

You've Now Got a Ticket for The Universal Serial Bus

We at McCormick Systems are excited to talk about our newest great leap forward in technology for our users—the addition of Universal Serial Bus (USB) technology.

No, this won't help you cut the cost of labor on your next estimate. But it will reduce the cost and energy you have to put into using McCormick Systems software on your computer system!

McCormick is the first electrical construction estimating software provider to make USB interfaces available. This will make it much easier for you in the future, when you upgrade your computer system.

Here's why: *New computers (the ones to which you will upgrade) often only have USB ports where there used to be serial ports. Additionally, laptops typically come with USB and without serial.*

By interfacing our system with this new technology, we've enabled you to do more with less. We've developed a USB version of our security key (which also interfaces to our count and length probes). Here's what this will be able to deliver to you and your company, now—or when you are ready:

- ✓ Flexibility—you can hook up a number of items through a USB port (not just the McCormick key).
- ✓ Adaptability—keyboards are now being made with USB ports (so you might be able to plug the McCormick security key into the keyboard, instead of prowling around the back of your computer).
- ✓ With the new McCormick USB-ready security key, you can still run with serial ports, if that's what you have. No one's system has been made obsolete!

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USB technology will reduce the cost and energy you have to put into using McCormick Systems software!

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We've Gone Online for Customer Support

Ever get frustrated, when obtaining computer support on the telephone—with McCormick Systems or some other vendor—that you're getting instructions on the phone, but they're hard to follow...and as a result your problem isn't being fixed?

Well, we've fixed that!

No, not your problem—we'll get to that when you call in. But McCormick now has access to WebEx. If you've got an Internet connection and Internet Explorer or Netscape as your browser, you can now get not just on-the-phone telephone support, but also live, online support, too.

Let's say you are a new user, not too familiar with how to set up an extension. Our customer support person, on the other end of the phone, can—with a few keystrokes by you—"take control" of your application. We cannot take control without your permission.

Why do it? Why not just talk with us on the phone? Well, of course, you can—and will—still do that.

But WebEx takes customer support to a new, higher level. There's more here than just accelerating the fix of your problem. Instead of having us "walk you through" the solution on the phone, you can WATCH the solution as the McCormick person is implementing it—on your screen!

There is a caution, of course. If you do not have a high-speed connection to the Internet, the process takes some time.

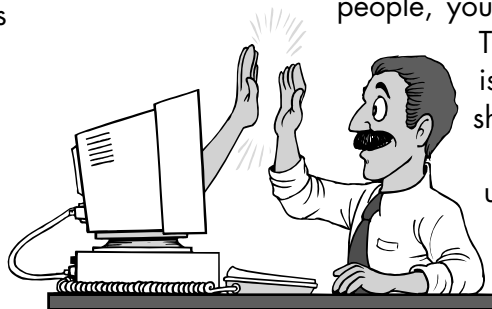
Online Training And More

In a way, when you call and end up with a WebEx connection with one of our customer support people, you are participating in online training. The expert on our end of the phone is not only telling you, he or she is showing you!

Additionally, while we're still hooked up via WebEx, you can show our support person that you've learned how to do what needs to be done.

Of course, there are other uses for WebEx beyond customer support. Companies with offices in multiple locations use it in a different way—for online meetings. Some companies use it for online training sessions on a scheduled basis; perhaps, in the future, McCormick Systems will offer you this option.

For the time being, if you have a high-speed connection, you might be able to work with us on your problem via the Internet as well as the phone. Is this some kind of pie-in-the-sky option? Absolutely not. McCormick Systems is averaging one use of WebEx per day with our customers! ✕



Send Us Your E-mail Address

We'd like to begin communicating with you, our customer, via e-mail. To get the ball rolling, we need your e-mail address.

Please send an e-mail from your regular e-mail address to lmccormick@mccormicksys.com. If possible, please put the subject line as "My E-Mail Address." In the body (text) of the e-mail, please give us your name, company name, and city/state. Thanks! ✕



Continued from page 1.

We're working to help you, our users, work the fastest with the least effort. This USB development is just one more way that we're helping you "keep up with the Joneses"—the people on the cutting edge of business computing!

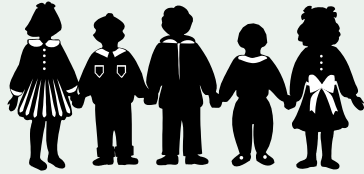
There's more. We're working on bringing even more capabilities to you via the USB port. Eventually, a company that has, say:

- ◆ four licenses of our change order software,
- ◆ six licenses of our CAD estimating unit, and
- ◆ eight licenses of our Win 8000 product

will be able to run them all with just one key running on the server. You can't do that yet, but you will soon—we're working on it! Today's announcement of our new USB-ready security key is the first step toward that future. ✕

You Can't Outgrow PC Scale!

As you might know, McCormick Systems offers PC Scale, a scaled-down electrical estimating software product. It can handle 2,000 items and 200 assemblies, and it has been around for 20 years.



