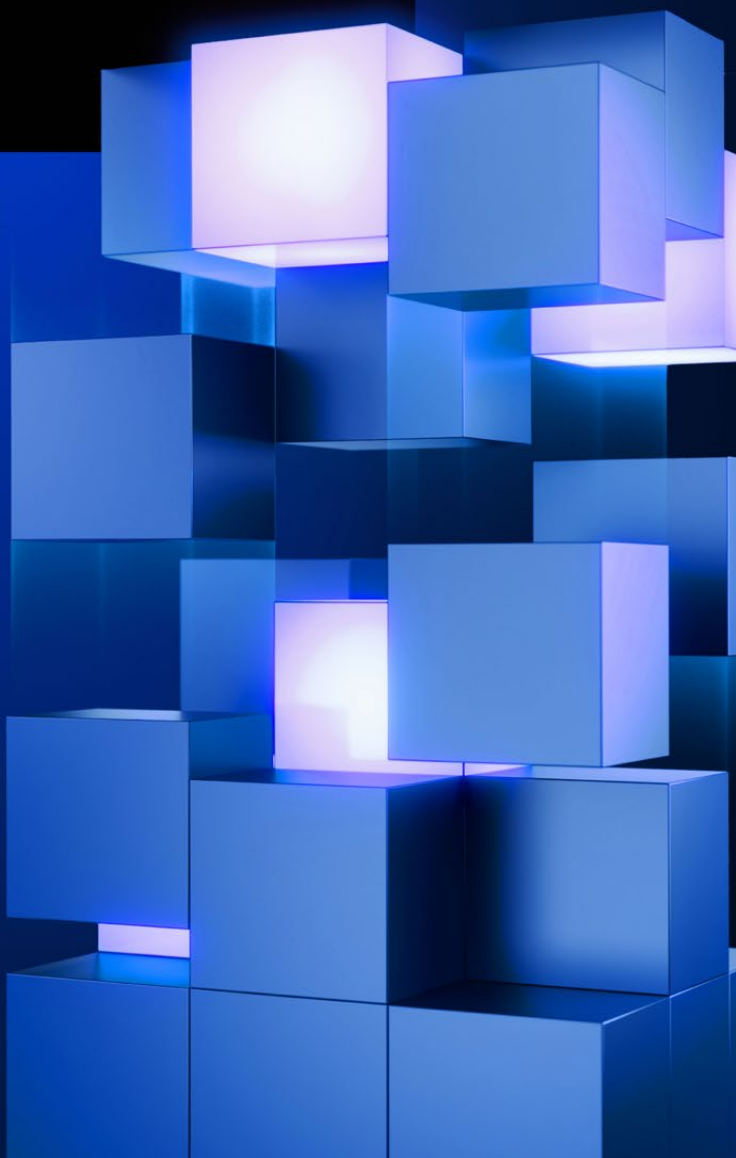
rightworks

Built to Last:

The Construction Industry's Guide to Business Stability



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An Industry Under Construction

Every construction business is built the same way. One decision at a time, foundation first. You don't pour a slab without checking the soil or frame a wall without a plan for what it's holding up. That discipline is what makes construction one of the most rigorous industries in the country.

In February 2026, Rightworks set out to determine whether that same discipline runs the back office, too. We surveyed 733 small and medium-sized business decision-makers across a variety of industries to understand what separates a stable, resilient business from the ones just getting by. This report focuses on what that data shows specifically for construction—how the industry is faring, where it stands, and what the path forward looks like for the businesses building America.

The data tells a compelling story about construction pros:

- The majority believe in the value of the cloud, consistent with small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) overall.
- Profitability, the economy, and growth are the top concerns, which will sound familiar to anyone who's priced a job in the last year.
- Two out of three feel confident in their current security setup, yet a third have already faced a breach—nearly double the rate of small businesses overall.

In the following pages, you'll get a clear look at where the construction industry actually stands on the cloud, on security, and on business management. We'll show you what the most stable businesses do differently—then it's your turn. Take the free assessment, see exactly how your business compares, and walk away with an action plan you can start today.



