



Here's What Awaits You in Phoenix

McCormick Newsletter

Green Construction

[How Much Do You Know About EPAAct?](#)

[The Future of Green Building](#) (from Business Week)

[UL Begins Certifying Green Products](#)

[Solar PV Install Cost Falls 30 Cents/W \(since '98\)](#)

[Special Report: Great Energy Efficiency Day](#)

[Home Builder Offers Green Tips](#)

['Solar Options' PDF for Building Owners](#) (from NECA)

Construction Economics

[FMI Forecast On Non-Residential](#)

[What the Auto Bailout Means for Construction](#)

[A Deep Dive Into \[Construction\] Data](#)

[Architects: 'Bottom May Be In Sight'](#)

[McGraw-Hill February Construction Report](#)

[State Construction Employment Report \(Feb.\)](#)

E-Construction

[Use of BIM in NYC-Area Stadium Construction](#)

[ENR Article on Construction Software Trends](#)

[Technology & Construction](#) (from Canada)

[What's Inside Autocad 2010?](#)

Registration Form

CONFERENCE
REGISTRATION

CLICK HERE



Ed, a developer, explaining aspects of McCormick

It's not too late for you to choose to invest three days in boosting your company's future estimating productivity by attending the McCormick Systems User's Conference (April 22-25, Phoenix, AZ).

Our event schedule grid can be found below, as can descriptions of what you'll learn from our **four guest speakers**.

Here's a briefing on what we've got on tap for sessions to be held Thursday & Friday:

V9.1 and V9.2

You'll hear a great deal about V9.1 of our Electrical/ABS estimating software. It's a new release, targeted to arrive at your door right after conference. What's the big deal? The headline is that this new version makes the program compatible with 64-bit computer operating systems.

Do you have to buy 64-bit hardware to make V9.1 work? **No.** But you are likely to be offered 64-bit equipment.

If you choose to upgrade to 64-bit – and well you might, if speed and productivity are your goals – you can be fully confident that McCormick's software will run just fine on 64-bit (or 32-bit operating systems, for that matter).

You'll also get a "sneak peak" at V9.2, which is what we're working on now. We'll talk the concepts we're tackling over with you. Among other things: Our programmers are enhancing what's available in the JOBS area. We're also putting in the latest links to Trade Service's Tra-Ser SX (see info below on that).

Training Dates



Upcoming Standard Training Classes in ARIZONA are set for May 6-8 and May 13-15

SPECIAL pre-conference training events will be held April 20-21 in Scottsdale, AZ -- both Standard & **Advanced** classes!!!

The next Standard class set for **Columbia, MD** will be held June 10-12. The next **Advanced** class in MD will be held Aug. 12-14.

We've added **2009 training dates** [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 go directly to this link: [Education](#)

Your Options

We'll review options you now have to enhance the basic electrical estimating software you've obtained from McCormick. Those options include:

On Screen Takeoff and On Screen Estimating – the product for which McCormick won the "ShowStopper" award at NECA's 2008 show. You've probably already heard about it. The major opportunity here is that after we talk about it, you'll get to play (in our computer Lab) with the OST and dump that info into our estimating software. *What you net:* A chance to "try before you buy."

CAD Estimating – Still going strong. If you can get the CAD files or generate them in house as design-build, we will show you the power of CAD Estimating.

T-Bill – we'll review this product. Perhaps you can put it to use.

Change Order – We'll explain why it's essential to track time sensitive change orders.

One computer, two monitors – McCormick does not offer this product. But dual-screen estimating offers such a productivity boost that we thought, once again, we would demonstrate it in our computer Lab. A good percentage of the 20+ computers in the Lab will be hooked up to two monitors. Again, these set-ups offer you a hands-on "try before you buy" opportunity.

Hardware & Technology Trends

Speaking of the two-monitor idea, we've included a session on computer hardware and technology trends. You live and breathe electrical contracting; we live and breathe technology. We'll talk about connectivity, the latest hardware on the market, routers, monitors, LANs, keyboards . . . you name it.

