



# FEBRUARY 2016 NEWSLETTER

THE NATIONS LEADER IN ESTIMATING SOFTWARE

## Meiners Thrives With Focus On Working Smarter, Not Harder



There was a time not that long ago that Meiners Electric (Louisville, KY) had just four electricians working in the field. Founded under another name in 1974, the company's fortune began to change in 1991 – when Tim Meiners (now President) bought the company.

Like all contractors, Meiners Electric has had its ups and downs; 2010 was a particularly bad year. However, as of 2015, the contractor has averaged 70 field workers. Work performed breaks down as 60% industrial, 35% commercial and 5% other.

"2015 was a good year and 2016 looks good too," Meiners explained. "In fact, we can't get enough qualified electricians these days. There is plenty of overtime available to our workforce."

To help his workers be more productive, Meiners has made investments to ease the strain of field electrical work and help electricians work smarter and safer – not harder. He knows all about field work, wear-and-tear, and productivity; he began working with his tools 36 years ago.

"We look at everything our people do, and every tool or piece of equipment we can buy, with an eye to make it easier and faster for our people in the field," he stated. "For example, every single tool we have that can be battery-operated is now battery-operated."

Labor-saving devices are a quarry Meiners has hunted when he goes to The NECA Show. "I get so excited when we find something that will work better for us," he claimed. "Safety is important, too. We don't want people hurt."

An additional productivity enhancement used by Meiners Electric is, of course, McCormick Systems software.

Click to see our Award  
Winning Software:

Electrical

Plumbing & Mechanical

Transmission and  
Distribution

Automated Building  
Systems (ABS)

McCormick Systems Inc

THE NATIONS LEADER IN ESTIMATING SOFTWARE

Version 12 is Out!

Grab it before Conference 2016!

SEE BELOW!



Forward  
to a Friend

Estimating article -  
By Erle Howard

[Avoid Costly Mistakes](#)

Predictions: 2016 +  
More

[Construction Outlook](#)

[DOE Will Not Regulate HID  
Lamps](#)

[Economic Outlook](#)

[Future Bright for Connected Buildings](#)

[Lighting Technology Overview](#)  
(posted 11/30/15)

[Moving Work Offsite](#)

[OSHA Likely to Raise Fines](#)

[10 Construction Trends to Watch](#)

[10 Residential Design Trends](#)

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**Technology**  
[3-D Printing](#)

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[Mobile: 2016 Construction Predictions](#)

[Top 2015 AEC Tech Blog Posts](#)

Video Tip: [Drawing at an Angle in AutoCAD](#)

## Training Dates



### STANDARD CLASSES

March 7-8 (AZ – Conference)  
April 6-8 (Arizona)

### ADVANCED CLASSES

March 7-8 (AZ – Conference)  
March 31-April 1 (Maryland)  
April 21-22 (Arizona)

### OSE PRO ONE-DAY CLASSES

March 7 (AZ – Conference)  
March 8 (AZ – Conference)  
April 11 (Arizona)

### ESTIMATING BY



## LG&E/KU- SCREEN HOUSE REFURB

Year: 2013-2014

Value: \$1,228,164.00

Scope: Tie screenhouse power and controls to new natural gas fired unit

### Moving On up

Soon after he assumed ownership of the company, Meiners hosted a visit from a McCormick representative. The company was using PC Scale (the product once marketed as an entry-level system – roughly the equivalent of today's WIN 1000 system, although Scale offered fewer capabilities).

"We listened. We saw the benefits that a bigger, more involved software system could bring to us – and we upgraded," Meiners remembered.

Over time, Meiners Electric's owner and estimators have taken advantage of much that McCormick has to offer. He personally took the basic estimating class one year, following up with the advanced class the next. Upgrades continued; Meiners now runs the **WIN 6000 system**.

Years ago, the company also obtained the CAD Estimating software; it even put T-Bill software to use. More recently, with five staff estimators, the company has begun to implement On-Screen Estimating Pro. And Meiners is a regular at the annual User's Conference events. What's going on here? Tim Meiners explains that the same approach he takes to finding and implementing labor-saving investments for his field people is used in working with McCormick software to find speed and efficiency.