The three pillars of business stability:

- Technology & Workflows
- Security & IT Administration
- Business Management

Closing in on Stage 2.

Every business surveyed fell into one of five stages of business stability, from Stage 1: Establishing to Stage 5: Empowering. On average, the construction businesses surveyed landed just short of Stage 2, close enough that the next stage is well within reach. The study also confirmed why that gap is worth closing:

Stage 1

Establishing

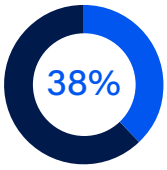
Laying the groundwork.

0%-49%

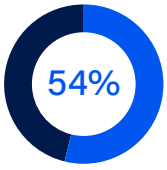
Advanced-stage SMBs average
38% more revenue per employee.



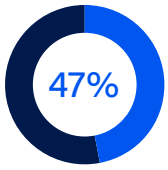
Overall stability score
SMB average: 49%



Technology & Workflows
SMB average: 39%



Security & IT Administration
SMB average: 57%



Business Management
SMB average: 51%

Where Construction Stands

Technology and business management are where construction still has the most room to grow, and that's not a coincidence given what owners say they want most. Growing revenue, attracting better clients, and getting paid faster all trace back to those same two pillars. Closing those gaps isn't a separate project from reaching those goals. It's how construction gets there.

Top Game Changers:

- Growing revenue without adding headcount
- Attracting better clients who value the work
- Getting paid faster



62%

of construction businesses place a high value on the cloud vs. 59% of SMBs overall.

The Technology Blueprint

Skepticism isn't holding construction back from the cloud. In fact, the majority of the decision-makers we surveyed see the value of moving work to the cloud, similar to SMBs overall (62% vs. 59%). We also found that **70% of construction businesses are already fully in the cloud or would be comfortable moving all data/apps to the cloud.**

The Cloud Conundrum

For most construction businesses, the biggest challenges in moving to the cloud aren't about whether it's worth doing; they're about knowing how. **Thirty-six percent point to a lack of technical expertise as one of their top challenges,** and 32% say they simply don't understand the choices available to them. That combination explains how cloud adoption tends to happen in practice: piece by piece, email, then file storage, then accounting software, each reasonable on its own, but never assembled into one connected system.

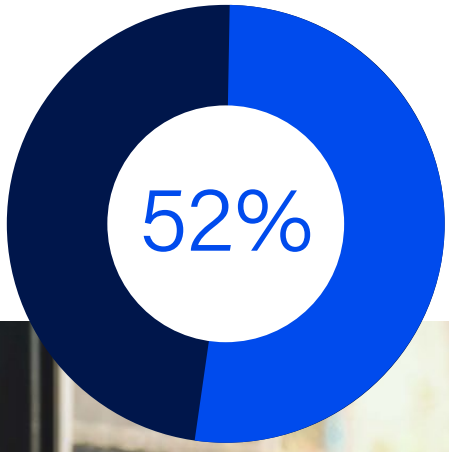
> Business management and technology... represent the clearest growth opportunities.
>
> —Rightworks' 2026 SMB Tech Survey on Construction Stability

In addition, lack of understanding choices around cloud migration is directionally higher for construction than SMBs overall, suggesting the hesitation isn't about whether the cloud is worth it, but about sorting through options without a clear read on what actually fits the way construction businesses work.

Staying Connected Is Paramount

What construction pros want most once they get to the cloud is work flexibility. **Forty-five percent cite the ability to access data and apps from anywhere as the top benefit,** nearly matching the 46% SMB average—a natural priority for an industry that splits its time between the office and the job site.

Only 18% point to data backups as a reason to move to the cloud, which could be seen as a notable blind spot for an industry that can't afford to lose job costing records, contracts, or client files.



52% of construction businesses host over half their data and apps in the cloud.



