



Building Efficiency Together

HeavyNews

For the Construction Industry

Keeping You Informed as We Build Efficiency Together

Fall 2008

Over 100 Classes to be Offered at the 2009 User's Group Meetings

The HCSS User's Group Meetings will be the place to be during the weekends of January 22-24 and February 12-14. Come for an exciting weekend of learning time-saving features and "best practices" for using HCSS software, networking with your peers in the industry and meeting HCSS staff.

It's an exciting year for the User's Group Meeting as we have outgrown our old location and have moved to downtown Houston to the George R. Brown Convention Center and the Hilton Americas Hotel. This larger venue is allowing us to offer you over 100 classes to choose from, covering all aspects of our products and a range of executive classes. Joining the executive lineup this year is Matt Stevens, President of Stevens Construction Institute, a management consultant company for construction contractors. He is the author of two books, *Managing a Construction Firm on Just 24 Hours a Day* and *The New Business Model of Construction Contracting*, and will be teaching two classes during the weekend.

There has also been a lot of new development on three products that were introduced last year. New classes have been added for those using or are interested in *FuelerPlus*, *Illuminate* and *Equipment360*. So, be sure to bring equipment managers and top executives, as they will leave the weekend with a lot of valuable knowledge.

And, it wouldn't be an HCSS User's Group Meeting without entertainment. Thursday night you're invited to a welcome reception that will give you a chance to network with other guests and HCSS staff. Friday evening, join us for Happy Hour while also having the chance to sit down face-to-face with programmers (See UGM on page 2)



The general meeting gives customers the opportunity to vote on new features and provide feedback on the products.

Give your spouse a vacation!



Bring your spouse with you! While you are in class, our Spouse Program will provide great entertainment through a jewelry making workshop, a hands-on cooking experience with an acclaimed chef, and a three-hour wine tasting class. And in the evenings, you'll enjoy each other's company again!

Customers Remain #1 Priority During Hurricane Ike

With everything now back to normal after Hurricane Ike, HCSS would like to thank you, our customers, for the incredible response of concern and appreciation that we received during the storm. The words of encouragement, offers of financial assistance, and even offers for us to use your mail servers or BOMGAR boxes are all truly appreciated and continue to prove that HCSS has the best customers in the world.

During the storm, we were very pleased with how we were able to continue to provide help despite having no power at our building for over a week. How did we operate? Through satellite offices located at HCSS employee homes! This close-to-home approach provided us with the ability to get most of our employees back to work despite enormous local traffic and power issues (at one point, Houston had 2.5 million homes and the majority of the traffic lights without power). By the end of the week, operations were close to normal, and we were even shipping systems from one of the locations!

Our support department started the week concerned that they were going to have to return your calls rather than taking them directly. However, their spirits were buoyed by the constant amazement they heard about the 30-second call back times. Sometimes, an experience like this helps remind us (See Ike on page 2)



Photos of HCSS temporary work locations. Thank you to the employees who opened your homes so that support was not interrupted for HCSS customers.

Estimate Fuel Rates More Accurately

As you probably know, *HeavyBid* can break equipment costs down into several components, one of which is fuel.

You can now import real-world fuel consumption rates from our new *FuelerPlus* application.

The import is fast and seamless. The integration takes a weighted average of the fuel consumption from individual pieces of equipment in *FuelerPlus* and imports it into Advanced Equipment Setup in *HeavyBid*. The import is done through an easy, step-by-step wizard and takes just few seconds.

This integration is just the first step in our equipment initiative to make estimating equipment as accurate as possible. In the future, you will be able to get actual lube rates from *FuelerPlus* and additional operating expenses from our upcoming equipment maintenance application *Equipment360*.

UGM (Cont. from page 1)

and product managers to drill down into your important issues.

And, Saturday night following our "All-Star" dinner, join us for the All-Star Sports Extravaganza. Wear your favorite jersey and compete against other companies in sporting games or try your hand at casino games.

Your spouse will also love what we have planned for them this year. For \$375, they can enjoy a jewelry making class, a cooking class and a wine tasting, while joining you for the nightly events.

