



Let Data Be Your Driver:

How Acumatica Moves Your Real Estate
Projects to the Fastlane

Data is the lifeblood of a successful real estate project: having the right data, and wielding that data correctly, is the difference maker in setting achievable timelines, reaching profit goals, and establishing and protecting long-term business health. But such data-driven decisions are only possible with accurate analyses about your finances and the many external impact factors.

Fortunately, such data-driven decision-making is not only possible but easy to do by using Acumatica Real Estate Development Accounting, handled by Anton Systems, Inc.

Instead of using messy, generic accounting tools, come see how easily Acumatica manages your project data, setting up your real estate business for growth and success.



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Introduction

As a developer, you know that real estate is ultimately a data-driven business. Essential tasks include tracking overhead costs, invoices, customer data, loans, and much more. With so many data points, across so many projects, you'll likely find that generic accounting tools like Excel and QuickBooks can't quite do the job you need them to do.

Further, knowing the type of data you need is just one challenge. Working with that data, in a way that's easy to manage and is supporting your goals, is another.

The good news is that there is a single, simple solution for managing your real estate project data: **Acumatica Real Estate Development Accounting**, handled by **Anton Systems, Inc.**

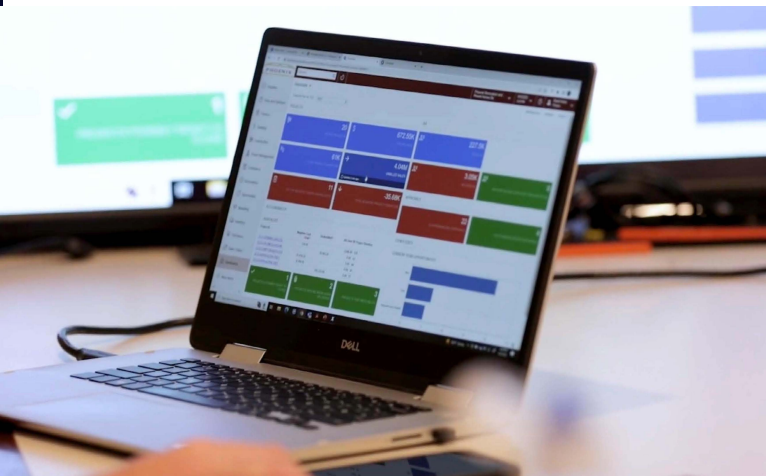
By the time you finish reading this ebook, you'll understand:

- ✓ Why data has overtaken gut instinct for many businesses' decision-making
- ✓ The "data" behind data-driven decision-making
- ✓ The many data points that real estate projects can entail
- ✓ Why having good data is crucial for ensuring successful real estate projects
- ✓ How Acumatica paves the way to better data-driven decisions
- ✓ What implementing and running Acumatica looks like in practice
- ✓ How Acumatica moves your decision-making from reactive to proactive
- ✓ How Anton Systems can get this process started for your real estate business



Let's get started!

Why Data-driven Decision-making Works So Well



In short, the concept of being data-driven refers to using facts, or data, to find patterns, inferences, and insights to inform your decision making process.

- Asana¹

As tempting as it is to go with your gut—and according to research, about half of us will trust our instincts²—there’s a good reason why the body part in question is not the brain. We can’t always rely on our gut instinct, which really is another way of talking about how **judgement is based on past experiences**.

When we understand gut instinct that way, we can see how data-driven decisions can have an advantage. There’s only so much personal experience that one can rely on to inform decision-making. Meanwhile, using data to guide business decisions can reveal insights about operations and processes that gut instinct—or experience—may not be able to discern. For example, data can reveal which strategies, projects, and tools are not pulling their weight, requiring a rethink, or performing better than expected, showing an opportunity for growth.

Rather than relying on experience, **the logic of a business decision must rest on whether it can be justified by the data**. This also presents additional opportunities for a business to develop; by being transparent and accountable, businesses can foster productive communication, new ideas, and alignment among its employees.

We can also use data to objectively determine what the impact of a successful decision looks like, and thus set measurable, realistic goals—there’s a reason that key performance indicators, or KPIs, have seen a resurgence in the last decade as better tools for data analytics have developed.³

The Data Behind Data-Driven Decision-making



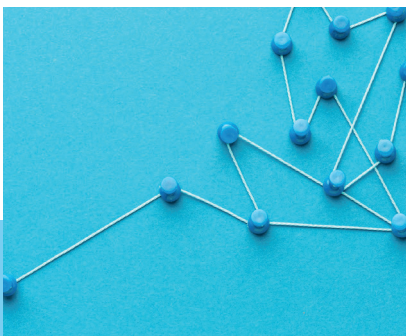
Data-driven organizations are three times more likely to report significant improvements in decision-making compared to other firms that leverage data less.

