 used Handoff, an AI-powered construction estimation tool, to streamline operations, boost accuracy, and speed up project timelines.



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## Introduction

Atelier 7, a leader in modular and container-based construction, has come a long way since its early days. Founded by Anthony Pope and his wife, both seasoned architects, the company evolved from a design firm into a full-fledged design-build operation.

This change was driven by their passion for innovation and the need to tackle inefficiencies in the traditional construction process. Here's how Atelier 7 used Handoff, an AI-powered construction estimation tool, to streamline operations, boost accuracy, and speed up project timelines.

## Background

Atelier 7 started small, focusing on unique, affordable housing solutions using shipping containers. Their creative designs and ability to turn unconventional materials into practical living and working spaces quickly made them stand out. As Anthony explains, "We got a chance to write the ordinances, help the city write the ordinances for containers, so we had a leg up on everybody, and there was absolutely nobody really in the East Coast that was dabbling with this stuff.

"Over time, they expanded to residential, commercial, and institutional projects, using complex prefabrication and modular construction techniques. From houses and research facilities to hospitals and supportive housing, Atelier 7 has been at the forefront of container-based construction in the Eastern United States.

Despite their success, Anthony and his team faced challenges common in the construction industry. Accurate cost estimation was a major hurdle. Traditional methods

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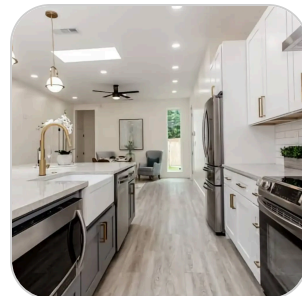
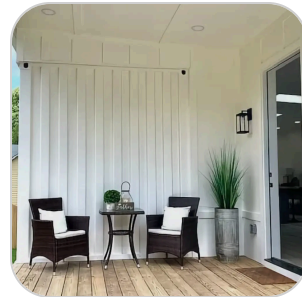


## The Challenge

The main challenge for Atelier 7 was the inefficiency of their existing cost estimation processes. They relied on manual methods and various software tools, which weren't tailored to their needs. This approach was slow and prone to errors, making it hard to give clients reliable cost estimates quickly.

As Tony describes, "Estimating is the life of the project. I mean, honestly, if you start off with a bad foundation, it's just gonna destiny off into something hard with the end. Brandon and I have been using Buildbook and a couple other softwares, trying to just track numbers and coming up with, I mean, we were going through literally going through this thing of one week, we were designing foundations, like foundation one, two, 3, 4, 5, and then putting numbers together so that we could quickly build an estimate for the building.

"Their projects often involved innovative and unconventional construction methods, complicating the estimation process further. For example, figuring out the costs of retrofitting shipping containers for homes required specialized knowledge and a high degree of accuracy. Traditional tools just couldn't handle these unique requirements.



## Enter Handoff

Handoff, an AI-powered estimation tool, was a game-changer for Atelier 7. Designed to automate and streamline the cost estimation process, Handoff uses advanced

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Handoff's key benefits aligned perfectly with Atelier 7's needs:



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**More profit:** "Reduces the number of hours spent in the field, increasing profitability on every estimate. Save costs by not hiring a full-time estimator, let AI do the work for you."

- **Accuracy of data:** "Utilize real-time data from millions of construction industry data points. Estimates tailored to specific project locations, ensuring relevance and accuracy."
- **Convenience:** "Work in the field or the office with intuitive mobile and desktop apps that don't require training."



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## Implementation and Usage

Integrating Handoff into their workflow was all about enhancing efficiency and accuracy in cost estimation. Anthony and his team were impressed by Handoff's ability to handle complex construction scenarios, especially those involving modular and container-based designs.

### Training and Onboarding

The onboarding process was smooth, thanks to Handoff's customer success team. Anthony and project manager Brandon Beasley got thorough training on using the tool. They quickly learned the functionalities and began using Handoff for their estimations.

### Streamlining Estimations

One of the first big tests for Handoff was a series of modular homes in Atlanta. These projects needed detailed and precise cost breakdowns due to their innovative construction methods. Using Handoff, the team created accurate estimates in a fraction of the time it used to take.

Handoff's AI allowed Anthony and Brandon to input basic project details and get detailed estimates covering material costs, labor, and other factors. The tool's ability to provide estimates based on local data made sure the figures were realistic and reliable.

