

## 30 Reasons that Prime Bid Outperforms Spreadsheets

Prime Bid is a software application that is dedicated to the process of preparing a competitive bid. Because of the uniqueness of the operation of Prime Bid you will find the following 30 items difficult or impossible to do with a spreadsheet application. The three primary benefits are to; make better decisions, increase productivity, eliminate costly errors.

### Make Better Decisions

#### [Optimize your bid solutions with the bid matrices](#)

Prime Bid has matrices that solve for the best mathematical solution for one or more vendors to complete a bid package. This allows for non obvious group(s) of subs to be used to come to the most competitive bid. Since the process is automatic, it is easy to be more competitive with less effort.

#### [Perform an efficient bid analysis between your costs and subs](#)

In the matrices, you can compare your labor and materials to sub quotes to come to the best solution. When a sub wins, the costs move from the labor and materials cost categories to the subcontractor cost category. This shows correct category totals for the bid during the bid day process.

#### [Exclude a low vendor and see the impact on the bid total](#)

When a sub or supplier that is part of the low solution is excluded, the matrix recalculates to the next lowest available solutions. The difference between the two solution is displayed in the matrix to see the impact on the bid total. The difference for all bid exclusions for the entire bid is displays in the summary view.

#### [Compare all bids on the screen to review the quality of the bids](#)

All of the bids (low and not low) are placed into the bid matrices. This allows the user to view them in contrast to one another. The user can tell if the bids are close or spaced too far apart. A cautionary percentage is setup for a matrix so that a too low bid appears in yellow instead of the normal light green color.

#### [Perform scope adjustments to make bids apples to apples](#)

Each section in a matrix can have a scope items worksheet pre-filled with the scope issues for that section. Adjustments to the vendor's bid are made via the scope item worksheets. These adjustments can come from one or more sections of work and create an accurate comparison of the bids.

### [Review the scope completeness of all bids in a matrix](#)

When you have multiple bids in a matrix, a scope items comparison window can be brought up to review and compare bids. This window presents the bids vertically with the detail level commonly found on most green sheets/bid cards. This review qualifies the bids in a matrix.

### [View colorized solutions that indicate information about the bids](#)

The low path solution in each matrix is displayed in a green color. Excluded bids are red and required bids are blue. A yellow color displays for a low bid that has triggered the cautionary percentage. These colors display on the sections spreadsheet for the winning vendors providing visual information about the bids.

### [Filter the bid information for review in many formats](#)

The sections spreadsheet has over 30 filters that can be displayed to highlight the bid information. These filters sort by CSI or other work breakdowns. The filters can be at a summary level or at a detailed level. All of the filters serve as reports and can be previewed before printing.

### [Automatic organization of the bid by divisions and sections.](#)

Prime Bid is based on the CSI division and spec section format. A list of divisions and sections ship with the software, they can be modified, deleted or added to. An additional database can be setup for the new CSI division and section format, the correct database is then opened to match with the job spec book.

### [Summarize the bid by division or by cost category.](#)

Summary filters on the sections spreadsheet show division, bid item and bid breakdown information at a "division" level of detail. The cost category totals display. These filters can show the unit price for these headers. When the addons allocated to the spreadsheet you can review the "marked up costs".

### [Add specific indirect costs or markups by cost category, percent or lump sum.](#)

The addons for sales tax, fee, insurance, contingency, etc, can be calculated on only one or some of the cost categories (labor, materials, subcontractor, equipment or other). The addon calculation can be lump sum based or percentage based. The addons will allocate according to the calculation method.

### [Calculate bonding costs on a step rate basis, on the entire bid.](#)

The bonding, insurance, building permit and excise tax have a pre-built form that has a step rate calculator. The steps are based on an amount range and a percentage calculation on that range. These costs can be checked to calculate on the total bid amount and automatically iterate to the nearest dollar.

### [Allocate addons to your direct costs for gross costs to perform the work](#)

All or some of the addons in the summary view can be allocated to the spreadsheet. This will display the costs of work with the addons added to the direct costs (gross costs to perform). Addons can be selectively allocated to bid items and bid breakdowns to meet owners bid document requirements.

### [Reference a division recap by percentage and gross unit price](#)

There is a category cost summary and division cost summary on the summary view. This allows for an obvious overview of the direct costs in the bid. Also a division unit price for the gross unit (typically building square footage) displays and a second unit price can be displayed (# of cars, leasable sf, etc).

### [Set notes for each section of work to validate the bids](#)

Each section of work in the bid can have a note attached to it. These notes can be set to “hover” over the matrix during the bid input. This allows the input person to review specific notes for a section during the bid processing, perhaps reminding them of an approved manufacture or some important detail.

## **Increased Productivity**

### [All of your team members can use Prime Bid](#)

Any team member can easily learn to input bids into the bid matrices. This allows bid savvy employees to participate in preparing a bid even if they are computer novices. Likewise employees that are great on the computer can easily learn to input bids and qualify the bids during input.

