



Lennar Corporation Uses ProEst Estimating Software to Save Time, Save Money and Bring New Home Designs 'To Market' Faster Than Ever

The Challenge

Lennar Corporation is one of the largest homebuilders in the United States, with annual revenues approaching \$14 billion and nearly 14,000 employees throughout the United States. Founded in 1954 and headquartered in Miami, Florida, the company built more than 42,000 single and multi-family homes in 2005.

For Jeff Lee, a Construction Material Estimator in Lennar's Houston, Texas division, using Excel to produce new home estimates had serious limitations. "All of our estimate takeoffs had to be outsourced because they were difficult and time consuming to calculate with Excel," he explains. So Lee kept his eye out for a better way to produce estimates.

"I started evaluating estimating software in 1996," remembers Lee. "I spent many hours looking at estimating products. Some were too laborious – it was almost easier to do my calculations with a calculator than click through all the screens. Others were just too confusing or the learning curve was too high and we needed an intuitive system."

The Solution

Two years ago, Lee discovered – and purchased – ProEst Estimating. "Over the years, I have looked at dozens of systems," he explains. "With all that ProEst had to offer, it was the best estimating software that I had seen."

Many features distinguished ProEst from the competition, states Lee. "The way ProEst handles assembly takeoffs puts it above all other estimating systems. With ProEst, creating assemblies is a simple process. The assemblies allow you to generate a lot of information with just one quick measurement,

At-A-Glance

Company:

Lennar Corporation
Miami, FL
Single and Multi-Family Homebuilder
Employees: Coast-to-coast offices
employing nearly 14,000 people
Annual Revenues: Approaching \$14B

Challenge:

To replace current spreadsheets with an estimating software solution that combines comprehensive functionality with ease of use.

Solution:

ProEst Estimating Software – set up to integrate with J.D. Edwards accounting software – and a digitizer to generate takeoffs.

Results:

- > Built-in feature makes assembly creation fast and easy
- > Customizable database integrates with accounting software
- > New home estimates created in 5-6 hours (previous system took 18-20 hrs.)
- > Custom reports meet exact requirements
- > Using digitizer to generate takeoffs saves time and money
- > New home designs are brought 'to market' faster than ever
- > Personalized, Web-based training supports learning at individual pace
- > Support from vendor is "unsurpassed"

which cuts down takeoff time.”

With help from ProEst, the database was set up to mirror Lennar’s J.D. Edwards accounting database. Using existing historical items, cost codes and corresponding data, ProEst created a customized ProEst database that, Lee says, “was in perfect ‘sync’ with our company.” ProEst also helped Lee set up his initial assemblies and wrote custom reports to fit Lennar’s exact requirements.

The Results

In Lennar’s Houston division, where more than 5,000 homes were constructed in 2005, time is money. “Before ProEst,” states Lee, “a typical new home estimate took me 18 to 20 hours to complete. With ProEst, that same estimate takes just

“For each new home takeoff that I generate with ProEst, Lennar saves about \$360 in hard costs and a couple of weeks in time.”

**Jeff Lee, Construction Material Estimator
Lennar Corporation**

five or six hours to complete.” With 25-30 new home estimates each year – and countless retrofit bids on existing plans – the time Lee saves has allowed him to bring takeoffs in-house.

“A firm in Houston used to take our plans and do the takeoffs for us,” Lee explains. “By the time we received them back, so much time had passed that we were under pressure to generate the budgets.” In addition, takeoff data had to be manually transferred, which created more down time and room for human error. Other problems included material errors and high waste factors. If these discrepancies weren’t caught before finalization, they would have to be corrected later – at a cost.

By handling his own takeoffs using a digitizer with ProEst, Lee sites startling results. “For each new home takeoff that I generate with ProEst,” he states, “Lennar saves about \$360 in hard costs and a couple of weeks in time.” Errors and waste factors are now significantly reduced, making the construction process at Lennar much smoother.

“And,” says Lee, “we are able to get our initial budgets out more quickly, which allows us to bring a new design ‘to market’ faster than ever before.”

Web Training Yields a Surprise Benefit

To optimally learn ProEst, Lee took advantage of ProEst’s personalized Web-based training classes. Weekly online training sessions were enhanced with ‘homework’ to provide familiarity with the terms and processes within the system. “Each week the trainer would make sure I was comfortable with the material we had covered. If I wasn’t, we would stop and spend extra time on a segment to make sure I understood everything before moving on. This was a great way to learn at my own pace.”

For Lee, however, the Web training did more than just teach him how to use the software. “During my weeks of training,” he explains, “I developed a rapport with the owners and staff at ProEst. Not only did I learn how to use the software, but I got to know the people behind the product.”

Bottom Line

The rapport forged between Lee and ProEst during that initial training has continued to grow and strengthen over the last two years. “ProEst is a great company to work with,” declares Lee. “Their follow-up is excellent. Their attention to detail is unsurpassed. They remember you when you call. And their software is the best I’ve seen.”