



NOVEMBER 2015 NEWSLETTER

THE NATIONS LEADER IN ESTIMATING SOFTWARE

Increase Your productivity: A Great Opportunity

Click to see our Award Winning Software:

Electrical

Plumbing & Mechanical

Transmission and Distribution

Automated Building Systems (ABS)

User's Conference



"Increase Your Estimating Productivity" is the title of the McCormick System's 34th annual user's conference, set for March 9-12 in Chandler, AZ.

Most events have a title, but this one isn't fooling around! There are real increases on the table here for you – in estimating productivity (as well as accuracy).

Why? McCormick at this event will officially roll out changes to our software on which we've been working – and making changes & updates based on customer input – for a long time.



Forward to a Friend



The Clock is Ticking! The 2016 User's Conference Begins March 9th!

Of course, as a McCormick Systems customer, you'll get the enhancements – to Version 12 of our software, as well as to On-Screen Estimating Pro – automatically. They will come to you. You'll install them. They'll be on your computers, available to contractors and estimators.

But will you know how to maximize the advantages you can gain through use of them? Will you know the details? Will you have hands-on experience before you begin trying to use these advances on your next project?

YES will be the answer of attendees at the 2016 User's Conference. We'll spend a great deal of Conference time helping you, on-site, to understand what's newly available to you in V12.

Beyond that, of course, there is our on-site "computer lab." You'll get hands-on experience with the new capabilities . . . right there, at the conference. You'll take home not only what you hear, and what notes you've taken – but the knowledge that comes best with doing it yourself.

"I've been to the User's Conference before, and I like the whole thing – meeting people from all over the

Electrical/Energy

[Coal-Fired Power's Future](#)

[Grid Becoming Stronger, Report Says](#)

[Report On Oct. Energy Storage Event](#)

[Window Film Generates Power \(solar\)](#)

[Workforce Issues](#)

Technology

[AutoCAD Tips - video](#)

['If The Thing Works, Don't Update It'](#)

[The Connected Jobsite](#)

[Top Apps for Builders](#)

Construction

[ConstructionCamTV](#)

[One Safety Approach](#) (with video)

[Robot Sprays Insulation Under Floorboards](#)

Lighting

[Calif. Proposes LED Standards](#)

[DOE Estimates LED Savings](#) (in common applications)

[Guide to Lighting Certifications](#) (& more)

[Lighting & Internet of Things](#) (video)

Training Dates



STANDARD CLASSES

Dec. 2-4 (Maryland)
Dec. 9-11 (Arizona)
Dec. 16-18 (Arizona)
Jan. 6-8 (Arizona)
Jan. 27-29 (Maryland)
March 7-8 (AZ – Conference)

ADVANCED CLASSES

Jan 28-29 (Arizona)
March 7-8 (AZ – Conference)
March 31-April 1 (Maryland)

OSE PRO ONE-DAY CLASSES

Jan. 11 (Arizona)
March 7 & 8 (AZ – Conference)

Click here for the complete list of upcoming [2015 training](#)

country, talking to the McCormick staff. But I really like using the lab, especially on Saturday morning."

– John Amicucci, President, Oneida Electric (Syracuse NY)



What's On Tap

MONDAY, March 7 – the start of TWO two-day training classes (optional addition to your Conference registration). One = Standard, the other = Advanced. PLUS: A one-day training class in On-Screen Estimating Pro.

TUESDAY, March 8 – again, optional training classes take place. Noteworthy: A second one-day training class in On-Screen Estimating Pro (separate from Monday's). Also: The 2nd day of each of the Standard and Advanced classes are set for today.

WEDNESDAY March 9 – morning, McCormick Masters Golf Tournament (7:30am tee time).

Evening: The official conference kick-off is a welcoming reception, held from 7:00pm to 8:30.

Conference Sessions – **THURSDAY March 10** (8:30 a.m. to 5:00) and **FRIDAY March 11** (8:00 am to 4:00).

