



## Enhance Your McCormick ROI With Training – Several Options Available

McCormick Newsletter

### Building Information Modeling

[Why Building Information Modeling?](#)

From Autodesk: [BIM Town Hall Roundtable Series](#) (videos)  
[Everyone Loves BIM \(Whatever It Is\)](#) (GreenBuildingNYC blog)  
[What are the benefits of BIM?](#)  
Advantages in Building Planning

[Journal of BIM](#) (Spring issue) – free, downloadable PDF

[Engineering a BIMStorm](#) (Consulting-Specifying Engineer)  
[BIM Now More Than Ever](#) (Building Design & Construction blog)  
[BIM in the homebuilding space](#) (ConstrucTech)  
[Technology product highlights](#) (BIM included) from AIA Convention  
[Autodesk 2010 software portfolio for BIM](#)

### Integrated Project Delivery

[What Is IPD?](#) (from the U.K.)

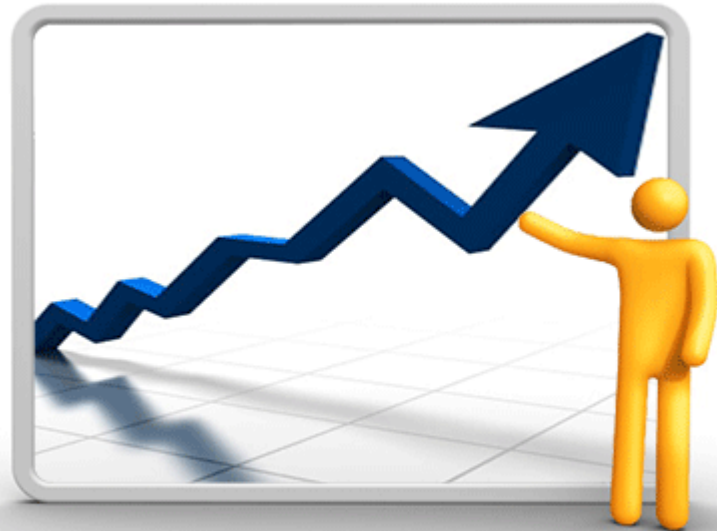
[IPD Frequently Asked Questions](#) (8p PDF)

[IPD 'Working Definition'](#) (17p PDF) – 5/15/07  
[AIA's IPD Guide](#)  
[Best Practices in IPD](#)  
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### Training Dates



Standard training classes set for our Chandler, AZ offices are scheduled for June 24-26, and



TRAINING IS COST EFFECTIVE WITH A  
VERY HIGH RETURN ON INVESTMENT

McCormick Systems has created a problem for you. But we are not about to apologize!

Here it is in a nutshell: The software already on your desk offers numerous useful options, special-use items, shortcuts, tips, tricks, things you'd like to see that are already in the program, and more . . . and *you don't know all about all of this.*

This isn't about selling you additional software or upgrades. You've already paid for it. **You've got it!** Everything you need is on your computer, at your fingertips. But you're not making complete use of it, and you're being shortchanged as a result.

We've had an instructive (for us) experience numerous times, including at our annual User's Conferences. A contractor or estimator asks for an enhancement to our software – a scheduling module, say, or a way to put the data into graphs for presentations. Our response has to be: *That's already in there.*

*That's a problem.* If it's in there, and you don't know about it – for you, the ROI on the software is less than it could be.

Let's work together to change it. Here are thoughts we've gathered from three users and our two trainers.

## Standard & Advanced Classes

McCormick's training schedule includes standard and advanced classes, with most held in Chandler, AZ (our HQ) and a few select events scheduled for Maryland.

**Note: We also have a special standard class set for Sept. 9-11 in Seattle, WA.**

July 29-31. An Advanced class in AZ is set for July 15-17.

The next Standard class set for **Columbia, MD** will be held June 10-12; the following Eastern Standard class is set for Oct. 7-9. The next **Advanced** class in MD will be held Aug. 12-14.

We've added [2009 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](#)



Erle Howard, who does our East Coast training, notes that many veteran users of the software benefit from attending these classes. "The McCormick system changes constantly. It's updated at least once a year, sometimes twice."

"Now, all of the users get the download right away if they are on support, or they can order the update on CD and have it shipped to them. But it's hard for them to integrate the advances and changes in the system."

"My guess is that probably 60% of the users, at least, are using 40% or less of what's on those disks," Howard said. "They are busy people, and they just don't get the time to dig into it, and to learn about what's new – and how to use it."

