# What's BI? Do I need it?

Executive Summary: BI stands for business intelligence. It is the process by which information from all of your company's different computer systems (estimating, job costing, accounting, operations, et cetera) is displayed on one screen. You may not *need* it, but you better understand it – it's coming.

What is BI? BI, or business intelligence, takes all of your computer systems (which currently do not talk to each other) and picks out data, at your direction, to display on one simple screen:
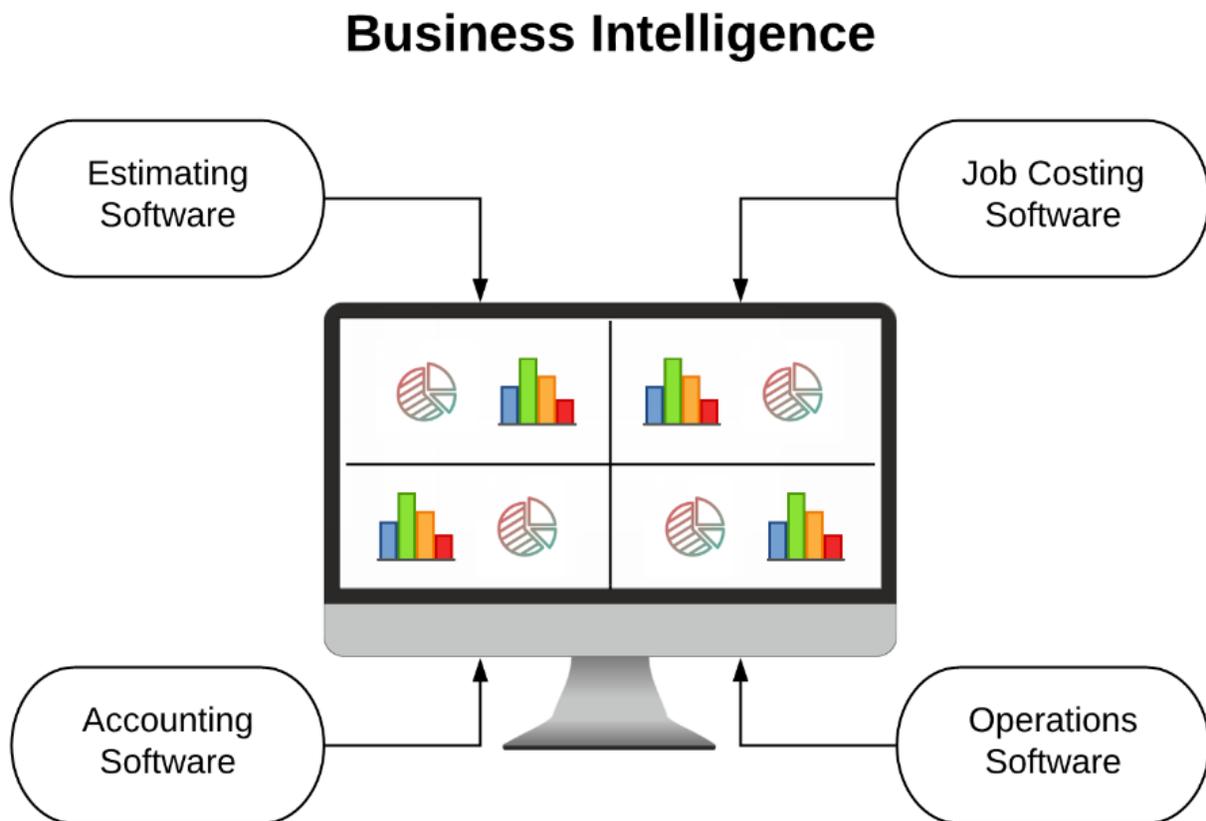
Why do I need it? Do you *need* BI yet? Well, maybe today you don't *need* it. Then again in the early 1980s, you probably didn't *need* a fax machine like you then *needed* it in the late 1980s. The point is you're better to start thinking about it now before you're behind the wave. And, best of all is that it's a tremendous help to have varying data from varying sources catered to your needs on one screen.

Scott Jennings, P.E., is the President of SJ Construction Consulting, LLC (808) 271-5150. He recently owned and operated a heavy/civil construction company and now provides cost estimating, litigation support, and efficiency advice to contractors. He is also the founder of Runjob Software, Inc. **Download our QR scanner app: runjobsoftware.com/mobile/**

Who in my company uses this technology? In all positions from CEO to Payroll Clerk, each of these team members can have their own screen showing the data they need. Think to yourself about which of these data points you may want to see daily on your screen:

- Available line of credit
- Working capital
- Current ratio
- # of employees

- Overtime/straight time ratio
- Liquidated damages per job
- Current EMR rate
- Manhours worked last week
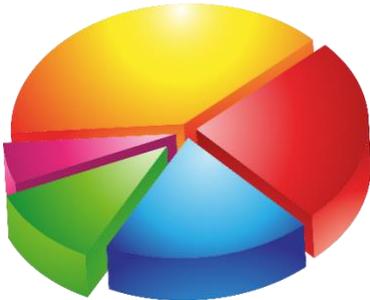
My Story. This is a relatively new technology but one that we have embraced and are implementing for clients who want to be at the tip of the spear in useful technology. I encourage the investigation of this technology to see if it's a good fit for your company. For me, it would have been nice have had different data points on one screen – I used to have to go into all these varying systems to pull out just that one piece of data I needed. For me, it was always accounts payable – what is due on what job and when and how much?