

# The McCormick Letter

The Nation's Leader in Estimating Software

www.mccormicksys.com

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## Win 12000 Helps Encompass Services Integrate Its Systems in the Southwest

For the largest company in subcontracting, 2001 is the year of *integration*. At least, that's what Joe Ivey, President/CEO of Encompass Services, declared recently in a phone call with Wall Street analysts. Of course, the analysts did not get excited. Integration isn't as "sexy," perhaps, as growth via acquisition or e-commerce or the spin-off of a tracking stock. But what Encompass has set out to do is awesome in its proportions.

Here are the basics: With roughly 30,000 employees, the company consists of several divisions (Encompass Electrical Technologies is the largest). It was formed by the February

2000 merger of two giant-sized electrical/mechanical contracting "roll-ups"—Group Maintenance America Corp. and Building One Services. Thanks to acquisitions by Building One and Group MAC, Encompass comprises more than 250 formerly independent local companies, most of them contractors of one sort or another.

At this point, Encompass as a whole is headed this year toward sales of more than \$5 billion in facilities services, electrical and mechanical contracting, industrial and



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### We're Now BICSI Corporate Members

McCormick Systems has become a corporate member of BICSI, a telecommunications association. BICSI's ([www.bicsi.org](http://www.bicsi.org)) mission is to enhance the telecommunications industry by providing excellent education, promoting skill sharing, and assessing knowledge with professional registration programs. BICSI's training, conferences, and manuals are available to BICSI members and nonmembers.

What's more, BICSI's rightfully-famed RCDD program—it stands for Registered Communication Distribution Designer—has over 5,500 registered RCDDs and 500 RCDD/LAN Specialists. BICSI's installation program has registered nearly 10,000 Installers and Technicians.

"We have a simple plan at McCormick Systems, to serve our customers," said Todd McCormick, company president. "Many of our electrical contractor customers have become greatly interested in voice-data-video work. Our corporate membership in BICSI is just one more demonstration that we are very serious about the VDV market, and in finding more and more ways to help our customers succeed and profit." ✕

### Highlights

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residential services, and janitorial work. For 2000, Encompass Electrical Technologies (EET) unit was, taken alone, the biggest electrical contractor in the U.S. (according to *CEE News* magazine).

In Tempe, Ariz., the local EET platform—which has roughly 2,000 electricians in the field in two states—is putting McCormick Systems' Win 12000 system to work at great advantage.

### **What It Looks Like in Tempe**

Integration looks like a problem that can be solved in Tempe, Ariz., says Rich Noe, the Director of Information Technology (IT) there. The operation is the central office for Encompass's companies in Arizona and Nevada, and will also take New Mexico under its wing when the company expands there.

Noe joined Wilson Electric—the acquired company that formed the basis of the platform—in 1992, to handle materials management, including purchasing, tool rental, and more. He migrated into IT a few years later...and now he has the responsibility for making the computer systems of operations in Las Vegas, Nev., and Tempe, Tucson, Sierra Vista, and Prescott, Ariz., work together seamlessly.

Has it happened yet? No. But the company is working diligently on it. "We're in the middle of a conversion, if you will," says Noe. "Right now, we've got separate estimating databases in each of those five locations. Within a couple of months, we'll have all five of them working from a single database, centrally located here."

McCormick's Win 12000 system was a key piece of the puzzle for this piece of the integration, Noe says. "I've already upgraded the Tempe office with the 12000, and by the end of October, we should have all five offices on it.

"The whole intent of the 12000—which fits perfectly with our plans—is to get rid of the security keys, and to be able to use the program remotely, and/or through the corporate LAN or WAN.

"Basically, at the local offices, our estimators will still have the functionality of using the probes. They'll just be working from a single, central database."

### **Plenty of IT Challenges**

Noe's life is pretty interesting these days. He's recently completed one conversion, which now sees all of the purchasing from the five branches done through a database located in Tempe. That was a major change.

"There are going to be a lot of conversions going on," he predicted. "Right now, for example, the people at Encompass headquarters are deciding on which ERP [Enterprise Resource Planning] system to use. That will have an impact here.

"As technology progresses and people in our company open up our databases, there will be more change. The whole intent would be to have one centralized database and have every application work from that one database. That will take some time."

EET's four remote Arizona/Nevada offices access Tempe's servers via a Sprint frame connection. Estimators, project managers, and others log-in via a terminal services client (from Microsoft and Citrix). But access isn't limited to those branches; computers in job trailers can also access the system via the Internet.

"All they would need in the job trailers is a computer and an Internet hook-up," says Noe. "They can estimate a job, a change order—whatever. All they have to do is connect with the system. They can even get away with a dial-up connection from the job site, although that would run a bit slower."

### **Using McCormick**

Noe has put McCormick Systems to work for Wilson Electric and, now Encompass, in a number of ways. One major example: He has the EET Southwest operation using a database from Pyracor for his company's project managers—a system that he saw demonstrated by that company at a McCormick user's group meeting several years ago.

Additionally, he had a demonstration of McCormick's CAD Estimating system set for this summer. "I'm really excited about that," said Noe. "It seems to be that the construction industry is always lagging in technology.

"At Encompass, we're trying to set the standard in leading the charge on technology. As I understand it, with the CAD interface, we'll be able to spend more time analyzing and critiquing our estimates, and less time counting.