FRIDAY Dinner – at Aunt Chilada's, begins 6:00 pm

COMPUTER LAB – available 8:30 a.m. to 5 on Thursday, 8:00am to 5:00 on Friday, and 7:30 a.m. to 12 noon on SATURDAY, March 12.

"I'm going because this is a great opportunity to see what's changed in the past year, and we're especially interested in the new Version 12. With McCormick at this conference, there's also an opportunity to give the staff a little input."

– Bob Phillips, Senior Project Executive, Commonwealth Electric of the Midwest, Lincoln NE

[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](#).

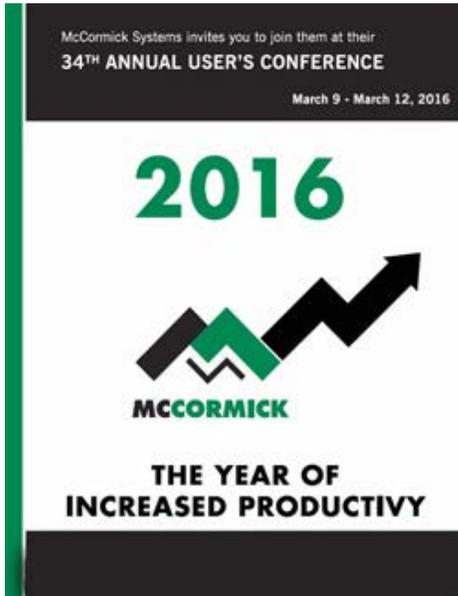


About Version 12

Download the 13-page PDF registration document. You'll probably go, right away, to page 13 – the registration form itself.

But once you've got that business handled, page back into the PDF. You'll find three pages that preview the total redesign of Extension (as well as major improvement to On-Screen Estimating Pro).

We'll not reiterate the details here – see pages 5, 6 and 7 of the PDF.



A better return on your efforts awaits at the coming Users Conference

Contractors and estimators often tell us that they derive benefits from the User's Conference which aren't necessarily on the agenda. A contractor from one end of the country can "talk business" with another – from hundreds or 1,000 miles away – with a clear head. Ideas are exchanged. Friendships are begun (or renewed).

But the 2016 event promises still more. Estimating is a major function for contractors that submit competitive bids or are asked by customers to supply prices. Speed matters. Accuracy is a do-or-die issue.

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](#)

In other words: You have a deep investment in Estimating.

With the 2016 User's Conference, McCormick Systems will deliver to you – live, and in person, and with a chance for hands-on practice – an enhanced set of tools that enable your company to ramp up its speed and performance.

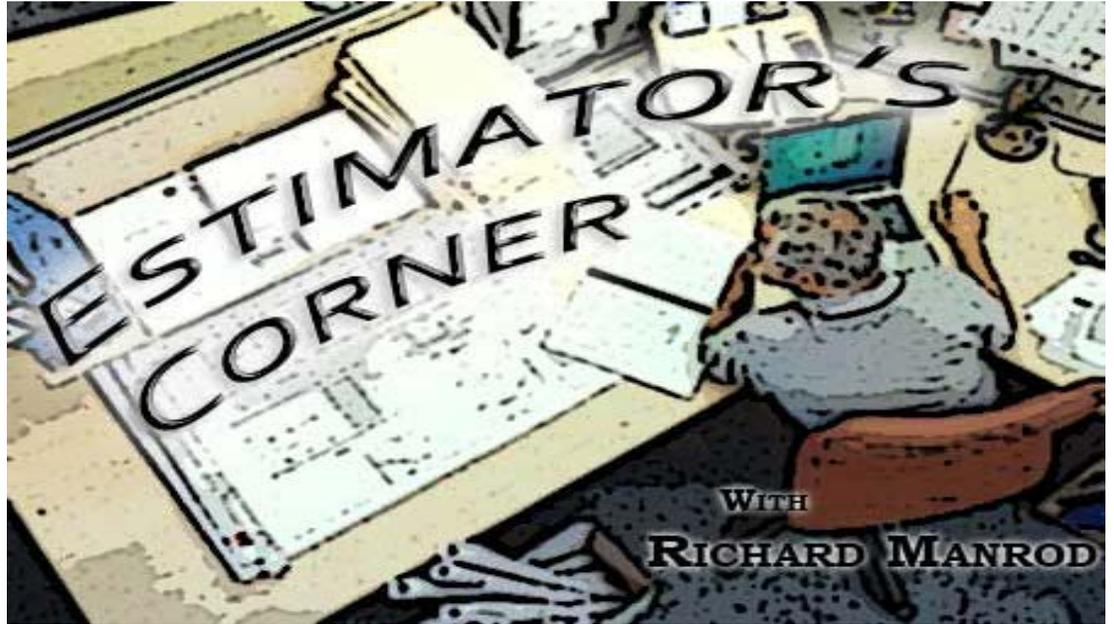
This is NOT about software. It's about success!

