



project[®]

EXECUTIVE **INSIGHT**

My Estimators **Don't Need** the Cloud

(and Other Common Misconceptions)

CONTENTS

Introduction	03
Misconception #1: There's Nothing Wrong With Our Desktop Estimating Solution	04
Misconception #2: We Can't Afford to Move to a Cloud Estimating Platform	07
Misconception #3: We Don't Do Enough Estimates to Justify the Cloud	09
Misconception #4: Using Cloud for Project Estimating Isn't Secure	10
Misconception #5: Cloud-based Estimating is Complicated and Hard to Learn	11
Conclusion	12

INTRODUCTION

Let's face it, sometimes conventional "wisdom" is anything but. The construction industry is changing so fast that it can be hard to separate fact from fiction, especially when it comes to advances in technology. That's why it may be time to let go of assumptions and learn the real truth about estimating in the cloud.

There have been plenty of technology "innovations" over the years that made a big splash—and lots of promises—before fizzling out altogether. To be clear, cloud estimating isn't one of them. It's the wave of the future, and it's gaining more traction every day.

In this Executive Insight report, we'll take a closer look at five common misconceptions about cloud-based construction estimating—and reveal the facts once and for all. That way, you can make up your own mind about how good your current estimating process really is and decide if a move to the cloud makes sense for your company. I hope you find it of value.

Best Regards,



Jeff Gerardi
CEO, ProEst

MISCONCEPTION #1

THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH OUR DESKTOP ESTIMATING SOLUTION

It's easy to overlook the flaws and limitations of an estimating solution you use every day. After all, it's familiar. It's comfortable. It works "well enough" for your needs. But if you rely on spreadsheets or a desktop estimating product, you may be performing more workarounds than you realize—all of which could be avoided with more powerful cloud-based estimating software. The problem is, until you compare the two approaches side-by-side, it isn't always obvious how much your estimators are missing if they're not in the cloud. So, let's do that now.

	Cloud	Desktop/Spreadsheets
Centralized Data	YES	NO
24/7 Remote Access	YES	NO
Scalability	YES	NO
Automatic Upgrades	YES	NO

The simple "Yes/No" chart above makes it clear what cloud-based estimating has to offer as compared to a spreadsheet or desktop estimating solution. A lot. But let's talk about why that matters to your business.

Centralized Data - This is a biggie. It makes sense for all of your people to work with exactly the same information throughout the life of a job, but with spreadsheets and desktop estimating systems, that doesn't always happen. When teams are siloed and data isn't readily available to be shared, mistakes can happen, bottlenecks can occur and complications will arise. Having a single source of truth for everyone avoids the issue of inaccurate or conflicting data, which in turn improves workflow and project outcomes. And who doesn't want that?

24/7 Remote Access - We live in a mobilized world, connected to everyone and everything that matters with our smartphones and mobile devices. Gone are the days of a deskbound workstyle and the traditional nine-to-five; now, we expect to confer with colleagues, consult with subs, review data, implement changes and generate reports whenever and wherever the need arises. A cloud estimating platform, accessible 24/7 via mobile devices and the internet, gives your teams the ability to work without interruption, something onsite desktop system or spreadsheets were never designed to do.

Scalability - As hard as we try, none of us can see into the future. So, if requests for bids suddenly skyrocket, or you need to double the number of estimators on your team, a hosted cloud estimating platform has the flexibility to ramp up quickly and meet the demand, all without the need to add equipment or other infrastructure. Conversely, if estimating activity slows down, even temporarily, you're not stuck with costly equipment and resources you don't want. The built-in scalability of a cloud-based estimating solution protects your company's productivity and the bottom line.

Automatic Updates - Technology just keeps getting better, which means that upgrades and enhancements are always out there. The latest versions of any software offer better user experiences, increased security and improved productivity features, but you shouldn't have

to wonder if and when they're coming—or implement them when they do. With a cloud-based estimating solution, important updates are delivered to your system automatically, at no cost. That means you're always working with a fully optimized solution as soon as it's available, all without lifting a finger.



PROEST TRUTH

ProEst Cloud clients typically report a 30-50% increase in estimating output once the platform is fully implemented—and nine out of ten say that they would “never go back” to the estimating solution they used before.

MISCONCEPTION #2

WE CAN'T AFFORD TO MOVE TO A CLOUD ESTIMATING PLATFORM

You can bet that there will be naysayers in your company who complain about the loss of the “old ways” of doing things and find fault with the new. They may argue that the transition to a cloud-based estimating system will be lengthy and complicated, and that the costs associated with making a move are more than the company can afford. The good news? Nothing could be further from the truth. Construction companies that assume cloud estimating is too expensive are in for a pleasant surprise: many contractors find that their estimating and preconstruction management costs actually go down when they move to the cloud—sometimes by as much as 30%. Here's why:

Reduced infrastructure - When your estimators work with cloud servers that are off-premise and out of sight, the need for hardware and other equipment is drastically reduced. Less infrastructure, lower costs.

