



ProEst Estimating Software Helps Growing California Contractor Generate Fast and Accurate Estimates and Identify Profitable Jobs

The Challenge

California Plastering is a \$25M a year subcontractor with two locations and more than 500 employees. The company's spreadsheet-based estimating system offered an inefficient method for handling the demands of its growing business.

Randy Cookson, California Plastering's vice president of estimating, explains: "We have three estimators working full time who produce over 300 estimates per year for our two locations. In order to keep up with our rapidly growing business, we needed to find a way to simplify our process and make our estimates more reliable."

The Solution

On the recommendation of a colleague, California Plastering purchased ProEst Estimating Software. Once installed, says Bill Crane, the company's IT director, "We began building the program to fit the needs of a plastering business."

By adding items to the existing ProEst database that were unique to California Plastering's construction business, they were able to customize the software to create specific, plastering industry estimates.

Once the database was complete, Cookson and Crane turned to ProEst for custom report writing. "We require certain reports for project managers and others for office personnel," Crane explains. "We designed reports to handle those specific needs."

With the database complete and reports in place, California Plastering eliminated their unorganized spreadsheets, replacing them with ProEst Estimating Software.

At-A-Glance

Company:

California Plastering
Sun Valley, CA
Specialty Subcontracting
Two locations with 500+ employees
Annual revenues: \$25M

Challenge:

To find an efficient and reliable estimating program to replace the company's current spreadsheet system.

Solution:

ProEst Estimating Software
integrated with Maxwell
Management Suite.

Results:

- > Customized database streamlines data entry
- > Creates estimates 30-40% faster than with previous spreadsheet system
- > Accurate estimates generate confidence and eliminate worry
- > Reports help identify profitable jobs
- > Transferring data from ProEst to Maxwell supports accurate job costing



The Results

“Creating an estimate with ProEst is probably 30–40% faster than with our old spreadsheet system,” states Cookson. He attributes this to ProEst’s database-driven technology. “It’s a real time saver. The estimators just log in, pick the type of finish, the type of project, the type of materials, and everything is right there in the database. It cuts down the input time to create a final bid.”

Cookson is quick to add: “I also believe our estimates are more accurate now which eliminates any worries that the bids are incorrect. I believe that I can trust ProEst completely and that gives us a real comfort level in our estimates.”

The standard reports within ProEst are extremely helpful to Cookson. He says that the mark-up reports, for example, “give me a profit range by percentage

Bottom Line

“The staff at ProEst has continually gone the extra mile to ensure that ProEst meets our needs,” states Crane. “ProEst,” adds Cookson, “cuts out our margin for error. It is a very proficient program.”

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**Randy Cookson, VP Estimating
California Plastering**

where I can tell my exact bottom line. Then, I can either sign and accept the job or say I’m going to pass if it’s not profitable enough.”

The ability to identify – and accept – profitable jobs has contributed to California Plastering’s growth. Since implementing ProEst in early 1998, California Plastering has nearly doubled their annual revenues.

Next Steps

California Plastering is now working on finalizing integration between their ProEst Estimating software and their accounting software: Maxwell Management Suite by Maxwell Systems. The ProEst software allows the estimate data to be organized by Maxwell Cost Codes for job costing purposes.

According to Crane, “The integration piece works great; our data transfers directly into Maxwell.”