

BID2WIN FINDS SUCCESS WHILE A COMPETITOR BECOMES SHELFWARE

A disastrous experience with one estimating package was almost enough to make Walled Lake, Michigan's C.A. Hull swear off the idea of computerized estimating altogether.

As longtime estimator Terry Smid recalls, making the switch from an in-house spreadsheet to HCSS's Windows version at first seemed like a logical step in taking the company's estimating to the next level. After using the system for only a short time, however, the opposite proved true. "We just weren't happy with what we saw," he says. "We were running into all sorts of problems and inaccurate numbers. It was put back on the shelf very quickly."

The disenchantment following the experience was such that when a BID2WIN demonstration disc crossed Terry's desk a short time later, it sat there untouched for months. He was moments away from tossing the CD in his wastebasket, when something made him think twice.

"I put the disc in, and was more than impressed with what I saw," he recalls. "I said to myself, 'It's what we thought we were getting before, but this time it actually works.'"

Before long, C.A. Hull was up and running with BID2WIN. Within a few months, the company won the first bid it put out with BID2WIN.

It's been two years since those early days, and Terry is hard pressed to find something he doesn't like about the software. "BID2WIN is a well organized, logical program," he says. "It's been an integral part in helping us to standardize our whole estimating process."

Part of that standardization has been BID2WIN's ability to easily import from and export to Bid Express. Other favorites among the estimators include subcontractor management and global edits, a "hidden but very powerful" feature. Terry adds that BID2WIN's custom reports have also played a significant role in C.A. Hull's satisfaction with the program.

"There are about a half dozen or so reports we use on a regular basis," he continues. "We're able to modify every one of them to fit our needs."

Terry explains that electronically creating a job budget once an estimate is complete takes only hours as opposed to the days it may have taken to do it in the past.

From training sessions at BID2WIN's New Hampshire office to support calls if a question should arise, Terry says that the value of this product goes beyond the software itself.

"Everyone's so responsive to our input," he says. "We've made some suggestions for the next generation of the product that we're really excited to see implemented."

For 50 years, C.A. Hull has been a leading provider of bridgework for the entire state of Michigan. The company is headquartered in Walled Lake, Michigan. To learn more go to www.cahull.com.

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