

JMS Aids Management Buy Out at CW Ellis

Faced with redundancy or an unknown buyer, three joiners from Halesworth in Suffolk decided to take the brave move to buy out their retiring boss, and become the proud owners of C.W. Ellis (Halesworth) Ltd. With all three of them hands on joiners it may have been a daunting prospect to take over the management and office work too; however they have been aided in their management role by Joinerysoft's Joinery Management Software (JMS).

Producing high quality bespoke joinery including sliding sash, doors, conservatories, and hand-made kitchens, often for conservation projects, CW Ellis relies mostly on word of mouth for new business. Providing a quality product is important to them, however they recognise that if you don't win business in the first place you can't impress with your quality. Committed to providing a professional approach and timely response JMS has helped them to achieve this goal.

The new management team; Mark Seamons, Mark Larter and John Gray purchased the business in 2008 with JMS already established making the transition easier. John Gray is now responsible for customer contact and estimating. With only a couple of lessons from the previous owner John was up to speed with JMS in a couple of weeks, providing quotes for customers while they waited. "The decision to take over the business was made easier by having JMS", says John. "Having been self employed before I know how much time it takes to quote manually, and how jobs can be lost without a quick response."



John adds, "JMS has cut down on actual workings out and phone calls. I can now complete multiple quotes as quickly as I can one. Selecting different timber can be done with just a few mouse clicks and doesn't mean working out the quote again. Quotes are now professional and the time I save producing them means I can quote more. This means we are manic at the moment, but I can't complain. I wouldn't have it any other way."

Describing himself as a basic computer user, without being a fan, John has found JMS simple to use and intuitive. Without formal training John has been able to familiarise himself with JMS and is constantly making improvements to fine tune the business and maximise profits.

John explains, "JMS not only provides visibility of your costs and profit but also the production time for items. With this knowledge we can check that all jobs are making money. When we need to we can adjust our mark-ups, however our workshop continues to hit the production times set for them, so we know that we have got it right."

More than just a quoting package JMS also provides cutting sheets for the workshop, glass sizes, timber requirements, delivery notes, invoicing; in fact everything needed to ensure the business runs smoothly. It is also conveniently available in modules for Casement Windows, Sliding Sash, Doors & Doorframes, Screens, Bill of Materials (which basically means anything else!),

CNC, Stairs and Gates. Limited by their current premises C.W. Ellis has no plans to expand at present, content with the five joiners currently employed.

Time savings introduced by JMS are also not limited to quoting. John says, "I have found JMS Glass reports really useful for handing straight to my glazier, with diagrams showing duplex bar positions, both the customers and glaziers like them. The software has also speeded up the workshop; by providing accurate concise information we have removed the need to ask frequent questions. Everything they need is provided."

Viewing customer support as an important part of the package, John has found the new features and updates helpful. "Whenever I have a query the technical support team are friendly and quickly sort me out. I don't have to use them very often but I am still learning new things all the time, and with frequent updates and new features the software gets better and better," he says.

Two years on the new management team have settled into their roles and are going from strength to strength. Despite taking over the business during a difficult time for the industry, turnover is up two years in a row and with their busy order book looks set to continue. With more time on his hands previous owner Bill Ellis still pops in when walking past with his dog. Pleased to see the business succeeding he lends a hand when needed, but mostly enjoys touring Europe and the freedom of his new luxury camper van.

C.W. Ellis (Halesworth) Ltd
Tel: 01986 875395
info@c-w-ellis.co.uk

Joinerysoft Ltd
Tel: 01608 643302
enquiries@joinerysoft.com
www.joinerysoft.com

