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Comparison of Civil Estimating Solutions

The SharpeSoft Estimator™ is a full-featured estimating solution for heavy/civil contractors, and also includes many features not found in other systems. Below is a feature comparison of the Estimator and two other estimating software products also designed for the civil contractor.

Also note that the SharpeSoft Estimator is available in only one *full* version, with *all* available features and functionality provided to all users. You should be aware that most competitive products have tiered versions for basic, intermediate, and full functionality. While the initial price may be less, if you do purchase one of their basic versions, you may have to pay thousands of dollars more to upgrade to their tier-2 or tier-3 versions to unlock features that are simply standard in the SharpeSoft Estimator. Before you purchase any system, be sure that all of the features that you need are included.

System Architecture & User Interface	**SharpeSoft Estimator**	**Competitor A**	**Competitor B**
Client-Server architecture for better hardware utilization and easy software updates	Yes		Yes
Central Microsoft SQL Server database for all users, containing all resources and all jobs in one location	Yes		Yes
Multiple users can update the same job and even the same item or comparison package simultaneously	Yes		Yes
All data is stored server-side in real time, eliminating the need to merge data from multiple estimators	Yes		Yes
Automatic "live" calculations for real-time resource costs, markups, bid prices, and job totals	Yes		Yes
Backup reminder notification	Yes		
One single backup file with all system, company, and job data	Yes		Yes
Database backup while online and in use	Yes	Yes	Yes
User-based security	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3	Tier-2 & Tier-3
User group security settings	Yes	Tier-3 Only	Tier-2 & Tier-3
View, message, and/or exit one or all current users	Yes	Yes	
Roaming user preferences and settings	Yes		Yes
User-customizable toolbar	Yes		
Reports can be previewed on-screen or sent directly to a printer or file	Yes	Yes	Yes
Reports can be saved as a PDF, text, or HTML file	Yes	Yes	Yes
Many reports can also be exported to Excel or CSV for further manipulation or importing into other systems	Yes		Yes
Report emailing (as a PDF attachment)	Yes		Yes
Toolbar button quickly prints a window's related report	Yes		
Create report packages for printing batch reports	Yes	Yes	

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Excel exporting and importing can be performed without dependency on an installation of Excel	Yes		
Context-sensitive on-screen help	Yes	Yes	Yes
Email technical support staff from the interface	Yes		
Intuitive, easy-to-use interface requires only 4 hours of online training for basic system proficiency	Yes		

Company Settings & Resource Tables	**SharpeSoft Estimator**	**Competitor A**	**Competitor B**
Multiple company data sets	Yes	Yes	Tier-3 only
Resources organized by type and groups/sub-groups	Yes		
Labor areas for multiple rate schedules	Yes		Yes
Ability to make individual labor areas read-only	Yes		
Labor benefits and burdens per area	Yes		Yes
Easily update labor benefits and burdens by trade	Yes	Tier-3 only	
Daily "per diem" labor subsidies	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3	Yes
Associated equipment can be linked to a laborer	Yes		
Equipment areas for multiple rate schedules	Yes		Yes
Ability to make individual equipment areas read-only	Yes		
Equipment rates calculated from purchase price	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3	
Owned vs. rented equipment rates and markups	Yes	Yes	Yes
Equipment fuel and oil consumption and rates per area	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3	Yes
Equipment burdens (operating expenses) per area	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3	Yes
Easily update equipment burdens by equipment group	Yes		
Equipment group daily overtime discounts	Yes		
Associated labor can be linked to equipment	Yes	Yes	Yes
Permanent vs. Construction materials	Yes	Yes	Yes
Purchased vs. Owned (produced) materials	Yes		Yes
On-the-fly material, subcontractor, trucking, other, and joint venture resource creation	Yes	Yes	Yes
On-the-fly saving of resources for future reuse	Yes		Yes
Crew templates	Yes	Yes	Yes
Crews can include subcontractors, trucking, joint venture items, and other costs	Yes	Yes	
Material assemblies linked to crews	Yes	Yes	
Material assembly templates	Yes	Yes	
Crews linked to material assemblies	Yes	Yes	

