

2000 User's Group Meetings Approaching

February 3-5, 2000

February 17-19, 2000

President's Advisory Council

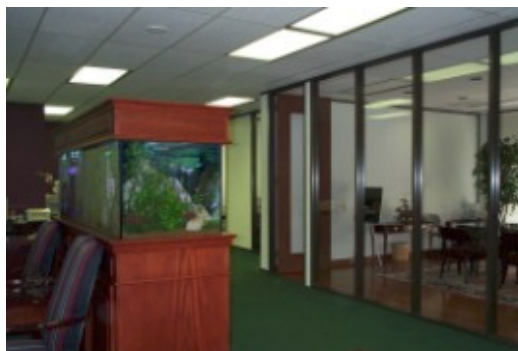
HCSS has created a new customer input group called the President's Advisory Council. The council will meet with Mike Rydin and other representatives from HCSS to identify how we can better serve our customers.

Membership to the council is by invitation, with two-year terms. Requirements for invitation to the council included strong use and knowledge of HCSS products, and prior attendance at the User's Group Meetings. Strong consideration was given to the customer's industry and size so the council members would be representative of our entire customer base.

The council will meet the day prior to each user's group meeting. We anticipate that this full-day of honest feedback from customers who depend upon HCSS will ensure that we continue to provide products and services that help our customers.

Wanted: The Finishing Touch

We're in our new building; we've unpacked the boxes, and hung the pictures. We've purchased more furniture and pictures for our new space, but now it's time to put on the finishing touch... an area we've reserved for you, our customers. Our idea is to gather and display customer job site photos. We'll take care of the enlargement and framing, but we need the photos from you.



The only requirements are that you own the submitted items, and they must be actual photographs that can be enlarged. We can also accept electronic files, but they must be very high resolution to work

Suggestion Station

Something new at this year's User's Group Meeting will be the "suggestion station", a place where you can go to make comments and submit suggestions about HeavyBid or HeavyJob. The station will be manned throughout the meetings, so an HCSS employee will be there to help in logging your suggestion, or in some cases, be able to show you where the system may already be doing what you are requesting. If you provide us with your e-mail address, we will notify you about the status of your submissions, and when, or if, it will become part of the system.

So before you come to Houston, be sure to speak with your co-workers and jot down your ideas. You can suggest as many things as you want, so come prepared with your wish list for HeavyBid and HeavyJob.

properly. If you have any questions, please call the office and speak with Mary Jo. We would love to have the photos in and hung before the Open House, but if that's not possible, just send them as soon as you can. Thank you.

Open House/Reception

HCSS is hosting a reception at our new office on Thursday evening, February 3rd or 17th, for our customers attending the User's Group Meetings. Given our recent move, we decided to replace the "video office tour" with the reception so that everyone can see the office in person. Our new facilities include a large training area, an expanded support area, a large aquarium in the lobby, and an 11th floor view of the entire city. We'll transport everyone to the office from the hotel via bus right after the conclusion of classes on Thursday. Drinks and hors d'oeuvres will be served from 6PM to 8PM. Of course we also extend an invitation to any of our customers, whether they attend the User's Group Meeting or not, to stop by for a visit anytime.

HeavyBid: Coming Features

Release 2.2 is just out the door and HCSS is already busy at work on features and enhancements for subsequent releases of HeavyBid. Here's a quick look at a few of the things you can expect to see in the near future.

One new feature coming in the comprehensive version of HeavyBid is an improved Joint Venture System. This system is designed to easily consolidate everyone's data, and permit you to "drill down" through various combinations of cost to quickly tell why the estimates differ. As the partners agree on quantities and costs, those items can be entered, and the conformed results viewed immediately.

Another new feature is the U. S. Filter import. Built in partnership with U.S. Filter, a leading materials supplier, this feature

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HCSS Has Reorganized For the New Millenium

Customer focus and customer service are the foundation of HCSS' success and the strategy that has made us the undisputed leader in our industry. However as success rewards us with an ever-growing family of customers, the increasing volume of requests increases the challenge of continuously improving our responsiveness and service level. Here are a few things we're doing to improve service:

1. Faster Delivery Through Monthly Updates. We were dissatisfied with our old method of producing updates once or twice per year, especially because of the delays it was creating in getting the programming changes into your hands. A newly formed Product Maintenance Programming team now dedicates their re-

sources to creating a new update monthly, which contains all of the small programming projects we've completed. Loading the monthly updates is optional, but it will be available for downloading from our web site at the beginning of each month starting in February.

2. More New Features and Enhancements In Annual Product Releases. Having a group designated to handle short-term programming gives the rest of our programmers the ability to focus on bigger projects. We've created two new programming groups to take advantage of this. The Estimating Programming group will focus their efforts on major projects for HeavyBid, and the Job Cost Programming group, will do the same for HeavyJob. We expect greater

productivity from this organization, resulting in more product enhancements in each annual release.

