

Now, estimators can use an API (application programming interface) to set up what is essentially a live connection between their estimating software and the software application they use for performance tracking.

APIs are increasingly common. They connect software and data sources to each other by providing a shared standard for interoperability. In simpler terms, the API is a messenger allowing two applications to talk to each other. An API can take orders or requests from a system, relay them to another system, and return the information to fulfill the order.

This kind of connection between an application used for estimating and one used to report production quantities, labor and equipment hours, and material utilization hours in the field gives estimators an obvious advantage. They can look up production rates for current and historical projects quickly and easily. This can be done within the estimating application, providing valuable information with very little time or effort.

Estimators simply choose an item or activity for which they want to review past costs and productivity and the range

of jobs they want to include. The software, using the API connectivity, will review the appropriate electronic field logs and provide the production rate actuals for asphalt paving, pipe installation, cut and fill or any other item or activity specified.

Filtering capabilities in the estimating software are important. They enable estimators to select a date range and tracking or account IDs for the jobs they want to include in their search. This gives them the most relevant and comparable production rate actuals.

As an example, let's say an estimator has used the API connection between the estimating software and the field tracking software to pull actual production rates for an excavating crew for six jobs. He or she then selected three of those jobs to include in the calculation, because they are most like the job being bid.



About the Author

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