



MARKET OVERVIEW · 2026

The Straight-Talk Guide to Electrical Estimating, Takeoff & Accounting Software

An independent look at what today's tools cost, what they include, who owns them, and how a contractor can keep material pricing accurate — assembled from public information, with sources.

Compiled by Electrical Ops, Inc. — makers of STINGER PRO™

Prepared July 2026

About this guide — please read first

This document is meant to be a genuinely useful reference for electrical contractors and estimators who are trying to compare their options. Searching for these products online usually lands you on lead-generation pages that hide pricing behind a “request a demo” form. We wanted to gather the publicly available facts in one place instead.

How to read this, and an important disclaimer. Every figure and description here was gathered from **publicly available information** (vendor websites, published pricing pages, trade publications, and industry discussion) as of **July 2026**. We have **not** independently tested most of these products, and we do not have inside knowledge of their current feature sets or pricing. Software changes constantly — a product may have added, removed, or repriced a feature since this was written. **Treat everything here as “this is what the public information indicates,” not as verified fact, and confirm any detail directly with the vendor before relying on it.** Pricing for products that do not publish it (marked “quote only”) is shown as a third-party estimate where one was available, and is inherently approximate. We name products factually for identification only. **If you represent one of these companies and believe anything here is inaccurate or out of date, please contact us at info@stingerprosoftware.com and we will review and correct it promptly.** Nothing here is a statement about the quality of any product — only about which capabilities are present, per public materials.

Where we compare, we describe **what Stinger Pro does** and note, neutrally, whether a given capability appears to be present, an add-on, or handled by a separate integrated product in each competitor — based on public materials. Reasonable people can read those materials differently; that is why we invite corrections.

A note from the founder

I've spent about forty years in the electrical trade, and I've bought, owned, and used many of the programs in this guide over the last thirty of them. Let me be clear up front: **they helped me.** They made my bids faster, they helped me run my business, and I'm grateful for what they did.

But somewhere along the way, most of them stopped changing in ways that actually mattered to the work. They'd update for a new version of Windows, tweak the database, freshen up the look — but the features I kept wishing for, the ones that would genuinely help a contractor who **does the books, drives the truck, and runs the work**, never seemed to arrive. The big shops were taken care of. The rest of us mostly made do.

That's why I built Stinger Pro — not because these companies did anything wrong, but because I believed the smaller contractor deserved a tool built the way we actually work, at a price that made sense, from someone who has actually priced the jobs and run the crews.

So take this guide for what it is: an honest look from someone who has used these tools for decades, laid out so you can decide for yourself. If I've gotten a detail wrong or something is out of date, tell me and I'll fix it — I'd rather be accurate than clever.

— **Robert, Master Electrician & Founder, Electrical Ops, Inc.**

The landscape at a glance

A contractor shopping for “electrical software” is really shopping in **three separate aisles** that most vendors sell separately:

- **Estimating** — labor units, assemblies, material pricing, bid summaries (Vision InfoSoft, ConEst, Trimble Accubid, McCormick).
- **Takeoff** — measuring and counting from plans (PlanSwift, On-Screen Takeoff, Bluebeam).
- **Accounting** — job costing, payroll, billing (QuickBooks, Xero, Foundation).

Three findings stand out from the public information:

- **Consolidation is heavy.** A handful of large parent companies own most of the well-known names (detailed below). Independent products are now the exception.
- **Pricing is often hidden.** Roughly half of the estimating/takeoff products reviewed do not publish a price; you must request a demo to learn cost.
- **Almost everything is sold in pieces.** No single competitor reviewed appears to combine estimating, native takeoff, project management, job costing, accounting, *and* engineering calculators in one product at one price — which is the scope Stinger Pro is built to cover.

If you read nothing else

Stinger Pro is **\$4,500, paid once**. To match its scope by renting separate tools — estimating, a material price-update subscription, takeoff, and accounting — a contractor can spend **roughly \$13,000 to \$40,000+ over five years**, and still have the work split across three or four programs. One program, one price, no yearly rent. (The five-year math is below.)

