

CONSTRUCTION THEN AND NOW

**2000
vs
2020**

Let's rewind to the year 2000, when the anxiety surrounding Y2K turned out to be overblown, Beyonce was still part of Destiny's Child and Netflix had just launched its monthly subscription concept, where you could keep your rental DVDs as long as you liked (but you were still receiving and returning them by mail).

In the North American construction industry, AutoCAD released version 15, known as AutoCAD 2000, and IBM's REVIT Version 1 made its debut. Building Information Modeling (BIM) was still in its infancy, generally limited to structural steel applications, and beginning to move into broader design usage at leading-edge studios.

At the same time, Graham was experiencing rapid growth across its services and capabilities while expanding its regional office locations throughout Canada and the United States.

There have been significant changes since 2000 – from how we build, to the types of projects being built. The list below highlights some of those changes.

Then (2000)	Now (2020)
Paper, paper, paper! (blueprints, spec books, RFIs, submissions, etc.)	Almost everything is digital / online / in the cloud
Each company involved in a project maintained their own set of documents	Shared documents between a project team (owners, architects, consultants and general contractor)
Estimating and takeoffs completed manually using paper blueprints	Quantity takeoffs obtained from BIM models prepared for the project
Very few cell phones on-site (smartphones had not yet been released)	Superintendents, foremen are digitally connected (and just about everyone has a personal smartphone)
Aerial photography and video captured by helicopter	Aerial photography and video captured by drones and microdrones

Then (2000)	Now (2020)
On the ground construction progress photos captured by digital cameras or the rare phones that had built-in cameras (which became popular in 2002-2003)	360° progress photos captured by mini cameras mounted to superintendents' hard hats stitched together using augmented reality
Only a handful of P3 projects completed in Canada, notably Highway 407 in Toronto and Confederation Bridge connecting PEI and NB	Over 200 P3 projects operational in Canada
Retail construction largely consisted of shopping malls, big box stores, power centres	Retail construction largely consists of logistics and distribution centres to support online shopping

These backward glances remind us how far we've come, and how quickly we, as a company and an industry, have adopted technological tools. If the last two decades are any indication, we will experience even more advancements enabling us to further improve efficiencies and deliver even more complex projects over the next 20 years. It's going to be an impressive journey. **G**



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