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## Benchmark Your Planning Process to Improve and Save

It's easy these days, with more work and fewer resources, to get caught up in the day-to-day need to simply execute as best we can. Company culture and old habits can make it difficult to stop and review how work gets done, and how it could be done more effectively. But benchmarking processes can make a huge difference in the time and money required to complete a project, and is a healthy step toward improving project management efforts in the future.

### Benefits of Benchmarking

Establishing benchmarks of project processes can allow you to measure against them and make steady improvement on those that need work. Simply tracking the time required for each step can reveal huge opportunities to speed timelines by eliminating unnecessary procedures, consolidating others, allowing for group input at key steps along the way and even reducing input where it isn't productive. And recording expenses for each element of a construction project can identify cost savings in future initiatives, and even reveal opportunities to spread costs among multiple customers.

### Getting Started

The first requirement of a benchmarking initiative is to document every aspect of a project – vendor costs, materials, projected and actual timelines, and staff time. In order to review and refine your efforts, you must capture a comprehensive picture of your current projects and [house that data in an easy-to-access system](#) that you and others in your organization can easily review and analyze.

### Establish Goals

Like any initiative, benchmarking must have a stated objective for your company. Are you seeking to execute your projects more quickly, spend less money, achieve more consistent results between projects, or improve the quality of the work being done? Do you want to benchmark your efforts against other parts of your organization, competitors in your industry, or best-in-class organizations outside your industry as well?

### Leverage Free Help

Often you can use existing resources - such as consultants and vendors you've used in the past - to help you identify benchmarks that make sense for you. Providers like QPM work with many best-in-class organizations across a wide range of industries and geographies, and can be tremendously helpful in establishing where your organization ranks now in terms of the goals you're trying to achieve. And, often, they can provide specific recommendations to help you get closer to your objectives on future projects.

QPM regularly advises our clients on benchmarking initiatives, and we can help you get started or improve your existing benchmarking program with our experience managing projects for world-class retailers and others. [Let us know how we can help your benchmarking efforts.](#)

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## Case Studies Bring Valuable Insight To Your Planning

QPM and other companies regularly add project case studies to their website and email newsletters. While these studies are a great opportunity for organizations like QPM to show their expertise and tout their client list, have you ever considered how a company's case studies can improve your own planning process and save you money?

The fact is, with over [50 case studies you can read and download from the QPM site](#), you're bound to find that one of our clients has faced challenges that you face as well.

Trying to come up with a [creative solution to achieve fire security](#)? Dealing with [disaster recovery](#)? Need to quickly [determine if your exit signs are properly registered](#) with the federal government to avoid fines?

QPM has case studies that show how you can [avoid losing capital funding](#), [reduce energy bills](#), [save on general contractor fees](#) and [make a difficult Fire Marshall very happy](#).

Take a moment to [browse our case studies](#) and see what others have learned that can benefit your planning process!

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## Employee Profile: Jay Long, Senior Project Manager

Jay is one of QPM's true multi-taskers. He regularly manages multiple client projects at once, from open store remodels to new construction, ADA upgrades, HVAC and mechanical upgrades and facilities support. He currently serves as our national lead for Jack In The Box, and has managed programs in Retail, Convenience, Petroleum, and Manufacturing in addition to the Restaurant industry.



Jay's strength lies in his ability to see the "big picture" of multi-faceted initiatives, and to structure the program (including necessary tools, resources and procedures) so that the client's goals are achieved within budget and on time. He brings practical field experience to all of his projects, which makes even the most complex project management program go smoothly.

Jay has managed programs for Chick-Fil-A, The Home Depot, Progressive Insurance, Texaco, Shell, BP, Chevron and Circle K.

Jack In The Box has identified Jay as a key team member, saying: "Jay really understands our business and culture, and lives and breathes our account 24/7. We have the utmost confidence in Jay, and we know that no matter what type of project we give him, he'll take complete ownership."

Jay has an Associate's Degree in Electrical Technologies from Michigan State University and over 20 years of experience in the construction industry.

Read case studies for two of Jay's recent projects: [New Construction](#) and [Interior Remodels](#) for Jack In The Box.

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## Featured Project

[View Projects](#)



### The Home Depot - A-Store Remodels

From 2004 to 2006, The Home Depot had a corporate initiative to focus on and renovate their highest sales volume locations – the A-Stores throughout several regions. The renovations encompassed the entire store location – both interior and exterior – and had to be undertaken in an open store environment for an 18-week time period. Stakeholders mandated the stores needed to remain open for business as the renovations were underway.

The Home Depot engaged QPM to provide full Construction and Project Management services for over 30 open store remodel projects. QPM managed these remodel projects in the Midwest, Southeast and Northeastern portions of the United States, throughout all seasons, to ensure these sites were completed within timeline and budget.

[See how QPM got the job done.](#)



### Thanks to all the companies reading the QPM Perspective including:

- Staples
- McDonald's
- Wegmans
- Abercrombie & Fitch
- Best Buy
- Michaels
- Pizza Hut
- Safeway
- 7-Eleven
- Chico's
- Verizon Wireless
- Dollar General
- AutoZone
- BJ's Wholesale Club
- US Bank
- Progressive
- The Home Depot
- Penske Automotive Group
- PetSmart
- Wells Fargo

## Events

[View Calendar](#)

06.27.11  
[2011 Bank Facilities Forum/ Restaurant Facilities Forum](#)  
Charlotte, NC

07.11.11  
[2011 Retail Facilities Summit](#)  
Miami, FL