"We're always willing to try something that will help us be more productive, including in estimating," he said. "It began when I was the only one doing the estimating."

"Basically, I'm not a detail-oriented person. I have some strengths as an owner, and as an estimator, paper or basic systems just don't work for me."

"Well, the McCormick estimating software – back when I was the only one using it – helped me to make sure that I didn't miss any details. All the systems work, they just vary by bells and whistles."

Then there's a factor that keeps Meiners sold on McCormick: "They actually listen, to us, the contractor," he said. "They tell us where the system is going."

"I go to the Conference to figure out what new capabilities McCormick will add to the software – and how we can use them to make us more efficient."

## HAND CLASSES

May 12-13  
(Maryland)  
June 23-24 (Arizona)

## PLUMBING & MECHANICAL

Dec. 14-16 (Arizona)

Click here for the complete list of upcoming [2016 training dates](#)

Training can be "suit-cased" to your facility. We can tailor our training to your needs. Ask us about customized training at your site!

Call to register for any of the above classes, including those in Maryland: 1-800-444-4890.

We've posted training dates, directions to our training facilities, and registration forms on our Web page. Click the "Education" button on our home page, or [click here](#).



### LG&E/KU OHIO FALLS TURBINE UPGRADES

Year: 2011 - 2013

Value: \$321,000.00

Scope: Demo 80 yr old system & replace w/new, refeed all motors

#### Industrial niche work

"We have seven powerhouses in our area, and we have electricians working in them nearly all of the time," Meiners revealed. "That includes everything from service, maintenance, repair, to additions.

"There are numerous distilleries in our area as well. We regularly work at several of them."

"For us, this has meant that we take advantage of the database we built, years ago – for powerhouse work. That means we can put a price together – *fast!* We benefit from speed and accuracy in our estimates on this type of work."

What's equally as important as the software's capabilities and the company-built specialized database is the level of confidence Meiners has in it.

"I've gone to meetings with industrial customers to learn what they want from a contractor on a given project" he said. "I don't necessarily do a lot of estimating myself these days, but – only recently – I came out of a meeting and sat in my car in the parking lot."

"Inside of 20 minutes, I had the small project estimated. I was able to e-mail it to the customer in less than one-half hour after we parted company!"

Also important is the confidence Tim Meiners has in the people who work at his company. Approximately 25% of the company's electricians have been with Meiners Electric for more than 10 years; several others who have been there 20 or more years.

"I'm lucky to have these people working at Meiners Electric. I have confidence in them," he said. "They are like family – and I *want* to treat them like family. These are the people that help our company be an industry leader in our area."

"I would do anything for these people."

**Tip \$\$\$**  
**Of the Month**

The latest McCormick version is:

**V11.72**

with a release date of

**4/20/15**

If you are on an older version, just fill out this [form](#) and send it in!

Company Hours  
[6am-4pm Arizona Time](#)

[Visit the Website](#)  
[Unsubscribe](#)



### **LG&E/KU FLYASH BARGE LOADOUT SYSTEM EPC TRIMBLE COUNTY GENERATING STATION**

Year: 2012 - 2014

Value: \$2,300,000.00

Scope: 8KV feeder, new 8 KV gear, 480 volt gear all automated controls.

#### **Customers matter, too**

Treat people well. Help them to work smarter and be more productive. Make staying at the company – over a decade or more – worthwhile for quality employees. Invest in estimating and technology solutions that lead you to have confidence in your numbers. Get to a point where you know your costs, you know the system, you know your database is solid.

Sounds wonderful, right? But is there a pay-off for a company owner somewhere in all of this?

You bet, Tim Meiners said: “We’re fortunate to have a customer base that knows what we can do for them – and these companies are, for the most part, growing.”

“In 2015, we had around \$10 million in sales. As of early 2016, we already have roughly \$6 million in carryover.”

“As an owner, I’m grateful that McCormick has never been pushy and has allowed us to grow our estimating system as our business grew. The investment has paid for itself many times over.”



## KENTUCKY KINGDOM WATER PARK EXPANSION

Year: 2013 - 2014

Value: \$376,000.00

Scope: Add new power feeds to new water rides.