If you don't have an IT department inside your company, and you're not an avid "techie" in your spare time, you might have questions. This one-hour session, we've been told by attendees, is worth the trip in and of itself.

And to answer a question for first-timers: NO, McCormick does not sell hardware!

Notes We'll Be Sure To Hit

Databases – you'll hear more about our Electrical and ABS databases. We look forward to your questions!

Using the software for project management – how you can use Labels, Graphics, and Schedules, among other things, to make your electrical estimating software work even harder for you. We'll also cover exports to MS Project.

Your input changes the program's future -- we'll have an "intake" session once again, in which President, Todd McCormick asks you, the users of McCormick's software, what enhancements you'd like to see in the Electrical and ABS estimating software. Much of what you see in the program today is the result of feedback/input from contractors and estimators in previous sessions. We're excited to hear what you have to say and ready to work to meet your needs!

A Change We Hope You'll Like

In years past, we've hosted dinners (of varying types, at various restaurants) at the User's Conference conclusion. We're doing something a bit different this time: We're talking the group to Chase Field in Phoenix to see the April 24th baseball game between the San Francisco Giants and the Arizona Diamondbacks This will be a great time for all those that attend.

. . . Yes, dinner is included!

Tip \$\$\$
Of the Month

You can hide all windows, revealing only what's on the computer desktop, with one keystroke: hit the Windows key and "D" simultaneously in Windows,

That's great when you want examine or delete something you've just downloaded to the desktop, for example.

Press the keystroke again to return to what you were doing.

Stay Just A Little Bit Longer . . .

Years ago, we noted that contractors and estimators who stayed for our Friday night dinner were still around the conference hotel on Saturday morning. Some might want to put to work the time spent waiting to go to the airport.

As a result, while there are no “official” conference sessions on Sat. April 25, our computer Lab will be open until noon. You’ll be able to try out things you’ve heard during the conference.

An Investment That *Will* Pay

Your attendance at the User’s Conference is an investment. Yes, as we all know from the media, 2009 is a tough year. Yes, as we all know from the media, many investments made by many Americans haven’t quite worked out

It might be a very good time for you to make an investment with a sure-thing, very high ROI. The McCormick Systems’ User’s Conference is just such an opportunity. We’ve worked hard to pack the event with information you can put to work when you return home. The result, we hope, is an instant boost to your estimating productivity, with future gains as well.

We’ll see you in Phoenix!

April 22-25 User’s Conference: *Your Quick-Ref Schedule*

See the [January newsletter](#) for details we have thus far on our annual McCormick Systems User’s Conference, to be held April 22-25 at the Embassy Suites in Scottsdale, AZ. For your quick reference, here’s what we’ve got planned:

SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE		
<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Time</i>
Mon., 4/20	Standard & Advanced Windows Training (separate classes)	7am-4pm
Tues., 4/21	Day 2, Standard & Advanced Windows Training Classes	7am-4pm
Wed. 4/22	McCormick Masters Golf Tournament	tee off: 7:30am
Wed., 4/22	Welcoming Reception	7pm-9pm
Thur. 4/23	Registration	7:30am
Thur. 4/23	Main Conference Sessions	8:00am - 5pm

Thur. 4/23	Computer Lab	12am - 5pm
Fri. 4/24	Main Conference Sessions	7am - 4pm
Fri. 4/24	Computer Lab	7am - 3:00p
Fri. 4/24	Dinner + Ballgame	5:30pm
Sat. 4/25	Computer Lab	7:30am - ?

Ready to reserve your spots? Call us (800 444 4890) for more information or to register!

Guest Speakers: Three Vendors And An Estimating Expert

We tried something new at the 2008 User's Conference: Guest speakers from software vendors within the electrical construction industry. You, the attendees, told us you liked the approach. Here's a brief outline of what we have on tap in just a few weeks.