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On-the-fly crew and assembly creation	Yes		
Hot Crews/Assemblies for quickly inserting commonly-used resources	Yes		
Joint venture resources	Yes	Tier-3 Only	
Vendor contact address, phone, email, and website	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3	Yes
Owner contact address, phone, email, and job website	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3	Yes
Merge duplicate Vendor and Owner records	Yes		
Resources, vendors, and other tables can export to and import from Excel	Yes	Yes	Yes

Job Setup and Management	**SharpeSoft Estimator**	**Competitor A**	**Competitor B**
Quickly select from recent jobs	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sort, search, and filter the Jobs list	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3	Yes
Customizable job status color-coding in Jobs list	Yes		
Filtered data across multiple jobs exported to Excel	Yes	Tier-3	Tier-3
Bid bond request form	Yes		
Currency conversion	Yes	Yes	
Job-level memo for recording general job information	Yes	Yes	Yes
Job/project website link	Yes		
Jobsite map/satellite view link (via Google Maps)	Yes		
Jobsite photos	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3	Tier-2 & Tier-3
Copy job	Yes	Yes	Yes
Job archiving	Yes		Yes
Job protection via read-only locking	Yes	Yes	Yes
Job protection via assigned users	Yes		
Job protection via password	Yes	Yes	
Mobile Job for checking a job out of the network system and estimating on a stand-alone system	Yes	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3
State DOT import and export (AASHTO)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Automatically import new state DOT item codes	Yes		
Import from third-party takeoff systems	Yes	Yes	Yes
Export budget to third-party accounting systems	Yes	Yes	Yes
Export to available field reporting system for job management	Yes	Yes	Yes
Export to third-party project management systems	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3	Yes

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Cost Estimate	SharpeSoft Estimator	Competitor A	Competitor B
Flexible item numbering, including support for numbers, letters, dashes, dots, and other characters	Yes		Yes
Able to repeat the same item number under different groups or items	Yes		
Bid items can be broken down into an unlimited number of sub-item levels	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3	Yes
Sub-items set as "fixed quantity" do not adjust when item quantity is updated	Yes	Tier-3 Only	
Optionally use an item's takeoff quantity for its cost	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bid-item groups with subtotals	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3	Yes
Alternate bid-item groups	Yes		Yes
What-If item status to exclude cost from job	Yes	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3
What-If sub-item or task status to exclude cost from job	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3	Tier-2 & Tier-3
Completed item status	Yes		
Customizable item status flags	Yes		
Memos for recording notes throughout the job (items, comparisons, markup strategy, rounding, etc.)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Item Masters for easily saving, organizing, and reusing items and/or tasks	Yes	Yes	Yes
Copy items from within current job	Yes	Yes	Yes
Copy items from other jobs	Yes	Yes	Yes
Production rates entered as units per crew hour, units per crew day, crew hours per unit, or total crew hours	Yes	Yes	Yes
Production rates entered as units per man hour, man hours per unit, or total man hours	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3	Yes
Non-production labor and equipment hours	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3	Yes
Automatically adjust crew production rate to arrive at an item's specified unit cost	Yes		
Workers' compensation rates at the item level	Yes	Yes	Tier-3 only
Comprehensive work-week rules for overtime and double-time labor rate calculations	Yes	Tier-3 only	Yes
Labor shift incentives	Yes	Tier-3 Only	
Labor area rate schedule setting at the job, item, and/or resource level	Yes		
Equipment area rate schedule setting at the job, item, and/or resource level	Yes		
Itemized breakdown of labor benefits and burdens	Yes		

