
Why Use a Sage Certified Consultant?

Congratulations on selecting Sage 100 Contractor (formerly Sage Master Builder) (S100C) to help you run your business! S100C is a well-integrated real time construction management system with powerful accounting and job costing capabilities, payroll processing with precise labor burdening and job costing, construction industry standard billing processes, effective purchasing management, project management tools, and parts and assemblies-based estimating. You may now be asking yourself if you need to hire a Sage Certified Consultant to help you maximize your investment.

I just spent a bunch of money on new software! Why do I need to spend more on a consultant?

One of S100C's most powerful features is its capability to meet the needs of a variety of contractors, homebuilders and service contractors. However, this capability also means significant complexity and you will find that the functions a homebuilder needs are not necessarily useful to a plumbing subcontractor, while the needs of a commercial general contractor can be quite different from those of a residential HVAC service contractor. These varying capabilities are built into S100C, but they may not be readily apparent to the uninitiated.

Moving a construction company's accounting and property management functions from an existing system to S100C can be a daunting task. We have seen too many instances of a company purchasing an excellent management accounting system and then leaving it "on the shelf" and never getting it implemented. Just as frustrating is the problem of companies purchasing the system, partially and ineffectively implementing the conversion and then being unhappy with the results.

Implementing a new software package involves making a number of decisions about available options that can have a long-lasting impact on your bookkeeping and accounting operations and the valuable business intelligence available to you. Having an experienced consultant guide you through these choices can prevent costly missteps.

Implementing new software of this scale is not necessarily intuitive to even the most experienced accountants and bookkeepers. Too often, we see implementations stall before completion because those guiding the process were unsure what the next step should be. Sage Certified Consultants have proven through class work, examination and experience to Sage Software that they are ready to guide your implementation through to completion. A Sage Certified Consultant is the best choice to ensure a successful and complete result. Data conversion opportunities may exist to ease the implementation, but if they are mishandled, they can be quite disappointing. An implementation consultant can help with data conversion as well.

With the online classes offered by Sage, why do I need a consultant to train us on how to use the program?

A critical concern that is too often given short shrift is training your staff to use S100C. While we truly believe that S100C is simple for a trained user, too often we find that a company may fail to optimize their use of the system because their staff is not adequately trained. S100C offers terrific online help and Sage University has numerous classes for users, but these are largely directed to a broad target audience and tend to address generalized procedures that apply to a generic user. A consultant can target your specific training needs. Experience shows that the best training results are a combination of the Sage University classes supplemented with one-on-one training from a consultant.

While S100C comes with over a thousand reports, many users find that they need a custom report to extract information unique to their business. Sage University and Sage Tech support are of little help in creating a custom report. Sage certified consultants, on the other hand, have great skill and experience in solving the need for more information.

Who is Mathieson Consulting, and why should I rely on them to help me with my S100C implementation, training and other assistance?

Mathieson Consulting, LLC is an independent Professional Services Provider for Sage 100 Contractor clients. We provide implementation, training and report writing support and general business consulting. Our goal is to help companies that own S100C learn to use their software in ways that improve their business processes and their potential for long term profitability. For our clients, we:

- Help ease the implementation of their software
- Ensure that their program configuration fits the short and long term needs of the company
- Train owners, managers and staff on how best to use their program
- Design reports that present meaningful information to manage their business
- Work with management to improve or design and implement processes that improve control and profitability

Mathieson Consulting was founded by an accountant with over 30 years of real world experience, including over 15 years as a Chief Financial Officer. With a background in growing businesses in the construction, contracting, homebuilding, land development and building services industries, we understand and solve the business problems of owners and managers. In addition to receiving awards for Excellence in Customer Service and Teamwork, we have consistently received praise from our clients for our expertise and devotion to customer service.

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We work extensively over the Internet to “be there” when our clients need us, without incurring the significant cost of travel to get to our clients. Our remote access tools enable us to see what the client sees on their computer monitor and control their keyboard and mouse while talking with them over the phone for implementation, training and problem resolution.

Can we get a fixed price quote for our implementation and training?