Stan Shook: Two Thoughtful Segments

Stan Shook has an intense passion and deep vision for electrical estimating. He has worked in the commercial electrical construction industry for over 23 years, devoting half his life to finding a different way to 'get it all done before Bid Day'.

He is president & chief estimator for [TakeOff16®, Inc.](#), a firm which specializes in estimating electrical and low voltage signal & communications systems for commercial and industrial construction projects. Specialty: The company loves to work on very large projects with electrical contract values in excess of \$1 million (many contracts are well into the \$100 million range). TakeOff16® is well known for being able to complete these extremely large projects within extremely tight deadlines.

You might well recognize Stan's name, as his Estimating column appears in every issue of *Electrical Contractor* magazine. Topics for Stan's two briefings at this year's User's Conference:

- 1. How to Set Up, Train, and Manage an Estimating Department.** His wry comment: "Simply adding more estimators, buying their furniture and feeding them doughnuts isn't the complete solution."
- 2. How to Review and Check an Extension.** You might spend 80 hours doing a project estimate, but only four hours reviewing extensions. How can you make those 240 minutes the time when you catch mistakes big and little? What key questions can you ask in the review – questions that can make or break the project for your company?

Autodesk Subcontractor: Project Documentation

Stuck looking for a solution to your project documentation needs? Look no further. Autodesk Subcontractor, as a Power Link Partner can provide McCormick Systems clients with an automated integration process to import and track projects and change orders into our documentation software so that you can manage projects — not paperwork to eliminate duplicate entry.

Autodesk Subcontractor offers McCormick Systems clients software and services to collaborate,

standardize and automate their business processes to convey a professional image and help improve their overall document management processes. Autodesk Subcontractor helps to electronically create, track, manage and share RFIs, transmittals, change orders, pay applications, correspondence/e-mails and contact information from a single, centralized database.

[More info here.](#)

NetPricer: Easy Material Prices

Did you ever wish you could just press a button and magically connect your estimating software to each of your key distributors? You can, simply, by subscribing to NetPricer™ – and telling us with which distributors you want to connect.

NetPricer™ has participating distributors in all 50 states, including major national chains and regional suppliers. If your favorite branch isn't connected yet we'll work with you to get them on board.

Once you're NetPricer™ connected getting accurate pricing 24/7 couldn't be easier. Just build your materials list within your estimating software as usual. Then click on the NetPricer™ link within your software to select a specific distributor, or the NetPricer™ "Market Price" option. In seconds, through your Internet connection, NetPricer™ returns current pricing on each matching item.

Questions? [Click through for the NetPricer FAQ.](#)

Trade Service: Two New Offerings

TRA-SER SX is the next generation TRA-SER: fully Internet-based, with over 2 million electrical parts, including "Column 3" and "Average Market" pricing columns, comprehensive product descriptions, color product images, and electronic links to manufacturer catalog pages. And, being an Internet application, the data is always current. No software or large database to load to your pc. All you need is an Internet connection, a user name & password, and you're in business! For more info, [go here](#).

[As noted above, McCormick's software will interface with Tra-Ser SX, as well as with Supplier Xchange]

Supplier Xchange allows you to connect, in real time, to your favorite supplier's pricing – right from within McCormick – and then instantly import your custom pricing directly into your job estimate! Users are reporting 85% - 90% match rates with their supplier's pricing and a huge time savings getting the exact pricing they need for their bids. [More info here.](#)

PERSPECTIVE

March items from www.eleblog.com

E-J Gets Into 'Energy'

(posted 3/29/09) E-J Electric Installation Co., one of the oldest electrical contractors around (founded 1899) -- and one of the most sophisticated contracting firms these days -- has started up E-J Energy Services. See some info on it [here](#).

[Supply Side Services](#)
Combined Heat and Power
Solutions
Solar Energy Systems

[Demand Side Services](#)
Automated Demand Control
Systems
Intelligent Demand Response

Commodity Procurement
Waste Heat Generator
Solutions
Fuel Cells

Programs
Lighting Solutions
Energy Program Development

I have the press release in front of me. It says:

"E-J Energy Services is providing cost-cutting solutions, many at no cost to the client, using reliable and sustainable methods."