### [All of your team members can be in the bid at the same time](#)

Prime Bid is a multi-user software application. This means that all of the team members can be logged into the same bid file and the same time. The team members can each contribute to the processing and reviewing the bids in a real time environment over a computer network.

### [Allow anyone to setup a bid, not just a spreadsheet expert](#)

There is a sample exercise, both paper and multi-media that comes with Prime Bid. This exercise walks new users through the process of setting up a processing a bid from scratch to completion. Anyone can learn the basics about using Prime Bid in one day. Now each lead estimator can learn to setup a bid.

### [Empower your team members to participate in bid preparation](#)

Each team member in a multi-user bid file can concentrate on his/her own specialty. One team member can focus on mechanical, another on electrical, another div 2-7 and another div 8-14. This allows each team member to focus on their portion of the bid to make critical decisions as well as input bids as a team.

### [Fill in owner supplied unit price bids/bid breakdowns automatically](#)

Within the bid there are bid items and bid breakdown structures available. These work breakdown structures can have quantities and produce unit prices. When the owner requires a list of bid items and/or a list of unit price items to be filled in on the bid forms, you can easily generate the values within Prime Bid.

### [Meet difficult bid document requirements with the click of a couple of buttons](#)

Many owners require lists of unit price bid items or a bid breakdown list to be completed as part of the bid documents. These lists can be setup in Prime Bid and displayed on screen to fill in the costs. Also states where a listing of subs is required, the list and details are filtered on the sections spreadsheet.

### [Produce a subcontractor list by running one filter](#)

For bids that require a listing of the subs on the bid documents, you can automatically produce the list of used subs for the bid by running the Subcontractor Listing filter. This filter will display the sub's name, city, state and type of work. The filter shows by a % of the bid total to display the correct names.

### [Import information from estimating software](#)

If you prepare your general conditions work up and a takeoff of your detailed self performed work in existing estimating software, you can transfer those costs over to the Prime Bid spreadsheet. This process will allow you to maintain the productivity you have in performing your detailed takeoff process.

### [Export bid information to other software programs](#)

All of the information in Prime Bid can be exported to a text file and picked up with other software applications. This is not limited to a budget, the entire contents of the bid can be utilized for reporting, analyzing or maintaining data with other software applications.

### [Budget a job to your list of job cost phases](#)

After receiving the award for the job, a budget can be setup in Prime Bid by assigning a job cost phase to each section of work. The budget can be reviewed on screen with the job cost filters. The budget can be exported in a format compatible with your cost accounting software to produce your beginning budget.

## **Eliminate Costly Errors**

### [Eliminate bid setup errors by not having to write any formulas](#)

Prime Bid is a structured program that has the formulas behind the cells built in. You don't have to write any formulas for the matrices or for the sections spreadsheet. Knowledge of programming is not required! Any estimator can learn to setup a bid in Prime Bid in one day.

### [Avoid unseen formula errors common in spreadsheet setups](#)

You need not concern yourself with adding sections in the middle of the bid or changing the values in the cost categories. All of the formulas are hard coded in Prime Bid and cannot be accidentally broken by a change in the row count or location of a cell within the bid.

### [Reduce required verbal communication amongst team members](#)

Since the team members are placing the bids into the computer, they do not need to verbally communicate their analysis to one spreadsheet operator. This eliminates the constant necessity of the team members talking to the computer operator. This is also true of managing the alternates, since they are input also.

### [Alternate bids are input by the same person that inputs the base bid](#)

Team members are assigned to certain spec sections to analyze for the bid. They input the base bid and the alternate bids on the same screen. This allows the team member to review the scope completeness of the base bid and of the alternates. Holes and issues are more apparent when the entire bid is together.

### [Analyze alternates using the computer instead of a ten key](#)

Prime Bid has a specialized math function that requires the low base bidder in the alternates for all of the alternates at the press of one button. The comparison of using a non low base bidder to perform the work for the base bid and alternate is automated allowing for a bid advantage on the alternates.

## Consider the following questions

### Would a better analysis help you win more jobs?

If the bids you prepared were  $\frac{1}{2}$  of 1% lower by having a better analysis with the same overhead and profit, how many jobs would you have won in the last year where you were second?

### Would elimination of math errors save you money?

Would you feel more comfortable about your bids if you knew that they were complete without math errors and bid at your fee number?

### Are you bidding the alternates as competitively as you could?

Are your alternate bids optimized? Would an automated system to recalculate the alternates while closing your bid make your bids of a higher quality. How many jobs did you lose in the last year because of the owner selecting a group of alternates that made you not low?

### How much have spreadsheet errors cost you?

Over the last five years can you calculate the cost of mistakes made via spreadsheet setup failure? Would an error proof system save you a lot of money?

For more information call Prime Software at 1-888-866-4580.

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Visit our website at [www.primebid.com](http://www.primebid.com).