Who owns whom: the consolidation map

Per each company's own public materials and press releases (as of 2026):

Parent company	Country	Products it owns / operates
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JDM Technology Group	International group	Vision InfoSoft (Electrical Bid Manager; EPIC pricing), ConEst (IntelliBid)
Roper Technologies (via ConstructConnect)	USA (NASDAQ: ROP)	On-Screen Takeoff, PlanSwift, Quick Bid, On Center Software
Trimble	USA	Accubid Classic (Canadian origin)
Nemetschek Group	Germany	Bluebeam (Revu)
Intuit	USA	QuickBooks
Xero Ltd.	New Zealand	Xero
Independent / privately held	USA	McCormick Systems (AZ), Foundation Software (OH)
Electrical Ops, Inc.	USA	Stinger Pro — independent, single-owner

Takeaway: two groups — **JDM** (two major electrical estimators) and **Roper/ConstructConnect** (three major takeoff tools) — account for much of the field. Buying most products means buying from a large corporation or, in two cases (Bluebeam, Xero), a company based outside the United States.

Pricing transparency: free trial vs. “request a demo”

Whether a vendor lets you download a trial and see a price, or requires a sales call, per public materials as of July 2026:

Product	Trial / download	Public price?
Vision InfoSoft (Electrical Bid Manager)	Free demo download	Yes
Bluebeam Revu	Free trial download	Yes
QuickBooks	30-day free trial	Yes
Xero	30-day free trial	Yes
PlanSwift	Free trial	Partial
On-Screen Takeoff	Free 14-day trial	Quote only
ConEst (IntelliBid)	Request a demo	Quote only
Trimble Accubid Classic	Request a demo	Quote only
McCormick Systems	Request a demo	Quote only
Foundation Software	Request a demo	Quote only
Stinger Pro	Free trial (planned at launch)	Yes — \$4,500, posted publicly

What they cost

Publicly listed or third-party-estimated pricing, 2026. **Quote-only** figures are approximate estimates from third-party guides and should be confirmed with the vendor.

Product	Category	Price (2026)	Model	Approx. annual cost*
Stinger Pro	All-in-one	\$4,500	One-time (perpetual)	\$0 ongoing
Vision InfoSoft EBM	Estimating	\$1,549 / \$2,749 / \$4,549 (Std/Plus/Pro); company also cites “less than \$1,000/yr” to start	Software subscription (annual renewal, per vendor)	Annual subscription (~\$1,000+/yr)
ConEst IntelliBid	Estimating (+takeoff add-on)	~\$2,500–\$7,500 — quote	License	License + support (quote)
Trimble Accubid Classic	Estimating	~\$4,200/yr — quote	Subscription	~\$4,200 / yr
McCormick Systems	Estimating	Not published — quote	License / subscription	Not published
PlanSwift	Takeoff	~\$1,749 one-time (+~\$250–400/yr maint.)	One-time / subscription	~\$250–400 / yr (maint.)
On-Screen Takeoff	Takeoff	Not published — quote	Subscription	Subscription (quote)
Bluebeam Revu	PDF markup / takeoff	~\$240–\$440/yr per seat	Subscription	~\$240–440 / yr per seat

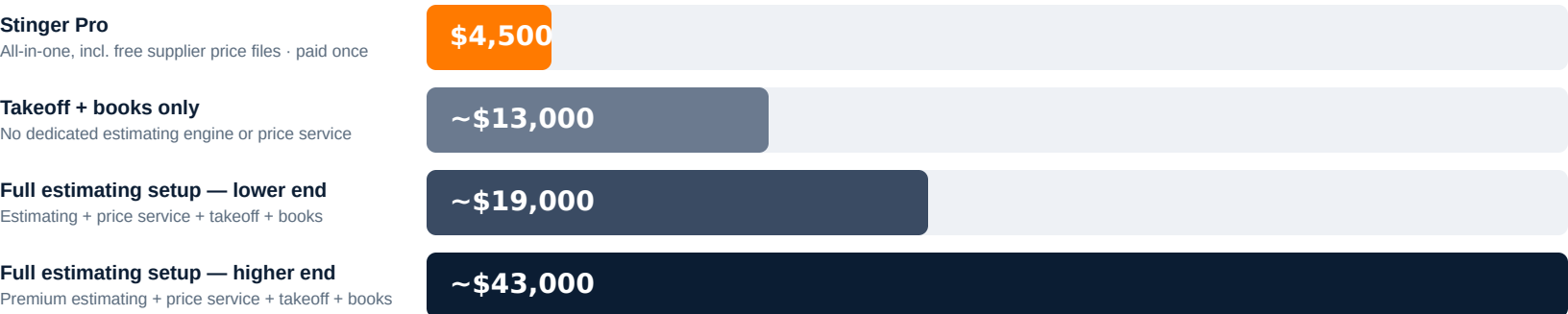
QuickBooks Online	Accounting	\$38 / \$75 / \$115 / \$275 per month	Subscription	~\$456 – \$3,300 / yr (+ payroll ~\$600+/yr)
Xero	Accounting	~\$20–\$80 / month	Subscription	~\$240 – \$960 / yr
Foundation Software	Construction accounting	~\$500–\$1,500+ / month — quote	Subscription	~\$6,000 – \$18,000 / yr