Realistic ENERGY STAR

(posted 3/26/09) Co Star Group (which does a bang-up job of "covering" real estate) did an [interview on ENERGY STAR](#) with Alyssa Quarforth, who handles Commercial Buildings for the EPA in the program. Here's a really neat Q and A --



Alyssa Quarforth, Program Manager
for ENERGY STAR's Commercial
Properties division.

Tell us about the Designed to Earn the ENERGY STAR label, which applies to new buildings. Obviously, construction has slowed considerably. How has that affected this platform?

Designed to Earn the ENERGY STAR is a fairly new program. It's unique because it allows architects and engineers to go beyond energy modeling -- so they not only do the energy modeling, but they compare that information against an existing stock of commercial buildings. It gives them an idea of where the building will fare when it is up and fully operational.

In places where there is still opportunity for development, building owners and managers are looking for more energy efficiency in new construction. Over the past year we've continued to see growth in this program. We currently have more than 100 designs that have achieved the Designed to Earn the ENERGY STAR plaque.

EleBlog take: Green building stuff has got to become more "realistic." Buildings that "perform" (i.e., use a lot less energy) -- not neat designs and superb "intent" -- ought to be the goal.

Perspective On Wind

(posted 3/15/09) Here's what Gregory Kenny, president/CEO of General Cable, had to say (in a 2/11 conference call with Wall Street analysts, one of whom was named Celeste) about [WIND POWER](#) -- some relevant and interesting stuff:



I think the bigger, the big driver for us Celeste is really the... I guess is 29 states or so that now have green mandates. And again Obama, the 20% target for 2025 you begin to look at if indeed we go do that and we do it through solar and wind.

We've been building 5,000 megawatts to 8,300 megawatts a year in wind. And in order to get to that kind of number, you need to go to 12,000 to 18,000 per year. And with the stimulus goal, it does have is some language around \$8 billion for renewable loan guarantees and also \$6.5 billion to build new transmission systems. Just to scale that again we don't know precisely, but we think roughly transmission spend in the U.S. is about \$10 billion a year, and that's the entire project from land write-aways to towers to labor to cable and some of the pole line hardware and other items and cable might be 5% of that \$10 billion.

So when he says or when the Senate Bill for example says \$6.5 billion again we think that will, that's a big number could be two-thirds of a year. But the much bigger numbers are tied to what needs to be done and there is a bit of number of reports including one out in the Wall Street Journal this earlier this week, the number is a \$100 billion plus kinds of numbers.

So I think this will help hope for our demand, we saw 2009 as a slower year because of some of the financing vehicles having dried up. Lehman was active in that GE and we saw that as a slower year, 2009 falling back to sort of 2006 levels. This could help hold it at 2008 levels on terms of win.

Transmission as we said was very slow in the first half of '08. It began to pick up in the fourth quarter. This will help may be enable some projects to get financed obviously its way more complicated in that as you need write-aways and there's hearings and other things and FERC is really not exercise it's eminent domain powers that came from the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

But net, net it's important I think it could help what might have been a weaker 2009, relative to 2008 in wind and may accelerate some of the transmission. But we're really playing for the green mandates and again we look at headlines that everyday there are alternative projects, some funded some unfunded, some talked about, but they are big numbers.

But to go to 20% green in the U.S. will put big demand on our undersea medium voltage cable plant that we're going into in Germany and that just won some wind farm orders there and clearly will help our medium voltage business, the transmission were well prepared for that.

Again, last year was a disappointment, we talked about hundreds of billions of work to be done in transmission for a first world grid and it's really only happened a tiny bit meaning we have just, in the last couple of years begun to pick up spending, saw a slowdown in our way and this may help.

So I think this language may be helps '09 and '10 which might have been tougher years, to sort of hold at '07, '08 levels but I don't think it's the big catalyst which is really so far 29 states that have green mandates.

