



Management Information Control Systems, Inc. (MICS) — Builder Information System

By Mary Girsch-Bock

800-838-6427
www.bissoftware.com

Builder Information System – Version 1135.18 is the latest version of this excellent construction-related software from MICS. Designed for



BUILDER INFORMATION SYSTEM

construction companies of all sizes, Builder Information Systems is offered in three distinct versions: Standard for small businesses; Professional for midsize companies; and Enterprise for large construction and construction-related companies.

LEARNING CURVE

Installation was quick and easy: The program was on one CD, and the Report Server module engine was on a second. A variety of FAQs are available from MICS. License files are installed from a diskette, and a demo company is included for practice sessions.

The main screen contains a drop-down menu with various options, including File, Edit, Job, Transactions, Reports, Administrator

and List. To open a company, you simply click on File | Open Company.

User preferences can be assigned for a variety of menu options, including settings, forms, hyperlinks, backgrounds, mail accounts and reports. Data-entry screens are easily navigated with lookup windows for all necessary fields. A decent Help feature will guide you through setting up the system. ★★★★★

MODULES & FUNCTIONALITY

The base system includes GL, AR, AP, Job Cost, Job Billing and Payroll, and is available for up to three users. Optional modules available for the Standard Edition include Bank Reconciliation, Password, Subcontract Control and the Union module (which was added this year). The Professional (up to 100 users) and Enterprise level (up to 1,000 users) editions offer even more optional modules, including Report Server, Job Scheduling, Document Link and Imaging, Document Manager, Equipment Control, Inventory, Purchase Order and Report Writer. This latest version contains numerous enhancements, including the ability to enter Workers Compensation rates and modifiers to the Job Cost adjustment screen, additional job cost type accounts, additional drill-down levels, additional exporting formats, and a variety of other improvements and report additions.

Clicking on *Job* will allow you to enter new job information, including default posting account numbers, the building owner and

architect, markup and change order information, billing method you wish to use, and your labor billing rate. Payroll information can also be entered, along with historical data and a section to enter user-defined fields for each particular job. An area for notes is also available.

Job budgets will track cost by category, and you can easily copy budget information from one job to another. You can also enter an unlimited number of change orders. The program also tracks budgeting information for each cost code entered in the system. The Job Billing feature allows you to easily track scheduled value, previous payments on that particular job, work in place, percent completed and total completed. Equipment history is easily maintained with areas provided to enter serial numbers, make and model, fuel usage, and average maintenance cost. The user-defined field option can be used to track the information deemed most important. ★★★★★

IMPORT/EXPORT/INTEGRATION

Smaller companies can start with the Standard edition and easily move up to the next edition without cumbersome data importing or retraining. All modules integrate seamlessly to provide real-time data processing. Builder Information System is ODBC compliant, which means you can easily export your data into third-party applications such as Crystal Reports, Microsoft Excel, Word and Access. And in the

Continued on back



MICS — Builder Information System

Continued from front

latest version, you can now export reports in *.XLS and *.PDF formats, even in the Standard edition. As well, you can now export reports in *RTF and *.TIF in the Professional edition and in HTML in the Enterprise edition. ★★★★★

SUPPORT & TRAINING

All new users are given four hours of setup training conducted by a qualified trainer over the phone. Onsite training is also offered for those who prefer learning in their own environment.

New users are provided with a block of three support hours that they can use

in a year's time from the date of purchase. Other support and training options are available at an additional cost. ★★★★★

REPORTING

The Standard edition comes with over 330 reports. The Professional and Enterprise editions come with over 430. The Report Server is a convenient tool for those who regularly send a multitude of reports to various entities. Simply enter e-mail addresses of the recipients, the reports you wish to send and the format you wish to use, and the Report Server will generate and e-mail the reports automatically. The optional Report Writer module will

customize existing forms or create and modify new reports. ★★★★★

RELATIVE VALUE

Builder Information System is an excellent program that even new users would feel comfortable with immediately. True scalability, a great selection of add-on modules, and easy import and export capability make this program an excellent value. BIS Standard Edition is available starting at \$3,200; the Professional Edition starts at \$9,250, and the Enterprise Edition starts at \$12,025. ★★★★★

2006 OVERALL RATING



CATEGORIES COMPANY/PRODUCT	Learning Curve	Modules & Functionality	Import/Export/Integration	Support & Training	Reporting	Relative Value	2006 Overall Rating	Pricing
A-Systems Corp. A-Systems Job View	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	\$7,495 for a 5-user system.
Cougar Mountain Software Cougar Mountain Job Cost	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	\$1,599 for a single-user version of Cougar Mountain Accounting; additional \$799 for a single-user Job Cost module.
Contractor Software Corporation Contractor V Plus	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	\$3,800 for a single-user system; \$5,000 for a 3-user system.
Dexter + Chaney, Inc. Forefront Construction Management Software	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	Approximately \$50,000 for an 8- to 12-user system.
Easy Street, Inc. Total Office Manager	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	5-user license will cost \$5,999.
eTEK International Inc. eTEK Accounting	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	\$9,595 for a 2- to 5-user license of the MTX version of eTEK Accounting.
Foundation Software, Inc. Foundation for Windows	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	Typical price range varies from \$8,000 to \$12,000.
Intuit Master Builder Master Builder	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	\$2,295 per concurrent user \$1,495 for the Receivables/Inventory module \$1,195 for the Estimating module
Intuit, Inc. QuickBooks: Premier Contractor Edition 2006	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	\$399.95 for a single user \$1,399.95 for an additional 5-user pack
Industry Specific Software, Inc. ISS Construction Manager	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	From \$2,700 for a single-user to \$9,650 for 5 users.
Maxwell Systems, Inc. The American Contractor – Enterprise Edition	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	\$19,500 for Enterprise System \$4,295 for Express package \$9,895 for Essential package
Maxwell Systems, Inc. Maxwell Management Suite	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	\$7,000 and up, increasing as functionality is added, as cost is determined by configuration.
Management Information Control Systems, Inc. (MICS) Builder Information System	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	BIS Standard Edition starts at \$3,200 Professional Edition starts at \$9,250 Enterprise Edition starts at \$12,025
Sage Software Sage Timberline Office Desktop	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	Typical cost for a new system would start at about \$7,500, but it will vary widely, depending on the type of business and the modules needed.
Toolbox Software Toolbox Construction Management Software	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	Pricing starts at \$6,100 for a single-user system; additional users are \$1,700 each for up to 5 users. Pricing per module goes down after 5 users to \$850 for a sixth user. Toolbox Lite is also available starting at \$1,000.