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# One Dozen Reasons for You To Come To Arizona!

You might be “on the fence” about whether to make the trip to Arizona in March (March 9-12) for the annual McCormick Systems’ User’s Conference. Here are 12 reasons on the positive side of the ledger.

Don’t wait for #12 – when you’re ready to register, [go here to download a 1-page PDF](#) (the registration form).



1. There’s a new version of the main McCormick estimating software – Version 12. There have been several earlier versions that you’ve used. **HOWEVER:** This one is a departure from the others, taking our system (and yours!) into new territory. Check your memory. Check our previous newsletters (all posted online). **We haven’t said this before.**

You are, of course, going to get the upgraded software automatically (if you’re on Support).

But will you be able to put it to effective, productive, profitable use?

2. Enhancements have also been made to On-Screen Estimating Pro (OSEP). It's able to work harder for you. As with V12, it's likely that the improvements will help you to move faster, make more money, and be more productive in your estimates (and change order handling, too).

. . . unfortunately, this stuff won't come to you via osmosis.

3. As much as we'd like to do so, we can't use psychic messaging to transmit to you the best ways for you to put the new V12 and enhancements to OSEP to work – at best advantage – for your company.

We've checked, and the Vulcan Mind-Meld Option is not yet available, either.

Attending the user's conference, on the other hand, will give you the opportunity to:

- hear our presentations on V12 & the new OSEP;
- listen to questions from other contractors and estimators (and our answers);
- discuss what's new and useful with other attendees (with whom you do not compete); and
- put the capabilities you'd like to try out to work in our on-site laboratory (with a McCormick person sitting next to you).



4. When you get the new software, you'll load it onto your computer system(s). You'll instantly have the exciting new capabilities at your fingertips! But you'll have to put in a great deal of time to teach yourself about all of these new capabilities.

It's possible that you'll put in more time on this than the three days (Weds. March 9 to Sat. March 12) of the User's Conference . . . if you're thinking you don't have time to spare to come to this event – well, how much time will you want to devote to teaching yourself all that's now possible?

5. Lots of attendees at our previous Conferences have told us they not only learn from McCormick speakers, but also from talking (in hallways, in between sessions, over a cup of coffee, etc.) with other contractors.

Another person's perspective can be enlightening. Someone else's ideas can stimulate your thinking. His or her questions might be answered (in your mind, at least) with considerations that might not have to you.

This won't happen if you stay home.

6. You'll have questions about V12 and OSEP. You'll have them even if you come to the User's Conference, even after you leave (*although there will be a lot fewer . . .*). When you attend, you'll have a deeper understanding of what the new software can do for you.

Stay home and, of course, you can call us with your questions. But our Support people can't take you through hours of education on V12 via telephone. It's just not possible.



7. Attendees at the conference ask questions and make suggestions that lead the people who work for McCormick Systems to make further improvements to the software. If your question can be answered immediately, it will. If your idea leads us to think and work on the software, you'll benefit (i.e., we'll be working on an improvement that targets your specific need).

We listen closely to attendees; that's been proven time after time.

8. What's the upside in staying home and working three more days at the office? You'll get important things done, but -- it's limited, isn't it? On the other hand, there's a really great chance the User's Conference sessions will leave you in much better shape to make more money (and perhaps even put in less estimating time at work) . . . for the coming weeks. And months.

Your choice, then, is this: A few more days at work (March 9, 10, 11, and 12) vs. smarter, more-profitable, speedier estimating (starting upon your return, Monday, March 14) . . . *is there a real decision to be made here?*

9. Of course, if your company has more than one person doing estimating, you might not elect to send *everyone* to Arizona for the U.C. [several companies have already registered more than one attendee, though].

If you send at least one person, he or she will come back to the office able to offer – instantly – explanations to your stay-at-home estimators the “ins and outs” of V12 (and OSEP).

What's more, this attendee (or these attendees) will be able to pinpoint precisely the V12/OSEP capabilities that your company can best put to work – immediately.

