

# A Testament to the Estimate



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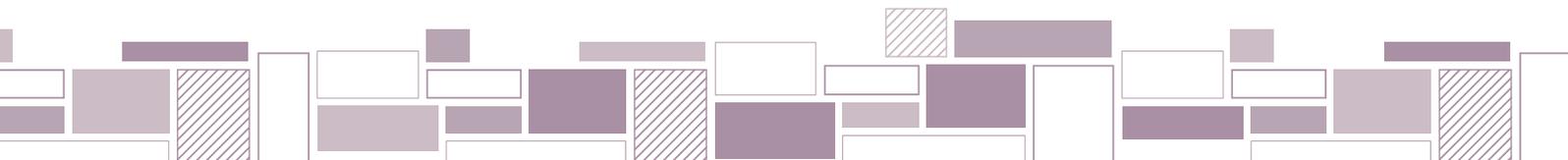
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The humble and lowly estimate, the quiet and critical piece of a complex puzzle that changes landscapes and skylines simply based on an intricate assembly of measurements and calculations. Before feet can hit the ground and changes commence, it is the estimate that pioneers every project. The estimate impacts the entire team, the total project, and the experience as a whole. Estimators deserve methods and technology that allow them to operate efficiently while effectively delivering benefits to the whole business.

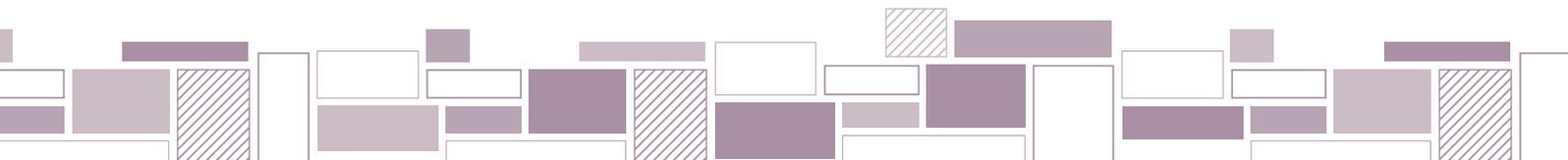
Slow and cumbersome takeoff and estimating processes — whether manual or disparate tools hitched together — can significantly hinder contractors' bidding success. Such methods typically require redundancy of data entry and that can produce inaccuracies, miscommunication, and wasted time, which is a set up for a losing bid and/or lost profit on a job that's been won.

How can the upfront powerhouse of estimators be armored to win the battle of the bid? By streamlining processes and automating tasks with seamless construction software for takeoff and estimating. Contemporary software for construction estimating helps contractors be more efficient, increase accuracy, reduce costs, and ultimately improve profitability.

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Digital takeoff software allows estimators to simply import electronic plan files, and then perform point-and-click takeoffs on their computer screen quickly and accurately. This not only speeds up the process but also eliminates the cost and hassle of working with bulky, expensive paper blueprints.

Mann's Construction is using software to perform digital takeoff of electronic plans. Katrina Owens handles estimating and project management for the general construction firm based in Louisiana, and explains the company's savings with software: "We have reduced our takeoff time from two weeks to just four or five days now depending on the size of the job. And, the takeoffs are much more accurate. The software gives me a way to track every item that I takeoff, so, if I'm taking off concrete, I know every square inch of concrete I took off. There is no question of whether I picked it up in the estimate."