"That," he added, "is why attending the standard class is essential for newer estimators – and why veterans can benefit from coming to an advanced class."

Dick Manrod, our on-staff trainer (and a former electrical contractor), has had similar experiences to Howard's. "There are new features introduced all of the time, and sometimes you find that they haven't made it down to the user level."

"I had an advanced class that I taught about two years ago. We had already released Edit Extension, which is a very valuable feature of the McCormick software. But of the 15 people in this advanced class, only two were really making adequate use of Edit Extension."

"That changed, of course, as a result of the class."



McCormick Systems Version 9.1 has been released!

According to tech support this has been the smoothest upgrade yet!

Some of the enhancements are as follows:

- Added ability to attach PDF files to Job and System Documents
- Ability to create and save custom Bid Summary report layouts.
- PowerLink interface to Autodesk SubContractor
- Interfaces with OnScreen Estimating
- 64-bit O.S. Compatible
- Improved Power Probe stability.
- Lots of clean-up behind the scenes.

[Visit the McCormick Website](#)

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## On-Site Training

Jim Withers, a project manager/project engineer for Kaemmerlen Electric & Communications (St. Louis), noted that a recent three-day on-site course gave his company a chance to custom-tailor McCormick's training to the company's unique needs.



Kaemmerlen Electric & Communications

"We had a couple of people that started new here in estimating and project management," he said. "We knew these people needed training to get up-to-speed quickly on using the McCormick system."

"So the first two days of the course were for those beginners. But the third day was an advanced class, attended by our veterans as well. We created the agenda ourselves, coming up with topics we wanted the McCormick trainer to address."

What was the result? "Everybody got something out of it. Advanced users learned. The new people got up-to-speed," Withers reported. Trainer Howard noted that while on-site courses can be more expensive for a given electrical contractor, the payoff is often stupendous. "Sometimes, you know, after I show them something that McCormick recently released, at a break I hear from a guy – 'you just paid for your whole visit in that one segment.'"

"One of the great things about the McCormick software is that you can do everything about 50 different ways. There are better ways for a given company to do its estimating and project management, and it's there in the system."

"Maybe there's an aversion to the word 'training.' What Dick and I are actually doing in these sessions isn't providing a canned 'course of study,' but helping the contractors and estimators to use the program the way they need to – so they can estimate the way they want to, and use the program in the most effective way."

# Revisiting The Software

Chewning and Wilmer (Richmond, Va.) obtained its McCormick software in the mid-1990s. "We had a trainer come for an in-house session back then," explained Art Nelson, a company vice president. "But, of course, since that time, we've had turnover in estimators. I've been to several of the User's Conferences. I've tried to relay to our people – we have 11 full-time estimators now – the things I've learned at the conferences."



"To tell the truth, a lot of that kind of education, from me to them, came up when someone had a problem. Something would come up, and I'd try to share the information I'd learned at a Conference. And it's hard to get this knowledge spread through the company, when you have a staff of 11 estimators, and there is some turnover."

*Solution:* Chewning and Wilmer recently had McCormick trainer Manrod come for a two-day class. "Dick knows the contracting end of it, he understood what we were looking for," Nelson said.

"Some of us knew some of what he talked about, but it was new to some of other folks. And it seemed to me that everybody picked up something new and useful. During the breaks, I'd hear one or another of our people say, 'Gee, I didn't know we could do that' or 'I didn't know that was in there'."

Manrod noted that his favorite on-site classes are those contractors hold away from their own offices. "If they're at their location, they're going to be interrupted with phone calls and frequently go back to their desks," he said. "The really good sessions involve a contractor renting a hotel room near their offices, not on their property."

Classes are *not* what you might remember from school days. "I hold up the McCormick manual in the classes, and I compare it to the National Electrical Code," Manrod said. "Everybody in our industry knows about the NEC, but no one worries every single day about what's on page 264."

"It's the same thing with these classes. I'm not there to 'teach the manual.' I'm there to help people do hands-on estimating. The classes involve doing actual estimating, not learning by rote or theory."

## Another On-Site Approach

In Champaign, Ill., Bud Allen (of Bud Allen's Electric) has set up "a more economic way to go" for training in his area. "I've been to the User's Conference many years, and it's very beneficial," he said. "And we know that going to the standard or advanced classes is a good way to learn."

"But not everyone can find the time for travel. And not every contractor has enough estimators to justify an on-site class for his own company."