Attending, then, provides a shortcut to faster profitability. Staying home, if you reverse that sentence, is . . . the long, slow way around to improving your estimating . . . sooner or later . . . ?

10. Want to kill more than one bird with one trip? We have two pre-conference classes (one day each) on OSEP. We are offering a two-day Standard Class and a two-day Advanced class as well. You can combine one of these educational opportunities with the User's Conference – and profit thereby.

It's impossible to kill ANY of these birds by staying home.

11. You can skip the pre-conference education, the pre-user's conference golf event, and even the Friday night dinner. The Saturday morning computer lab? Give it a stip.

SO: You can come just for the user's conference, arriving Wednesday mid-day and leaving late Friday or really early Saturday. It's a difficult way to “do” this event –

but it's possible. That minimizes your time away, and your investment in the user's conference.

If you need to put your attendance at the user's conference on an equal footing – by minimizing the investment –with staying home, this is the way to do it. Now what do you think?

12. You might be busy right now (actually, we hope you are!). You're thinking: "Well, we'll do the best we can – we'll get the automatic update, and we'll limp along with our understanding of V12 until next year. I'll go to the user's conference in 2017."

That's not a solution. Without a clear comprehension of all of the capabilities we've changed, added, and enhanced in V12, you just won't be able to put it to work – for your company's unique needs – to its maximum effectiveness.

Do you really want to wait 12 or more months to get "up to speed" with the newest version of the best estimating software that exists?

[Register today!](#)

A green banner for McCormick Systems Inc. On the left is a circular logo with a stylized green and black roofline and the word "MCCORMICK" in green. To the right of the logo, the text "McCormick Systems Inc" is written in white, with "THE NATIONS LEADER IN ESTIMATING SOFTWARE" in smaller white text below it. Further down, in a white box, the text "Version 12 is Out!" is written in large black font, followed by "Grab it before Conference 2016!" in a slightly smaller black font.

**McCormick Systems Inc**  
THE NATIONS LEADER IN ESTIMATING SOFTWARE  
**Version 12 is Out!**  
**Grab it before Conference 2016!**

Looking for another reason to attend Conference 2016?

Users Conference attendees can get it NOW!

The general release will start AFTER the Users Conference.

Thank you again for your valuable input in crafting Version 12!

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## Tech Support: Logmein Support Tool



## End of Support for Windows XP

Following Microsoft's lead, LogMeIn Rescue will soon be ending support for Windows XP starting January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016.

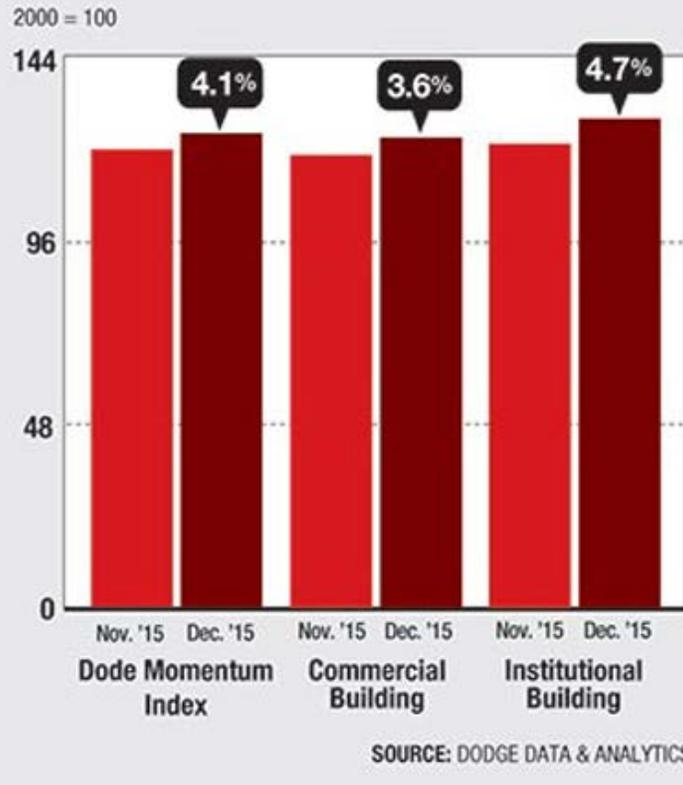
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# perspective

