



RAISING THE BAR FOR PLAYGROUND SAFETY

How ProEst helped FlexGround increase efficiency and integration





FlexGround provides custom poured-in-place playground and aquatic safety surfacing for school districts, municipalities and recreational facilities across the country.

BACKGROUND

Since the company's launch in 2010, FlexGround estimators had relied on Excel and manual calculations to prepare and submit project bids, but a prolonged period of growth for the company—and a corresponding rise in the number of estimates and reports required—demanded more functionality than spreadsheets could provide. Recognizing the need for a more robust solution, FlexGround founder and CFO Corey Hague began an exhaustive seven-year search for integrations that fit their specialized estimating requirements. After evaluating over 40 solutions, in 2018 he chose cloud-based ProEst as the company's new estimating platform.

OVERVIEW

Arizona-based FlexGround maintains oversight of more than two million square feet of playground and aquatic safety surfacing throughout the western United States. One of the fastest-growing companies in the U.S., FlexGround has 23 employees—including four full-time estimators—in three locations and installed and repaired 700+ engineered safety surfaces in the past year alone. In 2019, the company completed 2,900 project estimates and generated an annual revenue of \$15M, projected to grow by 10-12% year over year.



MEETING THE NEED FOR BACK-END INTEGRATION

When Logan Walsh joined FlexGround as a Project Administrator in 2017, he quickly became adept at using Excel to prepare estimates, a solution that had been in place long before he arrived. And while functionality was limited, the real problem for FlexGround, he says, was on the back end, where a lack of integration with accounting programs was causing inefficiencies, frustration and delays. "It wasn't really working for accounting," he said. "Everything had to be done manually, and with information being scattered across different documents, tracking things down and finding what they needed was a nightmare." With the implementation of ProEst, says Walsh, the problem was solved, aggregating information in a single location that was accessible throughout the project lifecycle by any user who needed it. "It's been a huge help to have everything consolidated in one specific place," he said. "Once you put data in the estimate, it's all there and secured."

A SCALABLE SOLUTION FOR HIGH-VOLUME ESTIMATING

Walsh also credits ProEst with a new ability to increase estimating efficiency during busy periods, all with the kind of pinpoint costing accuracy that wins bids and helps ensure that projects turn a profit. "We're unique in what we do," said Walsh. "A lot of construction companies do a handful of estimates every month, and sometimes, no more than one a year. The kind of work we do requires us to submit a lot of estimates week after week, and how we break down materials and job costing has to be very detailed and specific." With a workforce distributed across locations in three states, FlexGround finds that ProEst's cloud platform supports better collaboration among teams, too. "It's useful," said Walsh, "because now we can work live wherever we are, using the same information at the same time."



"Our estimating needs are so unique that most estimating platforms just didn't work for us. ProEst does."

ONGOING SUPPORT FROM THE PROEST TEAM

Walsh was equally impressed with the training and technical support offered by the ProEst team, personalized attention that he feels helped accelerate the transition to the new platform. After years of using Excel, there was a certain amount of “muscle memory” for the FlexGround estimating team to overcome, he said, but the intuitive nature of the ProEst interface—combined with embedded training videos and live education sessions—made it possible for estimators to fully adopt the new platform within a week or so, and leave Excel behind forever.



“ With ProEst, our teams can work together live, using the same information at the same time. ”

ACHIEVING A NEW LEVEL OF ESTIMATING EFFICIENCY

CFO Hague has always viewed technology as a key differentiator for FlexGround, and found that ProEst shared his company's commitment to innovative future-forward thinking. Since implementing ProEst, says Hague, FlexGround has increased their estimating efficiency rate by nearly 30%. Even better, Hague feels that the company is well positioned for the future—forecasting that annual revenue could reach \$20M by 2025. What did ProEst bring to the table for FlexGround that other solutions didn't? Hague put it this way: "All of the other estimating systems I looked at are built for general contractors, so they made assumptions primarily about the way GCs work," he said. "ProEst had the flexibility to help us build the complex formulas we need."



FlexGround projects range from minor surface repairs to major public works installations that require a month or more to complete.

ABOUT PROEST

ProEst provides advanced construction estimating capabilities for leading companies and public sector clients in the United States, Canada and Australia. Our cloud-based platform combines cost estimating, digital takeoffs and bid day analysis in a single powerful solution—a proven way to reduce costs, ensure accuracy and streamline pre-construction workflow.

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