*What's the alternative?* Allen created one: He put together a class in his area held at a local JATC. He invited other contractors to participate (and help pay for) the event. "We had people come from Chicago, Peoria, Danville, and Bloomington," Allen remembered. "One company sent five guys for the basic class. In the advanced class, one company had four people, another had three."

"It included lunch (we had it catered), so no one had to leave the premises or worry about leaving and getting back in time. This reduced the cost to any one company, and yet we had standard and advanced training classes right here."

Such an option is open to any group that can put itself together. NECA and IEC chapters are logical starting places, and a local training center certainly can work as a facility for the event. But a group of unrelated contractors could easily form for such a class, renting a hotel room.

"The great thing about these classes is that you learn to change things in the software so you can fit them to the way your company operates and the way you want to estimate. You can do things the way you want to do them," Allen said. "Any time you can get to a class, you should."

"We all need to sharpen our estimating skills. In the long run, attending one of these classes will help your company to win a job, or bid a job faster, or bid more accurately."

"In my opinion, based on the feedback after this class," Allen concluded, "even guys who came to our local class and learned only one thing got more than their money's worth from the training."

Like the software itself, McCormick Systems offers you many different customizable and most importantly informative ways to get the most out of the software you have been using for years.



## **McCORMICK SYSTEMS ADDS \$100,000+ TO ELECTRI INTERNATIONAL**

McCormick Systems recently presented a check for \$100,000 to ELECTRI International – The Foundation for Electrical Construction. Company president Todd McCormick explained the decision to increase the gift, "We have been involved with ELECTRI International for many years. We've seen it grow and we recognize the importance of keeping it strong."



Jack McCormick, Todd McCormick, and Russ Alessi at recent meeting.

During the presentation at company headquarters in Chandler, Arizona, Todd McCormick also announced that McCormick Systems Inc. will continue to work with the Foundation to provide estimating software and companion education/training to institutions across the country. Company founder, Jack McCormick noted, "We've made an in-kind investment of close to \$900,000 by giving colleges and universities access to our software. Students and their professors gain and so do their colleges."

McCormick's additional \$100,000 cash investment in ELECTRI International will support both the Education Center and the new Transmission & Distribution Enterprise, a dedicated fund within the Research Center that focuses on research and education for line constructors. Jack McCormick is enthusiastic about this new fund. "Over the years, there have been a number of proposed projects that would have been beneficial for line contractors, but there's only so much project money to go around. We serve both the inside and outside parts of this industry, so it's a natural fit for McCormick to put money into this new dedicated fund." **McCormick Systems is the first electrical construction industry partner to make an investment in the ELECTRI International T & D Enterprise.**

McCormick Systems was founded in 1979 by Jack McCormick. "I had started out as an electrician apprentice in Eugene, Oregon, in 1958. By the early 1970s, I had my own electrical contracting company. Then, I had an idea for a new product and turned to one of NECA's Oregon chapters as a sounding board. Those chapter members were instrumental in reviewing and evaluating our new product development." NECA honored McCormick in 1981 with a special award for providing the first affordable estimating software on a mini-computer.

Todd McCormick sums up, "The electrical industry has been good to the McCormick family over the past fifty years. Staying involved with ELECTRI International is a way for my father and me to continue giving back to our industry."

Acknowledging the McCormick Systems gift, ELECTRI Council chairman Michael Mazzeo (Mazzeo Electric Corporation, NY) stated, "We are honored to recognize McCormick Systems as an **ELECTRI International Program Guarantor**. The level of commitment shown by both Jack and Todd McCormick sends an important signal to our contractors and to other industry partners. We are strong. We are vital to our industry. We are moving forward."



McCormick will soon have donated more than \$1 million in cash and software to

the electrical contracting industry.

The McCormick Systems gift also generates a release of \$20,000 from the Foundation's current anonymous challenge grant. For additional information about ELECTRI International's research and education portfolio and about the Challenge Grant, contact ELECTRI executive, Russ Alessi at 301-215-4518 or [rja@necanet.org](mailto:rja@necanet.org).

