

Seacon Construction cuts estimating time by more than 50%

Sage Estimating and eTakeoff build the right connection



Seacon Construction is a concrete and masonry contractor serving the Santa Barbara and Ventura county region since 1980. The company is known for its high-end residential and commercial brick, stone, paving, and veneer work. Impressively, Seacon Construction, is entirely referral driven—no salespeople and no advertising. It's a progressive well-run company that relies on technology tools of the trade, including Sage Estimating, eTakeoff Dimension, and eTakeoff Bridge, to keep it on top of the competition.



Leverage technology to modernize estimating

"We started using Sage Estimating back in the late 1990s," recalls Michael Seay, president of Seacon Construction. "Before that, all my estimating was done by me, by hand, and it was very time consuming. I knew I needed to hire estimators to free up my own time, and I would need to provide them with software to create accurate, consistent estimates. That's when I implemented Sage Estimating. The productivity gains were considerable. It was—and is—the best estimating software on the market, by far."

Customer

Seacon Construction

Industry

Concrete and masonry contractor

Headquarters

Moorpark, California

System

Sage Estimating
eTakeoff Dimension
eTakeoff Bridge

Seacon Construction was also an early adopter of electronic takeoff software, further streamlining its estimating tasks. "I believe in investing in technology that allows our people to be better and more efficient at their jobs," Seay says.

Bridge the gap

While the estimating and takeoff tools freed Seay's time to build the business, there was one piece lacking—true integration between Sage Estimating and the company's digital takeoff software. "We were manually keying our takeoff quantities into Sage Estimating. There was always the opportunity for error, and it added a lot of time to the estimating process. When I heard about eTakeoff Dimension and eTakeoff Bridge, I was immediately intrigued," Seay says.

Challenge

Seacon Construction has been using Sage Estimating and takeoff software for many years to streamline and standardize its estimating tasks, but still had to manually key the takeoff quantities into Sage Estimating to finish its estimates, a time-consuming process that could introduce errors.

Solution

The company added eTakeoff Dimension and eTakeoff Bridge to its Sage Estimating installation to form a comprehensive integrated estimating solution for the company.

Results

Since adding eTakeoff Dimension and eTakeoff Bridge to its Sage Estimating solution, the time to produce estimates has been slashed by an additional 50 percent. By eliminating the manual rekeying of takeoff quantities, accuracy and productivity have increased. Drawing changes can be automatically updated to the estimate while still preserving original detail.

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Michael Seay, president
Seacon Construction

eTakeoff Dimension is a leading electronic takeoff solution, and eTakeoff Bridge is the application that integrates it with Sage Estimating. eTakeoff Bridge automatically sends takeoff quantities calculated by eTakeoff Dimension to the estimate, eliminating the need for manual data entry. “eTakeoff Bridge is the missing piece that automates and streamlines the entire estimating cycle, from start to finish,” says Seay.

All of the assemblies Seacon Construction utilizes in Sage Estimating are available in eTakeoff Bridge. Estimators enter each of the assembly variables during takeoff, and the data is transferred either automatically or manually (drag and drop) to Sage Estimating, with no rekeying. “I created and refined all of our assemblies in Sage Estimating to bring consistency and accuracy to the process,” Seay says. “And those assemblies are now available to us during takeoff. It makes the process much more seamless and efficient.”

Reduce estimating time by an additional 50 percent

The increased efficiency is saving the company money. By streamlining and standardizing estimating tasks through the use of Sage Estimating, eTakeoff Dimension, and eTakeoff Bridge, Seay says he is able to hire less tenured, and therefore less costly, employees to perform the task.

The efficiency also leads to faster, more accurate estimates that boost the company’s profitability. “When combined with Sage Estimating and eTakeoff Dimension, eTakeoff Bridge reduces the time it takes to produce an estimate by an additional 50 percent,” says Seay. “It paid for itself within a few short weeks.”

From within Sage Estimating, eTakeoff Bridge allows the staff to drill down and locate and highlight drawing measurements in eTakeoff Dimension. The resulting time savings allows the company to take on additional bids without increasing staffing levels, and it enables the estimators to focus more time on maintaining accurate, up-to-date pricing in the assemblies, ensuring every project is successful and profitable.

“I’ve had colleagues from other, much larger contractors visit our offices to see how we do what they do and they are always impressed,” says Seay. “Many of them are still using Excel spreadsheets for estimating.”

Embrace change

One constant in the construction industry is change. With Sage Estimating, eTakeoff Dimension, and eTakeoff Bridge, staff can automatically update the estimate with drawing changes while still retaining original estimate detail such as pricing and productivity factors.

“Every project has changes, and they can be very time consuming to price and incorporate into the estimate. Previously we had to redo the takeoff and redo the estimate, but with eTakeoff Bridge it is so much easier. Our changes update Sage Estimating automatically, and the system tracks all the changes for us.”

Pave the way for the future

Seay feels like he’s made the investments that will make the company easier to transition to a new owner when he’s ready to step down. “With Sage Estimating and eTakeoff, I’ve created a situation where the owner can focus on the overall direction and strategy of the business without being involved in every detail of its running.”

He concludes, “Consistent, accurate, and reliable estimates are the lifeblood of any successful contractor. Using tools that ensure that consistency and accuracy—and also bring a rapid return on investment—just makes smart business sense.”

About Sage

Sage energizes the success of businesses and their communities around the world through the use of smart technology and the imagination of our people. Sage has reimagined business and brings energy, experience, and technology to inspire our customers to fulfill their dreams. We work with a thriving community of entrepreneurs, business owners, tradespeople, accountants, partners, and developers who drive the global economy. Sage is a FTSE 100 company with 14,000 employees in 24 countries. For more information, visit www.sage.com.

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