



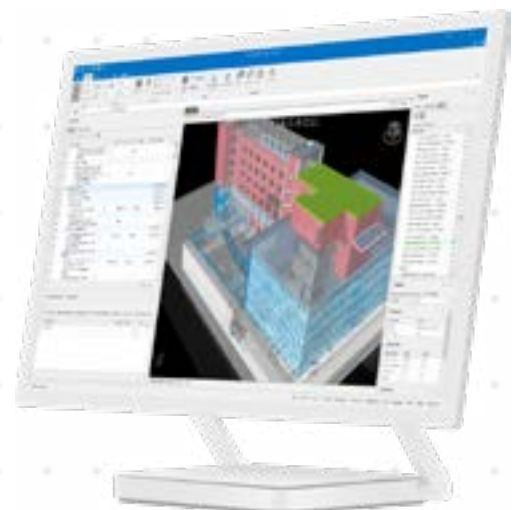
Spreadsheets vs

**Estimating Software**

Determining the best approach  
for your business

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## Determining the best approach for your business

As technological advancements have transformed our everyday lives, so to have they been instrumental in changing the way we do business, and the construction industry is no different.

We can now use robots to lay bricks, use drones to assess sites and monitor work conditions, and even 3D print entire homes. The frontier of Artificial Intelligence, automations, and new technologies in construction is exciting, and there are many changes that can be used in your day-to-day work that can have significant impacts on both the daily short term, and the strategic long term success of your business.

One of the areas of massive change for construction companies is estimating. Moving away from manually calculating quantities, spreadsheets brought many estimators and builders into the digital age, and they are still one of the most popular tools used to help determine the cost of a build. While spreadsheets offer many benefits, the use of estimating software like Cubit Estimating - Buildsoft's state-of-the-art construction estimating solution - can take your business to the next level, with an array of advantages.

If you're still using spreadsheets for your construction estimating, you should consider the use of specialised estimating software in reviewing the best approach for your business moving forward.

To help you with the process, we've highlighted some of the differences between the two options, and why estimating software is becoming more popular as the preferred solution for many construction companies, Estimators, and Quantity Surveyors world-wide.

01

# Save more time - reclaim weeks, not days

It's well-known that estimating is complicated and time-consuming. For a long time, the best way to estimate has been to use manual methods - using a scale ruler to measure plans by hand, and entering that information into spreadsheets, and developing your own formulas to calculate the results.

While this approach is still used by the majority of companies in the construction industry, it is far from the most time efficient and accurate way to produce estimates.

Estimating software has revolutionised the estimating and takeoff process, offering massive time savings.

With Cubit Estimating, you could be estimating up to 10 times faster than spreadsheets and manual methods. That's because the software has been designed and developed specifically for construction estimating, with specialised functionality. Unlike a manual spreadsheet which requires

you to format your estimate from scratch and create your own formulas, Cubit Estimating is designed to help you get a job underway and estimate quickly.

You can set up your common trades and items, and save them as a template to use to start new jobs quickly and consistently. Cubit Estimating also allows you to import a price list and use that as a template, so when you need to update a price from one of your suppliers, you can do it easily in just one place, and have it pushed out across all of your jobs.

Using Cubit Estimating's powerful takeoff tools is another area where massive time savings can be gained when compared to manual methods. You no longer need to use a scale ruler; you can import your 2D plans as PDFs or image files into the software and then trace directly over them to determine your measurements, which automatically populate the estimate sheet. There's no need to type your quantities into the software. It's quick and easy, and you can be taking off a room in seconds, and a complete house in minutes. Plus the availability of different takeoff tools means you can choose the best method to suit you and your plans. You can also import an IFC file to extract quantities directly from a BIM model and apply to your estimate.

Saving time is a way you can maximise how efficient you and your workforce are. Cubit Estimating takes your efficiency to the next level with a process called 'Natural Estimating' - showing your takeoff and estimate in one view, and seamlessly integrating them so you can see your results being returned in real-time.

## 02

# Improve your accuracy and minimize errors

Accuracy is the key to successful estimating. An accurate estimate will give you the detailed information you need to determine the closest true cost of a build, and share those costs with colleagues and clients, or use them to bid for a job.

The use of manual estimating techniques including spreadsheets have a high risk of error. From human error to equipment error, mistakes can easily throw off an estimate, resulting in overblown budgets, underquoted jobs, and bid losses.

Cubit Estimating is a solution to this common problem, and minimizes your risk or error. You don't have to program your own formulas to calculate common result types like area, length, or volume and risk them being damaged, or worry that your manual calculations are incorrect. These common calculations are built-in to Cubit Estimating. If you're moving from spreadsheets to Cubit Estimating, the transition is made easier through functions like referencing, allowing you to link data between cells.

Cubit Estimating also allows you to takeoff with pinpoint accuracy, and check your work in interactive 3D, so you can be sure you haven't missed any items. It's this kind of additional functionality from a specialised solution that takes your business forward in leaps and bounds in comparison to what you can achieve in a simple spreadsheet.

03

# Data analysis made easy

One of the significant differences between spreadsheets like Microsoft Excel and estimating software like Cubit Estimating, is the ability to organise your data.

Cubit Estimating allows you to group similar information together so you can quickly analyse a job by cost code, material, or trade, with just the click of a button. This functionality gives you the flexibility to view your job in multiple ways, and easily analyse the specific information you need. You can also choose to save multiple groupings as 'grouped views', and quickly return to them as you need, giving you complete control over how you want to work.

