

The McCormick Letter

The Nation's Leader in Estimating Software

www.mccormicksys.com

September 2001

In the Process of Estimating, Maybe You Are Also Producing...As-Builts!

In chess, they call it a “discovered check.” You’re on the defensive, you move a piece to protect it and—lo and behold!—by moving that piece, you open up a new line of attack—as another one of your pieces puts the opponent’s king in check.

Lucky or brilliant? Who actually knows? If you’re lucky and not brilliant...why on earth would you tell anyone? If you’re actually brilliant, it would be immodest to say so, wouldn’t it?

Something similar goes for Mark Weidman, a project manager/estimator for Albarell Electric in Bethlehem, Pa. The company has 150 to 250 field employees at any given time, dates to 1937, and does all kind of electrical work—from

industrial and commercial to fiber and copper voice-data.

Not too long ago, Mark was showing off some AutoCAD drawings of a to-be-revamped tenant floor inside of a local office complex, which is owned by a local utility.

Thanks to his firm’s use of McCormick Systems’s CAD Estimating software, Mark—who actually joined the firm three years ago to do CAD work—had already drawn in all of the details.

“What happens is, I receive the CAD drawings from the utility. We go over them together—what we want to accomplish in re-doing the

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Michael M. Albarell, the president of Albarell Electric, has a commitment to state-of-the-art tools, such as McCormick Systems’ CAD Estimating software.

Highlights

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Please Note Our New Address

After 14 years in a leased office, McCormick Systems has purchased—and restored—a historic office building in downtown Chandler, Ariz. Here’s our new address:

McCormick Systems, Inc.
149 W. Boston St.
Chandler, AZ 85225

All of the rest of our contact information does not change—phone 800-444-4890 or 480-831-8914; fax 480-820-2422. And you can still contact President Todd McCormick at tmccormick@mccormicksys.com. ✕

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floor, what we are going to reuse, what we aren't going to reuse. I take them back and draw up the floor using AutoCAD.

"I'm a project manager now, and I don't want to spend too much time working on the CAD unit. But after I revise the floor for what we're going to do and interface with the CAD Estimating, it takes it off for me. That's the pay-off.

"Well, on this day, I was showing off the resulting drawings to a group of the utility's people. They have a team that works on the tenant floors together.

"One of the guys said, 'You know, these are so good that we probably could use them later on as as-built drawings'."

A New Day Dawns!

Were we doing a movie of this scene, THIS would be the moment in which a cartoon light bulb would appear, magically, over the heads of every person in the room. Today, the drawings produced for finished electrical work in the utility's building by Albarell are used as as-built drawings!

Don't pooh-pooh this development in your mind. It's a service that Weidman and Albarell can produce without any extra effort—a service valued by a very important client. "We have two people at work for this company at all times, and some times, depending on what they want done, we can go up to 20 people out there," he notes.

"I've been working with them for almost two and one-half years, and we've done four floors for them. These aren't small jobs—each floor is in the \$100,000 or higher range. There's a lot of work, a lot of VDV work. We've done everything on

some of these floor from the demolition to the finish."

Although his college education included two years of CAD, and he has both estimating and CAD expertise going for him, Weidman says it's his goal to minimize the amount of time he spends working with AutoCAD.

"I'll take a floor plan and send it out to the local fire alarm people. They are a local rep for a fire alarm vendor. I'll ask them to take it and lay out the fire alarm system for me, on the drawing.

"When I get it back," Weidman says, "I have a fire alarm drawing, with conduit and everything on it. All I have to do then is manipulate the drawing, and tell the McCormick CAD Estimating System—'this smoke detector is a smoke detector'—and so on."

Making the Client Happy

Everyone wants to make the client happy. Recently, Albarell's contact at the utility indicated to Weidman that the client wants the contractor to play a bigger role.

"Recently, our main contact there called me in and said he wants Albarell to do more of this work via design-build. This man is the head electrical designer for them. He wants to get away from doing all of the design.

"Essentially, thanks to AutoCAD and McCormick Systems, we've shown that we can do this. In a way, with these systems—and our great performance on the job—we've been able to open a new door with this client."

According to Weidman, the final CAD drawings he is producing for the client can really function as as-built drawings. "With our drawings, we put everything. I'll draw in my MC whips, I draw almost everything in. So I can tell you: Instead of going up into the ceiling tile and looking around, with our drawings, an owner can put the ceiling tile overlay on our CAD drawings, count tiles, remove the right one, and he'll find exactly what he sees on the drawing!"

What's next for Albarell in this area? Weidman wants to use AutoCAD, McCormick's CAD Estimating to make more clients—and their engineers and architects—even happier.