"My goal in attending is to stay up on the system, including updates to Edit Extension. We've been looking for to that. And we also appreciate the opportunity to provide input on what we'd like to see."

– Jeff Ihler, President, Tri-Nar Electric, Redmond, WA



Estimator's Corner



Starting the takeoff

Company Estimating Procedures: A company practice of forming an estimating procedure will help in the output of good estimates. The same colors of highlighters, order of takeoff, etc. will help a company control the estimating process.

If an estimator leaves the estimate for a period of time, his estimating procedures should allow him to easily re-start his work. AND: Should the initial estimator be unable to complete the estimate for any reason, another estimator should be able to pick up where he left off.

This can only be accomplished by using good, standardized estimating procedures.

Checking the drawings:

- Check the table of contents for the drawings; be sure that they are complete. If they are not complete either obtain the missing drawings or be positive you don't need them.
- Now that you have thoroughly checked the specifications, **compare the plans to the specifications**. It is a good practice to mark any areas affected by alternates with a highlighter so they won't be missed (mark the drawings so there is no mistake that they have been marked). Create the labels for the alternates either as labels, etc in a computerized estimating system or using separate sheets in a manual system, as shown below. Keep in mind that the deductive alternates need to be included in the base bid.

Base Bid

Alt. E-1 Add

Alt. E-2 Add

Alt. E-3 Deduct

Alt. E-4 Add

- Circle the drawing scale (i.e., $\frac{1}{4}'' = 1'$) on all the drawings and circle the scale of any insets on the same page. A good practice is to write the scale on that part of the drawing in large numbers with a brightly colored pencil.
- Check the scale on all the drawings and insets against a known measurement, like a door opening, a 2x4 lay-in, etc.

Takeoff order can be important. The following takeoff order has worked well.

- Quoted items (lighting fixtures, panels & switchgear, systems, specials, etc.)
- Feeders
- Devices
- Systems wiring
- Branch wiring

Manual takeoff is usually done on special takeoff forms, lined paper, or directly onto the pricing sheets. The pricing sheets may consist of either items or assemblies (groups of items). They usually have a name, quantity, price, unit, price extension, labor, unit, and labor extension columns (note: A manual is furnish to the Students taking McCormick's "Estimating by Hand" class).

Assemblies may be used when doing manual takeoff, but once the job is obtained it's difficult to break out the material. The advantage of using McCormick's computerized estimating system is how easy building and using assemblies is, including breaking them down for an accurate material list.

McCormick offers two ways of doing takeoff. Power Probes and the newer On Screen Estimating Pro (OSEPro).

Power Probes – when using the Power Probes, mark the items or assemblies (outlets, panels, etc.) and lengths as they're taken off – with bright colored highlighters. Any notes, or existing items, etc. should also be marked as they are noted or taken care of. When the takeoff is complete, every item, note or length that pertains to our work should be brightly marked.