"Of course, we have engineers that e-mail us a CAD drawing. My understanding is that, with CAD Estimating, you set up all of the parameters up front, and it goes out and counts for you. This will save a lot of effort." ✕

*Obviously, your company isn't as big as Encompass! However, there's nothing that Encompass is doing here that can't be done on a smaller scale for a company with more than one office.*

*To find out more about Encompass, visit the company's web site at [www.encompass.com](http://www.encompass.com).*

## What We're Telling The Media

# Relief in Sight: McCormick Releases Complete T&M Billing Solution



Invoicing time is reduced and clerical errors banished! A new time-and-material (T&M) tracking and billing solution from McCormick Systems allows easy access to key information.

“T-Bill” has a feature-rich, state-of-the-art interface, especially created for clerical staff with little or no electrical expertise. “T-Bill’s” extremely powerful innovative design allows quick information access in an easily understood format. It provides in-depth reports: year-to-date totals, month-to-date totals, job status, and a host of secure information tools managers need. Contractors see at a glance how much a client has been billed, how much that client owes, and the status of the account.

While “T-Bill” works with a user’s existing McCormick database (Win 6000, 8000, or 12000), a McCormick database is available for those without a McCormick estimating system. For details, talk to McCormick at 800-444-4890. ✕



*Privately owned, McCormick Systems ([www.mccormicksys.com](http://www.mccormicksys.com)), of Mesa, Ariz., provides high-productivity software for contractors to use in producing consistent, profitable estimates for electrical and voice-data-video work.*

## Technical Corner

# Get the Picture with Screenshots



Have you ever wanted to take a screen shot of something on your computer screen and use it in another program or e-mail the image to someone?

There is a very useful feature built into Windows. If you depress the “PrtScn” button on your keyboard, you will save a **bitmap image** of your desktop into the “clipboard” memory. This “screenshot” is now available to be pasted into any graphics-friendly application, such as Microsoft Word. All you have to do is paste your screenshot into your document, save the file, and you can attach the saved file to an e-mail.

Here’s how to insert the screenshot into Microsoft Word.

1. Open a new Word document.
2. Right-click in the document.
3. Select “paste” from the menu.
4. Save the Word document to your hard drive, to a specific, easy-to-access folder.

To e-mail the screenshot, simply use the “attach” feature in your e-mail program. Browse to the folder to which you saved the Word document, and select the file.

Net result: When the recipient gets your e-mail, he or she simply double-clicks on the attachment to view the screenshot...and see exactly what you had on your screen when you took the shot! ✕

## What We're Hearing—From Customers



# CAD Estimating Saves Hundreds of Hours on the Job

Dear Todd:

As you know, we started using your CAD Estimating program a little over a year ago. I would like to tell you—thank you. Your CAD interface for doing takeoff with McCormick Estimating has saved us hundreds of hours! It truly revolutionized the way we do takeoff. Your staff has been excellent in assisting us with any questions that we might have had, and had us up and running in no time at all. It was a seamless installation.

*Bud Larosh & Mark Weidman  
Albarell Electric, Inc., Bethehem, PA*

### Write To Todd

Have a beef? Some praise? An idea on how we can improve McCormick Systems software, or our services? Don't hesitate to write to Todd McCormick, our company president, at McCormick Systems, 1255 W. Baseline, #138, Mesa, AZ 85202. You can also e-mail him at [tmccormick@mccormicksys.com](mailto:tmccormick@mccormicksys.com). Fax: 480-820-2422. ✕

## Frequently Asked Questions



### Q. How often should I back up?

A. The answer depends a lot on your specific company. A good rule of thumb is to back up as often as you can afford to lose information! For some companies, this might be half a day; for others this might be a month. *Remember, power failure or a hard drive crash can happen at any time... usually, when you least expect it.* Be prepared. A two-minute backup procedure can save you countless hours (the cost if your system crashes and your must start from scratch).

### Q. What is a zero price and labor report?

A. The zero price and labor report is a drop down on the right hand side of the extension screen, when it is selected instead of the standard. The report will contain ONLY items that do not have a price or a labor value included. This helps catch items that people have created and perhaps forgotten to fill in the price/labor numbers.

Imagine taking off a thousand feet of conduit with no labor hours attached to it. This report is always a good safeguard. ✕

*Contact us if you have technical questions you would like to see answered here.*

## Get Ahead With Training

### Standard Estimating

It is structured to take you from "Job Startup" clear through "Bid Summary." In-depth instruction helps students with good manual experience get up on line.

### Advanced Management

This class is designed for the database manager or chief estimator. Students attending this three-day class will drill down into the bottom of the program and learn how to build specification formulas, reports and reports formulas, keyboard mapping, setting up security, and more. You should be proficient in all takeoff phases of the McCormick product.

### Upcoming Schedule

All classes are held at McCormick's training center (generally from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) in Mesa, Ariz. Class sizes are limited! Contact Jody Dougherty or Loriel McCormick at 800-444-4890. ✕

*Aug. 8 – 10*

**Standard Estimating Class**

*Aug. 22 – 24*

**Standard Estimating Class**

*Sept. 12 – 14*

**Standard Estimating Class**

*Sept. 19 – 21*

**Advanced Management Class**

*Sept. 26 – 28*

**Standard Estimating Class**

*Oct. 3 – 5*

**Standard Estimating Class**