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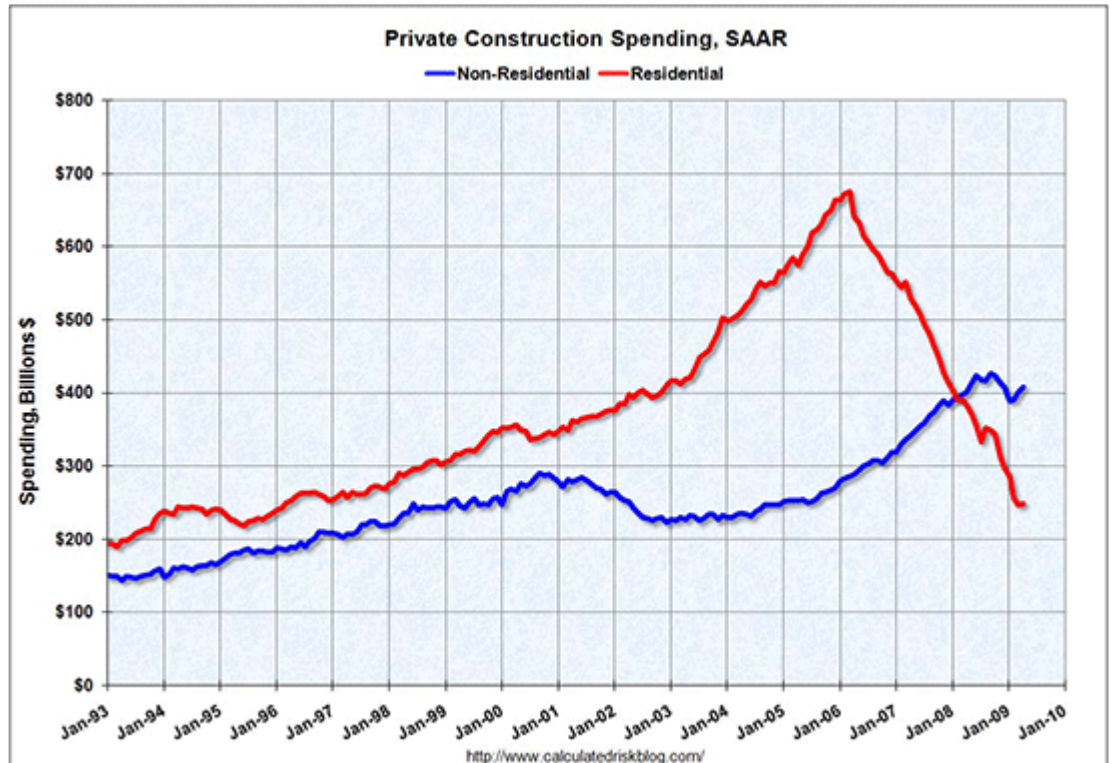
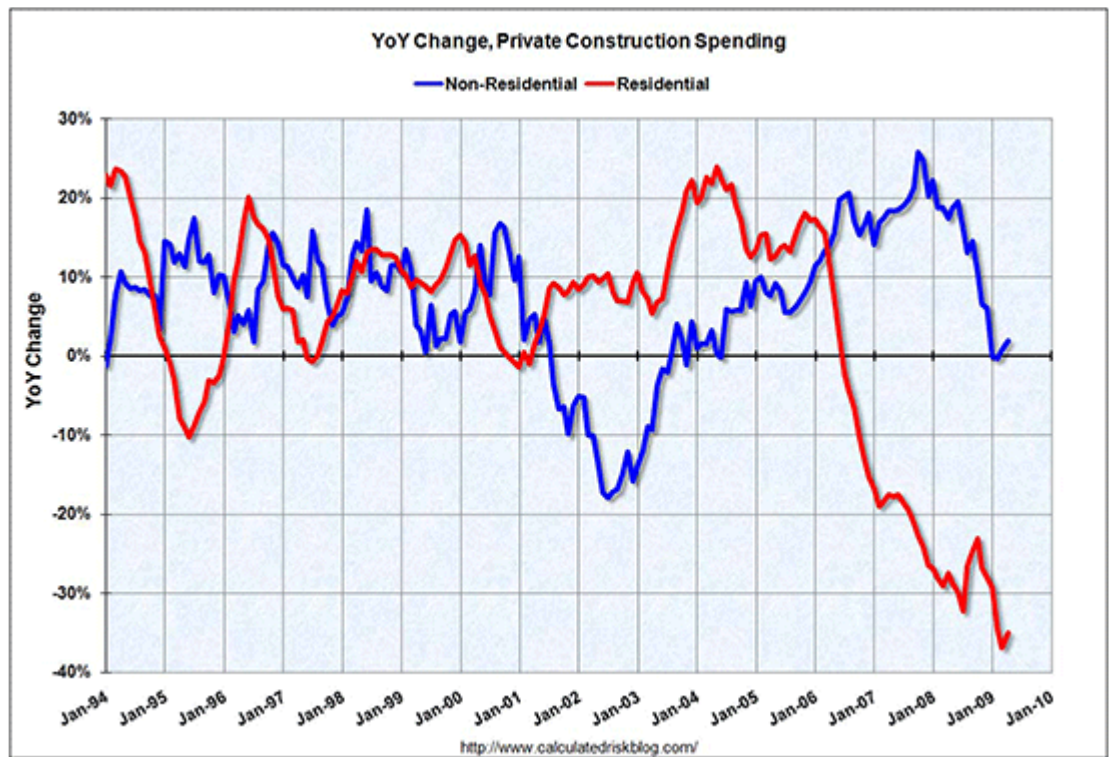
# perspective