OSEPro – when using OSEPro the Items and Assemblies are marked as they're taken off in the computer without having to print any drawings. NOTE: In Estimating classes, almost all of the students elect to use OSEPro for takeoff

If you have any questions about the things in these areas - Please feel free to give us a call - 800-444-4890



Building Assemblies

To build Assemblies, at least two takeoff windows need to be open. An Assembly window needs to be open and in the review mode with the ByProducts list area showing.

Rule of thumb: Have the window with the Assembly being built, in the upper left corner of the screen.

Other windows open: As many additional Item or Assembly windows as needed may be open only limited by the System being used and the 30 window maximum limit.

To begin building an Assembly, click the "AddMode" button at the lower left side of the ByProducts area in the window of the Assembly being built. Notice that a "Transfer" bar appears in all the other Takeoff windows.

- An Assembly may be built using Items or Assemblies (the ByProducts are transferred) by marking an Item or Assembly and clicking the "Transfer" bar.
- When transferring Items, **if there is a ByProduct marked**, you will be asked if you want to "Replace the selected byproduct" and the default is no (the "No" button is highlighted). You will also be asked how many you would like to add (the default is 1) and what constant value you would like (the default is 0).
- When transferring Assemblies you will be asked how many you would like to add (the default is 1) and what you would like to multiply the byproducts constants by (the default is 1). Normally if the number of assemblies added was 2, the constant multiplier would be 2 also.

If help is needed to setup your system click on the "Help" Ribbon, Help Contents, and Jobs: or call McCormick Technical Support at 800-444-4890.

Estimating Plumbing & Mechanical Systems



What can you learn at a pre-bid meeting

By Dick Manrod, McCormick Systems

I used to find any excuse to not go to Pre-Bid meetings, until I realized how important they can be.

When you go to a Pre-Bid meeting, try to be the last person to sign the attendance list. This will allow you to scan the list for who else is attending. I've been to meetings where as soon as it was over I returned the plans and specification.

There are many reasons to **not** bid a job. Here are just a few.

1. When you viewed the list of attendees, one or more of your competitors is famous for low balling Jobs.
2. You have had a bad experience with or the reputation of someone you will have to work with could make the Job unprofitable.
3. This Job will stress your Bonding limits so you won't be able to bid a better upcoming Job.
4. During the walk through, there is a condition that your company will have problems managing.

- 5, You realize you don't have the tools or equipment to manage this Job.
- 5. You won't have the skilled help available needed to complete this Job within the scheduled time.
- 5. The payout schedule doesn't meet your cash requirements; or perhaps you'll come to believe there's a possibility you won't get paid at all.

Allow yourself plenty of time when attending a Pre-Bid meeting. There are many other things to learn beside who your competitors will be.

I once hung around after the Pre-Bid meeting on a School Life Safety Job and spent some time with the School's Maintenance Engineer. The School had the original building and four additions running in various directions. The hour or so I spent with that Engineer helped me get the Job. More importantly, it helped my company make money on it. What happened? Among other things, he showed me where all the tunnels and access areas were.