*Approximate ongoing annual cost, for comparison against Stinger Pro's one-time price. Subscription figures are the listed monthly rate × 12; "quote" products do not publish pricing. License products may carry optional yearly maintenance. Confirm all figures with the vendor. Note: per Vision InfoSoft's public support materials (2026), Electrical Bid Manager is sold with a one-year software subscription that renews annually rather than as a perpetual license; continued updates and support depend on maintaining it. Buyers should confirm current terms directly.

The one-time-vs-subscription math. Most competitors have moved to annual subscriptions. A tool at ~\$4,200/year costs about that every year; over five years that is roughly **\$21,000**. Stinger Pro's \$4,500 is a one-time perpetual license (with free fixes for the current version; major new versions are offered to existing customers as a discounted upgrade). Even a modest stack of a takeoff tool plus an accounting subscription typically runs **\$2,500–\$4,000 per year, ongoing**.

The bottom line: what it really costs over five years

To do what Stinger Pro does, a contractor usually rents several things that each bill every year — estimating software, a **material price-update service** (EPIC or TRA-SER; see the next section), takeoff, and accounting with payroll. Not every product needs every piece, so here are a few honest scenarios built from the approximate figures in this guide. These are illustrative example combinations, not a quote for any specific product; your mix and negotiated pricing will vary.



Example five-year math — **Takeoff + books:** takeoff (~\$1,750 up front + ~\$400/yr) + QuickBooks Plus (~\$1,380/yr) + payroll (~\$600/yr) = \$13,000 — but with no dedicated electrical estimating or priced material database. **Full, lower end:** estimating subscription (~\$1,000/yr) + **price service (~\$500/yr)** + takeoff (~\$400/yr) + accounting & payroll (~\$1,980/yr) ≈ \$19,000. **Full, higher end:** premium estimating (~\$4,200/yr) + **price service (~\$1,500/yr)** + takeoff (~\$1,000/yr) + accounting & payroll (~\$1,980/yr) ≈ \$43,000.

Don't forget the price service. A material price-update subscription (EPIC or TRA-SER, roughly \$456–\$1,800/yr) is a normal part of running these estimators — that's about **\$2,300–\$9,000 over five years by itself**, on top of the software. Stinger Pro avoids it entirely by loading a free supplier or manufacturer price file. Put simply: even the leanest full estimating setup passes Stinger Pro's one-time price within the first year or two, and keeps billing every year after — while Stinger Pro is paid once and yours to keep, with free fixes for the current version. **Run your own numbers:** an interactive version of this comparison is at stingerprosoftware.com/savings.html — enter what you pay now and see your savings.

What's included: all-in-one vs. pieced together

The clearest difference is **scope**. Competitors specialize; Stinger Pro is built as a suite. This table states, per public materials, whether each capability is typically a product's core function, an add-on/integration, or not part of it. It is a statement of **scope**, not quality.

Capability	Stinger Pro	Electrical estimators	Takeoff tools	Accounting tools
Electrical estimating (labor units, assemblies)	Included	Core	Limited/none	No
Digital plan takeoff	Native	Add-on / integrates	Core	No
Project management / scheduling	Included	Mostly no	No	Some
Job costing	Included	No	No	Core
Accounting / AP / AR / payroll	Included	No	No	Core
Certified / prevailing-wage payroll	Included	No	No	Some (e.g., Foundation)
AIA G702/G703 progress billing	Native	No	No	Varies
Built-in NEC engineering calculators	Included	No	No	No
One program, one price	Yes	No	No	No

Note, per public materials: the major electrical estimators generally perform takeoff by **integrating** a separate tool (for example, linking to PlanSwift or On-Screen Takeoff), rather than including it natively. To assemble Stinger Pro's scope from these products, a contractor would typically license an estimator, a takeoff tool, and an accounting package separately.

