
Preface

About This Manual

This manual is an introduction to CostLink/AE and an aid to learning its use. Each chapter provides detailed information about the functions of the software. Step-by-step instructions guide you through using the features, and a tutorial walks you through creating a small estimate.

NOTE: For installation instructions, directions for moving the software, and system requirements information, see the Installation document available on the *Install BSD Products* screen of the latest version of the BSD SoftLink CD-ROM.

Chapter Summary

While the Table of Contents and the Index contain detailed information to aid you in finding information in this manual, in general the following is what you will find in each chapter:

Chapter 1: Introduction

Contains an overview of CostLink/AE and the R.S. Means data.

Chapter 2: Tutorial

Follow the instructions in this chapter to learn CostLink/AE by creating a small estimate.

Chapter 3: About the CostLink/AE Display

If you are not familiar with arranging multiple windows on your computer, read this chapter for information on tiling windows. This is an essential skill when working with CostLink/AE. The chapter also contains information on arranging panels, a list of the icons in the software and their meanings, how to customize the toolbars, and how to use the online help.

Chapter 4: Projects, Models, Tasks, & Markups

Provides detailed information on how to create and open estimates, use models, add tasks (assemblies and line items), and apply markups.

Chapter 5: Reports

Describes the process of creating reports and the options available when printing reports.

Chapter 6: Tools and Techniques

Provides detailed information on using most of the features of the software that were not covered in the previous chapters. These include ways to:

- find information (Find)
- attach additional information to an estimate (Notes and Pictures)
- copy and move folders and tasks (tips on right-click, copy and paste, etc.)
- remove extra (empty) folders easily
- reuse existing estimates (Copy Project)
- fix technical problems with projects (Compact Database)
- save backup copies of projects or save a copy you can fit in an email (Save To and Load From Compressed)
- add commands to the Tools menu so that you can open other programs from within CostLink/AE

Chapter 7: Linking

Contains information and directions for linking the quantities of tasks to the quantities of folders so that you can change the quantity on a folder and automatically recalculate how much of each task is needed for the new quantity. You can also link an estimate to an Excel workbook.

Appendix A: Toolbar and Menu Reference

Lists all toolbar buttons and menu commands along with a short description of each.

Appendix B: R.S. Means Abbreviations

Lists abbreviations used in the R.S. Means databases.

Suggestions and Corrections

If you have suggestions or corrections for this User Manual, please email them to support@bsdsoftlink.com. Please be sure to include the name of the manual and the page number. We appreciate your feedback.