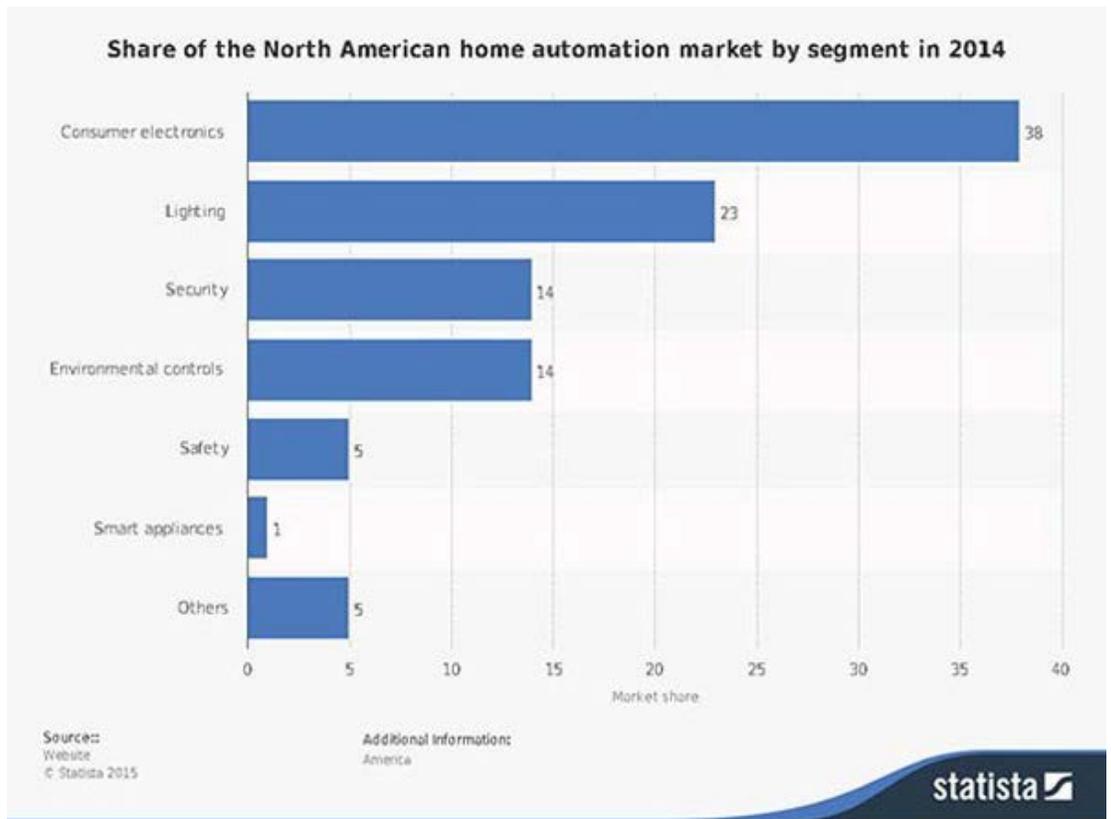
Here is a partial list of some of the other things to look for at a Pre-Bid meeting.

- Where will our Tools, Equipment and Supplies be stored?
- Will they need to be moved and how often?
- Will we need a Lift to move our workers, equipment, and supplies to other floors, or have to pay for the use of someone else's Lift?
- Will the storage areas be secure? Many Contractors have lost material from their Job sites, especially copper.
- Is there any special equipment needed, do we have it, or will we need to rent it?

Spend whatever time is needed looking at all the conditions of the Job. Once the Bid is in, it's too late.

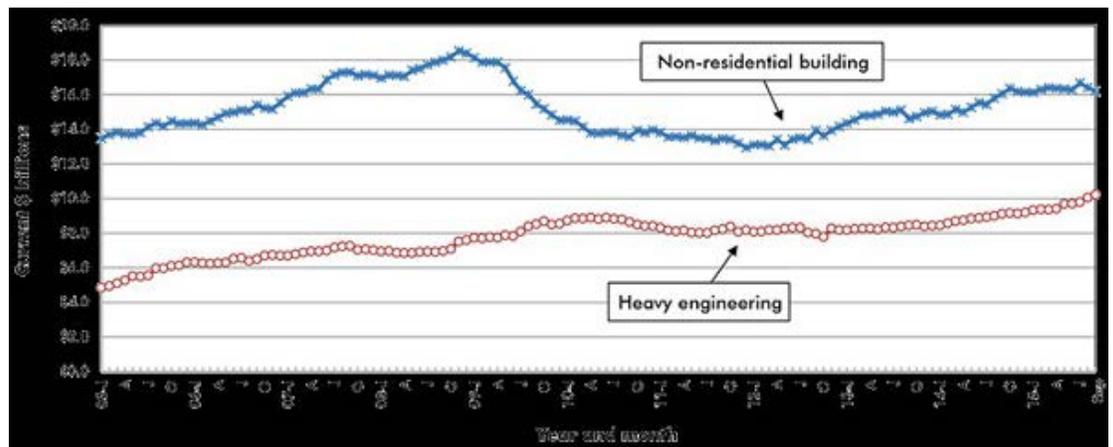
perspective

Lighting & Control - As a piece of the home technology market



(from [EC&M](#))