To register for this information-packed weekend, visit www.hcss.com or use the back page of the event brochure.

Ike (Cont. from page 1)

that the way we like answering the phones and providing help to you is dramatically different than most other software companies!

We have learned a lot of lessons to make our own disaster recovery efforts better and will try to share these in different ways so that you can hear some first-hand experience that may help your efforts to stay up and running. If you have a story that you want to share with us or any questions on specific things we did, please e-mail Tom Webb, HCSS VP of Technical Services, at tom.webb@hcss.com.

Customer Profile: MGE Underground

HCSS software provides motivation for better decision making



Michaeljoe Goldstein bought his first backhoe in 1997 and started MGE Underground in Paso Robles, CA. He began doing mostly fiber optic construction work, but when the industry took a downturn, he shifted the business focus to wet and dry utilities and other public works projects.

A young, innovative company, MGE is willing to invest in technology to stay ahead of the competition. With the goal of integrating estimating and field management, Goldstein purchased *HeavyBid* estimating software from HCSS to start the process.

"With *HeavyBid*, we have been able to bid more work while maintaining accuracy," said Goldstein. "We have landed profitable jobs that we would not have bid using our previous method. We recently completed a storm drain job where there were over 100 bid items, complicating what otherwise would have been a fairly simple job. We were able to easily handle the complexity with *HeavyBid*. Using our old system, we would have added unnecessary contingencies and would not have landed the job. We win more because we can bid more, but more importantly, we are confident that the jobs we do win are bid accurately."

Jason Montgomery is MGE's Estimator. "The Quote System is unbelievable. On some projects we'll have several dozen subcontractor and material quotes. Many of these will come in on bid day, often in the final hour," he said while explaining how *HeavyBid* has helped organize the bid-day rush. "Say, for instance, we receive itemized quotes from three paving subcontractors. We enter each of their quotes into the system. Then, as we review the bids, we can instantly change the selected sub if needed, with the new prices automatically applying across the estimate."

With the estimating system successfully in place, MGE turned to HCSS once again when they purchased *HeavyJob* for their field management needs. MGE foremen were given laptops to enter their crews' daily time, production and quantity information, daily diary notes, and other jobsite information. That information is then sent back to the office where project managers check where the job stands as of that day's work. "Before *HeavyJob*, we didn't know where we were at financially on our projects until weeks later," said Goldstein. "Now we know the next day and can take corrective action if necessary. The foremen see the numbers daily as well, and are empowered to make better decisions."

Nick Salvucci, MGE's Superintendent, is overseeing a water/sewer replacement project, which is being completed on the night shift, and is encountering unforeseen conditions almost every night. With *HeavyJob*, the foreman can easily send photos and detailed (See MGE. on page 3)

Customer Awarded for Innovative Use of Technology

HCSS customer **McGuire and Hester** of California, was honored at the 2008 Vision Awards, hosted by *Constructech* magazine in Chicago on August 20. McGuire and Hester took home the Silver in the Heavy/Hwy/GC category for their use of HCSS's *The Dispatcher* software.

Prior to using *The Dispatcher*, McGuire and Hester had difficulty communicating between their satellite offices and maintaining real time locations of their equipment. Each office had their own magnet board with their jobs posted. However, each office was unaware of the others' activities, and in some instances, would rent equipment that was available on another job site.

"*The Dispatcher* has allowed us to efficiently communicate throughout all of our office locations," said Mitch Hanner, Resource Manager. "We were able to do away with each of our magnet boards because of *The Dispatcher's* capability to incorporate all of our scheduling into one common screen. This has allowed us to stay aware of what resources we may or may not have available. Overall we have seen a 15 to 20 percent decrease in our outside rentals."

The *Constructech* Vision Awards honor companies that have realized the advantages of applying innovative technologies to their everyday businesses as well as the technology enablers that have helped them achieve their goal.

If you would like to be considered for future Vision Awards for your use of HCSS software or other technologies you may use, contact Amy Pyle at 713-270-4000 or email amy.pyle@hcss.com.



