

CASE STUDY

Kraemer North America Embraces Informed e-Bidding with Bidx.com Competitive Analysis Suite

BACKGROUND

Kraemer North America has used Bidx.com to submit bids in Wisconsin, Iowa, Michigan, Colorado, and Washington for over a decade. Early on in their Bidx.com history, they started exploring better ways to get historical information that would inform estimates and future bids. They also wanted to ensure they wouldn't miss out on any available subcontractor quotes.

SOLUTION

Bidx.com Competitive Analysis Suite and Small Business Network

The Competitive Analysis Suite can be added to any Bidx.com Basic or Pro subscription for a monthly fee. The Small Business Network is included with Basic and Pro subscriptions.

RESULTS

Kraemer leverages the Bid Tab Analysis component of the Competitive Analysis Suite to refine estimates and determine the value of a project, as well as compare against other bids to inform future bids. While much of their subcontractor outreach is done through a different platform, the Small Business Network helps ensure they don't miss any subcontractor quotes and can demonstrate Good Faith Effort when needed.

“The amount of time Bid Express saves estimators, especially when you're bidding in a heavy month... You can actually start the estimating process before you start bidding a job to find out what it's going to take to build it. The time savings for individuals is huge.”

BRENT FREEMAN
ESTIMATING MANAGER

Kraemer North America's Approach to e-Bidding

The process of bid submission is much the same for Kraemer North America as it is for many Bidx.com subscribers. They download bid files, prepare the bid in AASHTOWare Project Bids™, export a COL file, and then import that into Heavy Bid to create an estimate. This process is already a time saver before any additional services come into play.

“Just being able to download a file instead of having to create a fresh set of Excel spreadsheets to upload into Heavy Bid, with the process we have it’s five minutes instead of trying to type in every bid item, which can take hours,” said Chuck Philipp, an Estimator for the company.

The Kraemer team also enjoys the ease of the addendum process and the timeliness of apparent bids.

“When we open up AASHTOWare, it’s pulling from the same folder, so it automatically pulls [the addendum] in there and does the update for us. Saves a lot of time,” said Brent Freeman, an Estimating Manager for Kraemer.

“Going further, once bids are turned in, being able to look at apparent bids the day that we turn them in... we all huddle up in our conference room waiting on pins and needles to see the results. Things like that, I think are great,” he continued.

But before bids are ever submitted, the Competitive Analysis Suite comes into play.

Bid Tab Analysis

Leveraging Bid Tab Analysis to Inform Estimates

Bid Tab Analysis, one of the two solutions included in the Competitive Analysis Suite, provides contractors with a treasure trove of historical bid information. How that information is used is up to the contractor. For the team at Kraemer, it's a key part of the estimation process.

“It’s an essential tool for us as estimators,” said Freeman. **“It’s great for looking up historical pricing and green-sheeting, or plugging up, the overall value of a job before we start the full estimating process. Before we get far into an estimate, we want to know what the value of the project is and the tool is very useful for us in the aspect.”**

Freeman referenced the sheer quantity of historic information and old lettings on Bidx.com that are simply easier to search for than going hunting on DOT websites. Philipp added that it contributes to a better understanding of the competitive landscape overall:

“It helps out even if we’re not priming a job to be able to go look and see how our numbers compare to other prime contractors... we can get a sense of where things are just by looking at the bid tabs,” he said.

Finding Value Post Bid

After bids are awarded, win or lose, the team at Kraemer always looks at the bid tabs for more information. On jobs they lose, they can pinpoint where different subcontractors came in with a lower quote or identify which items they lost on. They can use that information to inform future bids and expand their subcontractor rolodex.

“If we up a new sub based on bid tabs, we can find that new sub and possibly use them on the next job that might make us lower than if we were to use another contractor that we use typically,” said Philipp.

On jobs they win, they'll follow a similar strategy and see where the competition had cheaper quotes and who they worked with, so they can be sure they are capturing all market opportunities in the future.

“Maybe there’s a cheaper quote that’s out there, we will go hunt for that so we can be sure we understand how others may have looked at the job. It does give us valuable insight, especially on jobs we’ve turned in,” said Freeman.

Small Business Network

The Benefits of the Small Business Network

The team at Kraemer mostly does their subcontractor outreach through a different third-party platform, but the Small Business Network still comes in handy. Occasionally, a new contractor will pop up that they haven't worked with before. While that doesn't happen often, Kraemer will use it as an opportunity to follow up with those firms and maintain a relationship with them moving forward. Additionally, there are a few frequent fliers that always pop up in the Small Business Network, like Arbor Green, a DBE

subcontractor that frequently works with Kraemer North America.

“In Wisconsin, there’s always a few that submit through the SBN... It’s nice to get that automated notification, it comes right to me and then I know that [DBE’s] quote is in there so I can go and grab it, that’s a pretty nice feature as well.”

The Small Business Network outreach is also included when Kraemer needs to demonstrate Good Faith Effort.

The Subcontractor Perspective



We spoke to Arbor Green, a DBE subcontractor that frequently works with Kraemer North America to get their perspective on the Small Business Network.

“We download the items into our own spreadsheet. We delete the items we are not quoting and make this our quote sheet... When we come to the part in the [Small Business Network] about entering our quote, we add the first item on the job that we are bidding. We enter that price and then upload the entire spreadsheet... this way we don’t have to re-enter our numbers for every contractor that we are quoting. Sometimes there are 10 contractors bidding the same job, so all we have to do is upload it and select all the contractors we are sending it to. It works very well for us – this is the main part of Bid Express that we use.”

Bidx.com Competitive Analysis Suite

From giving your bid a competitive edge to informing your estimate, explore what the Bidx.com Competitive Analysis Suite can do for you.

The Bid Express Competitive Analysis Suite is an additional service that gives contractors access to the data they need to gain greater insight into the competitive bidding landscape.

Bid Tab Analysis

- + View past bid prices to inform bids and estimates
- + View historical low, average, and high item prices
- + Search by item, description, proposal, county, unit and low bidder
- + Sort by item, item description, average, high, low, and unit
- + Perform multiple analyses quickly within the Bid Express service

Competitor Insights

- + Compare your bid to key competitors on select items
- + Perform competitive analysis for specified lettings
- + Set parameters like quantities, locations, and dates
- + Quickly make decisions in intuitive graphic displays

SIGN UP TODAY →

The Bid Express Analysis Suite is available to Basic and Pro tier subscribers for \$45/month. Sign up for additional services on Bidx.com by going to Settings > Billing. For questions and assistance, contact us at bidx.support@infotechinc.com.

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