The players, in brief

Each summary reflects public materials as of July 2026 and describes capabilities neutrally. Confirm details with the vendor.

Electrical estimating

Vision InfoSoft — Electrical Bid Manager (EBM)

Owner: JDM Technology Group · Carlsbad, CA · free demo download · states "Made in the USA"

Published tiers of \$1,549 / \$2,749 / \$4,549 (Standard/Plus/Pro). A long-established estimating package; takeoff is handled through integration with separate tools. Pairs with the company's own EPIC material-pricing service (see pricing section).

ConEst — IntelliBid

Owner: JDM Technology Group · Londonderry, NH · demo-gated

Large prebuilt database (the company cites 140,000+ items and 500,000+ NEC assemblies). Takeoff is a separate module (SureCount). Integrates with NetPricer, EPIC, and TRA-SER pricing services. Pricing is not published; third-party estimates put modules in the ~\$2,500–\$7,500 range.

Trimble — Accubid Classic

Owner: Trimble (US) · Accubid Canadian origin · demo-gated

A widely known electrical estimating system. Pricing is not published; a third-party guide lists roughly \$4,200/year. Desktop, Windows.

McCormick Systems

Independent · Chandler, AZ · demo-gated

US-based electrical (and plumbing/mechanical) estimating. Pricing is not published.

Takeoff

On-Screen Takeoff (OST)

Owner: ConstructConnect / Roper Technologies · The Woodlands, TX · free 14-day trial · quote-only pricing

A long-standing digital-takeoff standard, now adding AI-assisted takeoff ("Takeoff Boost"). Pairs with Quick Bid for estimating. Desktop, Windows.

PlanSwift

Owner: ConstructConnect / Roper Technologies · free trial

Popular, approachable takeoff with an electrical plugin (~+\$499 per public materials). ~\$1,749 one-time historically, with maintenance, moving toward an annual model.

Bluebeam Revu

Owner: Nemetschek (Germany) · free trial download · ~\$240–\$440/yr

Primarily a PDF markup and collaboration tool that many estimators use for takeoff because it is already on their machine; not a purpose-built estimating system.

Accounting

QuickBooks (Intuit)

Owner: Intuit (US) · 30-day trial · public pricing

The most widely used small-business accounting platform, valued for how many bookkeepers and integrations already support it. It is general-purpose, not construction-specific; construction workflows such as job costing depend on the plan tier and add-ons.

Xero

Owner: Xero Ltd. (New Zealand) · 30-day trial · public pricing

A modern cloud accounting platform, typically ~\$20–\$80/month with unlimited users. Not construction-specific.

Foundation Software

Independent · Ohio (US) · demo-gated

A construction-specific accounting platform known for job costing and payroll compliance (including certified payroll). Custom pricing; third-party estimates commonly cite several hundred to over a thousand dollars per month.

Material price updates: what they are, and how to stay accurate

Because material prices move constantly, most estimators use some way to keep prices current. This is one of the most important — and least understood — parts of estimating, so it deserves a clear, honest explanation.

The paid subscription services

Per each service's public materials, the best-known options are:

- **EPIC** (a Vision InfoSoft / JDM service): a large catalog (the company cites 2+ million items) that provides a **Trade** price and a **Target** price, with an optional **NetPricer** add-on to pull a distributor's negotiated pricing.
- **TRA-SER** (Trade Service): a widely used pricing service that integrates with around 20 estimating systems and includes an "average market pricing" column and a free "Supplier Xchange" tool for supplier quotes.
- **NetPricer**: a connector that retrieves your negotiated pricing from participating distributors.

What they cost (and where it lands on your bill): these are **recurring subscriptions that sit on top of your estimating software**, per public materials as of 2026 — EPIC Pricing is an annual subscription (weekly updates standard), with an **EPIC DUO** add-on listed at **\$456/year** for more frequent updates; **TRA-SER** has been reported in the **~\$1,200–\$1,800/year** range (older third-party figure — confirm current pricing); and **NetPricer** is commonly cited around **\$30/month** (~\$360/yr) where your distributor participates. In other words, a contractor using a subscription estimator plus a price service is often paying **two recurring bills** — the software *and* the pricing — every year. (These recurring costs are folded into the five-year scenarios earlier in this guide.)

Two kinds of "price" — and why it matters

These services generally publish two columns, and it is important to understand the difference:

- **Trade price** (also called list, column 3, or end-column price): the manufacturer's non-discounted wholesale price. It is **not** what a contractor with a supplier relationship actually pays.
- **Target / market price**: an average of what contractors are reported to pay, typically with a small cushion built in.