**Nonresidential Momentum Builds (in 12/15 reading)**

# DODGE MOMENTUM INDEX



[From Engineering News-Record/Dodge.](#)

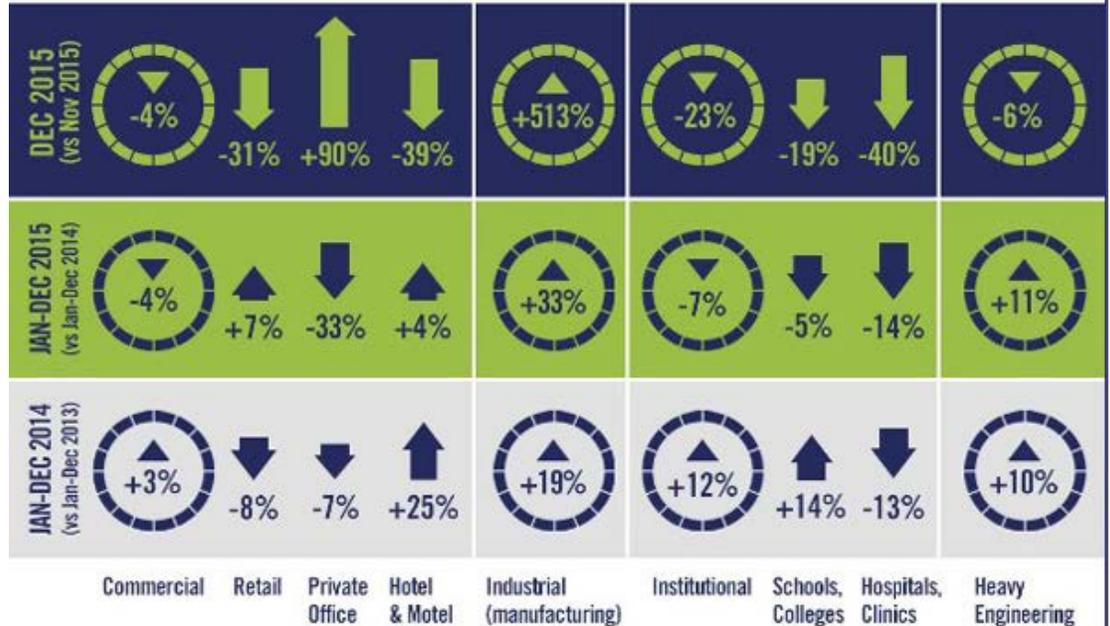
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**Construction Industry Snapshot (released January 2016)**

## CMD's December Starts Fell Slightly More than Usual Seasonal Decline

CMD announced today that December's level of U.S. construction starts, excluding residential work, was **\$22.2 billion, a drop of 6.9% versus November.**