Randy Montgomery (left), McGuire and Hester IT Coordinator, and Peter Alvim, HCSS Technical Services Regional Manager, accept the Vision Awards at the awards banquet.

Basic Finance for Kids

In my working career, I've come across many people who believe that the company sales are the same as the company profits. Thankfully, no one at HCSS has ever asked that question. Some people mistakenly believe if sales were \$2 million in a month that means the company "made" \$2 million in profit.

I'm determined to teach my kids the basics of finance so they have a good grasp of what it takes to make a profit and how to calculate it. My son, Ryan, has an entrepreneurial spirit and loves to make and sell things or services. From a young age he has been involved in several money making ventures from running lemonade stands to cleaning pools in the neighborhood. His latest venture is building and selling skateboard ramps for younger kids. This has been a great opportunity to teach him the basics about how a business operates.

The entire process from purchasing of the wood to storage of the ramp until "sold" provides an excellent example to learn what it takes to operate a business. We begin with the drive to Home Depot where he purchases the materials and we talk about how this is his cost of goods. He tracks his time and I show him how to calculate his labor cost. He knows how much the ramps will sell for so he can then calculate his profit plus what he is paying himself for the effort.

Though the calculations may be very basic for a 15 year old, it allows him to experience real world examples of a business and understanding of expenses such as marketing, rent, utilities, and equipment. Ryan is now very interested in what the true cost of making something is in business. He has even experienced the impact of inflation since the price of wood has gone up about 20 percent in the time since he made his first ramp!

My advice to all parents would be to find a project your kids are interested in and teach them the basics of what it takes to run a business. It is important that they understand the costs to make the item (COGS), labor cost, and all other expenses that need to be subtracted from the sales price in order to calculate their profit. Since they aren't teaching this in high school, you'll be glad you did.

Perspective



Steve McGough
HCSS Chief
Operating Officer

MGE *(Cont. from page 2)*

notes, highlighting any concerns, to the project manager every morning. The project manager can then generate a Request for Information and have it to the client almost instantly. "With so many changes, recording and keeping the information organized is critical. Now we usually have an answer from our customer by the next night's work," said Salvucci. "I don't know how we could have done this job without *HeavyJob*."

The positive effects of HCSS software are being seen throughout the company. "Using *HeavyJob* sped up the payroll process immediately," said Tiffany Sly, MGE's payroll and HR manager. "With integration into our accounting software, I no longer have to track down our field guys for time card information."

Goldstein points out that one of the most impressive things about *HeavyJob* is that foremen are acting like managers. "They can see day to day where they're at financially. It's a huge motivational factor," he said. "Our incentive program is a bonus pool based on net operating profit. When employees can see daily how their job will be contributing to our year end results, they stay much more engaged, and it becomes a challenge to make the numbers even better. People like to see the results of their efforts, and when they see the dollars on the screen, it's instant feedback as to whether the plan is working or needs adjustment."

"All of the job information is at my fingertips," said foreman Travis Leopard. "I have more detailed and complete daily reports, and I am able to make decisions that will have an impact on the job's bottom line."

Bid News

(HeavyBid Customers Noted in Green)

WEST VIRGINIA

Black Fork Bridge Structure Replacement, Tucker County

MEC Construction, Inc.	\$7,076,921.36
Turman Construction Co.	\$7,186,735.80
Orders Construction Company	\$7,390,813.55
The Vellotta Company	\$7,779,638.19
Ahern & Associates, Inc.....	\$8,124,000.00
Vecellio & Grogan, Inc.	\$8,509,431.40

CALIFORNIA

Route 15 from Ninth Avenue UC to 15/78 Separation, San Diego

Atkinson Construction	\$47,420,115.00
Coffman Specialities	\$47,966,919.00
Beador Construction	\$48,372,700.00
CC Myers	\$48,681,374.00
FCI	\$48,893,118.00
Rados Construction	\$53,732,712.00
Balfour-Beatty	\$59,397,946.20

