

Meade Wins More Projects with a Faster, More Accurate, and More Automated Project Estimate Log



Chicago-based design, engineering, and construction firm Meade creates several thousand estimates each year worth over \$1.5 billion in potential opportunities. A fragmented collection of shared spreadsheets made it difficult to open, update and track estimate workflow, value, and volume. PSC designed a SharePoint-based Estimate Log that added immediate structure and speed to the estimating process and enabled better collaboration among Meade divisions.

Demanding schedules, expensive materials, and complicated facility designs make large-scale ground-up or add-on construction estimating challenging to say the least.

Accurately calculating labor units, material procurement, and subcontractor costs is half the battle. The other half is keeping it all organized and accessible for key stakeholders.

“The Estimate Log from PSC has helped us increase our capture rates for big projects by making our estimates leaner and more competitive. It’s giving us speed and intelligence for our estimating that makes us smarter and more successful across our divisions, as well as our entire business.”



Scott Sanson is vice president of pre-construction services at design, engineering, and construction firm Meade. Sanson and his team of 15 estimators and project managers send out over 3,000 bids and proposals each year, representing over \$1.5 billion in potential new business.

When Sanson took over estimating responsibilities at Meade he found an estimating process that was clearly successful but was still relying on too many manual functions and forms. Sanson and other Meade executives brought in PSC to map the estimating process and create a centralized Estimate Log using Microsoft SharePoint.

— Scott Sanson, Vice President of Pre-Construction Services



“Opening new estimates and pulling unique project identifier numbers always required a phone call or email in the past, and then we had to wait for the necessary files to be opened and forms to be created, it took too long and had too many gaps,” Sanson said. “PSC came in with a process mapping and automation plan using SharePoint designed to match our needs and resources and get us organized.”

Faster, More Accurate Visibility to Estimates and Proposals

Meade has five main divisions, including Commercial, Industrial, Infrastructure, Utility and Pipeline, that must often collaborate on large RFPs.

“Working with PSC to get all estimating activities in one place across our divisions supports our One Meade initiative for improved collaboration and cross-selling,” Sanson said. “We have a compelling value proposition, and the Estimate Log gives us one view, one source of information, and one process to drive speed, simplification, visibility – and new growth.”

PSC began with interviews and business process mapping. The information requirements for project costing, job types, accounting, and task requirements were captured for SharePoint customizations.

“PSC was prepared from day one,” Sanson said. “They know the construction industry, they know the right questions to ask,

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and they gave us a jump start on organizing and aligning our divisions and designing with their respective estimating needs in mind.”

Sanson said the Estimate Log process automation has already paid for itself and provided dividends in numerous ways. Real-time estimating data on job types, sizes and win rates give Meade more direction on sweet spots to pursue. Quarterly and even ad hoc reporting requests are easier to run and available on demand.

“We can’t pursue every project and RFP, and the Estimate Log data helps us decide where we should spend our time and resources for the biggest and most likely returns,” Sanson said. “We now know what our ideal project profiles are and we focus on those.”

Sanson said win rates for large projects have also improved. More estimating precision and confidence allow estimators to be more aggressive with their numbers.

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Pains & Gains

Pains

- Estimating numbers, spreadsheets, and forms were time-consuming to open and manage.
- It was difficult for divisions to collaborate and share documents.
- Estimating data such as value, volume and job type was not searchable.
- After a successful project win, the document hand off process was manual and inconsistent.

Gains

- PSC designed a SharePoint-powered Estimate Log to serve as the central repository for all estimating documents and activities.
- Executives and division leaders have a real-time view of estimating activity and capture rates.
- Anyone at Meade with Estimate Log access can open new estimates and get started immediately.
- Now, a secure project SharePoint site automatically ensures consistent project setup.

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