AI: The Hesitation Behind the Hold-Up



Picture the day-to-day for a lot of construction offices right now. Calls coming in while paperwork piles up on the desk, follow-ups scribbled on sticky notes, numbers that live in someone's head instead of a system. It's not that they don't see a better way. It's that handing any of it over to a new tool means handing over sensitive client, payroll, and bid information, too, and that's not a small ask.

That hesitation shows up clearly in the data. **Forty-six percent of construction businesses currently use AI,** notably lower than 55% of small businesses overall. Forty-three percent say they're knowledgeable about it, and 41% say they're comfortable using it, both a step behind the broader small business average as well.

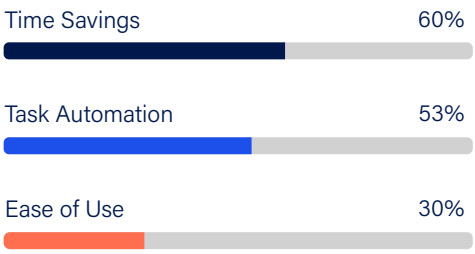
But the concern isn't really about whether the technology works. It's about where the information goes once it's there, and that's a fair thing to be careful about. It's also a solvable one. The right tools with the right safeguards can close that gap without asking anyone to hand over more trust than they're ready to give.

Here's how small businesses overall are weighing the benefits against the concerns:

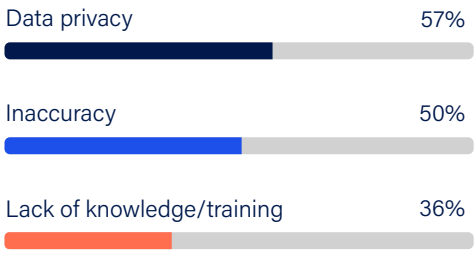
91% of all SMBs acknowledge the **benefits** of AI

93% of all SMBs have **concerns** about AI

Top AI Benefits



Top AI Concerns



> AI has been a great advantage to my business. It streamlines my operations. I can automate emails and so much more in record time.
>
> —Survey Respondent from Rightworks' 2026 SMB Technology Survey

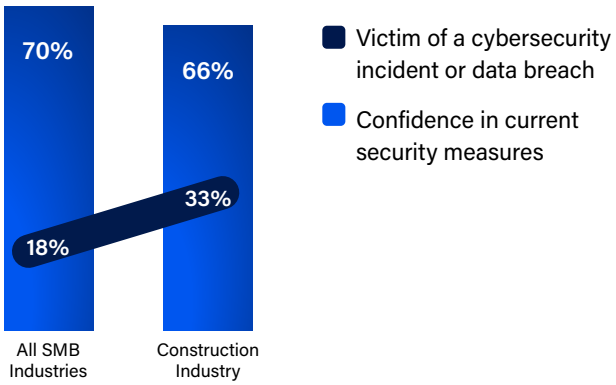
A Closer Look at Security

Most construction businesses have network safeguards and other basic protections that are common across all SMBs surveyed. But that coverage isn't always what it seems. Sixty-six percent feel confident in their current setup, yet **33% have already faced a breach—nearly double the 18% rate across all small businesses.**

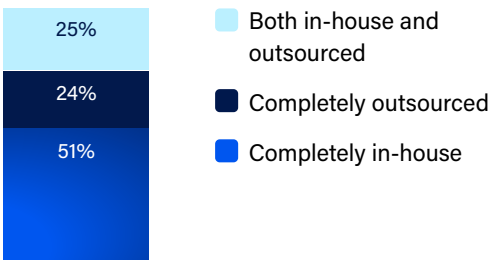
Documented security plans (42%) are on pace with the total SMB average (44%). Yet, data backups beyond what vendors provide lag at 60% for construction versus 71% overall, one of the widest gaps in this report, and a risky one given how many construction businesses have already been breached.

The good news is they're leaning on the experts. **Nearly half of construction businesses now use outside IT support,** fully outsourced or blended with in-house management, which is often the fastest way to turn confidence into real coverage.

