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Construction Accounting Software 2006 — Executive Summary

Apr. 13, 2006

*From the April/May 2006 Review of
Construction Accounting Software*

Although this is the 2006 Construction Software review, the majority of the products that were reviewed in this issue are suitable for a variety of construction and construction related businesses such as custom homebuilders, subcontractors, HVAC contractors, Heavy Highway, and Equipment Repair businesses.

We looked at six major areas for each product. The first, Learning Curve, highlights the ease (or difficulty) of initial product installation and setup, ease of navigation, customization capability, etc. The next area, Modules and Functionality, stated what modules or features were included with the product, and what add-ons, if any, were available. Import/Export/Integration is an area that may be of great importance to some, and relatively unimportant to others. To smaller companies, the most important function of the three may be integration. After all, it's pointless to purchase a system hoping to get a better control on your time management, and then realize that your core modules don't integrate with your add-on modules. Support and Training lets you know exactly what training options are offered, and what type of product support is available.

It's also important to note whether the product includes a useful Help function. I am amazed at the number of people who simply do not take advantage of this very helpful feature. And with many software vendors enhancing their Help function to be more interactive, it may be helpful to note that many problems you may encounter as you familiarize yourself with a new software product can be answered simply by clicking on the Help function. Reporting is always important, particularly for larger companies that need to produce more in-depth reports, and distribute them to a variety of sources.

The tough one is Relative Value. How do you assign value to a product that you have not spent weeks using? It's very difficult, and it's important to remember that relative value is not necessarily about product cost. Rather, it's about what that product may prove to be worth to the market for which it is targeted.

You, the consumer, will have to apply your own definition of value to these products. Visit their websites, talk to a company representative, maybe even try out a demo for a week or two. You'll be in a much better position to assign a value that is important to you and your company needs. Either way, all of the products here are worth a second look. □

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