- Harvard Business Review⁴

Stating “data is essential to success” seems intuitive enough not to seriously question. But let’s take a moment to check the evidence. After all, since we’re talking about how data can be a significant difference maker for your business, let’s actually show some data that support these conclusions.

When choosing whether data or experience should guide decision-making, 74% of today’s top companies completely rely on data to make decisions, 23% will weigh data and experience about the same, and only 2% rely completely on experience.⁵

More Key Stats Behind The Shift to Data-driven Decision-making



Data-driven decisions create competitiveness

Businesses with strong data leadership are seen as more competitive, compliant, and innovative. (Alation⁶)



Data-driven decisions foster flexibility

9 out of 10 businesses believe that agility and flexibility are key parts of being data-driven. (Experian⁷)



Data-driven decisions instill stability

Many businesses shifted to more data-driven decision-making after the COVID-19 pandemic, speaking to the need to protect against external factors. (Zeenea⁵)



Why Data-driven Decision-making Works So Well: A Summary

With data-driven decision-making, businesses can:

- ✓ Identify and address challenges that gut instinct and experience couldn't find.
- ✓ Identify emerging industry trends and patterns.
- ✓ Clean up and speed up outdated operations and processes.
- ✓ Add flexibility and resistance to external factors and sudden changes.
- ✓ Encourage better internal communication, collaboration and alignment.
- ✓ Check industry-wide data that can help make informed decisions to remain competitive.
- ✓ Develop measurable, realistic goals.

How Data is Integral to Your Real Estate Projects

What's next is where things can get tricky. When we look at real estate projects and the challenges involved, we can see easily how pursuing data-driven decision-making is easier said than done. It's one thing to collect data; generating useful analyses out of that data, and taking those conclusions to drive impact to your real estate business, is another.

That's because real estate development projects run a gauntlet of data. Let's take a look at the multitudes of data points that even one project must consider:



The Data Behind Your Financials



Budgeting and costs: There can be so many things to keep track of, even with just one project! Real estate developers must consider land acquisition, infrastructure development, the construction itself, contractors, and many other costs. Overhead costs can balloon, especially if project timelines blow by deadlines, and let's not forget about the hidden costs that pop up uninvited, such as requiring specialized permits to build and changes in building codes.⁸



Revenue projections and cash flow:

How will your projects generate income once complete? What are the expected sales for a new development—for the first year, for the first five years? Ten? These questions can only be answered by having the data and performing the right analysis.



Financing: If you have a loan, what are the terms, interest rates, and repayment schedules? How is land equity being treated? Does the project receive equity contributions from investor partners?

The Data That Informs Project Management



Timelines and milestones: Knowing the start and end dates for phases, from planning to construction to marketing, is of course crucial. But are you also considering critical deadlines that can halt projects in their tracks if not met, such as permit approvals and inspections?



Progress reports: Knowing whether a project is on or off track is essential data to have! When a project is not meeting timelines or running over costs, and a change order is required, what details are you entering in?



Stakeholder and communication data: Do your investors have all the information they need? Also consider that each meeting should keep track of key decisions, and be kept in a place that's easily accessible for quick referencing in the future.

The Data That Tells You About the Market



Demographics: Who are the buyers that comprise your target market? What do you know about their income levels, and how will your developments attract them to buy? You can go even further and look up the population trends in the areas you wish to develop—it may end up being a deciding factor as to whether a project should go forward or change scope.



Economic trends: Speaking of trends, you should also be focusing more broadly on the economic health of your region(s). Is the local market saturated, or not saturated enough? How could inflation figure into the buying habits of your target market? The data behind the economic trends, from local to global, can drive a better (or worse) market, so it's vital to keep track.



The competition: A key data point that shouldn't be overlooked. What are the other developments nearby, and how are they being priced and marketed? Refresh this constantly and consistently, and your projects will always have an edge.



The Data That Tells You About Your Success



Sales and leasing data: The pure numbers on how many units you are selling or leasing, including what each unit is priced at.