3. New Department For Custom Services. We've also experienced a growing number of requests for services to personalize the use of the HCSS products, such as creating new reports, custom programming, or getting training on a specific topic. To improve our ability to handle these requests, we have formed a new group, Product Services, which can avoid getting bogged down with the variety of other demands for programming resources. You can now "order" a custom report or other service, and be able to receive it within a short time.

HeavyBid: Coming Features cont'd.

will electronically import their latest prices directly into HeavyBid, saving you time and effort in data entry, and improve the accuracy of the results. Options are being provided to import the information as either the system standard, prices for a specific estimate, or the U.S. Filter prices in the Quote Comparison system.

Another enhancement we are working on will permit you to personalize the tabs on

HeavyBid screens. Previously we provided a "customize" tab on views that permitted you to select the specific information that would appear on that tab. We will be extending this capability so you can specify the information displayed for **every** tab. In addition you will also have the ability to create and name additional tabs with just the information you want to see.

HCSS Internet Development

Recently, HCSS completed its first internet pilot project, an in-house system that permits job applicants to sign up for testing, then retrieve their scores over the internet. Since its implementation on our web site, dozens of job applicants have used this system every week, eliminating a great deal of administrative work and telephone calls. The scheduling system was a real hit... first time out of the box.

Pilot projects, like this one, help us stay current with technical knowledge and skills, as well as provide 'real world' opportunities to evaluate the readiness and worthiness of new technologies and their benefits to our customers.

We are planning to review HCSS' internet applications at the user's group meetings and gather customer input. However, always feel free to call our development team anytime to discuss your ideas.

HeavyBid 2.2 Released

Release 2.2 of HeavyBid for Windows contains dozens of new features and enhancements, which target improved usability, speed, and access to information. Highlights from the release include:

- * New Print Engine
 - Reports are produced considerably faster
 - Reports can be saved to disk
 - Paging within a report is instant
 - Ability to go directly to a specific page
- * HeavySchedule
- * Non-Taxable Material Codes
- * Addition of Calculation Routines 10 and 11 (Trucking-Haul and Scaper-Haul) from the DOS system
- * Improved Backup Features

- Perform system backup without requiring other users to exit system
- Automatically back up to more than one disk.

- * Optional password security by user
- * The ability to tie an operator to a piece of equipment is now included in the Basic version
- * Man-hour Adjustments feature is now included in the Advanced version.
- * New "Estimate Data" section in Check Estimate report (you should be using this report!!!)
- * Biditem notes are now copied with Biditem data, upon request.
- * Support for Windows 2000

Release 2.2 was shipped in December of 1999. If you have not already received this release, please call us at 713-270-4000.

Windows 2000 Users

Please note that version 2.2 of *HeavyBid for Windows* is required for all users installing Windows 2000. Microsoft plans the general availability of Windows 2000 in February of this year.

Listening To Children

by Mike Rydin, HCSS President

When I was a child my parents told me that "children were to be seen and not heard" when we made a lot of noise or bothered them all of the time with the stuff children think important but that adults are uninterested in. Now that I am a parent, I can see how attractive that idea might be, especially when families were larger and 6 to 12 children were common.

For years, my now 12 and 14 year old boys would bother me in any of my attempts to have quiet time. Whenever I was watching a favorite TV show, or trying to read the paper, they took that time to come bother me with something. It always seemed to me like it was a plot, as if they said to each other: "Let's bother daddy now that he is trying to do something HE wants to do."

For years it irritated me for them to bother me with stuff I had absolutely no interest

in such as the power of their latest Pokemon card, or what happened to a "Dragon Ball Z" cartoon character in the last episode.

However, in the past couple of years I have decided it is a good thing that they want to talk to me. Instead of plotting to bother me, they are probably more likely thinking something like "Daddy is not doing anything now so I can go talk to him." It still irritates me to be interrupted constantly, but I now have a better attitude about it. It also occurs to me that reading the paper and watching TV are rarely more important than interacting with the children. I figure the more the kids talk to us about the things they are excited about, the longer that is likely to continue until the subject matter IS relevant to us.

For example, one day my younger son told me how he had tricked one of his

friends and instead of paying off the \$5 he should have lost in a bet, he only paid the friend \$1. I informed him that not only had he cheated someone, but that the person he had cheated was a friend.

He didn't see it that way; he just thought he was being clever. So it took me half an hour to get him to understand that he was doing something wrong. I then told him he was going to have to give the friend the extra \$4. However, figuring that punishing him too hard might make him reluctant to tell me something like that again, I contributed \$2 of the \$4 he was going to have to pay.

Although it may seem silly for me to give him \$2 in this case, the money is less important to me than the opportunity to teach him a lesson and have him innocently tell me such stories in the future.

