

BUILDING SUCCESS



Ruhlman Brothers crew cutting a new curb

featured

- Ruhlman Brothers
- Foundation Software

A Concrete Difference

In 1962, three brothers opened a small concrete construction company. They had one common dream – that of creating a successful business that used technology to the fullest. Three generations and many curbs later, Ruhlman Brothers is a leader in their industry and emulated by many.

The Ruhlman Brothers always prided themselves on being innovative. Purchasing a curb machine in 1975, they ignored skeptics and watched as the machine lay 120 linear feet of perfect looking curb and gutter on the ground, all in 15 minutes.

Over the years, Ruhlman Brothers created many additional innovations such as Free Forming and the Soft Cut System. These processes have made them a company to watch within the industry, creating several copycat competitors.

Rainee Ruhlman, Vice President, sums up their success; "We have come up with many unique and innovative ideas over the years with both equipment and techniques. Anyone can buy a curb machine and try to be as successful as we are. However, we find that our most valuable asset is our skilled employees and realizing that it takes a unified effort to make things work."

These principles have lead to Ruhlman Brothers' impressive growth. The company has gone from using one curbing machine placing 100,000 linear feet of curb per year to six machines placing 700,000 linear feet of curb per year and has tripled their employees since

1962. This growth caused a need for upgrades in various areas of their business, including the task of finding an accounting system detailed enough to handle their ever-changing requirements.

John Jacobs, Office Manager for Ruhlman Brothers, wanted an accounting software package that wasn't afraid to be different and try new things. "We were looking for a company that cared enough to know our business. By the same token, this company needed to be a leader in their industry," Jacobs said.

THE CHALLENGE

Ruhlman Brothers previously used Peachtree, an accounting system that was not detailed enough for the construction industry. They needed a system that was powerful enough to meet their needs with better and more detailed job costing information. They had a multi-user program, but only one user could be in a particular module at any one time. "We needed strong job costing and payroll modules," Jacobs said. "We were doing AIA billings by hand, which can be tedious."

Although Peachtree was relatively easy to use, if a problem did arise requiring support, they would be put on hold, sometimes for up to 45 minutes. When the rep finally took the call, they had to explain background information on themselves before even discussing the problem at hand. This wasted more of Jacobs's valuable time. "Sometimes, after being put on hold, support couldn't answer your questions, and then they would have to call you back. I didn't have time for that."

CUSTOMER



CORPORATE PROFILE

Ruhlman Bros, Inc.
Hanover, PA
Slip-Form Curbing
Employees: 35
Annual Revenue: \$5 Million

SYSTEM PROFILE

Computer System

- Networked with a Dedicated Server

Operating System

- Windows XP

Foundation Software Modules in Operation

- Job Costing
- Payroll
- General Ledger
- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- DataGenie Designers

BENEFITS

- Quick processing and retrieval of information and reports
- The ability to retain and view previous years' information
- Construction-specific accounting software at a reasonable price
- Extremely well-trained staff from sales to customer support

Jacobs knew he needed a stronger accounting system. When it came time to look at systems, he found many other companies' prices to be unreasonable for the package they offered. "I understood there would be a price hike in going from a generic package to a construction-oriented package, but the cost for some of the other packages was too outrageous for a mid-sized company like us," he emphasized.

Jacobs was frustrated because his current system was not date-sensitive and didn't have the ability to retain yearly information. "With the current system, we could only have access to the current year and the past year information," he said. "We needed the ability to retain company history."

THE SOLUTION

After comparing FOUNDATION® for Windows® to their systems, Ruhlman Brothers found FOUNDATION's price to be attractive. "FOUNDATION offered a construction-specific system with everything we needed for a price that was reasonable to our budget," Jacobs said.

When Ruhlman Brothers started looking in more detail at FOUNDATION, Jacobs called companies who used the system. "I contacted our accountant for names of other companies that were using FOUNDATION, and I called them," Jacobs admitted. "I wanted unbiased opinions of Foundation Software and their support. I was happy to hear everyone I talked to had high regards for Foundation Software, particularly the excellent support staff."

In FOUNDATION, Ruhlman Brothers found a system that met their current needs with important features like certified payroll and AIA billing built right in. "The ease of use and the amount of time saved with Foundation's AIA billing is great," Jacobs said. "Previous billings are there, and you just need to insert the current amount due. The same thing applies to certified payroll."

Reporting was also critical. Using FOUNDATION's innovative DataGenie report writer, Ruhlman Brothers can easily customize reports to meet their needs – unlike with other report writing tools that are difficult to use.

Finally, Ruhlman Brothers found the customer support they were looking for.

"Technical support was important, and this probably carried the largest weight of the decision," Jacobs said. "Their staff is extremely well-trained from sales to customer support. When I call in, I can talk to the same person. They know who I am. They know the company history. Most importantly, they know how to work with me, saving me time to work on other tasks."



Crewmen molding a curb