

# Taking it Easy

Easy Price Pro estimating software could help you win work during the upturn.

**N**ext year, it's widely anticipated that there'll be an upturn in the economy. Are you determined to ensure that your business can survive the current recession and thrive once it's over? If so, the first step should be an investment in estimating software, says Easy Price Pro Commercial Director Stephanie Collyer, because this alone will save you thousands.

When winning a job do you often ask yourself: "Have I priced it too low? Or when losing one: "Have I priced it too high?" Easy Price Pro estimating software takes this uncertainty away and ensures that your quotes are accurate and have taken everything into account. It also guarantees your paperwork will be well-presented and include all relevant details. Clients want the assurance that their builder is professional and does high quality work, so your quotations should be like that too as they reflect directly on your business. Estimating software also keeps you organised and ensures you don't forget anything you need. Once you tap in some basic information about the project, the defaults throw up every item you would normally need for this kind of job and you can then alter to your own specifications, as required.

### Pass on your costs, reduce your overheads

Every business, however small, needs to add a percentage on to every quote for overheads like insurance, vehicles and fuel, mobile phone bills, tool maintenance and replacement, stationery, heat, light and time

spent off the job, on paperwork etc. If you haven't done so already, add up ALL your overheads, set the total figure beside last year's turnover and calculate it as a percentage. For example, if your turnover last year was £400k and your overheads were £60k, then your overheads are 15%. So when costing work, the base line on most jobs would be 15%.

At a time of recession businesses must keep overheads to a minimum. Test the market for all your outgoings by comparing prices for expenditure such as power, insurance and mobile phone tariffs. Use price comparison websites wherever possible to save you time.

### Compare material prices

Easy Price Pro's Easy Order Ultra makes cost comparisons for building materials for you by exporting the list of materials and quantities from New Homes and Extensions Plus or Renovations & Alterations and emailing it off to any suppliers you choose. The software then imports the prices back and crunches the numbers, maximising your savings and creating the purchase orders of your choice, all within a few clicks of the mouse.

At the National Homebuilding and Renovating Show in March Easy Price Pro did a live demonstration on the stand and used Easy Order Ultra to e-mail six well-known suppliers for a typical batch of materials for an extension. The return prices showed totals ranging from £10,000 down to £6,000, so savings of 40 per cent were possible.



### Control your cash flow

Make sure your clients pay you on time during each phase of the job, as agreed, by providing clear work schedules for staged payments. If there are unavoidable delays and a stage of the project is not completed on time, keep the goodwill going by providing clients with a revised schedule as soon as possible. Work schedules are included as a basic part of all Easy Price Pro estimating software programs.

And, talking about goodwill, the latest technology from EPP helps you to avoid these niggling disputes about additional costs or 'extras' as they're commonly known. Easy Comparer has just been released and provides a detailed breakdown of any changes in requirements over the whole job. It compares the original quote with any altered specifications and generates a report of all the differences in cost so you and your client know exactly where you stand.  
*Next month: Client satisfaction*

### MORE INFORMATION

**To request more information on Easy Price Pro, use the readerlink enquiry number 124**