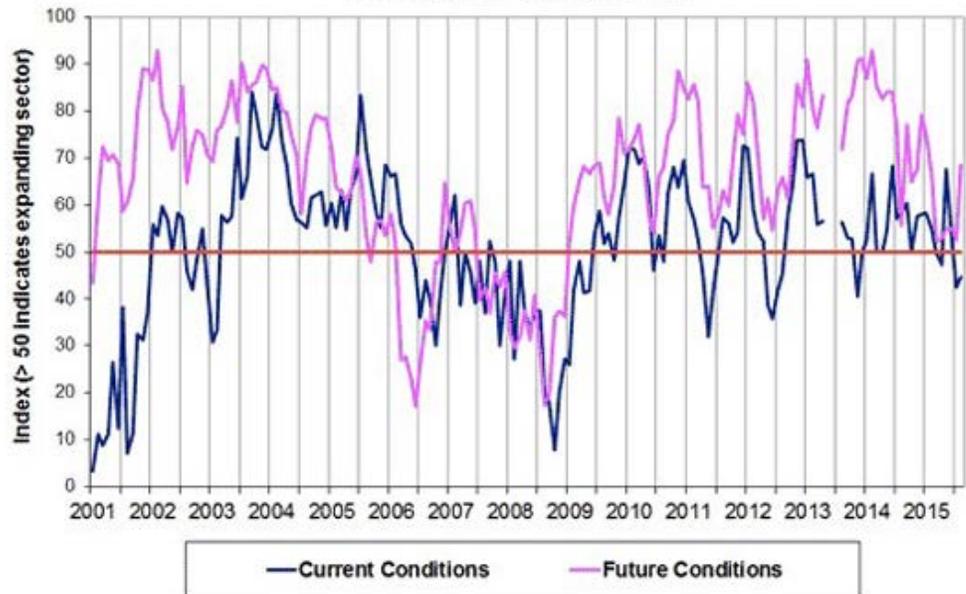
Non-Residential construction starts



[CMD Group](#) posted this and several other charts, updating its data, on construction.