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Itemized breakdown of equipment burdens	Yes		
Visual indication of non-default work week, workers' comp code, and workers' comp rate	Yes		
Visual indication of resources missing in current tables	Yes		
Sales tax rates at the job, item group, item, and/or resource level	Yes		Yes
Bid-item escalation factors on resource costs	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3	
U.S./Imperial-Metric conversions at job level	Yes	Yes	Yes
U.S./Imperial-Metric conversions for individual items	Yes		Yes
Bid items export to and import from Excel	Yes	Yes	Yes
Export quantities, costs, and vendors of job resources (labor, equipment, materials, subs, etc.) to Excel	Yes		
Create indirect/overhead items or prorate items to spread to actual bid items as desired	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3	Tier-2 & Tier-3
Dynamic graphical (drag-and-drop) trench profiles to calculate utility trench material takeoff quantities	Yes		
Job Audit Trail detailing all changes that affect cost	Yes	Tier-3 only	Tier-3 only

Vendor Quote Management	**SharpeSoft Estimator**	**Competitor A**	**Competitor B**
Send Requests for Quote (RFQs) via email	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3	Tier-2 & Tier-3
Automatically retrieve emailed vendor responses and import quoted prices directly into comparison	Yes		
Compare material and subcontract vendors' quoted prices and DBE percentages	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3	Tier-2 & Tier-3
Compare subcontractors' prices to self-perform cost	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3	Tier-2 & Tier-3
Account for subcontractors' mobilization, bonding, and itemized exclusions costs	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3	Tier-2 & Tier-3
Load one or more vendors' prices into estimate	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3	Tier-2 & Tier-3
Compare vendors' takeoff quantities	Yes		
Load one or more vendors' quantities into estimate	Yes		
Plugged vendor price identification	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3	Tier-2 & Tier-3
Customizable vendor price status	Yes		
Date/time stamps on vendor cut/add amounts or percentages	Yes		

Job Summary and Markups	**SharpeSoft Estimator**	**Competitor A**	**Competitor B**

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Comprehensive cost-type and overall markups	Yes	Yes	Yes
Realtime job cost summary totals and automatic spread of markups to bid items	Yes		
Itemized overall cuts and adds	Yes	Yes	Yes
Multiple bond tables	Yes	Yes	Yes
Indirect items spread automatically to direct costs	Yes	Yes	Yes
Prorate items spread by percentage of cost, bid quantity, or manually-entered amount or percentage	Yes	Tier-2 & Tier-3	Yes

Bid Closeout	**SharpeSoft Estimator**	**Competitor A**	**Competitor B**
"Auto Round" bid prices using default/standard rounding rule and conditional rules	Yes	Yes	Yes
Manual adjustment of rounded bid prices with automatic "live" calculations for real-time bid balancing	Yes		Yes
Item rounded bid price as percentage of bid total	Yes	Yes	Yes
Item rounded bid price locking	Yes	Yes	Yes
Track rounds of locks and price revisions	Yes	Yes	
Analysis of alternate bid packages	Yes		
Analysis of takeoff quantity bidding profit margins	Yes		Yes
Job-level Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) goal and participation tracking	Yes		Yes
Bid notification clock displays time remaining	Yes		
Many formatting options to configure the Proposal	Yes	Yes	Yes
Multiple-office support for proposals with different address, phone, fax, license, and/or logo, etc.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rich text formatting (fonts, colors, etc.) in proposal introduction, terms, and conditions attachment	Yes		Yes

Workstation Pricing	**SharpeSoft Estimator**	**Competitor A**	**Competitor B**
Tier-1 version ("Basic")	$7400	$5700	$6000
Tier-2 version ("Advanced" or "Professional")	$7400	$7800	$8200
Tier-3 version ("Comprehensive" or "Enterprise")	$7400	$9800	$9800
Annual maintenance fees	$930 (<13%)	20% (Up to $2000)	18% (Up to $1800)

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All competitive information gathered from publically-available documentation and believed to be correct at the time of publishing. Pricing does not include the additional costs of implementation services and training or license upgrades, nor does it account for any discounts, such as for quantity purchases.

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