



BIM Helps Estimators See More

Jason Goodin uses Envisioneer's Building Information Modeling to produce more accurate takeoffs

Profile

Wilbur C. Strait Sr. and Arnold W. Lamp started Strait & Lamp Lumber Co. in 1950. Located in Hebron, Ohio, the company's primary focus was to provide lumber and building materials to builders in Columbus and surrounding areas.

Since 1976 Strait & Lamp has expanded their product and service range through a number of acquisitions and a variety of business ventures. This steady growth has strengthened the company's position in the marketplace, and together the pieces have formed the Strait & Lamp Group of companies, which includes a truss, wall panel and pre-built stair plant, a contracting service, an interior trim shop, and a full service custom mill.

Strait & Lamp continually strives to provide their customers with the quality standards and efficiency that they have come to expect from this leading supplier to the building industry.

Making the Move to BIM

Jason Goodin, Strait & Lamp's Corporate Estimator and Safety Director, has been using Envisioneer Construction Suite since January of 2011. Prior to that he had been using professional estimating software in combination with an onscreen takeoff utility.

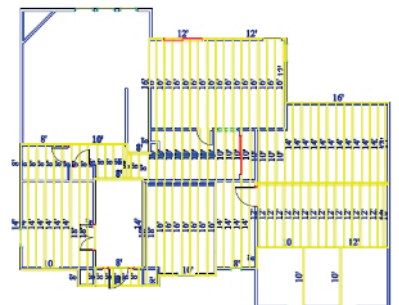
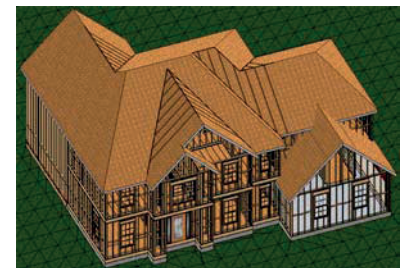
For some time Jason had been sensing that his takeoff utility was slightly lacking in ability, and that he should be at a more advanced level in his estimating practices. When he saw what Envisioneer could do, this became even more apparent. "When Cadsoft approached us with this product I became very interested in the 3D scheme of things and the presentation factors that were available", says Jason. Having grabbed their attention in a big way, Strait & Lamp decided to make the switch to Envisioneer.

The transition began with two days of on-site training with Cadsoft's LBM Professional Services Manager, who not only provided hands-on instruction on Envisioneer and the integrated Quote Generator application, but also set up the database with the company's own products, and worked with their IT department to ensure a smooth connection to their Point-of-Sale system. The company then shut down their Estimating Department briefly while Jason played around with the software, which he found "very easy to learn".

Cadsoft's Technical Support department proved to be an invaluable resource along the way, providing the help he needed in a "timely and orderly fashion".

"I am impressed with Envisioneer's ability to be accurate, to be versatile, and to make everything be seen in a 3D real-world environment."

**Jason Goodin, Estimator
Strait & Lamp Lumber**



A Streamlined Workflow

It wasn't long before Jason was fully up and running with Envisioneer and reaping the benefits of Building Information Modeling (BIM) technology.

Typically when he gets a plan he first prints it out and highlights any areas that require special attention with regard to the estimate, such as a sunken floor, to ensure nothing gets missed.

He then imports the PDF into Envisioneer and traces over the lines in the 1st floor plan with auto-connecting walls from the program's catalog, instantly forming an intelligent 3D model. To create the foundation and additional levels Jason uses the 'Duplicate to Locations' tool to quickly copy perimeter walls from the 1st floor, which he finds to be "a huge timesaver". Floors and openings are added with point-and-click simplicity, and in a very short time he is able to see the different building materials used and how the foundation, wall framing and floor framing components fit and work together in 3D. After checking the structure Jason moves on to creating the roof system, which is made easy with Envisioneer's automated roof-building tools.

Once the model is complete Jason goes through it location by location, filtering out various elements with the View Filter tool to reveal the components that require a close check. He then generates automatic member schedules and creates worksheets that contain the wall, floor and roof framing layouts for each building location along with their associated member schedules. The completed worksheets are then output to PDF format and submitted to the sales staff so that they can share the information with their builders.

Next, Jason generates an automatic quote in the Quote Generator application that is built into Envisioneer and checks to see if anything needs to be addressed in the model. He then tweaks the quote where necessary and sends it to the company's Point-of-Sale system by Activant.

Being able to easily change things is also a key benefit for Jason. "If we get an addendum we can just open up the file in Envisioneer and move things around — it does all the recalculating. We create a new report and quote and we're done. With a spreadsheet system you would have to do a lot more work."

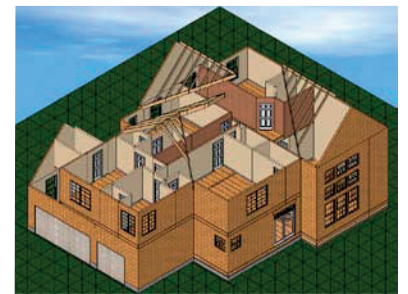
The Visibility Factor

According to Jason, the most significant benefit of using a BIM tool like Envisioneer is visibility — "being able to see and understand where everything is structurally". Envisioneer's 3D viewing tools enable Jason to analyze the structure in detail and account for materials more accurately. For example, he is able to check his headers and determine where he needs to double up members. He uses elevation views to help him to lay out trim and cornice systems — things that were previously time-consuming and not included in the standard quote. Accounting for all materials at the drawing phase ensures that nothing is doubled up or missed.

Jason's next goal is to distribute the free Envisioneer Express viewer to off-site staff (such as those who design trusses and engineered floors) so that they can see and understand his designs—something he was not able to do with his old software. This will "get everyone on the same page" and give designers the detailed, accurate information they need to do their job well.

Sales staff will also be able to use the viewer to collaborate with builders and make a solid impression on customers. "We can show them that we have everything covered", says Jason.

To learn more about Envisioneer, please visit www.cadsoft.com.



Jason's Top 3 Features in Envisioneer

- **Visibility**
View structures and framing layouts in 2D and 3D; pinpoint areas that require special attention; customize framing configurations; convey design ideas to designers, builders and customers.
- **Versatility/Capability**
Import PDF; build a 3D model with properly-sized building elements; make changes easily; create worksheets with framing layouts and member schedules; generate reports and quotes; connect to POS system.
- **Accuracy**
Analyze and verify the structure in 3D; account for all materials including trim and finishes; produce takeoffs with confidence.