Specialised functionality like this, which is designed so you can perform tasks that are unique to construction estimating, is why Cubit Estimating stands out as a more efficient tool than spreadsheets.



## 04

# Maintain a professional appearance

Having a professional image is essential when dealing with clients. It sets your business apart from the competition, and helps build trust and confidence in your offering.

While using a spreadsheet will give you the opportunity to make your data appear professional, it takes time and effort to set up and enter your information into new spreadsheets to use as reports. One of the differences you'll experience when you choose to use estimating software instead of a spreadsheet, is the speed and ease of formatting your data to share with your customers.



Cubit Estimating allows you to customize and generate a range of professional reports at the click of a button, to share with both colleagues and clients. You can choose the information you'd like to present, and apply your company's unique branding, to maintain a consistent and professional appearance.

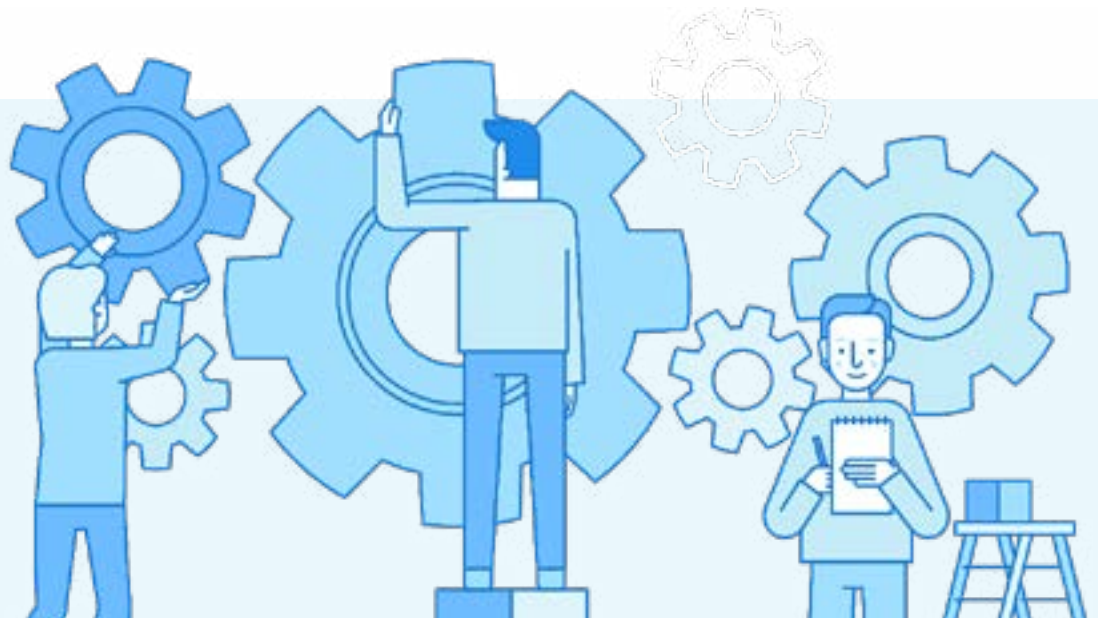


## Get technical support to help you achieve success

All software will take some time to learn until you can use it to its fullest potential. This is true for both spreadsheets and estimating software. And at some point, you'll need to reach out to someone for some help - whether it's to answer some simple questions, or help you with a technical issue.

While both Microsoft Excel and Cubit Estimating offer support, there's definitely a difference in the type of support you'll receive. When you contact the MiTek support team, you'll get help from a professional who understands what you're trying to achieve in the context of your work. As Cubit Estimating is a specialised estimating solution, the team can understand your needs from a deeper and more focused point of view.

With spreadsheets, you won't be getting the same construction estimating expertise you need in order to achieve your specific goals.



06

## The verdict



The difference between what you can achieve with a spreadsheet and what you can achieve with specialised estimating software is vast. Working with a system that has been designed with construction estimating at its core offers you a wide variety of added functionality that you simply do not get from a spreadsheet alone.

Whether you're down to the wire working to submit a bid, quoting costs for a client, or working on your own build, the benefits of partnering with a company like MiTek that has developed a solution to the challenges you face uniquely in your line of work cannot be overstated.

While a spreadsheet will help you get the job done, Cubit Estimating will save you time, increase your accuracy and make you more efficient. You'll have the peace of mind of knowing your work is correct through your ability to easily report on, analyse, and review your data, as well as knowing there is specialised help available when needed.

Simply put, estimating software wins hands-down when you compare the benefits you'll experience.

07

# Making the change to estimating software

Change can be daunting at the best of times, and implementing a change in processes across your company can seem like too much trouble. However, when you assess whether or not estimating software is worth the effort, you'll see how helpful it can be in increasing the efficiency and profitability of your business.

Remember that specialised software like Cubit Estimating will be backed with support from a dedicated team, to help you achieve the success you're looking for.

For your guide on how to implement estimating software into your business, check out our free resource guide:

A guide to implementing estimating software into your company.



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Innovators of world-renowned construction software, Buildsoft has pioneered estimating and takeoff solutions for more than 35 years. We have set the industry standard for quality software and continue to deliver new solutions that transform the businesses and lives of construction professionals - helping them to work faster, more efficiently, and more profitably than ever before.

With thousands of construction companies in more than 50 countries trusting our solutions as their essential business software, Buildsoft is a brand that is respected throughout the construction industry in Australia and around the world.

Contact us for a demonstration or free trial  
of our leading solutions.

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