Lead generation strategies: It doesn't matter what type of business you have, you will always need to pay attention to your conversion rates. Trying out different lead generation strategies is certainly important, from building a social media presence to building local connections.⁹ Yet arguably more important is recording which strategies are yielding more success than others.



Customer feedback:

How your customers—your buyers and tenants—respond can help you inform whether a change in direction is needed.

Other Vital Data Points



Engineering and design: Architectural plans, building layouts, engineering reports, material specifications—are they easily accessible?



Project risks: Always plan for the worst. Prepare your risk assessments and contingency plans so that if disaster does strike, your mitigation efforts are quick and decisive.



Legal and compliance: Real estate development always needs to consider zoning and land use regulations, not to mention environmental impact assessments and any other sustainability features. For example, Section 179D of the Internal Revenue Code allows developers to claim tax deductions for building energy-efficient commercial buildings.¹⁰

There are more than enough data points here to easily overwhelm an underprepared business. Could there be such a thing as too much information?

But remember—data, by its nature, is countable. And with the right tool to capture and organize data, while also delivering actionable analysis, **any real estate development project can record, track, and scrutinize each and every data point.**

That tool, of course, is **Acumatica Real Estate Development Accounting.**

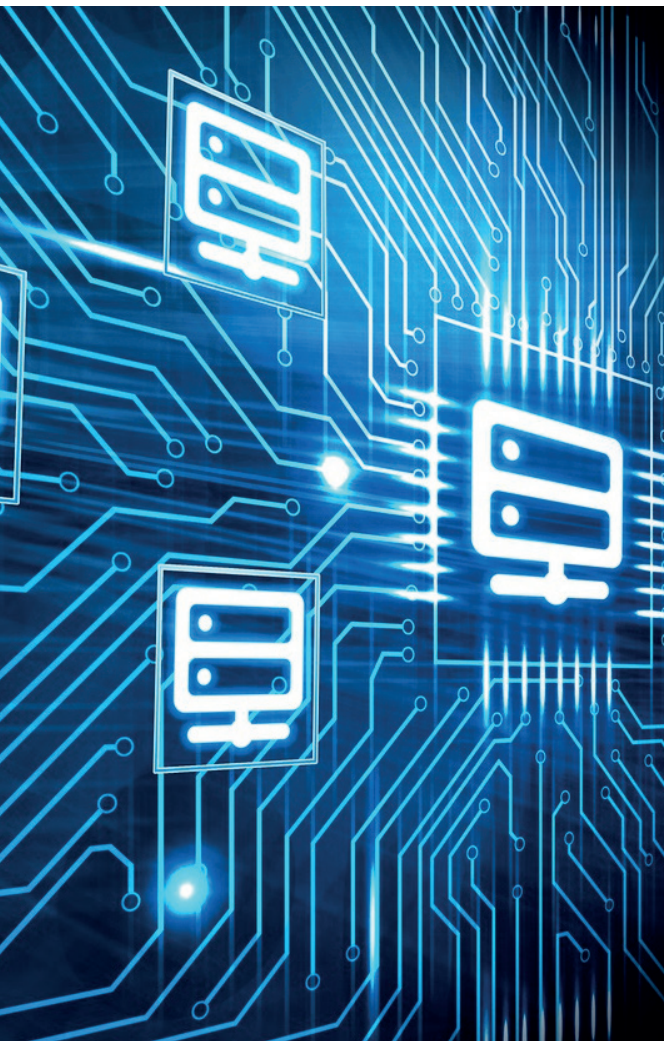


The Perks of Using Acumatica to Manage Your Data

Acumatica Real Estate Development Accounting is the single, simple software solution that lets you easily manage the data of your real estate development projects.

Using Acumatica Cloud ERP, this tool excels at collecting and reporting your data vital to your projects, all-the-while ensuring that data is always easily accessible. Whether you require a quick check or deep analysis, Acumatica has the flexibility to fit your needs at any stage of your project timelines.

What makes Acumatica so effective for managing the data of your real estate development projects? Consider the perks:



Tear Down Silos with Centralized Data Management

When it comes to making informed and effective data-driven decisions, silos must be avoided at all costs. They can give a wrong impression of the data, create redundant work, and overall waste time. Yet it can be difficult to prevent silos from being created at a real estate business; there are just too many data points, projects, and teams to be able to get a clear picture.

To counter siloing, Acumatica consolidates the data points from all aspects of your real estate business operations—financials, project management, marketing trends, and more—into a single platform. Whether your projects run many or few, whether your teams are big or small, all your employees will be working from the same data.