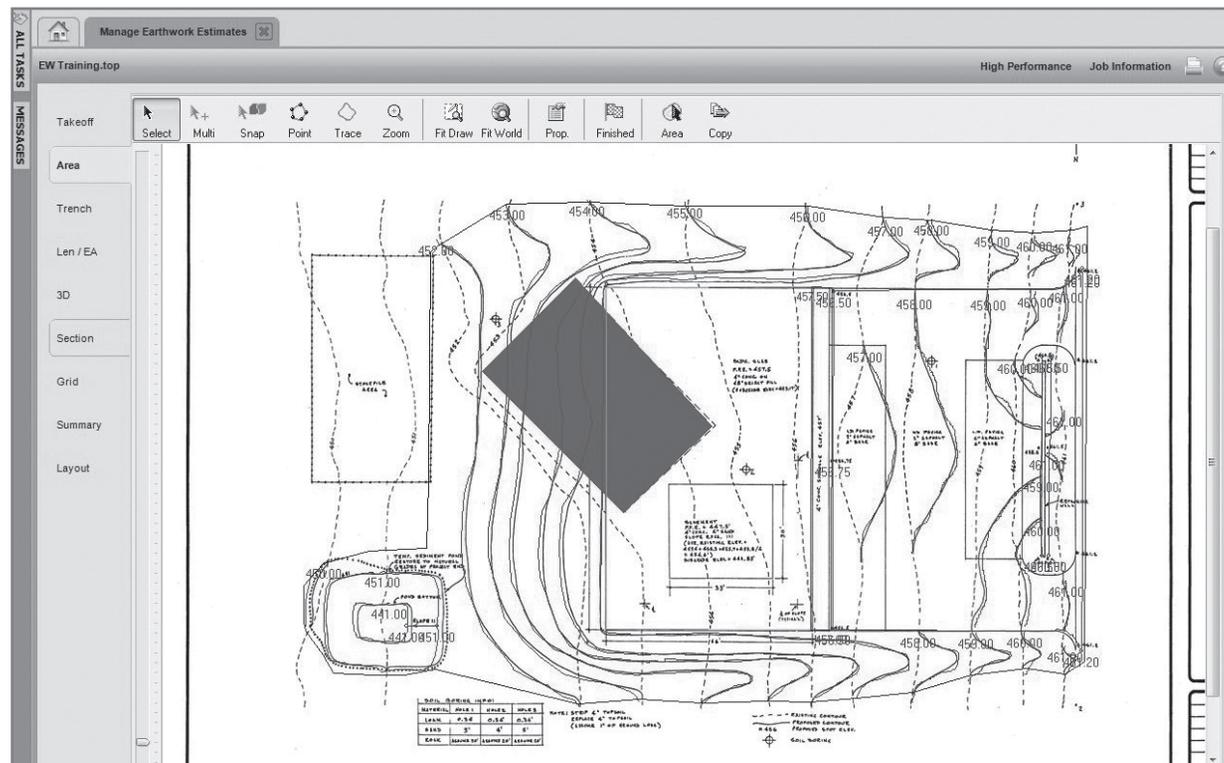
## Mann's Construction

Mann's Construction is a family-owned general construction business founded by Stephen Mann in 1999. His daughter, Katrina Owens, joined the company at its inception right out of college and she and her father handle most of the estimating and project management for the small firm's large construction projects. For years, Owens and her father performed takeoffs and estimates with pencil and paper. Now, Mann's Construction is using Viewpoint Estimating for digital takeoff of electronic plans and digitized takeoff for handling traditional blueprints.

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Contractors using digital takeoff software can typically complete bids up to 10 times faster than when using manual methods, while also ensuring precision, as well as equipping estimators to quickly measure the scope of work and changes to react on bid day with confidence. The result is more bids in less time with greater accuracy and insight into how to negotiate to win work with profit margin.

See how the business reaps the ultimate benefit? Digital takeoff's speed and accuracy are critical to bidding and executing jobs, as well as preventing cost overruns and increasing profitability.



**T**hat magical step between takeoff and bid is the estimate. Seamless workflow between takeoff and estimating applications allows contractors to complete their measurements and then easily send them to their estimate to prepare their bid.

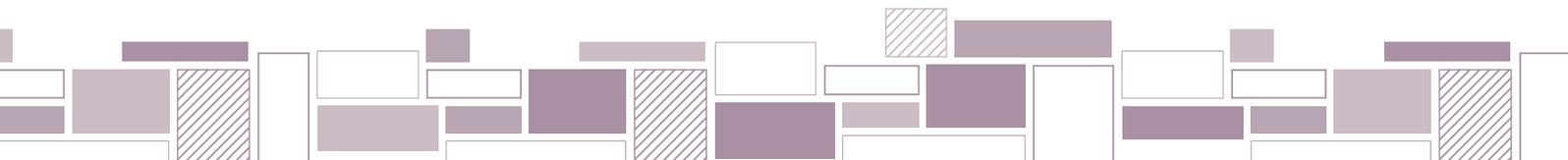
With a seamless solution, once an estimator takes off their plans, that data is pulled directly into the estimating process. By avoiding the time and error of reentering data and keeping processes moving along, estimators can maintain accuracy and avoid costly mistakes.

Thanks to a central database that maintains updated pricing on cost items, estimators can efficiently and accurately determine costs for a project. Estimating software also makes it easy to create a bid, allowing contractors to easily add, change, and manage costs items. Plus, estimators can properly prepare and track alternates to negotiate for an advantage on other bidders and identify opportunities for additional profit on a job.