"In my opinion, the ultimate is for the engineers and architects to make everyone's life a lot easier, and use standard symbols. This can't happen too soon for us. And let me tell you—as soon as that happens, McCormick's system will become the only system any electrical contractor will ever use." ✕

McCormick Training Comes to D.C.—Class Set for October 18-19

Most McCormick training programs are held at our facility in Chandler, Ariz. But a number of requests from users have stimulated us to schedule a Standard Estimating training class for October 18-19 in Washington, D.C., in conjunction with the NECA Show.

While we're away from home, this is the same high-quality training you would expect from us in Chandler. There will be no shortcuts. The learning experience will be the same—same instructors, same material, same high-quality information on putting McCormick software to use.

For more information, call our office at 800-444-4890. ✕

What We're Telling The Media

Contractors Gain Estimating Flexibility With McCormick's Latest, Version 7.0



Flexibility is something contractors want. They've told McCormick, and the company has responded—with major changes to its estimating software, with Version 7.0.

- ✓ **Complete Flexibility**—contractors can edit every aspect of the estimate after it is complete—individual labor units, specific product prices, or entire portions of the job.
- ✓ **Update Estimate**—a bid might be a winner, but the job might start months later. Estimators can now update prices and labor costs months later—while still holding key segments of the estimate as they were.
- ✓ **Speed**—individual users can tailor the speed at which a computer performs the estimate's extensions, by tailoring the software's demands to the machine being used.



There's much more in Version 7.0, an upgrade to Win 3000, 6000, and 8000 systems. Talk to McCormick at 800-444-4890. ✕

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

Trade Show Time

Invest Some of It at Our Booth!



If you're coming to the IEC Show (Oct. 1-4 in Las Vegas) or NECA's annual Convention and Trade Show (Oct. 21-23 in Washington, D.C.), you need to make the McCormick Systems booth a key stop. Save some "quality time" for us—you'll want to make sure you don't miss items we've rolled out recently. Included here are:

- ✓ **T-Bill**—our new time-and-material estimating program.
- ✓ **Version 7.0**—see press release on this update to our 3000, 6000, 8000, and 12000 programs above.

There's more to our booth, of course. Our company's key personnel, including President Todd McCormick, staff the booth. We're there to listen to your complaints about our products and services (if any), problems you have that we might help you solve in the future—and, even, praise!

Don't overlook this face-to-face opportunity. See us at booth 439 at the IEC Expo in Las Vegas, or Booth XX during NECA's show in D.C. ✕

Did you know... That the McCormick Systems job list is sortable? By typing in the spaces below the list, you can quickly sort your job list by job name, lead estimator, job number, or even by bid date.

Our “Manual” Is in Your Hands —Electronically, That Is!

McCormick Systems has come to a major decision about distributing information. It's quite simple, really: We think you'd rather pay us to develop great new software than to manage the printing of words on paper. So from now on, our training materials—our manuals—will be available to you on the Web and via CD-ROM. On our Web site, you'll find a McCormick software tutorial (for 3000, 6000, 8000, and 12000 systems). If you're on support, you'll receive this material on a CD.

Web downloads will be available behind a password-protected site. For more information, contact your McCormick account representative, or call us at 800-444-4890. ✕

Frequently Asked Questions



Q. How can I get my windows to stay where I put them?

A. Takeoff windows can be created and placed around your McCormick Desktop. The number of takeoff windows you can have open is limited only to screen space. (A note on screen space: It's bigger depending on screen resolution. The preferred minimum is 800 by 600 pixels; often 1024 by 768 is used). When you have a set up that you like:

- (1) right click on an empty toolbar button,
- (2) name the button, and
- (3) right click it again to take a “screenshot” of your screen as it is.

NOTE: This will affect only your login, so wherever you login, you will see this screen button. ✕

Contact us via phone (800-444-4890), fax (480-820-2422), or e-mail (msi@mccormicksys.com) to get your technical questions answered here.

Write To Todd

Have a beef? Some praise? An idea on how we can improve our software or services? Contact Todd McCormick, our company president. Use our company address or fax or e-mail him directly at tmccormick@mccormicksys.com. ✕

McCormick Systems Has Moved

We've got a new address; same phone, fax, and e-mail. But if you're mailing anything to us, make sure you change your record for McCormick Systems. See details on page 1 of this newsletter. ✕

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

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

Sept. 19 – 21

Advanced Management Class

Sept. 26 – 28

Standard Estimating Class

Oct. 3 – 5

Standard Estimating Class

Oct. 10 – 12

Standard Estimating Class

Oct. 18 – 19

Standard Estimating Class*

*Held in Washington, D.C., in conjunction with the NECA Show.