TEXAS

IH 30 Interchange with Tollway, Dallas

Austin Bridge and Road, LP	\$179,976,985.00
Williams Brothers Construction	\$188,059,037.00
Texas Sterling	\$216,253,457.00
Granite Construction	\$218,084,510.00
Zachry Construction.....	\$221,638,460.00

MICHIGAN

I-94 West of County Line Road to East of St. Clair Highway, St. Clair & Macomb Counties

John Carlo	\$25,190,032.10
SIX-S, Inc.	\$25,644,145.93
Dan's Excavating	\$28,047,483.54
Angelo Iafate Construction Co.	\$28,529,359.79
Interstate Highway Construction, Inc.	\$34,184,515.52

NORTH CAROLINA

Grading, Drainage, Paving, Curb & Gutter and Signals on NC 16 from NC 73 TO SR 1895, Lincoln and Catawba Counties

Blythe Construction, Inc.	\$28,893,591.51
REA Contracting, LLC	\$29,820,221.81
Taylor & Murphy Construction Co., Inc....	\$32,649,791.20

ILLINOIS

NB Roadway & Bridge Reconstruction Tri-State Tollway (I-294)

Plote Construction	\$49,481,535.51
Lorig Construction	\$51,059,710.40
Walsh Construction Company	\$53,599,209.51
F.H. Paschen, S.N.Nielsen & Assoc.	\$53,896,672.18

All Bidders are HeavyBid Customers!

LOUISIANA

Bayou Desglaises Channel Bridge on LA 114, Avoyelles Parish

Gilchrist Construction	\$1,842,900.70
James Construction Group	\$1,873,737.40
F. Miller Construction	\$2,363,290.60

All Bidders are HeavyBid Customers!

If you have bid results you'd like to share, simply e-mail them to bidresults@hcss.com.

User Tips

HeavyBid®

See Toolbar How You Want

You can now customize the *HeavyBid* toolbar by changing the order of the icons or removing icons you never use. To move icons, hold the Shift key, and then click and drag icons to desired locations on the toolbar. You can also right-click on the toolbar, and select the "Customize" option.

Automatically Sign-in with Active Directory

Starting with *HeavyBid* 2008.1, integration with your Windows login has been added. With this feature users can seamlessly login to *HeavyBid* based on their windows profile.

We're ALWAYS Available to YOU

Never be frustrated. If you have questions about these or any other tips, **our customer support team is here to help you instantly, 24/7.** Remember to call the support line directly to get help faster.

HeavyJob®

Send documents electronically

HeavyJob provides an easy way for field personnel to send over copies of invoices and other documents. A portable scanner attached to a computer can be accessed through the Diary Entry's scan feature. Using this option will allow an image of the form to be sent over with the timecards as a PDF file.

Filter jobs by Project Manager

Simply go to File > Open Job > Filters tab, and enter the project managers initials in one of the three filter values. Now, when viewing overview reports such as Job Summary, a PM can select the Filters button, click on selected jobs and choose their name from one of the filter drop-down lists. Now they can analyze, and report on, just the jobs that are assigned to them

View images across multiple jobs

You can easily view attached images and documents across multiple jobs. Simply go to Diary Entry > Images/Docs > View. You can view attachments from the current, active, safety or selected jobs. The attachments will appear in a tree view for you to browse and preview.

The Dispatcher®

Marking Multiple Resources as Available

If you have several employees or equipment pieces available for use, you can mark all of them as "Available" at once. Simply select their checkboxes, right-click on one of the selected resources, and select the Mark Selected Resources 'Available' option. The resources will display in colored text to indicate that they are available.

Managing Crew Setup with Schedules

If a resource is switching crews on an upcoming day, you can assign it to the proper crew while scheduling it. In the Schedule window, use the Report To field to indicate whom the resource should report to that day, or which equipment piece it will be working with. When the scheduled date arrives, and you mark the schedule as done, the resource will then be attached to the Report To resource.

Have you discovered a shortcut that could be useful for others?

We want to know! Please drop us a line at tips@hcss.com.



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