Less maintenance - A cloud estimating solution removes the burden of on-site hardware maintenance, updates and repairs, giving your estimators and IT teams time to focus on more productive work.

Greater efficiency - Cloud's centralized database lets teams work collaboratively in real time. Without the cloud, estimators and project managers are forced to send files back and forth to be worked on by one user at a time. That's the kind of inefficiency that wastes time and money.

Subscription pricing - If costs are a concern—and they should be—you'll appreciate how your company pays for a cloud estimating solution: a little at a time. That means even the smallest firms can work “big” without making a major capital investment.



PROEST TRUTH

Unlike on-premise estimating solutions, ProEst Cloud cuts out the high cost of hardware, setup and IT management. Plus, our subscription-based pricing model lets you pay as you go, resulting in lower capital costs and better cash flow.

MISCONCEPTION #3

WE DON'T DO ENOUGH ESTIMATES TO JUSTIFY THE CLOUD

Not true. One of the best things about a cloud-based estimating solution is how flexible it is—including how many users you have and the number of estimates you need to prepare. Clearly, if you're a small company with only a few bids to generate every month, you don't need the same kind of firepower that a large, multi-office organization does, and as we saw in Misconception #1, you shouldn't have to pay for resources you don't use. Unlike spreadsheets or a desktop estimating product, a cloud platform is inherently adjustable, easily scaled up or down depending on demand. That's especially important if you see growth in your future. When you estimate in the cloud, you can add users—and increase estimating volume—anytime you need to, without the trouble and expense of adding more infrastructure. In the meantime, you only pay for what you use.

PROEST TRUTH

ProEst Cloud is an open, shared platform, so a minimum number of estimates is never required. Whether you generate one proposal a month—or dozens every week—ProEst Cloud is an affordable estimating solution that can be tailored to fit your needs.

MISCONCEPTION #4

USING CLOUD FOR PROJECT ESTIMATING ISN'T SECURE

This is another misconception that needs to be corrected. Like any technology, the cloud has evolved and matured over the years, and that includes the security of the data it stores. In fact, these days, you can assume that information is safer in the cloud than on the hard drive sitting in your office. Why? Because encryption on a cloud estimating platform is a lot more sophisticated than anything a desktop solution or spreadsheet can offer, making unauthorized access to your data and documents all but impossible. By using a cloud estimating solution with built-in antivirus software, third-party antivirus software or both, you can be sure that potential threats are anticipated and addressed, usually before they happen. On the other hand, your desktop estimating solution could be a source of serious trouble. What happens when your system gets a virus, or a laptop gets left behind? Until the software glitch is identified and fixed—or the laptop found—the data you need is unavailable, and your estimators are pretty much out of business. And we don't have to tell you what that does to your productivity.

PROEST TRUTH

With ProEst Cloud, your data can never be “lost” or unavailable, and it can't be viewed or shared with unauthorized users. It's stored on a remote server that maintains the highest levels of safety and security.

MISCONCEPTION #5

CLOUD-BASED ESTIMATING IS COMPLICATED AND HARD TO LEARN

Nothing—nothing—could be farther from the truth. In fact, ease-of-use, even for non-technical personnel, is a major selling point when it comes to a cloud estimating solution. In the first place, the interface of a web-based estimating system is highly intuitive, offering users a simplified experience that feels logical and straightforward from the very beginning. Good design is something everyone can understand and appreciate, and the inherent simplicity of a cloud-based estimating tool proves the point, speeding the onboarding process and getting immediate buy-in from new users. Just as important, when questions arise, and they almost certainly will, help is always available. With an online estimating tool, your teams can speak live to customer service reps, chat with expert technicians, view on-demand how-to videos and attend topic-specific training webinars. In a very real way, your cloud estimating solution connects you to a vast community of construction, estimating and software experts who are ready, willing and able to make your company's experience in the cloud easy, productive and hassle-free.

PROEST TRUTH

ProEst Cloud was designed with simplicity in mind, allowing many new users to be productive within hours. If questions arise, our embedded tutorials can give you the answers you need 24/7, or utilize our staff of dedicated support engineers.

CONCLUSION

If you're not challenging your own assumptions about the way you and your estimators work, you could be missing out on some important opportunities to streamline your estimating processes and improve your business productivity. As industry technology advances, it's clear that construction companies that resist change and settle for an estimating solution that's "good enough" can't expect to compete with those that actively pursue innovation. Could you benefit from estimating technology that saves time, eliminates errors, reduces costs and adds revenue? Yes. Do your estimators need the cloud? Absolutely.

ProEst was a pioneer of web-based estimating and preconstruction management, introducing the ProEst Cloud platform in 2015. Today, ProEst Cloud provides advanced construction estimating capabilities for leading companies and public sector clients in the United States, Canada and Australia. Our web-based platform combines cost estimating, digital takeoffs and bid day analysis in a single powerful solution— a proven way to reduce costs, ensure accuracy and streamline pre-construction workflow. Want to learn more? We're happy to walk you through ProEst Cloud so you can see all it has to offer firsthand.

Call us or [visit www.proest.com](http://www.proest.com) to get started.