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“Automating our processes allowed us to eliminate many hours of redundant work and I never doubt a number.”

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Software features, such as dashboards that provide fast, graphical representation of a bid and the ability to drill-down for details about proposals, bid details, win-loss statistics, and historical information, are great for the owner and other team members to get a quick overview on a bid.

And the great equalizer among competing contractors is bid day, which can be extremely hectic for most if not all involved. Bid day separates those who work from those who wish. The more preparation that has been done, the better chance there is of landing the job. A seamless takeoff and estimating solution contains all the pertinent information necessary to produce the final number in one convenient location. This allows contractors to quickly and accurately create, track, and manage their proposals; manipulate a proposal's price on the fly; propose 'what-if' scenarios; and make up-to-the-minute adjustments before submitting the competitive bid.

The PIPCO Companies of Peoria, Illinois utilize a takeoff and estimating software solution where historical data is stored, and so enhancing accuracy further. With details on specific crews and their productivity levels for performing certain tasks already stored in the software, for example, it is much easier to estimate labor hours for future bids. Estimators know what a specific crew can achieve in one day or a certain timeframe. Kim Freitag, an estimator at PIPCO explains: "I am able to easily plug in what our crews can do in a linear foot, cubic yard, day, however I decide to set it up and the answer is right there. I also now have access to cost analyses for each project so that I can review how long a project or specific task took to accomplish and go back and tweak the software's database for future jobs. This is a big benefit of our solution!"

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"Because our software synchronizes project costing and ongoing changes with hard financial data, we have better insight and control."

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## PIPICO Companies

Peoria Industrial Piping Company (PIPICO) is a full-service construction contractor serving central Illinois. PIPICO specializes in the fields of site excavation, plumbing, fire protection, HVAC, process piping, sheet metal, electrical, inspection services, and design build services.

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Of course estimators can appreciate using software for the takeoff and estimating process to increase efficiency and accuracy of producing bids and proposals. Yet, everyone across the business can agree that a seamless solution is beneficial to submit more bids in less time with precision and profit margin, and ultimately win the work that's worth the estimating effort.

"I can turn around a proposal far faster using [software] than with the old method, which keeps me out in the field more for field management and making sure my crew is moving in the right direction," says Larry Custodio president, estimator, project manager, and field superintendent at Village Excavating, Inc. in Colorado.

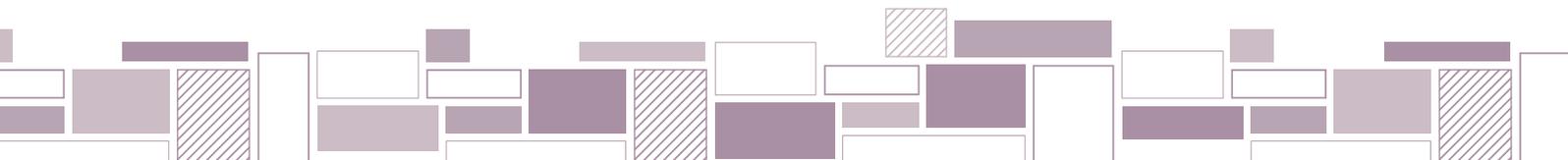
Beyond the takeoff and estimate, the entire process and construction team can benefit by a simplified workflow that helps to make informed decisions quickly, while saving time, controlling costs, and improving profit margins on jobs.

So perhaps now the often overlooked yet critically valuable estimate shall no longer be underestimated, yet finally take its place of importance in the process toward achieving and improving profitability. The upfront advantage is truly secured in an accurate and swift estimate, made more so thanks to seamless takeoff and estimating software.

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**V**iewpoint, a leader in meeting the collaborative and information needs of the AEC industry, offers construction-specific solutions for a variety of professionals including small, medium, large and enterprise contractors. Viewpoint solutions include takeoff and estimating, project management, accounting solutions, enterprise resource planning, project and BIM collaboration, mobile field-to-office and enterprise content management. Viewpoint customers include more than 30 percent of the ENR 400 and have the most technology partnerships with the top 50 mechanical and electrical contractors in the United States. Viewpoint serves as the technology partner of choice to the construction industry and delivers the right solutions on the right platform, including cloud, SaaS and on premise solutions and provides customers improved accountability, efficiency and productivity throughout the U.S., Canada, the United Kingdom, Europe, the Middle East and Australia.

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Watch the ProContractor all-in-one construction management solution, now offered in the cloud. See how you can run your business faster, smarter, and more profitably with applications for estimating, project management, and accounting in a single solution..

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