Items posted June 2, 2009 to [www.eleblog.com](http://www.eleblog.com)

## Construction Spending in April

Let's take a look at yesterday's Construction Put-In-Place ("construction spending") report from the Census Bureau:

1. As noted here before, I cut straight to Table 2, the value NOT Seasonally Adjusted.
2. For total construction in the year's first 4 months, it's \$286.3B, down 11.3%. That's right, DOWN 11.3%.
3. Private construction for the first 4 months = down 16.4%.
4. Private residential construction for 4 months, down 34.3%.
5. Private nonresidential construction is flat (0.0% change). It was \$125,012,000,000 in the year to April 2009, \$125,018,000,000 in the first 4 months of 2008. Flat. That's almost the same (but not quite) as the report last month, in which nonresidential was UP 0.2%.
6. Public construction was up 3.4% in the year's first 4 months.



*Those are the facts. In the next item, we'll deal with the baloney.*

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## Green Shoot Baloney - Case #4,137

Because people -- media people, stock market professionals, those who have elected to become heavily invested again, the White House (I guess) -- so awfully NEED to see green shoots, the Construction Spending report for April was spun as positive.

EXAMPLE -- Headline from Bloomberg.com: "[Construction Spending in the U.S. Unexpectedly Climbs.](#)"

When I saw that, I said to myself "no it didn't!!!!!!!" But here's the story:

"The 0.8% gain (in April) was the biggest since August and followed a revised 0.4% increase the prior month [March]."

In other words, March was slightly better than February, on a seasonally adjusted basis, and April supposedly was significantly better than March.

Well, how the HECK could construction spending be DOWN 11%-plus in the year's first 4 months vs. 2008, then? Manipulation? Look over here, don't look over there?

I don't know. The same idea permeated a lot of the reporting (and apparently led to a stock-market uptick on 6/1). Example: *Christian Science Monitor* blog: "US construction spending rises, raising eyebrows."

I do know that some sources got it right ("Construction Spending Sinks," read the headline in the *Portland Business Journal* - as in Ore.).

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## Haughey's Take On Spending

Freaking out a bit (which is why I waited a day to post all this), I went to Jim Haughey's blog. He's the Reed Construction Data economist. His take on the numbers: "MISLEADING."

It was a short 2-paragraph entry. I'm going to regurgitate all of it here (here's [a link to Jim's blog](#)) because this is important. I've subdivided some of the paragraphs for emphasis or easier reading:

- - - - -

The revised spending data show that residential remodeling spending plunged 12.2% in February, stayed at about that reduced level in March and then recovered most of the abrupt drop in April.

This is implausible.

But by now we are used to wild swings and frequent large revisions in the remodeling data.

There are three key insights in the April spending report.

- First, the housing market continues to weaken rapidly, down 6.7% more. The recent stabilization of home sales will not stop the spending slide for a few more months.
  - Second, the manufacturing and power markets continue to expand with each now nearly as large as single family housing. This is momentum from the 2003-07 business expansion which will not last much longer.
  - Third, commercial real estate is more distressed than reported earlier with downward revisions for both office and retail construction spending.
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## Additional Input

While I was at Jim Haughey's blog, I noticed 2 other recent posts:

[Construction wage gains weaken](#) -- this is about union construction.

[Economic recovery in 2009-2010, but problems beyond](#) -- I think this perspective might prove to be VERY correct, and VERY VERY important.

. . . . Maybe very very very. Here's Jim's conclusion:

Massive spending will lead to economic recovery later this year and continuing recovery at a modest pace next year before bills come due that cannot be repaid. The inevitable consequence is a pullback in federal spending, including construction credit, and/or much higher credit costs that force private construction customers to cancel projects.

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