ElectroIndustry index points up & down

Electroindustry Business Conditions Index: March 2001 - October 2015

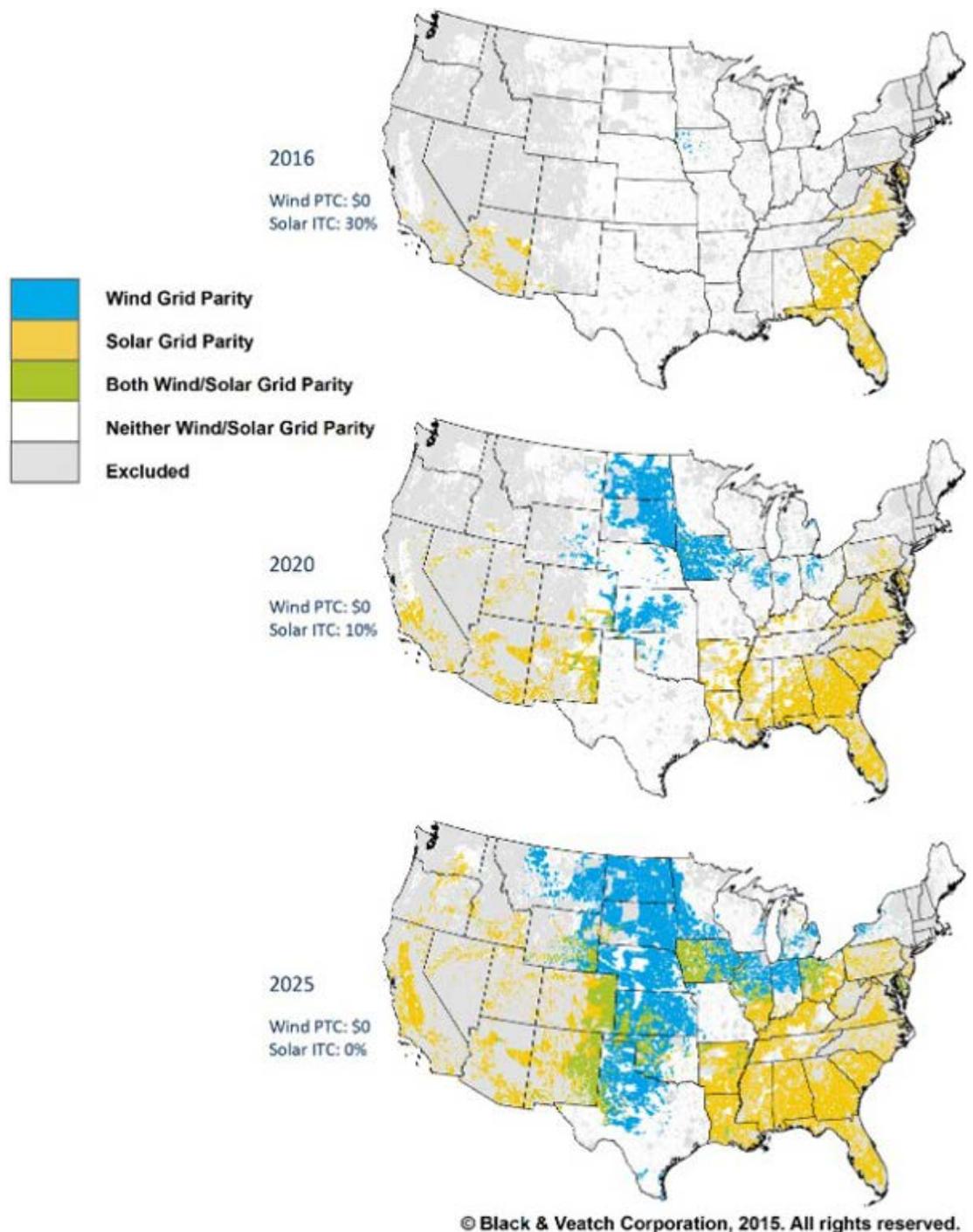


(from [NEMA](#))

NEMA's Electroindustry Business Conditions Index (EBCI) for current conditions in North America measured 44.7 in October as a larger share of panelists reported conditions deteriorated than reported they improved. Nonetheless, the October EBCI represented an increase from 42.5 in September. The survey's measure of the intensity of change in current business conditions held steady at -0.4.

Meanwhile, the EBCI for future North American conditions climbed sharply to 68.4 in October after measuring 52.5 in September.

Solar, wind & wholesale grid parity



(from Black & Veatch)

FMI on skilled labor shortage

"One of the leading findings is that skilled labor shortages are intensifying and broadly affecting construction firms. The survey shows 86% of respondents reported that their company was experiencing skilled labor shortages, compared with only 53% two years ago, a 30% increase in the gap.

"This situation stems from the structural mismatch of labor capabilities and employer demands, as well as the continuing fallout of the last recession. Moreover, the extent of labor shortages is probably more severe than expected and is starting to impact construction firms nationwide.

"The survey also reveals an intriguing mismatch where employee engagement is concerned, especially among millennials. Employers surveyed cite offering competitive pay (89%), providing an enjoyable work environment (81%) and offering training opportunities (76%) as the top-three methods they use to retain

key talent in the construction industry.

"Conversely, millennial employees list the top three important factors for keeping them engaged are competitive pay (29%), work-life balance (23%), and personal development (16%)."

([release posted Oct. 12](#))

149 W Boston Chandler, AZ 85225
Toll Free (800) 444-4890
Phone (480) 831-8914 Fax (480) 820-2422