



# Virtual Building Systems Coordination: Using Navisworks Manage

*Damon Troy Socha*

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The process of virtual building-systems coordination currently represents one of the leading methodologies for increasing profitability and productivity in the construction industry. Defined processes with appropriate software have enabled contractors and designers to build and design complex virtually systems with high levels confidence. Confidence and detail provide for prefabrication of building systems and components, reducing the labor and excess materials necessary to fabricate and install building systems in a field setting. Some estimations place this labor and reduced materials figure up to 30%. While 30% may be an educated guess, the truth does hold true that preplanning and prefabrication of building components saves significant time and field labor. The key element in the prefabrication process is the ability to confidently coordinate building systems and components to a high level of accuracy. A highly defined process, adaptable to the needs of a specific project, provides the necessary level of accuracy and confidence. However in concert with a defined process, internal changes to the business model and management must also occur. For various reasons, many companies do not leverage the technology in the most efficient and effective methods. In fact, many companies hold fast to established internal processes and attempt force the technology to mold to their current market strategy and methodology. Choosing what to implement based on ease of implementation will rarely provide the desired results. While some efficiency gains can be realized by simply adding to established practices, more often than not frustration and marginal profit increases are the result. A defined process using the “Clash Detection” system found in the Navisworks Manage software and the resulting virtually coordinated shop drawings provides a catalyst to confidence and prefabrication. However, improper or partially coordinated systems will often demonstrate that a particular level of effort is required to justify the cost. It is important to understand that the benefits of virtual coordination are not linear. There exists a level of coordination and effort that must be put forth to obtain the profitable results and recover the time and effort of the investment. The level of coordination that is required will differ for every project and will be dependent upon factors such as; drawing completeness, building complexity, governing bodies of regulation, location, building uses and systems complexity and code requirements. While a reasonable discussion of the entire coordination process including prefabrication and field installation implementation process is warranted, it is not the scope of this book. The main purpose of this book is to provide all the necessary resources to effectively implement a successful virtual building systems coordination. The book is built for the novice and for the most experienced user. The novice will come to understand how to efficiently run an effective coordination process starting at ground zero. The expert will likely find “nuggets” of wisdom and refining practices to help their own process run more efficiently. The premise of the book then is a simple one. With a defined process and some simple management skills one can effectuate a building systems coordination in which the field has confidence, and ultimately one in which you will reap the rewards of the technology.



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