



How PlanHub Helped Subcontractor QRF Systems Make Half a Million Dollars in its First Year of Business



10x

projects won vs.
manual outreach



2x

revenue in 2020
vs. projections

CASE STUDY



“Because of PlanHub’s flood of project opportunities, we are set to bring in revenues of about \$850,000 in 2021. Without PlanHub, we would have barely met our projection in our first year of business (2020), let alone double it from a quarter million to half a million dollars.”

Michael Heaton,
CEO, QRF Systems



QRF Systems is a veteran-owned low voltage company in Georgia that provides fire protection and security systems in the commercial industry.

HIGHLIGHTS

CHALLENGES

- Launching a new subcontracting business
- Finding a consistent source of construction projects to bid on
- Increasing company and project profitability

SOLUTION

- Free subscription to PlanHub allows subcontractors to bid on projects within a 100-mile radius
- Paid subscription unlocks access to thousands of contractors and their contact information to build long-term relationships
- Detailed project files attached to bids allow subcontractors to clarify drawings, plans, and estimates honestly

RESULTS

- Actual revenues doubled year-one projections
- 10x increase in construction projects won
- 10x ROI on paid subscription from first winning bid

Challenges

STRUGGLING TO GET A STEADY SUPPLY OF CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS TO BID ON

Michael Heaton, a subcontractor in the fire alarm and low voltage industry, didn't like what he saw at the low voltage company he was working for—customers not receiving quality work.

As a young military veteran with a strong code of ethics and honesty, it didn't sit well with him to see customers being taken advantage of. That's why, in late 2019, he took the leap and started his own company along with two other like-minded partners:

“

“I wanted to have an honest approach to business. I wanted to treat contractors and customers right,” said Michael.

His company, QRF Systems, installs quality fire alarms and security systems for contractors. From the beginning, the founders were careful to play it smart:

“

“We didn't want to start in debt. We started with maybe \$500 apiece into the company. We worked on private contractor projects to build capital instead of immediately going into bidding. Even after COVID hit, which was scary, we kept going,” recalls Michael.

The founders' efforts paid off. By reaching out to their network, QRF Systems got work without loans or bailouts, even during a pandemic. But for the first few months, nobody took home a salary. While they did get private jobs, the company only landed two jobs through a general contractor.

“

“We were just pulling small percentages off each job. But it was okay because we started our business to take care of people, do the right thing, and build relationships and reputation. Still, it was time to bid on our own jobs. We wanted greater profits,” says Michael.

After five months, the three founders sat down and decided that they could now afford the overhead to try bidding on their own projects. It was time to grow their business and profits.

Michael reached out to random general contractors, but they didn't win any bids. Where could he find bid invites for new subcontractors? He asked a good friend of his, who told him about PlanHub. That was when bid invites started pouring in.

“

“We were just pulling small percentages off each job. But it was okay because we started our business to take care of people, do the right thing, and build relationships and reputation. Still, it was time to bid on our own jobs. We wanted greater profits.”

Solution

A PLATFORM FOR SUBCONTRACTORS TO BID ON THOUSANDS OF PROJECTS

At first, Michael tried the free Basic subscription of PlanHub, which allowed him to view low voltage and fire protection projects within a restricted radius of his location. Once subcontractors are added to PlanHub, they immediately begin receiving Invitations to Bid (ITB) notifications for all posted projects in the subscribed geographical area. Within a month, project opportunities started pouring in for QRF Systems:



“It was unreal. Before PlanHub, we landed two jobs through a general contractor. During the free subscription, I landed about six,” says Michael.

But the paid subscription was the real game-changer.

When Michael saw on PlanHub that demand for fire protection services was much greater than he expected, he reached out to PlanHub to upgrade his subscription and unlock more bid invites. With the ability to view projects in the state of Georgia, Michael greatly expanded his territory to complete projects he never thought was possible before.



“Once I upgraded my subscription and expanded my radius range, I saw a substantial increase in bid invites, opportunities, and connections with other contractors. It was phenomenal,” says Michael, “Right now, I have 30 pages of available bids I get to scroll through and pick.”

What’s more, unlocking the paid subscription and using the Bid Navigator feature allows Michael access to the emails of general contractors, which the free Basic plan didn’t.

PlanHub even helped Michael keep to the ethics and honesty he valued in his business. Because subcontractors get easy access to projects posted by general contractors including project files containing details, drawings, plans, and bid due dates, Michael can approach contractors when occasionally, contractors’ plans did not reflect timelines or budgets accurately:

“

“I can email the contractor, break down their plans for them, and explain what it takes to bring their systems up to code, get everything ironed out,” says Michael.

PlanHub also surprised Michael by opening doors he hadn't thought of. Even when Michael didn't win bids, he built relationships with contractors he didn't know previously by explaining his services and proposed plans in detail:

“

“It's a game-changer. These conversations with contractors connected me to one of the most prestigious construction companies in Georgia, which led to four of their estimators directly emailing me to ask questions. It was awesome,” says Michael.

Another opportunity came when Michael responded to a posting to join a meet-and-greet with a new group of contractors, helping him develop even more long-term business relationships.

“

“PlanHub is very versatile. It is very, very valuable to build these relationships with these contacts and to open these doors,” says Michael.

Within eight months of upgrading to a paid subscription, QRF Systems won 10 times more bidding projects than before PlanHub, which Michael described as “mind-blowing.”

“

“Because of PlanHub, we are now growing to the point of having to hire people to manage our work volume. We never imagined we would get to this point so quickly,” says Michael.

“

“Once I upgraded my subscription and expanded my radius range, I saw a substantial increase in bid invites, opportunities, and connections with other contractors. It was phenomenal. Right now, I have 30 pages of available bids I get to scroll through and pick.”

Results

2X REVENUE VS. YEAR-ONE PROJECTIONS

In the eight months since upgrading to a paid PlanHub subscription, QRF Systems landed an astounding **20 to 25 new jobs**, by Michael’s estimate. This is a 10x increase in projects before using PlanHub.

When Michael and his partners started QRF Systems, they projected a first-year revenue of about a quarter million dollars. Because PlanHub brought in a flood of project opportunities, **QRF Systems doubled the projection, making half a million dollars during its first year of business.**

“

“It blew our minds. This year (2021), we are projected to bring in revenues of \$750,000 to \$850,000—all because of PlanHub,” says Michael, “If we hadn’t dived into PlanHub, we would have barely met our projection last year, let alone double it.”

Michael is thrilled with the return on investment on his PlanHub subscription too:

“

“Just from the first job I got out of the paid subscription, the return on my investment was 10 times over what I paid. Everything after that is just icing on the cake,” says Michael.

Although he tried out other bid boards and even paid for one, Michael was disappointed: none of them landed him any jobs like PlanHub did.

“

“If you are in the construction industry, you need to get on PlanHub. If you don’t want to become stagnant and if you want steady, healthy growth, PlanHub’s where it’s at. Make looking into PlanHub a priority, because that is going to make or break you,” concludes Michael.

“

“It blew our minds. This year (2021), we are projected to bring in revenues of \$750,000 to \$850,000—all because of PlanHub. If we hadn’t dived into PlanHub, we would have barely met our projection last year, let alone exceed it.”



Sign up for a free PlanHub account today to receive bid invitations.

QUESTIONS? SCHEDULE A QUICK DEMO WITH A PROFESSIONAL.

Sign Up Now