As Tony noted, "Handoff showed up, and we said, okay, this could be pretty cool. It's AI, so maybe we don't believe it so much. And it was very interesting because it was spinning out some stuff at light speed for us." Brandon added, "I can do a punch walk and go over construction-related items and just use the schedule and completion list, and then I talk to Handoff, and it puts numbers to it, and it automates it for me."

### Enhancing Accuracy and Speed

Anthony saw a significant improvement. "We used to spend weeks on cost estimations, often with less accuracy than we wanted. With Handoff, we can generate precise

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consistency in their estimates. Handoff "leverages a robust database from 1build, including partnerships with major suppliers like Lowe's and LL Flooring, to provide the most accurate construction cost data." By fact-checking Handoff's estimates against subcontractor bids, Tony and Brandon found that Handoff's numbers were consistently within 5-10% of the actual costs. This level of accuracy gave them confidence in their estimates and helped them win more projects.

Brandon highlighted the importance of consistency, stating, "I want to be able to go to Handoff and say, crank out an estimate for whatever the scope of work is, and it's the exact price, but same every time. I want to depend on it. I want to know that this number is real and it doesn't just change."

## Case Study: Modular Housing Project in Atlanta

A great example of Handoff's impact was a modular housing project in Atlanta. This project involved building several homes using shipping containers, a method Atelier 7 had perfected. The unique nature of the project needed precise cost estimations to ensure profitability and client satisfaction.

### Challenges Addressed

The main challenge was to provide a detailed and accurate cost estimation that covered all the unique aspects of using shipping containers as building materials. Traditional estimation methods struggled with this level of detail, often leading to cost overruns.

### Solution with Handoff

Using Handoff, Anthony and his team quickly generated a comprehensive cost estimation. The tool's AI considered all relevant factors, including material costs, labor, and local pricing data. This allowed the team to present a detailed and accurate estimate to the client within days.



### Results

Using Handoff led to several benefits:

- **Time Savings:** The estimation process was cut from weeks to hours, freeing up the team to focus on other critical tasks.
- **Increased Accuracy:** Estimates were within 5-10% of actual project costs, significantly improving budgeting accuracy.
- **Enhanced Client Trust:** Providing a quick and reliable estimates built client trust.

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*estimates in Baltimore, and concrete okay. You got the job."*

## Ongoing Benefits and Future Plans

The successful implementation of Handoff has had a lasting impact on Atelier 7. The tool is now a key part of their workflow, offering ongoing benefits beyond individual projects.

### Scalability

As Atelier 7 continues to grow and take on more projects, Handoff's scalable estimation capabilities help maintain efficiency and accuracy. This is crucial as they expand into new markets and handle larger, more complex projects.

### Continuous Improvement

Anthony and his team appreciate Handoff's commitment to continuous improvement. Regular updates and new features keep the tool effective and aligned with industry trends and client expectations.

Tony commended the Handoff team, saying, "I think you've made some considerable progress. I mean, you're working at light speed." Brandon echoed this sentiment, adding, "Every time we say we want this, we come back and have it. So let's glance over that. Thank you."

This collaborative approach has led to the rapid implementation of new features and improvements, such as the ability to print estimates, customize them with company logos, and save frequently used prompts for quick access.

### Future Innovations

Looking ahead, Atelier 7 plans to integrate Handoff further into their project management processes. They're excited about upcoming features like generating schedules of values directly from Handoff estimates, which will allow for even more detailed and customizable estimations, enhancing their ability to deliver unique and innovative construction solutions.

## Conclusion

The story of Atelier 7 shows the transformative power of advanced technology in construction. By adopting Handoff, the firm overcame significant challenges in cost estimation, achieving unprecedented accuracy and efficiency. This has improved project outcomes and enhanced client satisfaction and trust.

Handoff has become an integral part of Atelier 7's workflow, giving them a competitive edge in the market. Looking ahead, Atelier 7 sees Handoff as a key driver of their future growth. With plans to expand their operations internationally and take on larger projects, the scalability and flexibility of Handoff's platform will be crucial for their success.

As Anthony and Atelier 7 continue to innovate and expand, Handoff will remain a crucial tool, enabling them to push the boundaries of what's possible in modular and container-based construction. The success of Atelier 7 highlights the value of embracing cutting-edge solutions to drive business growth and excellence.

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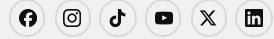
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