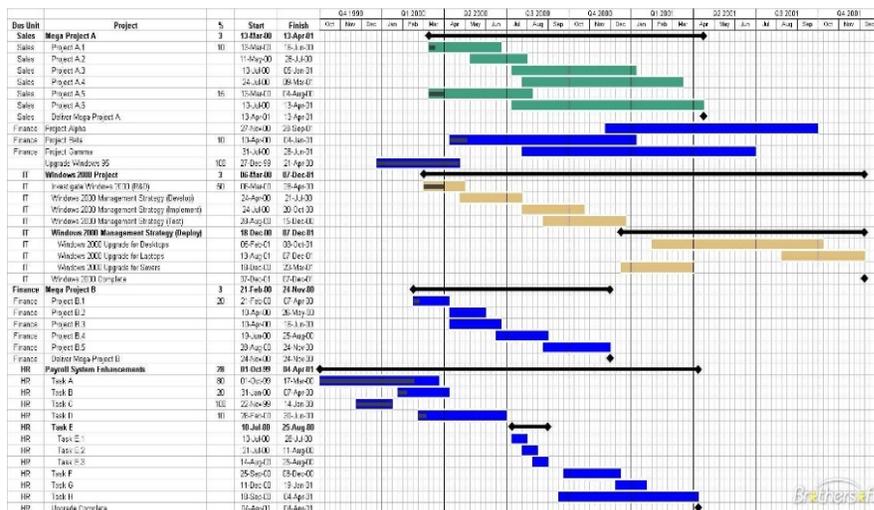


SCHEDULING SOFTWARE

JUNE 2018 TECH BRIEF FOR
CONSTRUCTION AND UTILITIES
TALENT NETWORKS



Schedulers and Coordinators are Well Paid

Construction and utility projects are invariably complex, highly sophisticated and involve a large number of trades. High-performance project management software is required for what is typically a project management *team* – not one lone project manager. A project management team can consist of a Senior Project Manager, several deputies underneath him/her, a scheduler and/or project coordinator(s).

The Bureau of Labor Statistics lists [project management software](#) frequently cited in employer job postings. BLS highlights Microsoft Project, Microsoft SharePoint and Oracle Primavera P6. Very large entities, such as brokerage firms and Port Authority of NY/NJ have custom systems. Usually these custom systems are built off of an oracle database and assume waterfall methodology.

Even as [IT project managers](#) embrace Agile, DevOps concepts and tools such as JIRA, GitHub, and Daptiv, non-IT sectors continue to use classic processes and enterprise software with stable databases. Primavera P6 experience is most often specified by firms managing infrastructure projects. On ENR Magazine's [top 50 Project Management Firms](#) list are [Louis Berger](#), headquartered in Morristown, as well as Dewberry, Jacobs, AECOM, CH2M, JLL, Burns & McDonnell, Skanska and other firms with large presences in NJ.

Labor Force Takeaway

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) does not collect data on [project coordinators or schedulers](#). Instead, BLS counts them among [business operations specialists](#). In May 2017, NJ had ~43,460 specialists making a median annual wage of \$77,180. NJ designates this occupation as the 4th highest employment level.

The Project Management Institute (PMI) offers a new Scheduling Professional (PMI-SP)[®] certification. Primavera P6 by Oracle is the most commonly used scheduling software in the CU sector. Software, training and certification programs for Oracle P2 add up to more money and are harder to obtain.

No scheduling certification is currently listed as in Industry Valued Credential (IVC). TAN recommends that P6 classes by an Oracle Training Partner be vetted and (perhaps) added to the IVC for CUTN.

Primavera is the tool of choice for CU sector

Primavera project management software debuted in 1983, one year before MS Project. They are both based on waterfall methodology, which has come under criticism as Agile and DevOps have ascended to prominence. Classically, a waterfall approach requires each step to be completed before the next one begins. Yet, both project managers and these two software tools are much more flexible in their planning capabilities.

Over the last 30 years, Primavera and Project have diverged. Oracle has focused on complex, expensive projects and large companies that also used Oracle databases. Oracle's project management tools, such as Primavera P6, are costly to license and costly to learn. P6 is part of a portfolio of tools that can be used to run programs; i.e. monitoring progress of several distinct projects simultaneously. The tenet that Primavera is both difficult but powerful is supported by the number of NYC consultants offering to help with scheduling - [VIATechnik LLC](#) will assist with Primavera scheduling, as will [HSE Contractors](#), both of which have offices in Manhattan.

Meanwhile MS Project remained more accessible and affordable for smaller businesses and projects. Larger projects are now supported by an enterprise version making it competitive with P6 in terms of features.

Why hasn't the cheaper version been the go-to solution? Microsoft databases are not as stable as the Oracle databases. Software that crashes episodically is a continual source of uncertainty and error. However, now that Oracle has released [Primavera Contractor](#), the cost differential is shrinking.

The complexity of Project/Program management schedules has construction manager depending more and more on dedicated schedulers and/or project coordinators.

The position of scheduler is only used in very large projects. The Project Management Institute (PMI) has a new [Scheduling Professional](#) (PMI-SP)[®] certification. Unfortunately, it requires nearly as much education and experience as a full PMP. This makes the PMI-SP best for displaced workers with college degrees.

Preparation for the entry level jobs of scheduler and coordinator are aided by modestly priced online certifications, particularly from [Microsoft](#). The [Managing Projects with MS Project](#) exam is available in Spanish as well as English. It however, doesn't seem to offer a digital badge for LinkedIn. Preparation classes are free (when available). Classes are also available through county colleges and training facilities.

Oracle University provides online [Primavera training](#), although not for the current release of P6. After passing a test, one can earn a certification as a Primavera P6 Enterprise Project Portfolio Management 8 Implementation Specialist, which again, isn't the current release. The certification exam is \$245. Primavera P6 [Professional Fundamentals](#) is a 3-day virtual live class and costs \$2,205. Software will not be provided. The minimum cost is \$500 for a 1-year subscription. The [Advanced](#) class is \$1,470 and runs 2 days. [Online training](#) is marginally less expensive. Classes do **not** seem to be available through the county college system.

Oracle training partners appears to be another avenue to prepare for a certification in Primavera. Among the dozens of online offerings, [Primavera Scheduling](#) stands out because of its specificity. [NetCom Learning](#) in Piscataway offers classes in-state. [HSE Scheduling Consultants](#) provides Primavera training out of their NYC office. They advertise themselves as PMI Certified Planning & Scheduling Professionals.