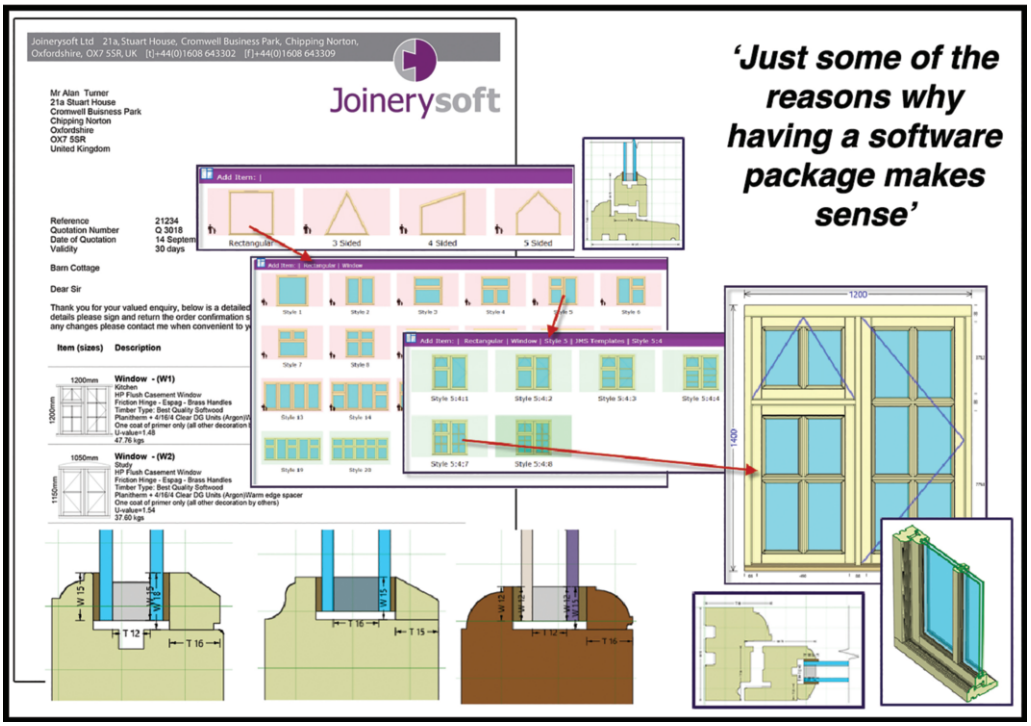
Can software help your joinery business?



HAVE YOU EVER thought that software was the way forward but could not justify the expense? It's a common dilemma for many joinery manufacturers.

Whatever the size of your business, here are some considerations that may help you decide whether software could help you.

1. Time to Quote

How long does it take you to quote a typical joinery job? For example, a three bed house with 11 items, made up of eight windows and three doors?

Manually – 2 hours?
With software — 30 mins*
Time savings — 1.5 hours
(*Based on JMS performance)

2. Cost Savings

If a quote was to take you only 25% of your time you save 75% of your time when quoting, how much of a saving is this in practise? Conservatively working on three quotes per week this probably adds up to circa £150 per week. This is probably less than the weekly cost of purchasing the software in the first place!

The cost savings are not limited to just quoting, either. With material ordering, and workshop cutting lists produced automatically once the design is confirmed, you can save hours on each job.

3. Greater Professionalism

With all your documentation looking professional from the initial quote (headed paper, personalised text, layouts to suit different customers) your customers immediately see a company that knows what they are doing. With all paperwork from initial quote, through to order confirmation, material ordering, cutting lists, delivery notes and invoicing having the same professional standards you have credibility from day one, without the customer knowing how easy this is to produce with the right software.

4. Clarity

Software not only allows you to design and quote but provides a clearly documented specification. Your customer can clearly see what you've quoted, with true scale images providing clarity and detailed descriptions including fittings and finishing ensuring they have all the right information to approve the work without delay. Itemised costs also help further and ensure the customer knows exactly what they are getting and paying!

5. Customer Confidence

It goes without saying that greater professionalism and clarity give your customer confidence. Often it isn't about just one thing. It is the overall impression that you give your customer that means they believe in you as a company.

6. Win Work

Greater customer confidence, and faster quotes mean you get back to the customer while the project is still hot. Customers are more likely to place an order if they receive a professional quote back in a prompt manner.

7. Reduces Disputes

The additional detail customers receive from your quotation software, and the professional printouts which make it easy to print and request signed order confirmations means that not only are disputes reduced, they are also easier to win if they do occur.

8. Faster payments

Paperwork that consistently lists the job with clarity means that your customer has little reason to delay payments. There is no confusion over the final price or specification and clear invoices that include the same diagrams and details as the quotes mean that the customer can match up quote to invoice quickly and speed up payments.

9. Time Savings in Workshop

Fewer questions from bench joiners due to clear instructions and automatically produced cutting lists improve standards. You also get visibility of what's going through your workshop.

10. Accurate Material Ordering

Ensuring you've ordered everything for an order can be a headache. Missed items or incorrect items can eat into profit margins. Software can provide accurate and detailed lists of all materials that are needed for each job. Glass sheets can even include diagrams of margin bars so you can be sure that your supplier knows what you want, with the greater clarity improving relationships with your suppliers. Confidence in your software can also lead to ordering glass early, removing delays waiting for materials to arrive and ultimately lead to faster delivery and faster payments.

With time and cost savings from quoting right through to material ordering and production, there are many reasons why for most joinery businesses having a software package makes sense. Certainly the cost savings directly equate to more than the initial purchase price, so conservatively you can expect a return on investment, within 12 months. Subsequent cost savings can directly improve your profit margins, or provide capital for further investment in tooling or machines. The choice is yours. Can you afford not to purchase?

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