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# Tendering and estimation in construction pdf notes

Comstock Images/Stockbyte/Getty Images By: Fraser Sherman Updated September 26, 2017 When a builder bids on a project, it has to be both competitive and profitable. Before setting the bid price, the builder has to estimate her costs in time, material and labor. A rough estimate can result in a bid that won't cover the construction expenses. If the builder bids carefully, she'll earn a gross profit and a net profit. Gross profit measures the profit the builder makes over and above the direct costs of the job. Direct costs include equipment, repairs, labor costs and supplies. Net profit, however, is the measure that tells the builder if he's really doing well. Net profit considers both direct costs and overhead -- the indirect expenses, such as rent on the company offices and administrative time, that aren't directly attributable to the job. If a builder makes a good gross profit but no net profit, that's not good news. Different builders have different standards by which they measure overhead. Some companies include the benefits and employee taxes on the job crew as a direct cost, but others count it as part of the overhead. The Building Advisor online magazine says some companies base the amount of overhead they assign to a project on what it costs to build, while others base it on the time involved. The amount of overhead the company assigns to the job will affect the net profit estimate, but not the gross profit estimate. If you're looking to start a construction business, it's a good idea to use construction estimating software so you can get a clear understanding of how much your projects are going to cost so you can provide an accurate bid. Even if you're doing some renovations to your home or your business, using takeoff software to understand your expenses is a beneficial strategy to keep your project within scope and budget. The right construction estimating software can help your business to calculate material, equipment and labor costs. The software can also help you to create formal bid documents that you can send to clients. Most software will do complex calculations for you, helping your business run efficiently. There are many options for free construction estimating software. Do your research so you can find the right free takeoff software for your needs. This will help you to bid on more projects in less time. One of the basic elements your software should provide is a database that enables you to compare costs of building materials so that you can provide a client with an accurate bid. Most construction estimating software can pull this data from the internet, as these companies have access to databases of wholesale prices for building materials. You may also require your construction estimating software to have takeoffs for adjusting estimates. Generally, you'll need to be able to determine how much you'll need in terms of materials and then develop an estimate for their costs. Most construction estimating software programs automatically calculate a price for each material line item based on the available data. In some cases, you may want to be able to upload to the software the blueprints of your proposed projects. This enables you to keep all of the pertinent information for your project in one place, ensuring your business is well organized and efficient. Some construction estimating software can also come in handy after your bid has been accepted by keeping track of materials and other ongoing project costs. You can use the software to keep your project on track by comparing your costs with the original estimates. This is a useful feature for showing your clients comparative reports when costs have been exceeded. Free software doesn't always mean you don't have to pay for something. There are a number of details into which you need to look when deciding which free software you want to use based on what is offered for free. Generally, free software products have no cost to download and use them, but you might have to work with an IT team to implement, maintain and host them for your business. Some free software is a lighter version of the paid software, so it may not contain all of the features you need for your business. In addition, some free software is only free for a limited time, and you'll need to purchase it for ongoing use. Some popular free construction estimating software options include: Easy-Pro Builders Estimator is always free. If you win a bid, they request a donation of 0.01 percent of the total value. PlanSwift is free for a 14-day trial period. After that, you need to purchase a plan. \* PlanViewer is always free. If you need to use some of their advanced features, you need to upgrade to a paid version. STACK has a completely free version of their software. You can upgrade your plan if you need more features. Estimate is always free. They request donations if you win a bid. In order to start using the free construction cost estimators, head to their website. Follow the instructions provided by the company to download and implement the software. If you have a high-volume business or need to access more advanced features, it may be beneficial for your business to look into an upgraded version of a free software. When factoring in costs, don't forget to include aspects such as IT support and hosting, which may be required for free versions as well as paid versions. Some paid versions of the software do come with tech support.

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