Security Confidence vs. Real-World Risk



How IT Is Managed in Construction



49%

Nearly half of construction businesses now use outside support for their IT operations.





Big Potential for Business Management

Profitability tops the list of what keeps construction owners up at night, alongside the economy and growth. The good news is all three are addressable, and the fixes are already known. What's missing is the follow-through.

Only 38% of construction businesses have a growth plan in writing, just 37% have a succession plan in place, and **fewer than half (45%) follow a documented marketing plan**. The goals are specific. The plan to get there mostly isn't.

Putting that plan on paper is often the first real step toward changing the trajectory. Stability tends to start with a plan, not a bigger effort.

Construction vs. All SMBs Following a Marketing Plan



Business Planning in Construction



42% have a data security plan.

38% have a strategic growth plan.

37% have a succession plan.

Tried-and-True Methods

What advanced-stage businesses do differently:



Move the majority of data and apps to the cloud.



Take a layered approach to cybersecurity.



See AI and technology as a growth driver.



Manage IT with external expertise.



Plan for growth, marketing, and succession.



Have higher confidence in their security measures.

The businesses furthest along this path aren't doing anything mysterious. They rely on outside IT expertise instead of managing everything alone. They access their data and tools through one connected system instead of a patchwork of disconnected ones. They have growth plans, security plans, and succession plans in writing—not just in mind. None of it is complicated. It's just deliberate.

3 Steps to a Built-to-Last Business



Your business is one of a kind. Your strategy should be too. Here's exactly how to move from knowing where the industry stands to knowing where you stand—and what to do about it.

1 Get your Business Stability Scorecard

Before you can close a gap, you need to know where it is. Plus, find out exactly where you stand compared to 733 businesses nationwide.

Get Your Scorecard

2 Tackle the lowest-scoring category

Start with the area where you scored lowest against the national benchmark. A focused approach helps you make the biggest impact.

Learn More

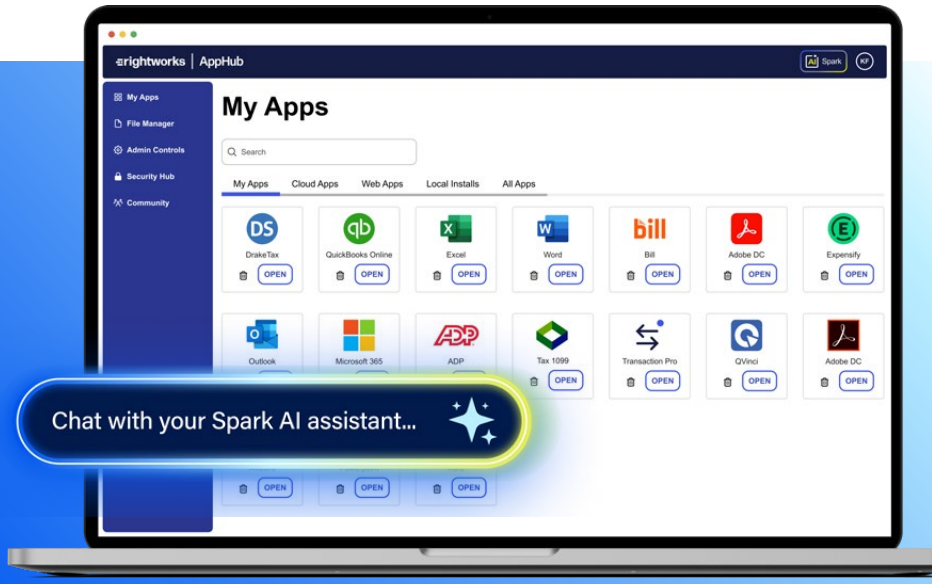
3 Bring in the technology experts

You don't have to close every gap alone. The businesses furthest along are far more likely to bring in outside IT support—and it shows.

Contact an Expert

Rightworks can help you assess where you stand, prioritize what matters most, and put the right infrastructure in place, from hosting and security to your CPA collaboration and beyond.

Schedule a demo today.
rightworks.com/get-started



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