

From Startup to Success Part 2: Datum Metrology Prospers with BuildIT Metrology Software

Ryan E. Day | Contributing Editor / Content-Marketing Coordinator | Quality Digest
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Simplified Workflows and Improved Features Are Key to Managing Growth

In this two-part series, we examine the successes achieved by Datum Metrology by choosing BuildIT Software to use with FARO® Vantage Laser Trackers for metrology services such as jig building and bond tooling. This installment will focus on the software use case.

Datum Metrology LLC (DM) is a metrology service provider specializing in jig building and bond tooling for various industries, including automotive, aerospace, naval, and nuclear energy. With decades of combined experience in multiple skilled trade backgrounds, the DM team provides something of a one-stop-shop metrology solution.

Because DM's current specialty involves working on large jigs requiring extremely tight tolerances, along with very large bond tools, FARO Laser Trackers and BuildIT metrology software are the company's measurement tools of choice.

Making Sense of the Data

With a data output rate of 1,000 points per second, the Vantage^S and Vantage^E provide feedback for high-speed

motion control and high-density scanning, making them ideal for automated applications. The raw data, however, is only as useful as the software used to render it. When looking at software to complete his FARO tracker system, Sobieck already had ideas.

"This time I used the BuildIT software ... But, my report was completely done and presentable in eight hours instead of 36 [which is what it took me to do the report in the previous software]. And it actually looked better than the ones I generated before!"

Jason Sobieck
Owner, Datum Metrology

"I've used many, many flavors of software, and to be honest, not a lot has changed over the course of the last 10 years," admits Sobieck. "When we started Datum Metrology, I wanted to see what else was out in the market."

After researching various options, Sobieck settled on a BuildIT software package.

The name BuildIT comes from the fact that the software was originally designed for jig building in conjunction with Laser Trackers. Its function and features, including the real-time feedback and bold arrows, attest to its origins.



Chad Fortune of Datum Metrology using a BuildIT software and a Vantage^E Laser Tracker to measure jig and tooling fixtures at a client's site.

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“The program was originally built around the core jig-building workflows that people were using it for when it was released 20 years ago,” explains Erin Fong, sales and marketing coordinator at BuildIT Software. “We’ve expanded to add other applications since then, but we always continue to develop the features for jig building and alignment.”



“A huge selling feature for me was the feedback that I’d gotten from multiple people who used BuildIT,” says Sobieck. “Everyone commented on the user-friendly platform of the software. And then for me, what really sold it was their support when I requested a demo. It has been unlike any support I’ve ever received from any software company, period. I’ve never seen anything like it. Once I realized what type of company I was dealing with, the software pretty much sold itself.”

Software is often the sticky part with the inspection workflow, including the learning curve involved with a new program. Sobieck didn’t find that to be the case with BuildIT.

“After only two weeks and two conference calls with BuildIT, I was able to completely do anything that I needed to do – and more efficiently than with prior software,” says Sobieck. “For most software, you have to go through lengthy training courses. With help from the gentleman at BuildIT, I was able to understand the software in only two hours. To me, that is extremely impressive.”

BuildIT continues to exceed Sobieck’s expectations.

“It was actually humorous; I didn’t realize that it was Canadian Thanksgiving Day when I sent in a bunch of questions to BuildIT’s metrology experts at the Montreal head office,” admits Sobieck. “I actually got a response, though. I was impressed that somebody took the time to contact me on a holiday.”

“A member of our application engineering team is always going to give you a response and make sure that you’re

not stuck, even on a holiday,” says Fong. “They’re very responsive. They genuinely care about our customers.”

User-Friendly Platform

“One thing I love about the BuildIT software is there’s not a downside way of doing things,” says Sobieck. “You can use it similarly to how you would use CMM software – that is, to plan out your entire inspection ahead of time, program the software, and then go through and measure it.

“Or you can do what I’ve found to be my favorite method; which is, as I’m going through and measuring certain things and getting certain details, I use BuildIT software to collect that data and create my report as I go. At the end of the job I hit ‘report’ and it spits out a beautiful report for me.”

BuildIT’s versatile interface is a boon for both novices and seasoned users.

“BuildIT software is very appropriate for a novice user, because you can be simplistic with it,” explains Sobieck. “However, for advanced users like myself and my business partner, we can go as deep as we want and basically, there’s nothing stopping us from doing absolutely anything we want to do.

“If you use the software correctly there is no real programming. Just name a feature and then the software automatically associates the geometry you measured with the feature you named and gives you an annotation associated with it. It’s really just a matter of what you want to do with it. If you want to apply GD&T (Geometric Dimensioning and Tolerancing), it’s very easy to do.”

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Time Savings and Return on Investment

All the features BuildIT engineered into the program were designed with usability and speed in mind.

“The CAD platform on this is incredible,” states Sobieck. “It’s probably the strongest CAD software that I’ve used. A big file that might have taken an hour and a half to download, BuildIT takes 10 minutes to pull in. And then when it’s in there, it’s organized and friendly to use. It’s easy to segregate things, easy to rename and organize files.

“When you want to make a report, it’s even easier,” Solbieck continues. “You open the panel, select ‘add report,’ and

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boom! – print. The savings that I realize with this software is insane simply because of how much less time I spend on the job. On average, on a job that would normally take me eighty hours, I'd say I'm saving fifteen hours. I have had reports where there's a lot of linear dimensions and true-position call outs and profile call outs and perpendicularity. On top of that, the customer wants to know the spread between this hole, that hole, and that edge. [Before BuildIT] I had jobs that, I kid you not, took me four hours to measure and thirty-six hours to make a report.

"I actually had the chance to go in and remeasure a job recently," says Solbieck. "This time I used the BuildIT software. It took me about the same amount of time to measure it, about four hours. But, my report was completely done and presentable in eight hours instead of 36. And it actually looked better than the ones I generated before! Now that's an extreme case, obviously, but on this particular job, it saved me that much time. That's huge for me, and it's huge for my customers because I pass savings along to them."

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