

# dB Dynamics White Paper



**Web-Based Intuit Master Builder™**  
*By Walter Mahan & Ricardo Garcia*

dB Dynamics, Inc.  
October, 2003

According to the NUA Internet Survey in March of 2003, there are currently 304 million worldwide users of the Internet. They project 765 million Internet users by 2005, doubling usage in just two years. Clearly the Internet is an accepted productivity tool rapidly growing in use.

dB Dynamics has recently played a significant part in providing Internet access to a variety of software products, particularly in the *ACT!* product area that is owned by Interact Commerce Corporation. dB Dynamics demonstrated its ability to develop an effective Internet front end when it created *ACT! For Web*, which it sold to Interact late in 2002. After re-branding the software, *ACT! For Web* was launched in the spring of 2003 and has attracted thousands of users in just a few short months. This is only one of several Web-based implementations dB Dynamics introduced to the commercial software arena.

dB Dynamics is creating an Internet front end for Intuit *Master Builder* called **BuilderBuddy™**.

---

## **Why is it a good idea to provide Internet access to *Master Builder*?**

Intuit *Master Builder* has proven to be a pace setter in software within the construction industry. Its success since being acquired by Intuit Inc. is remarkable and unquestioned.

In the past two years the East Coast has had two major disasters (9/11 and hurricane Isabel) that have created a backlog of construction contracts in the range of 1 to 1½ years. It was recently stated by an authoritative sources, “That anything that increases productivity is a good thing!” Even without the recent cataclysmic events it is a good idea to have instant Internet access to the *Master Builder* data from remote locations.

### **Be Productive Anywhere, Anytime**

The job is where the action is. For instance, off site personnel would benefit greatly if they could do the following:

- ☞☞ Record labor hours, subcontractor work, equipment used and bid items worked daily.
- ☞☞ Field Estimators need to enter key metrics to develop preliminary estimates (collect Takeoff information electronically) on new jobs.
- ☞☞ Update punch lists by completing or adding items.
- ☞☞ Create and update change orders.
- ☞☞ Review lists and update Jobs, Clients, Wage Rates, Equipment Rates, Vendors, Employee Positions, Subcontractors, Pay Groups, Unions, Cost Codes, Tasks, Departments, etc.
- ☞☞ Review reports from remote locations (at the job site or in a hotel).
- ☞☞ Update a job schedule by extending time, compressing time or changing dates.
- ☞☞ Update inventory as delivered.
- ☞☞ Check map, directions, weather, traffic, nearby Home Depot or Post Office from job site.

All of these actions can be done remotely and securely through Internet access.

---

## How does BuilderBuddy fit into the *Master Builder* model?

*Master Builder* positions itself as software that fits into four general areas of Estimating, Production, Accounting and Analysis. The following depicts how BuilderBuddy fits into that model:

<b>Estimating</b>	<b>Master Builder Model</b>		<b>Analysis</b>
	<b>Production</b>	<b>Accounting</b>	
	<b>BuilderBuddy Functions:</b>		
View Reports	View Reports	View Reports	View Reports
Takeoffs (future)	Daily Field Reports		
	Punch Lists		
	Schedule Changes		
	Change Orders		
	Update Clients & Jobs		
	Update Tables		

---

## What is a remote location?

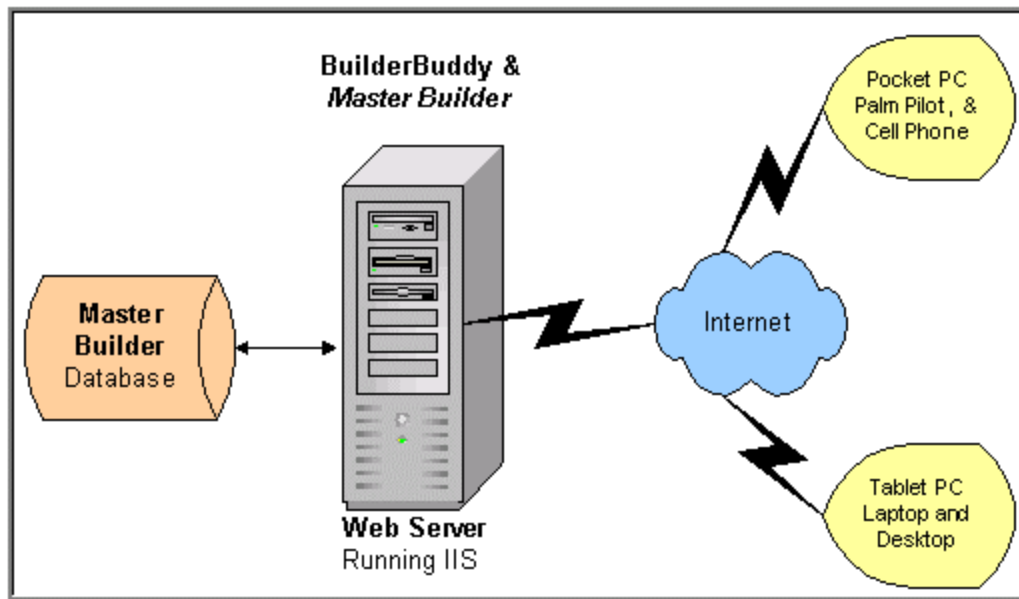
To most in the construction industry, a remote location is a job site. While that is the primary target of BuilderBuddy, a remote location can also be the following:

- ✍✍ The home of a prospect where the Field Estimator is gathering information to estimate a new job.
- ✍✍ A client's office where you are meeting the customer.
- ✍✍ In a motel room where the supervisor is staying.
- ✍✍ At home when the supervisor wants to update the schedule.
- ✍✍ While at a hotel for a convention (or vacation) where the owner(s) of the construction company wants to review the status or jobs or current profitability of the company.

