



Timothy Powell

P. Eng, Civil Engineer
GeoLine Engineering
Age: 52

"Speed trumps security when it comes to exchanging documents. It's not worth jumping through hoops to protect a document that nobody's interested in but me and the client."

Sends 12 documents/week at nearly 100 MB each **via FTP**

Sends 8 documents/week under 5 MB each **via email**

Receives 15 documents/week under 5 MB each **via email**

Receives 15 hand-edited CAD drawings/week **via fax**

Exchanges primarily PDF and Microsoft Word files

Employs couriers only for shipping physical goods

Internet use is mostly limited to a website that hosts discussion groups for civil engineers. Purchases flights, hotels, and conference registrations twice per year.

Goal: Get everything done before heading home. Timothy has a lot of work to stay on top of and firm deadlines that cannot be missed. Speed is a competitive advantage for GeoLine, so it's essential that delays do not occur. Timothy hates working at night, too, so he makes the most of his hours at the office.

Goal: Cover his back and avoid blame. In Timothy's industry, projects usually go far over budget and are completed late, at which point all the subcontractors involved begin pointing fingers at each other. Timothy needs detailed records that prove he completed exactly what was expected of him and his company.

Timothy Powell is famous among his coworkers for once visiting a construction site and remarking to the client, "Look, you may build bridges, but I design them. And that's the most critical part!" He may not have made a friend that day, but Timothy was unconcerned. He doesn't suffer fools, just as he won't put up with anything that stands in the way of getting his job done. Timothy's work is extremely deadline-driven. His clients demand aggressive schedules and expect him to stick to them, as timing is crucial when coordinating subcontractors and suppliers on a large construction project.

"On a great day, I'm able to get everything out the door and into our client's hands. Never, ever let anything come between you and that door!" Timothy struggles with this all the time. With at least three major projects underway, it takes an enormous effort to produce his CAD drawings on schedule. As a result, he ships most of his documents at the end of the day, just before leaving the office around 5:30 pm.

CLICKDOX



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Timothy spends about equal time working in AutoCAD and Microsoft Outlook, by far the most important tools in his job. AutoCAD is where he produces his work; Outlook is where he manages it. He creates a folder in Outlook for each project and is meticulous about archiving copies of all correspondence there. He copies himself on every outgoing email just for that purpose. In fact, after a phone call with a client, he'll even summarize the conversation in an email and send it to both himself and the person he spoke with if he knows their email address. Outlook acts as a central record of everything that has transpired on his projects, which is important: when clients demand, "Why did you design this bridge for only three lanes?" he can point to an archived email and tell them with satisfaction, "Because you told me to." Timothy says that his records in Outlook have saved him many times.

Although Timothy exchanges all his documents electronically — he would love never to touch another piece of paper — he is quite unhappy with the inconvenience of handling large files. He wishes that everything could be exchanged as email attachments, but over half of the 20 files he sends each week are almost 100 MB each. Files that large must be sent by FTP instead. This aggravates Timothy for several reasons. First, there's no record in his Outlook project folder. But also annoying is the speed: their FTP system is so slow that it's often the next day before he learns that a delivery failed; he sends most of his files just before heading home and doesn't want to wait an extra half hour just to see if it's successful. If a document is particularly important, he might investigate by calling the recipient from his mobile phone while driving home. Earlier this month, Timothy had to turn around and restart a transfer that had encountered an error. He was *not* impressed.

"Most of our clients have policies that say all documents must be transferred by FTP for security and archival reasons," Timothy admits. "But that's a load of crap. I don't think a client has ever sent me something by FTP. They send edits by fax and everything else as an attachment. Nobody has ever complained about attachments and never will — unless it's a lawyer, I suppose." He dryly remarks that "we're not building the space shuttle here, so I doubt we have to worry about espionage."

For the full story behind this persona, see Robert Barlow-Busch's chapter titled "ClickDox: A Case Study in Personas" in the book *User-Centered Design Stories* by Carol Righi and Janice James. You may also read more or contact Robert through his blog at www.chopsticker.com.