



FOUNDATION IN ACTION

For a Contractor on the Rise, Both
Software and Company Stand out

BY FOUNDATION SOFTWARE

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software

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When Ryan started with the family company, he learned the premier contractor edition of a top small-business accounting application, and they used it for several years. Ryan's the president of VEI Solutions, a glass and metal subcontractor based in Chicago, Illinois, that puts as big a value on building relationships as they do quality of work. "It lets you job cost in a way," he says of their old system. "It worked out well for the basic accounting needs, but it didn't have the option to job cost the way I'd like."

To make it work for the jobs VEI performed, Ryan kept a half dozen spreadsheets on the side of his small-business software just to track items like union dues and perform certified payroll. "I had to come up with creative solutions," he says. That meant a lot of spreadsheets.

"I designed my own certified payroll template painstakingly to calculate everything I possibly could, and I still had to adjust it to the penny. I created a lien waiver template," he continues. "I had to track unions separately and workers' comp separately. I even had to create a dummy account in the system," Ryan explains, "because I could only job cost workers' comp if the software thought it was coming from a checking account. Then I had to zero it out every week."



It wasn't simply time-consuming — ultimately, Ryan reflects, it was going to hold them back from what he knew VEI could achieve. A construction-specific accounting system was going to be part of their path forward. "I knew it was an important piece of getting to the next stage. I knew that we were going to be growing a lot, and to get to the next level, we needed to do this."



A Different Sales Experience

When Ryan began his search for new accounting software, he went through six or seven one-hour demos with sales teams. "A lot of the sales people didn't really seem excited about their product, and a lot of times they wouldn't have answers to my questions."

But there was one vendor they hadn't talked to yet, and when Foundation Software reached out to send him a brochure and [free demo CD](#), he says, "That stood out. I was able to get a better feel of the software ahead of time," and by the time he [scheduled a live demo](#), he felt prepared with better questions.

"I was really impressed with Garrett at Foundation," Ryan draws the contrast with his other demos. "He always had answers if I ever had questions. He was really good about acknowledging my emails in about 15 or 20 minutes and answering by the end of the day." That's not the only difference Ryan noticed right away. "I never even thought about asking for a list of referrals from these companies. That really stood out that Garrett offered that of his own volition. I called a bunch of references, and I was really pleasantly surprised the feedback was so good."

Already adept at making spreadsheets, Ryan drew up his list of pros and cons, evaluating

each of the different aspects. This time, it calculated perfectly. “The team I worked with at Foundation was pretty stellar. Foundation did a fantastic job of presenting what it was able to do. I’ve been very pleased with it ever since.”

Technology That Makes Sense for Construction

Asked about his favorite part of either the software or the company, he insists it’s really both. “The product is really fantastic and allows me to do so much. When I was going through the training, I got really excited. It does all the tracking, all the unions, all the lien waivers. That I had to create a spreadsheet for every one of those before, it’s overwhelming for me to think about. I was so thrilled by the product.” Ryan says he was surprised at first that he wasn’t finding something like FOUNDATION® sooner. “It just makes sense that someone would have sat down and created this.”

Transitioning to more robust construction job costing, he knows that there’s a lot they have available to grow into. That’s true on all sides of the ledger. “As we’re trying to grow from an operations standpoint, we’re also trying to grow from a financial standpoint. We’re going to be able to get the kinds of financial reports we need with the click of a button. It’s great to have that ability to create such in-depth reports.”

“It gives us a decided advantage because we’re able to stay on top of things a lot better.” He thinks of a big VEI customer that uses four different systems: one for POs, one for project management, one for accounting and one for reports. “For us, everything’s bundled in one.”

“I was surprised I had never heard of FOUNDATION before. Then after talking to a bunch of people I found out that a lot of contractors haven’t either.” For Ryan, it’s a best-kept secret that really shouldn’t be a secret . . . with one exception. “I want to share it with as many people as I can — but I don’t want to share it with my competitors.”

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A Different Kind of Company

When Ryan thinks of what it's been like to work with Foundation, he thinks of his own [growing family business](#). He sees the influence of a strong culture and how it makes a difference, and he urges Foundation just to make sure they keep taking their own path. "They're doing something right," Ryan insists.

"I've been very impressed with how quickly I get responses and how helpful the staff has been." Ryan recalls some complex union corrections he needed help with and the support rep who saw the long project all the way through to resolution — as well as some instances where VEI had a very unique situation that needed a solution. "The people have always been very gracious and patient. I've always been surprised with how positive and helpful everyone has been."

"It's rare I come across a vendor I'm so pleased with." Ryan adds, "I'm pleasantly surprised by how well Foundation runs its company. My dream is that my company can leave that kind of impression."



Foundation Software is the developer of FOUNDATION® – America's #1 Construction Accounting Software. Since 1985, we've been dedicated to giving contractors the back office tools they need to manage their job cost accounting and project management, with on-premise, cloud and mobile.

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