Bid News

Pennsylvania DOT Butler County SR 228 (241) (102156)

DICK CORP.	\$8,582,240.50
A & L, Inc.	\$8,631,557.86
Baker Heavy & Highway, Inc.	\$8,840,046.00
Brayman Construction Corp.	\$8,948,846.98
IA Construction Corp.	\$9,031,973.45
Thomas A. Mekis & Sons	\$9,059,877.26
Joseph B. Fay Co.	\$9,088,541.60
Trumbull Corp.	\$9,108,753.40
Upon This Rock Construction	\$9,330,999.00
Gasa, Inc.	\$9,643,005.98

Florida DOT Pinellas County - SR 679 (256905-1-56-01)

Johnson Bros. Corp.	\$7,621,795.35
GLF Construction Corp.	\$7,794,407.34
Jones Bros., Inc.	\$8,434,065.01
Walsh Group LTD. Archer Western	\$8,683,555.57
PCL Civil Constructors, Inc.	\$8,856,013.41
Misener Marine, Inc.	\$8,875,757.00

Texas DOT Harris County - NH 2000 (198)

Williams Brothers Const. Co., Inc.	\$36,367,956.36
Deavers Const. L.P.	\$36,639,822.62
J.D. Abrams, Inc.	\$40,310,725.18

Shears Construction L.P. was awarded 17 contracts totaling about \$10.5 million on the December 15 Kansas DOT letting.

All Customers with HeavyBid noted in Bold type.

Ohio DOT Cuyahoga County Project 480 (99) IR 271, Tinkers Creek

The Ruhlin Co., Inc.	\$4,955,721
The Great Lakes Construction Co.	\$5,079,900
S.E. Johnson Companies.	\$5,339,902
Velotta	\$5,415,022
Beedir Construction Co.	\$5,470,306
J.D. Williamson Construction Co.	\$5,471,047
National Engineering & Contracting Co.	\$5,514,446
OHIO Contracting	\$5,584,144
S.S. Construction	\$5,901,412

Indiana DOT Hendricks County - RS-24774-A

Rieth Riley Construction Co.	\$ 998,700
Shelly & Sands, Inc	\$1,042,926
E & B Paving, Inc.	\$1,044,299
Calumet Asphalt Paving Co.	\$1,060,766
Hunt Paving Co, Inc.	\$1,065,263
Milestone Contractors, L.P.	\$1,081,645
Edsam Construction, Inc.	\$1,306,846

Florida DOT SR 103 / Lane Avenue

The Milestone Company of Jacksonville	\$2,595,732
JB Coxwell Contracting, Inc.	\$2,599,566
Hubbard Construction Company	\$2,622,622

"Milestone has had a lot of very tight successful bids and we're pleased with both our success and HCSS."

Marcia Gillette, Estimator

The Milestone Company of Jacksonville, Inc.

User Tips

Adding Materials Without Sales Tax

There may be times when you use a material in your estimate but do not want it to have sales tax. HeavyBid allows you to do this by designating a material code as non-taxable. Go to your system-wide material setup by clicking **Setup, System, Material**, and then click on the **Other** tab. By putting a check mark in the **Non-Tax** column, the material will not receive any sales tax.

A Mysterious New ==>

You may notice that an arrow (==>) now appears in some of your resource descriptions. This arrow appears at the beginning of the description of any labor or equipment code that is not a part of a crew so you can tell the difference in resources that are affected by crew changes and those that are not.

New Scheduling Package

The TimeSketch scheduling program included with our Advanced and Comprehensive systems has been replaced with HeavySchedule. HeavySchedule makes it easier to add and delete lines from your schedule. HeavySchedule can be found by clicking **File, Export, To HeavySchedule**. Please let us know, if for any reason, you still have the need to use TimeSketch.

Saving Reports to Text Files

HeavyBid now has the option to save any report in the system to a text file. The **To Text** option appears just below **Preview** in the **Print** window. Since a text file is a common file format, once it is created you can open it in a word processing program and change the font or layout of the report, and print it on special paper such as letterhead. One of the most useful options is the ability to attach the text file to an e-mail and send it to someone to view or print even if they do not have HeavyBid installed on their computer.

Reminder: Fast Way to Copy Current Biditems

If you're working in a biditem and you want to copy some or all of it within the same estimate, there's a faster way than using Copy Biditem/Activity. Click the **More Options** button from the Enter Estimate screen, and select **Copy Current Biditem/Activity**. This option will permit you to copy some or all of the content of the current biditem to an existing, or new biditem, within the same estimate. Additional options permit you to move biditems or activities, and to specify whether quantities or activity codes should be changed during the copy.

Monthly In-House Training Resumes This Spring

HeavyBid in-house training is gearing up to start again this spring. The 2-day entry level training sessions will be conducted monthly at our new offices in Houston. This is another training option available which will enable a company to quickly overview the basics of the system and start using it right away.

Scheduled sessions for 2000 are:

March 23 - 24, 2000
April 13 - 14, 2000
May 18 - 19, 2000
June 22 - 23, 2000

If you are interested in attending one of these sessions, please contact the office as soon as possible because seats are limited.

HCSS' NEW ADDRESS:

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