



April 17, 2008

## Sage Software - Sage Master Builder

By Staff Writer  
News Service

*From the April/May 2008 Review [<http://www.cpata.com/go/1917>] of Contractor/Construction Accounting Systems*

Sage Master Builder is an integrated-construction and financial software product ideally suited to mid-sized construction and service contractors, including plumbing and HVAC contractors, electricians, and heavy equipment operators. Sage Master Builder is compatible with Microsoft operating systems including Windows Vista.

### **Learning Curve/ Ease of Use - 5 Stars**

Sage Master Builder's main screen contains a drop-down menu bar at the top and a vertical listing of modules to the left of the screen. Clicking on a module will expand the menu to display the functions specific to that module. Data-entry screens are easily navigated and contain lookup options where needed. A series of icons in each data-entry screen offer varying options such as locating records, changing the posting period, attaching notes to the record or the option to recall the last accessed record. Sage Master Builder provides detailed information on setting up job codes that work with a business' structure, or the user can import codes from another application. Job costs can be tracked as direct expenses or as work-in-progress (WIP). Users can also create subcontracts and keep close tabs on change work orders and invoices. Purchase orders can be easily created, and expenses can be recorded on specific jobs upon receipt of product. A sample company is included with Sage Master Builder, which allows users to become comfortable with the product prior to going live on the system. The newly revamped Help system is very thorough and will answer most questions about setting up Sage Master Builder or offer assistance on just about any task.

### **Modules & Functionality - 5 Stars**

Sage Master Builder includes the following modules: GL, AR, AP, Accounting Reports, Payroll, and Project Management (includes Job Costing, Utilities and Equipment Management). Add-on modules include Service Receivables & Inventory and Estimating. Third-party applications that will integrate with Sage Master Builder include Payroll, Point-of-Sale, Project and Process Management, Service Management, Checks and Forms, Time and Attendance, Job Tracking, and Equipment Management. Version 13 also contains enhanced e-mail functionality, point-and-click drilldown reporting capability, and the ability to associate RFIs (Request for Information) to a particular client.

### **Productivity Tools - 5 Stars**

The Executive Dashboard presents a snapshot of the status of a business, including the balance of cash accounts, cash position, aged receivables and payables, an abbreviated income statement, and outstanding change orders and under-billed jobs. A desktop calendar is available for recording appointments, including the addition of any in-depth notes regarding the appointment. Users can schedule employees to perform assigned tasks and then estimate the duration of the job and enter a fixed start date and a description of the task. Equipment can be assigned to a particular job, as well, which allows for the tracking of equipment time and usage on all jobs. Schedules can also be e-mailed or faxed to employees or contractors as needed. A list of master tasks can be set up during scheduling and then be posted directly to the specific job. The Project Work Center allows users to view each assigned job and view various information tables such as payable invoices, proposals, purchase orders, receivable invoices, subcontracts and more.

### **Import/Export/ Integration - 4.5 Stars**

Sage Master Builder is designed to integrate with all available system modules as well as numerous third-party applications. Integration is further simplified by utilizing Sage Master Builder API, which is designed to assist with integration capability and provide the functionality needed to integrate with a variety of third-party software applications that are designed specifically for construction-related industries.

**Reporting - 5 Stars**

Sage Master Builder currently includes more than 1,200 standard reports in its current version. Built-in report writer functionality allows for the creation of customized reports, and current reports can be modified as needed. The Form/Page Design function enables users to add or design custom touches for company reports or create in-house forms for company use. All reports can be exported to Excel or e-mailed directly to recipients. The Quick Reports function allows for the creation of quick reference reports such as user lists, departments or cost codes. And the Report Scheduling features allows user to determine the reports needed and when they are needed so they can be scheduled to print at that time.

**Support & Training - 5 Stars**

Sage Master Builder offers numerous technical support and product maintenance plans, including the Basic Care and Total Care maintenance and support programs. Both programs include product upgrades, tax updates and access to the Sage Master Builder Technical Knowledgebase. Total Care also offers unlimited access to technical support and includes the Discovery Training Package, which offers 25 hours of online training classes to new users. And as previously noted, the Help function will also assist new users with a multitude of issues.

**Relative Value - 5 Stars**

Sage Master Builder is currently available for less than \$5,000 for a single-user system, with add-on modules costing extra. This is an excellent system for mid-sized construction companies and contractors, heavy equipment companies, and service-related contractors who are looking for a better way to monitor their business without a large investment of time or money.

**2008 Overall Rating: 5 Stars**