

Formwork for buildings big and small

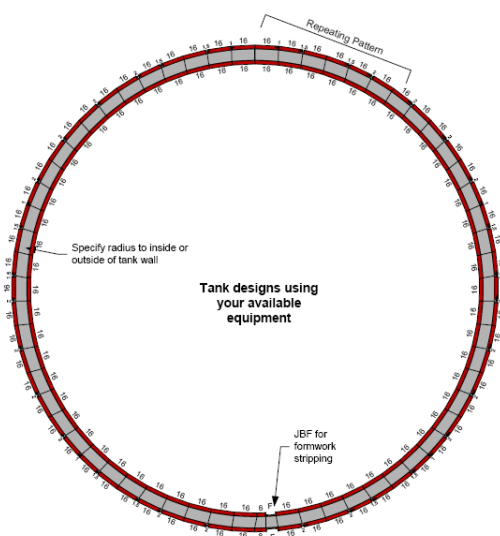
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By CONCRETE CONSTRUCTION Staff

Recapturing the hand-set market

Shepler's, a major formwork supplier in Texas, was looking to improve its performance in the small hand-set formwork market, but the sales staff was unable to bid small jobs due to the increased sophistication of the market. "Almost everyone submits bids with nice CAD drawings nowadays," said branch manager, Johnny Arolfo. "For us to provide CAD drawings we had to schedule bids with our engineers but they're busy with larger panel jobs."

Shepler's had tried using a few of the larger CAD packages but found they required specialized skills. Since the sales people couldn't run them, they would have had to hire a new employee. As a result, the company had gone back to hand drawings and error-prone material lists to get a percentage of the small projects. "Even these jobs were tough because of the occasional unavoidable error. I can't tell you how many times I've had to get in my truck and drive to the jobsite to deliver a box of wedge bolts," said Arolfo.



But then he saw a demonstration of Handset Designer 2006 and decided to give it a try. To be sure the software was a good fit, he devised a simple process that could measure the use and success of the software. "I wanted to be able to justify the cost to my managers and also show them how we could hit this big market that's sitting out there. I knew it would be good, but I never expected these results." With Handset Designer, the supplier bid on 22 projects over two months. "We were awarded all 22," he said. "The software paid for itself in a single project—a large curved-wall job with a very complicated layout. We designed the job and counted the materials in about 15 minutes."

This software also eliminates errors associated with project management. "Managing revisions was frustrating and time consuming. Sometimes revisions took longer than the actual project. We'd get all the way to the end of the project, start shipping the equipment, and find we were out of 10-inch fillers," said one of Shepler's sales staff. "With this software, I can change my available inventory to exclude 10-inch fillers and the revisions are so fast I don't even worry about them anymore."

Handset Designer by Avontus, www.avontus.com, 800-848-1860