One reason smaller contractors might hesitate to invest in such a system could be worries about conversion to another estimating software vendor when they grow. With McCormick, this worry does not exist!

Why not?

First, it's easy to export your PC Scale database to one of our Windows products.

Second, McCormick gives you a "trade-in" credit for the price you paid for PC Scale! It doesn't matter how long you've used the scaled-down product—we've given credit to contractors recently who bought their original system in the mid-1990s.

Third, PC Scale (Windows version) is now on customer support, a major advantage over previous years.

Finally, for those PC Scale users reading this who are still locked in to the old DOS version: Converting PC Scale from DOS to Windows is this easy—call McCormick Systems customer support at 800-444-4890! ✕

Technical Corner "Windows Updates" – In A Nutshell



Most of us look upon any "freebie" with some degree of suspicion—especially if the "freebie" originates from Bill Gates and Microsoft.

But the "Windows Update" that most of us ignore on our Windows Start Menu is one that we really shouldn't pass up, despite our innate skepticism.

Generally speaking, the Windows update will contain enhancements to whichever Windows operating system is on your computer. These enhancements will normally address software conflicts that Windows has discovered within each of its operating systems. More importantly Microsoft is constantly upgrading its security in regard to virus attacks. In conjunction with a good virus protection package, this is your best safeguard against costly virus infections.

So, the next time that you see your Windows Update blinking at you on the Start Menu, consider the advantages to your company of clicking through! ✕



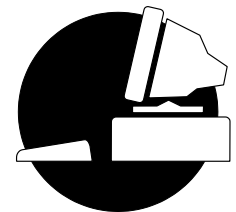
Did You Know... *Is your system running slow? You may want to consider a quick and dirty hardware upgrade—system RAM. With RAM at less than 50 cents/MB, it makes sense to upgrade now!*

See Us on the NECA Show Web Site

As of the end of March, six of the 16 exhibitor products on the NECA Show's Web site were McCormick Systems listings. See the Show products/services page at:

www.necashow.org/2002/exhibitors/ex_products.cfm

NECA's Show takes place Oct. 6-8. You don't have to be a member of NECA (or even a union contractor) to attend. For registration info, go to www.necashow.org. ✕





The Specifications— More of Division 1 to 15!

Last month, we dealt with a piece of the construction specifications—Division 1 to 15. Below is a further discussion.

- ✓ Check the payment terms. How will they affect cash flow? Will you need additional money? Add the estimated cost of money to your Bid Summary under Direct Job Expense.
- ✓ Check for any penalty clauses that could affect the estimate or the completion of the job. Is the work force available to complete the job within the requirements? Will overtime be required? Be sure to include those costs in the Bid Summary either as an additional labor amount (under the Labor Tab) or as a Direct Job Expense.
- ✓ Is shift work or overtime required, due to owner occupancy, etc? If so, include those costs in the Bid Summary under the Labor Tab.
- ✓ Check the Mechanical Section (Division 15) for work required under your division, including any requirements or schedules that will affect the estimate.
- ✓ Do you know the other trades that will be working on this project? What is your relationship with them? Will there be additional costs stemming from their involvement?
- ✓ Check the other Divisions for work required under your division, including any requirements or schedules that will affect the estimate.

Finally, is a sample copy of the contract included or referred to as part of these specifications? Read the contract very carefully. Is it a standard contract (AIA, AGC, etc.)?

If it is a standard contract, check with an attorney, trade association, or another contractor to see if the contract's terms and conditions are acceptable. If the contract is not a standard contract, having it reviewed by your attorney would be wise. If the contract needs revision, can it be revised without additional cost to your company? X

Next month: More about "The Specifications, Division 16."



Did You Know... *If you are on a networked version, unclicking the "my takeoff" button lets you view the takeoff of everyone working on that particular job, in real-time. This is also an excellent way to ensure both you and your partners are working on the same job, and spot-check each others' numbers.*

Get Windows Training Now!

Standard Estimating

The class is structured to take you from "Job Startup" through "Bid Summary". It provides in-depth instruction, including good manual experience and "brush-up" exposure for those who want to get more out of the product.

Advanced Management

Designed for the database manager or chief estimator, this class drills down into the bottom of the program. You will learn how to build specification formulas, write reports and reports formulas, and more. Before taking the class, you should be proficient in all takeoff phases of the product and understand your company's needs.

Upcoming Schedule

Unless specified, all classes are at the training center in our office in Chandler, AZ. Classes start at 7 a.m. and wind up about 4 p.m. daily. We make hotel reservations using information from the registration forms sent in from participants. We must receive your registration form in order to reserve a space in our class. To obtain a registration form, call 800-444-4890. X

April 24–26

Standard Estimating

May 1–3

Standard Estimating

May 15–17

Advanced Management

June 5–7

Standard Estimating

June 26–28

Standard Estimating

July 10–12

Standard Estimating