

Efficient Estimating Saves Dow Corning on Capital Improvements

Multi-national corporation Dow Corning relies on Sage Timberline Office estimating for quick, accurate estimates when it's making decisions on capital improvements and construction projects.

Lead Estimator David Rupp says he and another estimator do up to 400 estimates a year using Sage Timberline Office, mostly for conceptual estimates used by economic evaluators to decide whether a proposed project makes good business sense.

"I can do five or six options with different configurations and different types of equipment and different materials of construction while looking for the lowest cost and the one with the best fit," Rupp says. "The software makes it easy to change a few details on an estimate for comparison purposes."

Multiple Users Made Easy

With thousands of employees and sites around the world, Dow Corning has more estimating work than its two full-time estimators could possibly keep up with. So Rupp put together a two- to four-hour training program that introduces new users to Sage Timberline Office software as well as general estimating concepts.

"If they want to know how much it costs to put in a pump, they can do it very quickly on their own. If they're talking about opening up a whole new site in a new country, then they generally come to the two of us here in Midland, Michigan," Rupp says.

With 13 licenses to use the software, Dow Corning has two full-time users, about 10 part-time users, and up to 75 occasional users, Rupp estimates. They manage that by using the Sage Timberline Office license manager module, which they keep on a central server that all the employees can access.

"Using License Manager, we can keep track of who has access and who doesn't," Rupp says. "One of the problems we had was people trying to use the software when they didn't understand how to, so now we don't give them access to the database on our server unless they go through the training. I'm the gatekeeper."

Customer:

Dow Corning

Industry:

Manufacturing

Location:

Midland, Michigan

System:

Sage Timberline Office

- Estimating
- Reporting and Other Tools

CHALLENGE

Estimators needed to keep pace with the annual demand for more than 400 capital improvement and construction project estimates worldwide.

SOLUTION

Sage Timberline Office estimating software provides standard and custom assemblies with multiple options, configurations, and materials. Estimators are able to show the lowest cost and best fit.

RESULTS

The streamlined Sage Timberline Office system allows a number of estimators to easily create and distribute practical alternatives to decision makers around the world.

Customizable Assemblies

With so many occasional users, Rupp says he needed to find a way to make using the software as easy as possible for people who might not remember its finer points.

"It's not like a bicycle where you don't use it for two months and you go right back to it. People tend to forget," Rupp says.

So he designed numerous assemblies that simplify the estimating process with straightforward questions that are easy for the user to answer without remembering formulas.

"With the assemblies, these people can very quickly go in and get an estimate and not have to remember all the background things to take into consideration because we prompt them," Rupp says. "The two of us here at Midland have put together all of the questions they need for a particular type of normal installation, whether it be a tank, a pump, a building. We've done all that pre-thinking for them."

Sharing Reports

One feature that has made life easier at Dow Corning is the ability to create a PDF file of a report. That allows Rupp to share his estimates with colleagues around the world electronically even if they don't have Sage Timberline Office.

"In the past, you either had the software or we had to send hard copies. With the PDF file, I can print the estimate out or share it electronically with people around the world, and they don't have to know anything about the software," Rupp says.

For more information about Sage Timberline Office, visit www.sagecre.com, call 800-628-6583, or contact your local Sage Timberline Office Business Partner.

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Lead Estimator