Mathieson Consulting does not commit to fixed price quotations for implementation, training or other consulting services. Contractors understand that they can't bid a job without a well defined scope of work and a thorough understanding of the site conditions. With software implementations, the scope of work can be very “fluid” with varying accounting processes and needs making scope definition nearly impossible. The site conditions that may affect software implementations include:

- Existing accounting systems from which we implement are often poorly organized, less accurate, or just plain unreliable,
- The staff assigned by the client to work on the implementation staff have varying amounts of time available to learn the new system and assist with the implementation,
- Client management is too often unavailable to help with significant decisions that impact the implementation,
- Client staff members have a wide range of learning styles and abilities which impacts the time required to properly train them on the best ways to use the system.

To carry the construction analogy to its logical conclusion, we would have to strictly define every step of the implementation and then doggedly negotiate a change order for every variance from the original definition. This would consume huge amounts of time and client goodwill.

While Mathieson Consulting does not work on fixed price implementations, we will provide broad written estimates of the time and expected cost of an implementation. To provide such an estimate, we must spend time, usually less than four hours, conducting a telephone interview to survey a prospective client's needs and existing conditions and to develop a plan for implementation. This will be charged at our regular hourly rate.

How will we be charged for implementation and training services?

Mathieson Consulting only charges for work you ask us to perform. If you and your staff can develop and learn a process from an online class from Sage University or the online help text without our assistance, there is no charge. We encourage you and your staff to take online classes from Sage University to cut the time (and resulting cost) required for training and implementation. If you and your staff cannot take online classes in a timely fashion, training will require more one-on-one time with our consultants. If you prefer to have your consultant on-site for implementation and training, we are happy to offer a custom quote for services that require us to travel.

What's the next step?

Contact Mathieson Consulting by phone, at 480.471.5305, or by email at info@mathiesonconsulting.com, to arrange for your free estimate and to get started with your implementation and training.

What Our Clients are Saying About Mathieson Consulting, LLC

“You have provided valuable advice and perspective on a broad range of topics, financial and otherwise, and I've come to depend on your counsel. I have found you to be extremely knowledgeable, responsive, and even fun to work with... You've been especially helpful with Master Builder, creating custom reports, training our staff, and suggesting improvements to our processes.”

- *Larry Parrish, President, Parrish Construction*

“Baltimore Air Balance had been in business for 20 years and Walt and Gerry were called on again and again to untangle an old accounting system and bring it into a more up to date system. They did just that, treating us with patience, encouragement and exceptional teaching and accounting skills... At this time we run four different types of companies on the same accounting system, and I have yet to find a problem they could not come up with an answer for.”

- *Patricia Nash, Comptroller, Baltimore Air Balance*

“I used Master Builder in a previous job and successfully converted the current company's books from Quickbooks to MB last June. I would strongly recommend using a Pro Advisor with the skillset of a Walt Mathieson to make the transition as smooth as possible. Walt has an unusual background combining accounting, construction, and computer skills, which enabled me to be up and running at a fraction of the cost of other software we looked at.”

- *Lewis Cohen, Controller, Bogdan Builders, Inc.*

“Walt and Gerry made themselves available on short notice, explained concepts until they were certain we understood them, and enabled us to progress quickly from a group of creative people struggling to stay on top of paperwork to a financially organized company. In addition to his ideas and input, he was always willing to listen to our questions and occasional crises and provide just the solutions we needed. Walt has helped us address profitability issues, employee/human resources policies, and subcontractor relationships. He's helped us implement procedures, a budget, and employee incentives. He's provided invaluable sales and marketing input, helping us restructure our design-build system so it works better for us, for our clients, and for the bottom line.”

- *Osie Adelfang, Vice President, ARC Design Build*

Prior to coming in contact with Walt, I worked with another consultant to implement Master Builder into my new construction business. The difference in working with each consulting firm was night and day. Walt has the heart of a teacher and made sure I not only knew how to do something in Master Builder, but more importantly, why. Both Walt and Gerry have helped me and my business address countless issues that have popped up no matter the time of day or night. I would highly recommend Walt and Gerry to anyone looking to really dive into Master Builder and successfully implement it into their own business.

- *Adam and Kristen Birkmeyer, Birkmeyer Construction Co, LLC*