

BUILDING SUCCESS



featured

- Charles Brown Electric, Inc.
- Foundation Software

Taking Charge of Business

Charles Brown Electric streamlines accounting processes to minimize workload while maximizing results

Some days an owner's work is never done. Unfortunately, this was becoming more of the norm than an isolated occurrence for Charles Brown, owner of Charles Brown Electric in Columbus, Ohio.

Since the business started, Charles Brown had been intimately involved in every aspect of developing his electrical construction company, with projects ranging from direct digital control to electrical control of systems.

Like any entrepreneur, Mr. Brown enjoyed his involvement in multiple areas. Many times this included taking care of the estimating, payables, receivables, and general management. However, substantial growth prompted him to search for better ways to run his business. An area of formidable concern was accounting practices which were done manually. The processes that worked for a small company would no longer fit a growing business. Mr. Brown needed to find a more efficient way to track his financial progress while keeping tight control on costs.

"I was doing too much," Brown said. "I needed to direct my business but was way too involved with every aspect of the company. It was just too consuming for any single individual to handle, including me."

Brown knew he could have easily moved away from his spreadsheets and into a generic accounting software package. However, he felt that this move

would only be a temporary fix that they would quickly outgrow. Brown was looking for a long-term solution, not a band-aid.

"Many other companies told me it would be in my best interest to buy a package like QuickBooks or Peachtree, but I wanted something that could grow with us, not something I might have to replace in a few years," Brown said. "I knew if I was going to spend the time and money to make a change, I wanted to find a package geared to my needs. I found what I was looking for in FOUNDATION."

THE CHALLENGE

"I could have literally wallpapered a small office with the spreadsheets that I regularly used for our accounting and job analysis," commented Mr. Brown. This was Charles Brown Electric's main reason for looking at integrated construction accounting software.

Mr. Brown continues. "I could not bring together all of the areas with spreadsheets alone. Manually tracking estimating, invoicing, accounts payable, and all other segments of the company proved too cumbersome."

Additionally, Mr. Brown found it extremely difficult to tie all of the details together to produce an accurate picture of how the business was truly performing. As Mr. Brown readily admitted, "I needed to take control of my business!"

CUSTOMER

**CHARLES BROWN
ELECTRIC, INC.**

CORPORATE PROFILE

Columbus, OH
Electrical Contractor
Employees: 12
Annual Revenue: \$1 Million

SYSTEM PROFILE

Foundation Software Modules in Operation

- Job Costing
- Payroll
- General Ledger
- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- DataGenie Designers
- Equipment
- Time and Material

BENEFITS

- Flexibility to track job progress using many variables such as man hours, material costs, or receivables
- Improved control of all financial and project aspects of the business
- Quicker payroll processing for various IBEW locals with different wage and benefit rates
- Friendly support dedicated to a user's success

THE SOLUTION

The Foundation Accounting System provided the structure that Mr. Brown was looking for.

"Now I can track job progress in man hours, material costs and receivables. What peace of mind."

In early 2001, Mr. Brown upgraded to Foundation's Windows product, FOUNDATION® for Windows®. The transition from DOS to Windows was extremely easy, and Mr. Brown now enjoys the additional functionality available in FOUNDATION for Windows.

"Our conversion to Windows went very well, as I knew it would. Foundation has always been there for us, and this time was no exception. And when a question does arise, I simply make a call to client services. Response time is always quick, and their entire staff is very knowledgeable and supportive."

Mr. Brown summarizes his experiences with a final thought:

"If I could go back in time and do one thing differently, it would be to start using FOUNDATION earlier in our company's growth process. I believe my business would be a lot further along today had we done so."



Charles Brown at the project site for
Riverside Heart Hospital