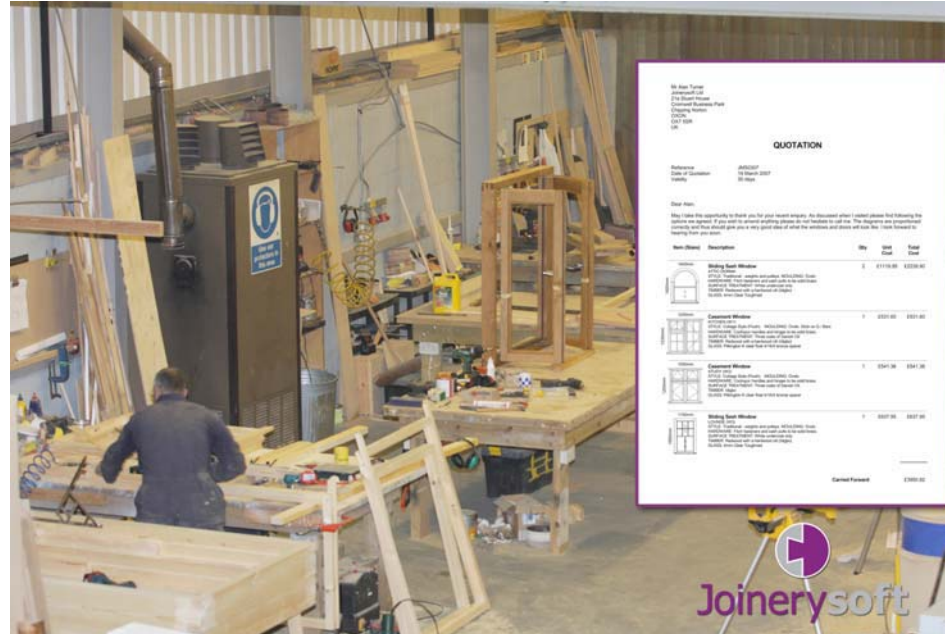


# JMS Gives David Hutchings a Competitive Edge

**David Hutchings, of David R Hutchings Building Services Ltd, never intended to go into bespoke joinery, but fell into it by necessity. Running his own building business in Cornwall for the last 20 years, David used to have constant difficulty sourcing bespoke windows for his jobs. Through necessity he eventually decided to build his own windows and doors.**

The local Cornish market demands bespoke joinery for all its many listed buildings. Renovation and barn conversions are common, and due to local planning regulations, wooden windows are mandatory, often specified in planning approval. With demand outstripping supply, David's decision to build his own windows soon proved a turning



point for the business. As soon as David had completed his first set of windows for his building project, other builders started calling David asking him to provide ALL the joinery for their projects too. What started initially as an aid to his building business, soon proved to be a

thriving bespoke joinery business on its own.

Today David still services local builders, but also has a thriving public customer base based on personal recommendations. Despite national warnings of a slow down in the UK housing market, David confirms the

Cornish market is holding firm. Quoting recently to produce 26 windows for the restoration of a 17<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse, David points out that only 2 windows were the same size. A fact which isn't uncommon in the Cornish restoration market.

David R Hutchings Building Services Ltd, now employs 15 people, including 10 joiners on the bench and 2 on site. They specialise in bespoke joinery for windows, sliding sash, doors, stairs, kitchens, bathrooms, and shop fittings as well. Investing in machining tools has always been a high priority for them. The philosophy of the company has always been to use technology to complement traditional methods and craftsmanship. Utilising these modern machines with traditional craftsmanship they have managed to maintain a reputation for skilled hand crafted bespoke joinery.

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The consequences of a busy workload has meant backlogs in quoting and long office hours. Quoting from a home produced spreadsheet program, David spent many hours quoting and producing rough sketches by hand for the workshop. Joiners would then take the sketches and produce their own cutting lists, returning to clarify details. Until 8 months ago, this was the norm, however, surfing the internet, David was pleasantly surprised to find a software package which seemed to offer a solution. Joinerysoft's Joinery Management Software (JMS) seemed to fit the bill at first glance, and after a follow up phonecall, and internet demonstration it wasn't long before he decided to give it a try.

Joinerysoft's JMS is designed for bespoke casement windows, sliding sash, doors and doorframes, screens and bill of

materials. It provides quotes (with diagrams), cutting lists, timber and glass requirements, delivery notes, invoicing, in fact everything needed for bespoke joinery. Its strengths include; single entry of data, ease of use, professional quotations, accurate and clear cutting lists, even linking directly to some SCM machining centres. Everything needed to track orders from enquiry to invoice.

Utilising computers to help with the workload has always made sense to David, but with the introduction of Joinerysoft's Joinery Management Software, he has seen a significant decrease in the amount of time it takes to process jobs. He confirms, "Using JMS I can now manage my time better and protect my profit margin. JMS doesn't forget anything. Manually quoting it can be easy to forget little things on a complex job, mistakes which eat into my profit margin."

Backlogs of quotes are now a thing of the past with JMS, David is able to quote while the customer waits, and the professional quotations produced with JMS also include diagrams. Utilising current prices, that can be easily adjusted to take into account fluctuations in the timber or glass market, he can also be sure that his prices are accurate, and profit margins secure. According to David, "The speed I can now quote is one of the biggest differences JMS has made. Recently I was asked to quote for 2 french doors and frames. Within 20 minutes I had called back the customer, and within half an hour he had a fax sitting on his desk. There is no way I could have worked it out in that time before." Customer response to their new style quotations has also been good. He confirms, "We've won jobs based on our professional

looking quotations. Customers like the drawings and detail included. It gives the customer confidence that we've understood their requirements. Generally we ask the customer to sign and return a copy of the quotation as confirmation of order." This all reduces the potential for mistakes.

Another significant change has been the introduction of JMS's cutting lists. Available in several styles to suit differing workshop requirements, David is now able to produce all cutting lists from JMS at the press of a button. He admits he had to persuade the joiners to give JMS a go, but after agreeing a test job with them, they couldn't find fault with it. Now all the joiners use JMS cutting lists and like JMS's straight forward approach. They can all clearly see what to do, avoiding unnecessary confusion and cross questioning. Another advantage to using JMS is that

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wastage has been reduced, and mistakes practically eliminated (so long as the joiners follow the cutting lists)! Glass can now be ordered in advance further improving production timescales.

Joinerysoft has built up a good relationship with David over the last 8 months. From the day their installer came to install the software, David was impressed with their level of knowledge of the bespoke joinery market. "The installer not only knew what he was doing on the computer side, but was also a qualified joiner himself, with experience of running his own business. The advantage to me was that he spoke my language, and knew where I was coming from", quotes David. He continues, "I haven't had much call to use their technical support, but when I have called them, they're always on the ball."

When asked what he sees as the biggest benefit of using JMS, David replies, "It provides us with an easy way to achieve accurate pricing. Anyone can use JMS to produce professional quotes without needing a degree in computing. Personally, I'd rather you didn't tell my competitors – I think it gives us an edge!"

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