---

## How does an Internet application implementation work?

As shown in the graphic below, there are four major components of an Internet application including a Web Server, a database, the Internet and remote devices.



These components are further described below:

<b>Database</b>	The <i>Master Builder</i> database contains centralized data entered locally from desktop and laptop computers networked into your Local Area Network (LAN) or Wide Area Network (WAN) at the main office. With BuilderBuddy, data can be entered over the Internet remotely from the job site or other location. The <i>Master Builder</i> database resides at your company's site just as it does now.	
<b>Web Server</b>	A Web Server is a relatively robust computer that runs Microsoft's IIS (Internet Information Services) software. The Web Server hosts the BuilderBuddy software that provides secured remote access to the <i>Master Builder</i> data. It responds to user's requests (local or remote) for information.	
<b>Internet</b>	The Internet has revolutionized the way efficient businesses operate in recent years because it enables company personnel to communicate and access/update data while out of the office. It also facilitates the use of shared software not typically available on LAN-based software.	
<b>Remote Devices</b>	<b>Full Display Computers</b>	These remote devices include computers that can display data that consumes an entire screen such as is found on your desktop computer. These also offer a full keyboard. Such devices include standard personal computers (PCs), Laptop and Notebook computers, and Tablet PCs.
	<b>Limited Display Computers</b>	These devices have a <b>smaller screen display footprint</b> and are <b>without a conventional keyboard</b> . These factors somewhat limit their usage. Input is done using a stylus, which is effective choosing an entry from a dropdown list and <b>entering limited amounts of data</b> . Users would not want to do extensive data entry with these devices. However, they can be useful for displaying data and updating records (i.e., recording time expended, updating punch lists, changing schedules, etc.). Devices of this type include Pocket PCs, Palm Pilots and Cell Phones.

## Can BuilderBuddy provide access to Contact Management software?

Customers of *Master Builder* have requested support for more contact names than are supported in *Master Builder*, particularly in Client records. While adding names to the *Master Builder* database may please some users, that approach may not be the optimal solution.

dB Dynamics has extensive experience with several CRM (Customer Relationship Management) software packages. Initially, dB Dynamics will provide an interface to the following CRM products:

☞☞**ACT!**

☞☞**Outlook**

☞☞**SalesLogix**

☞☞**GoldMine**

The user will be able to access contact information from supported CRM products while on the Client screen within BuilderBuddy. Data from these resources can be copied into *Master Builder* at the click of a button.

---

## What are the system requirements for BuilderBuddy?

The software and hardware requirements are listed below:

- ?? A Web Server box running Windows 2000/XP/2003
- ?? Internet Information Server (IIS) 4.0 and higher

The following table identifies the minimal and recommended requirements for your Web Server.

	Minimum Requirement	Optimal Requirement
CPU	Pentium III (600 MHz)	1 GHz Pentium IV
Memory	512 MB RAM	1 GB
Disk Space	20 MB	40+ MB

The following identifies the requirements for the computers of your users of BuilderBuddy.

- ?? Document Control (an add-on module of *Master Builder*)
- ?? Microsoft's Internet Explorer (5.01 and higher)
- ?? Ensure that cookies are enabled on the computer that you use.
- ?? Internet Access/Connection running at least at 45 KB

---

## What options are available if my job site does not have wireless access to the Internet?

BuilderBuddy will provide the means to download *Master Builder* data on to your portable computer along with the capability to run without Internet access. When Internet access is reestablished, a synchronization capability (sync) will be provided to upload modified data into the *Master Builder* database.

---

## What are the benefits of BuilderBuddy?

BuilderBuddy provides many benefits including the following:

- ✂ **Control Costs**—Recording labor, subcontractor and equipment expenditures more accurately as they are used. The ability to record the appropriate cost code to all labor can also have significant impact on labor costs.

- ✂✂ **Anytime Access**—A proven, robust integrated construction/accounting package with a numerous desirable features not previously available.
- ✂✂ **Save Time**—Supervisors can access and update records without returning to home site.
- ✂✂ **Productivity, Productivity, Productivity**—All workers at the job site (including the Supervisors) work more efficiently because parts and materials are managed more efficiently. Management at all levels profit because information is just a mouse click away.
- ✂✂ **Resource Utilization Is Improved**—The use of laborers, subcontractors, equipment and parts can be managed more effectively because of the currency of information.
- ✂✂ **Cost Effective**—The cost of purchasing BuilderBuddy and any additional hardware will pay for itself in productivity, improved awareness of the job situation because of real time updates, improved morale and greater customer satisfaction.
- ✂✂ **Maximize IT Investment**—Your investment in *Master Builder* (and CRM software) will result in a higher ROI with Internet Access from remote locations with BuilderBuddy.

## In Summary

- o BuilderBuddy is a **MUST HAVE ADD-ON** for *Master Builder*.
- o Your employees will have **EXPANDED COVERAGE AND ACCESS** (from anywhere).
- o Your company will have **QUICKER BILLING** because of more timely updates of information.
- o **DIRECT ENTRY** of data from the job site results in fewer transposition errors & elimination of double entry.
- o **QUICKER RESPONSE** to client needs results in greater customer satisfaction and more revenue.

**No need to wait**—For a live demonstration of BuilderBuddy, call us at:



**dB Dynamics, Inc.**  
**7064 Infantry Ridge Road**  
**Manassas, VA 20109**  
**703 330-1026 X36**  
[www.dBDynamics.com](http://www.dBDynamics.com)