Utilize Real-time Reporting Anywhere, Anytime with Cloud Flexibility

True to its name, Acumatica Cloud ERP is a cloud-based platform, providing a centralized location for all your data in real time. From construction managers to stakeholders to your accounting team, everyone at your company can access the same data at the same time, which can go a long way toward eliminating confusion and empowering intra-company communication.

Acumatica is also flexible to your location, too. It doesn't matter who is working remote, in the office, or on-site, everyone can be on the same page!



Customize as Much as You Want

Acumatica is designed to be customizable from the ground up—certainly a treat when you're working in the constantly changing world of real estate, where easily adapting to the specific needs of a project is indispensable. Instead of a one-size-fits-all solution that you'd find in Excel, Acumatica lets you create custom workflows, tailor dashboards, and define who can access which data based on user roles.

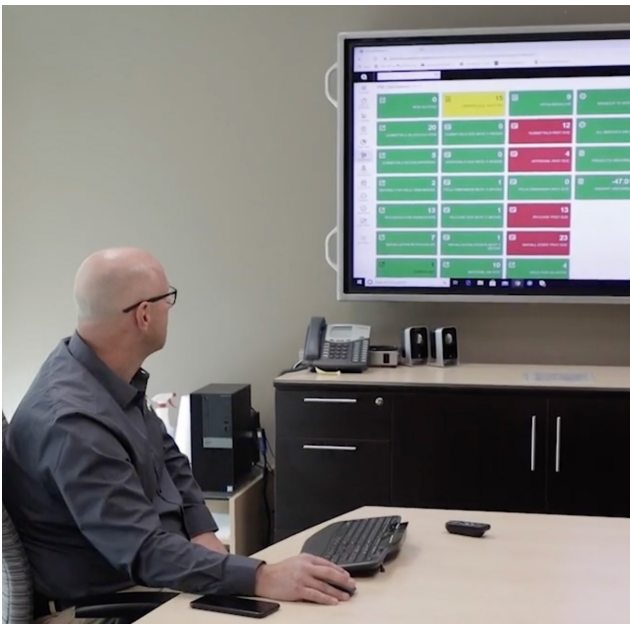
For an example of the latter, you can set up your instance of Acumatica so that your project manager only sees project budgets and timelines, your accounting team only sees financial data, while leadership sees both. Alternatively, you can have your data in Acumatica open for everyone in your company to access. It's up to you!



Respond to Change (Before Change Happens)

Data-driven forecasts should anticipate challenges and identify opportunities. By combining Acumatica’s real-time data reporting and customizable dashboards, proactive decision-makers can set themselves up for a swift response should a scenario play out as foreseen.

Could the latest economic report make an impact on your target market’s willingness to buy homes? What changes are possible with those new zoning bylaws in place? That’s all data to consider; put it into your dashboard and get insights instantly.



Focus on the Truly Important Tasks with AI- Powered Automation

AI is here to stay, and Acumatica is making full use of the advantages it can offer. For instance, Acumatica Cloud ERP offers zero-touch automation, which can significantly speed up accounts payable invoicing for your business.¹¹ Instead of manually sorting and entering invoices, a time-consuming and repetitive process prone to human error, Acumatica’s AI-powered zero-touch automation reads the key information on an invoice—for example, the name of a contractor, the date, and amount owed—and automatically processes the invoice in Acumatica.

And since this is an AI-powered feature, this zero-touch automation becomes even more accurate over time as it learns your business’s unique workflows. Instead of taking the time to manually enter this data, your employees can focus their efforts on other important tasks.



Take Advantage of the Responsive, Functional Mobile App

Some tools are certainly easier to use on desktop than mobile—is this the case for Acumatica? Fortunately, Acumatica’s native mobile app retains much of the functionality of the desktop version on both iOS and Android.

What’s more, the Acumatica mobile app takes full advantage of its platform, integrating with your smartphone’s features like the camera or fingerprint reader. For example, real estate companies can use the Acumatica mobile app to snap pictures of receipts, creating digitized invoices that automatically get added to expense reports.



An Enthusiastic Support Community

What’s the community like? It’s a factor not often considered when switching to a new tool. Yet it can be a key sign of how truly well-received and effective a piece of software is. If a tool doesn’t have an active user base, it could signify that the developer is not interested in providing timely support and not responsive to user feedback. And if the enthusiasm for the tool is just not there, it can be a discouraging sign should you look for support not only from the developers, but other users as well.