The honest part, from an independent source. According to *Electrical Contractor Magazine*, the "average market" / "national market" price columns in these services can, in most cases, be **beaten by a direct quote from your wholesaler** — and the publication stresses that confirming pricing on every estimate is ultimately the estimator's responsibility. In other words, the subscription number is a useful benchmark, but it is often not the sharpest price available to you.

Working electricians echo this in trade forums: the traditional approach of taking a list/column price and applying a standard discount has become less reliable as distributors have moved away from fixed discount schedules, and contractors frequently report getting better pricing than the "market" column shows. A further practical limitation of the distributor-connection tools is that **your specific supplier must participate**, and many smaller suppliers do not.

The most accurate — and often free — approach

The price you can most trust is the one your own supplier will actually charge you. Two routes get you there at little or no cost:

- **A price file from your distributor.** Many supply houses will provide a **free price file** reflecting your negotiated pricing. As a real-world example, one regional distributor's file I use in my own testing contains roughly **37,000 items and loads in seconds at no cost**.
- **A direct file from the manufacturer.** For fast-moving commodities this can matter: for example, copper wire pricing tends to track raw-material (copper/oil) movements, so a manufacturer's own update can reflect a change sooner than a supplier file that is refreshed only weekly or quarterly. Bidding a wire-heavy job on stale copper pricing is a well-known way to lose money.

How Stinger Pro approaches this. Stinger Pro is built to import material pricing from a **free supplier or manufacturer price file** (common CSV-style formats), so a contractor can keep pricing current without a mandatory paid subscription. And because those files use the same basic structure the industry relies on — including the item **UPC number** — it may also be possible to connect Stinger Pro to a third-party pricing service such as TRA-SER or EPIC; a contractor who wants to do that should check directly with the pricing service to confirm what is required on their end. Contractors who prefer a benchmark service can still use one; the point is that **accurate pricing does not have to be a recurring cost** — avoiding a price-update subscription can save roughly \$450–\$1,800/yr on its own — and the most accurate number is usually your own supplier's file or a direct quote. As every source above agrees: confirm the pricing on each bid — you are the last line of defense.

"Made in America" — the real picture

The common assumption that these tools are mostly built overseas is only partly right. Most are actually **developed in the US**; the notable pattern is **consolidated ownership**, with two products under non-US owners:

- **US-developed and US-owned:** McCormick, Foundation, On-Screen Takeoff and PlanSwift (under US-based Roper), QuickBooks (Intuit); Vision InfoSoft and ConEst operate US offices under the international JDM group.

- **US-built but foreign-owned:** Bluebeam (built in California, owned by Germany's Nemetschek).
- **Foreign company:** Xero (New Zealand).

What is genuinely uncommon is a product that **markets itself as American-made and independent**. Among those reviewed, Vision InfoSoft is the main one that states "Made in the USA." Stinger Pro is built in the United States by an independent, single owner — a working master electrician — which is a distinct position in a field dominated by large and multinational parents.

Where Stinger Pro fits — honestly

Genuine advantages (per this review)

- **All-in-one at one price** — estimating, native takeoff, project management, job costing, accounting, and engineering tools in a single program.
- **One-time perpetual license** in a field that has largely gone subscription — large multi-year savings.
- **Built-in NEC engineering calculators** — not commonly found in the estimating tools reviewed.
- **Transparent, published pricing** where about half of competitors require a sales call.
- **No mandatory paid price-update subscription** — free supplier/manufacturer price files are supported.
- **Independent and American-built** in a consolidated market.

Honest challenges to weigh

- **Prebuilt database size** — some competitors advertise very large item/assembly libraries and mature pricing-service integrations.
- **AI-assisted takeoff** — leading takeoff tools are automating measurement; buyers will compare on that.
- **Track record** — several competitors have decades of installs; Stinger Pro is new.
- **Cloud / multi-user** — some competitors offer cloud-hosted, multi-seat options; Stinger Pro is a desktop application.
- **Support scale** — large vendors staff big support teams.

Who it's built for. Stinger Pro is aimed at the contractor who does the estimate, drives the truck, and runs the work — the large majority of electrical contractors — rather than the small number of very large shops. For that audience, one honest program at one fair price, that keeps the whole job together, is the point.