

How to know when it's time to invest in software built for contractors



Taking time to shop for new business software can feel like a stretch, especially if you're not clear if new software can make enough significant improvement. The assessment list below can help you determine if it is time to switch to a construction-specific solution and worth the investigation:

Check off each issue that applies to your business.

✓	Accounting:
	You can spend hours reconciling your books, wondering why a number is off.
	You often are coordinating with others to understand what needs to be billed or paid.
	The field continually calls the office or stops by to get information or assistance.
✓	Change orders:
	You have missed getting a change order approved, risking if you'll get paid for the work.
	There's no easy way to track change orders.
✓	Job costs:
	Tracking committed to actual costs is a manual effort. Usually you don't know the actual costs until the job ends.
	You often fall behind knowing your actual labor costs, which can hurt profitability.
	Some jobs don't make money. If you had the right information during the job, you could have made a different decision and made a profit.
✓	Reports:
	Most of your construction-specific reports, such as a certified payroll, union, or other report, are manually created, making it a long workday when you need them.
	You don't have access to the reports you need that would confirm which jobs or which aspects of the work bring in the best margin.

✓	Estimates:
	Time spent creating estimates in spreadsheets requires lots of scrutiny, but even with scrutiny, costs can be missed or inaccurate.
	Setting up a new job from an estimate is done manually, transferring information from one system to accounting, to initiate things like purchase orders.
	Tracking how you perform on a job against the original budget is only known after combining numbers together.
✓	Project management:
	You or your office is not automatically alerted when things are needing attention, such as insurance about to expire, or outstanding lien waivers.
	You do not have access to a report that will indicate when job costs may soon exceed the budget.
	You often spend time searching for the most recent project document, such as RFIs, submittals, transmittals, or the latest approved drawings.
	You need to leave the site to get information more often than you'd like.
✓	Service management:
	You track dispatch, scheduling, inventory, equipment, and documents using separate systems and methods. You enter information twice. You confirm information referring to different places.
	Changes to schedules take concentration.
	Keeping inventory at a minimum takes effort.

Sage Construction and Real Estate

If you check two or more boxes, you are most likely putting out a level of effort that is unnecessary. Your team is working extra hours that can otherwise be automated. Also, if you manage jobs using information that is late, incomplete, or inaccurate, these best-guess decisions can easily erode your already thin margins and expose your business to undue risk. It may be time to start relying on software that is built for your type of business, software that can do the work for you, giving you stronger visibility and performance.

How does a construction-specific solution make a difference? When you directly tie together your jobs with accounting, your performance of your business will increase.

The decisions that are made during a construction project have the biggest impact to the bottom line. That's why software that integrates estimating, scheduling, job cost, project management, and service management into everyday accounting practices can best help you manage your business, and in turn, help improve profitability. Even the smallest contracting company can find substantial benefits because you start to gain visibility and control of your job costs as you make your daily decisions.

Unlike generic accounting packages, a construction-specific solution can:

1. Give stronger and earlier visibility into the actual status of job costs and expected future performance as a project progresses.
2. Increase business confidence by connecting construction processes, centralizing financial and operational data within one system, delivering strong audit capabilities, and providing managers with construction-specific reports, alerts and more.
3. Reduce errors and redundancy that results when using multiple, disconnected systems, including Microsoft Excel and Word to manage a business.
4. Strengthen communication between the field and the office to keep projects moving forward. Better communications contributes towards earlier visibility on arising issues before they become problems that drain the bottom line.
5. Help contractors effectively and efficiently comply with governmental, union and other reporting requirements specifically affecting the construction industry. It also handles the complexity associated with owner, general contractor and subcontractor relationships.

Sage 100 Contractor and **Sage 300 Construction and Real Estate** are both integrated solutions that provide business visibility, centralized financial and operational information, reduction in errors and redundancy, and streamlined processes. Each product also provides a solid foundation towards best construction accounting practices, helping you to provide quality services to your clients.

Sage 100 Contractor (formerly Sage Master Builder) is a single integrated software solution built specifically for small and mid-sized construction companies. It gives you the visibility to move your business into stronger job performance and profitability that no off-the-shelf bookkeeping software can, combining accounting, project management, and service management all in one place. To learn more, visit: www.SageContractor.com

Sage 300 Construction and Real Estate (formerly Sage Timberline Office) offers advanced capabilities for mid-sized construction and real estate businesses requiring solutions to handle more business complexity, more stringent business documentation and reporting needs, and farther-reaching integration of business processes. It uses in-depth project visibility to make well-informed, data-driven decisions throughout all phases of the project or property lifecycle. To learn more, visit: www.sagecre.com

Why choose a construction specific solution from Sage

For more than 40 years, Sage Construction and Real Estate has provided software for small to mid-sized construction and real estate companies. Sage Construction and Real Estate solutions are used by more than 40,000 companies each year to manage more than 400,000 projects and 5.7 million subcontracts. Our solutions help companies make clear-sighted decisions on a daily basis.

Sage Construction and Real Estate works with a wide network of knowledgeable, construction-focused business partners and software consultants. Our experts can help construction customers on-site, online, or by phone. We offer deep industry experience, having helped thousands of contractors implement new technology into their businesses. You have our commitment to delivering personalized and professional service at every stage. With 90% of our customers rating their customer support experience an 8 or higher on a scale of 1 to 10, and our customer support representatives averaging seven years of experience in supporting our products, you can expect to get quick access to the answers your customers need to keep their businesses moving.

For more information on **call us at 800-628-6583** or **email us at productinfo.cre@sage.com**.

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About The Sage Group plc

The Sage Group plc is a leading global provider of business management software to small and medium sized companies, creating greater freedom for them to succeed. Sage understands how and why each business is unique. We provide products and services that suit varying needs, are a pleasure to use and are secure and efficient. Formed in 1981, Sage was floated on the London Stock Exchange in 1989 and entered the FTSE 100 in 1999. Sage has over 6 million customers and more than 13,380 employees in 24 countries covering the UK & Ireland, mainland Europe, North America, South Africa, Australia, Asia, and Brazil. For further information please visit www.sage.com.

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