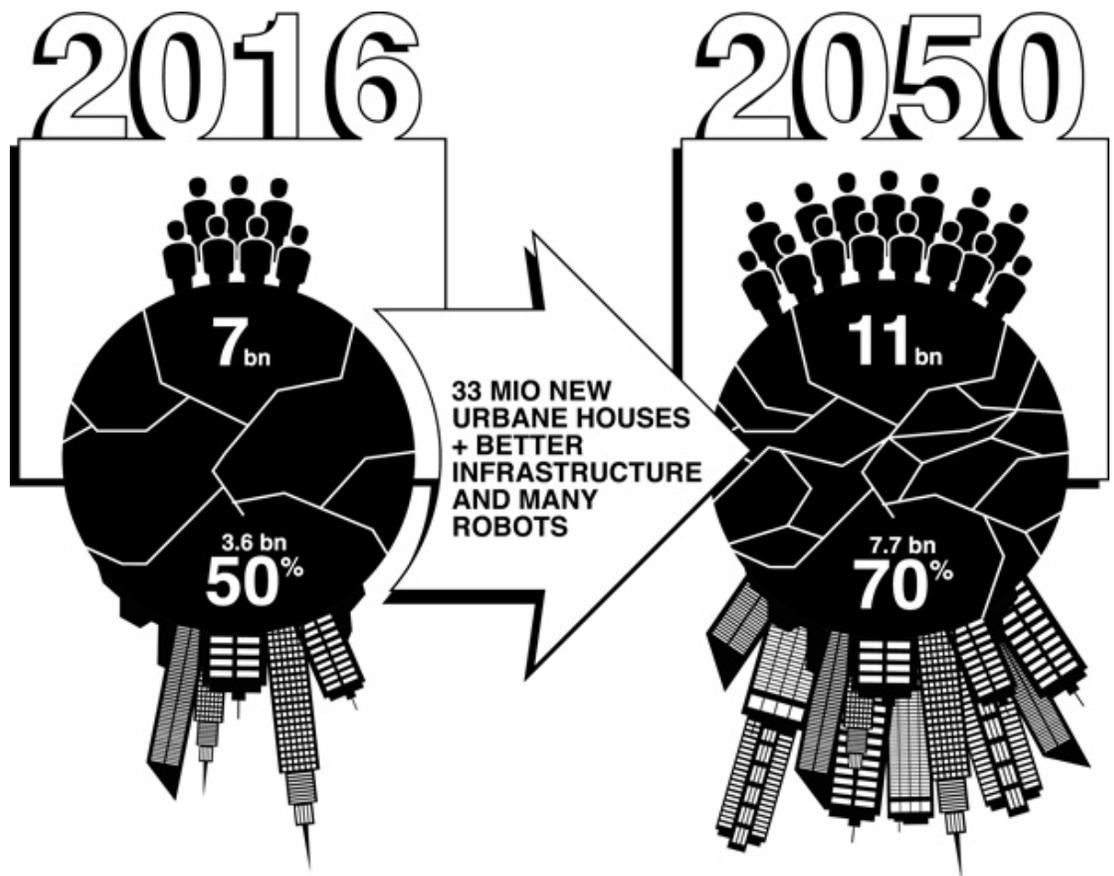
*The pull-back was only slightly more than the usual or long-term December-versus-November percentage change, due to seasonality, of -5.0%.*



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A six-page PDF from CMD Group, [downloadable free](#).

## BuildingBots: Thoughts About The Industry's Future



[Article from AECBytes.com.](http://AECBytes.com)

An excerpt:

"We are facing the biggest change in the history of building. To accomplish this enormous construction challenge, it will be necessary to reduce the cost of planning, building and managing buildings significantly.

"We will need to build more intelligently, take advantage of limited space, and finally focus on sustainability. The integration of new technologies and materials brings with it new challenges.

"The continuous digitization of our society and the economy will create new usage models of buildings. Not a stone will be left unturned."

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## **NEMA'S Economic Index Goes Negative In December**

## SURVEY RESULTS:

	<b>Current Conditions</b> (Compared to Previous Month)	<b>Conditions Six Months From Now</b> (Compared to Current Conditions)
EBCI	41.2	52.9
% Better	18%	29%
% Worse	35%	24%
% Unchanged	47%	47%

The manufacturers' group compiled the Electroindustry Business Conditions Index. November "current" reading was 58.3; as shown above, the December index came in at 41.2.

[Follow this link to download 2p PDF.](#)

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**'Construction Backlog' Indicator' Down Only Slightly vs. One Year Ago**

**CONSTRUCTION BACKLOG INDICATOR**

Region	% Change		Change from Q2 2015
Northeast	-3.5%	—	-0.31 months
South	5.0%	+	0.49 months
Middle States	-11.5%	—	-0.84 months
West	14.9%	+	1.01 months
<b>Industry</b>			
Commercial/Institutional	1.7%	+	0.14 months
Heavy Industrial	-2.7%	—	-0.19 months
Infrastructure	0.6%	+	0.06 months
<b>Company Size</b>			
<\$30 Million	-3.7%	—	-0.28 months
\$30-\$50 Million	2.7%	+	0.26 months
\$50-\$100 Million	-1.7%	—	-0.18 months
>\$100 Million	4.6%	+	0.49 months



(from [CalculatedRisk](#))

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