That is certainly not the case with Acumatica, as the online community is truly bustling. The [official Acumatica Community page](#) features news and announcements, discussion forums, product ideas, and partner forums, all of which are updated frequently (in some cases, daily if not hourly), and give great tips, fixes, and insights. Such activity is a healthy sign!

What Switching to Acumatica Looks Like

How does it all come together in practice? To see the real-life impact, let's take a look at three different construction & real estate companies and how their challenges resolved after switching to Acumatica.

Success Story 1



The problem:

This company needs to manage hundreds of projects with multiple vendors at once.

While they used five different instances of QuickBooks and spreadsheets to manage their finances, the inefficiency of these tools caused delays and key information to go missing.

Since they still relied on paper documentation, they spent countless hours sorting through vast amounts of insurance claims and subcontractor hires.



The solution:

Switching to Acumatica enabled full visibility on all data running in and out of the company's projects on one dashboard, and accessible to everyone, from stakeholders to project managers.

Automated, digitized processes also saved plenty of time. Before the switch, receipt approvals would take weeks, but the introduction of real-time submissions via mobile apps allowed receipts to be approved instantly.

All this time saved meant the company could focus more on improving their customer experience and scaling up their business.

Success Story 2



The problem:

The company wanted to modernize its operations and scale up efficiently while maintaining excellent customer service.

However, it was hard to innovate when relying on outdated accounting tools like Excel to manage its data.

They also needed an easy-to-use app so they could access data while attending project sites. Potential solutions like Sage or Textura did not fully meet their requirements for easy integration and customization.



The solution:

Acumatica's flexible customization options allowed the company to create a project numbering system, giving them key data from past projects to inform future decisions.

And with Acumatica's cloud-based functionality and mobile app, employees could access real-time data from any project site, enabling instantaneous customer service.

Since Acumatica is so easy to use, the company will continue using the tool as they scale up operations.



Success Story 3



The problem:

The company could handle multiple projects; they couldn't handle multiple tools.

They used Quickbooks for some projects, Salesforce for others, but had no way to easily integrate all project data into one place.

Efforts at data reconciliation were messy too, due to inconsistent manual input.



The solution:

Using Acumatica to consolidate all their instances into one centralized location, the company gained insights on data they could not easily access before, such as conversion rates, margins, the profitability of their customers, and their entire financial picture.

Acumatica also introduced automated workflows, which significantly saved time for processes like submitting expense receipts.

And since Acumatica is a cloud-based platform, the company could expand more easily, including hiring employees living outside the U.S.

Acumatica Moves Your Decision-making From Reactive to Proactive

In each company's story, we see the move from reactive to proactive decision-making in three steps:

1. Each company encountered numerous challenges that placed blockers on their potential, from the time wasted using outdated tools to lacking knowledge on the vital information running in and out of the business.

2. To address these challenges, each company realized the same need: having good data is key to saving time, improving operations and identifying the next steps for success.

3. And then, recognizing that they were being blocked from acting on good data, each company ditched the generic accounting software. Instead, they switched to Acumatica, a simple-to-use, robust accounting tool that could enable data-driven decisions.

Wielding the expansive capabilities of Acumatica, these companies gained the flexibility and resilience to scale up, expand operations, and focus on delivering customer satisfaction.

There are more examples, of course. It should come as no surprise that Acumatica's ease-of-use and innovation is well recognized, winning awards for best usability¹² and attaining top rankings in 19 categories.¹³

Anton Systems Will Help You Wield Acumatica to Make Better, Data-Driven Decisions

Anton Systems, Inc. has been working with Real Estate Developers for over 35 years. We are an Acumatica Gold Certified Partner, and can help you overcome the accounting and project cost management challenges you face.

From inception through completion, we will set up a customized Acumatica solution designed to meet the unique accounting needs of your real estate development business.

Why Use Acumatica Real Estate Development Accounting

Acumatica Real Estate Development Accounting is a single-entry intercompany accounting solution designed specifically for real estate developers in the office, industrial, retail and residential industries.

Employ Acumatica to easily handle all aspects of real estate development: from pre-development cost to final funding, from project construction to property management, from the front line to the bottom line.

[Learn more about Acumatica Real Estate Development Accounting.](#)

Ready to Make Better, Data-Driven Decisions?

It's time to drive your real estate development projects with real, actionable data:

[Contact us to get started.](#)

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