

# Noteworthy Sweeping Software



For sweeping contractors, bidding a job can be likened to a high-wire balancing act. A bid too far to the right or left of middle ground can spell disaster. Just as the high-wire performer carries a pole for balance, sweeping contractors need a tool to balance profitability with competitiveness.

Years of experience in bidding and sweeping parking lots has resulted in the development of Bids-A-Lot™, the only

computer program that accurately estimates the cost of sweeping a parking lot, and helps to analyze current contracts. Bids-A-Lot™ is a valuable online bidding tool for both the seasoned and inexperienced parking lot sweeping contractor.

For the inexperienced, bidding can be an unexpected nightmare. How much should be charged? A contractor might think, "I gave up a \$15.00 an hour job to do this, so I'll charge \$30.00 an hour to sweep and that should be plenty." But, how long will it take to do the job? Often, it's only after a commitment to a year contract has been made with a new customer that it's discovered that money is being lost. The contract may actually be paying the customer to clean his parking lot. Then, when the time comes to bid the next job, the natural tendency is to overbid and lose the job.

The seasoned contractor, on the other hand, has made his mistakes and survived. He understands bidding, but is working in an increasingly competitive industry where customers are shopping for the best service at the best price. He needs to offer as much as he can in a highly professional manner. Bids-A-Lot™ provides that, along with the ability to send customers a bid that gives exact prices for nine separate sweeping frequencies.

As long as contractors base their bids on guesswork, their profit margin will remain uncertain. For example, when attempting to ensure some kind of profit margin, many contractors estimate high. If they think it will

take 20 minutes to properly clean a parking lot, they round it up to 30 minutes just to be safe. This method won't get them the job if they're competing against somebody who felt secure in their 20-minute estimate and bid accordingly.

Bids-A-Lot™ calculates a bid according to both the amount of time it will take to do the job and how much the contractor feels he needs to make per hour on that particular job. Using a Parking Lot Survey Worksheet (printed online from the program), all pertinent information about the individual parking lot being bid can be accurately entered into the computer. Figures are calculated using detailed information about the parking lot design, customer requirements, combined with specific adjustments that allow the contractor to tailor the bid to his desired profit margin.

Bids-A-Lot™ enables contractors who are currently in the business to use a 'known money-maker' as a template, then compare other existing contracts against it. Using this method, one contractor eliminated \$1800 in contracts - and increased his overall profit margin by over \$800.

The software's nine-option bid feature gives the customer nine sweeping frequencies to choose from. Prices can be calculated from once-a-day to once-a-month service. This allows customers to plan their yearly budget, looking ahead to those times of the year that they might need to temporarily increase or decrease their sweeping frequency.

The nine-option bid generated by the online program enables the customer to see the wisdom of using the service more often, since it shows that the cost per sweep is reduced as sweeping frequency rises. As all experienced contractors know.....the more often the parking lot is

**BIDS-A-LOT**

PARKING LOT SWEEPING BIDDING SOFTWARE

[WWW.BIDSALOT.COM](http://WWW.BIDSALOT.COM)

**Online Program  
for Bidding & Analyzing  
PARKING LOT  
SWEEPING JOBS**

**505.434.3737**

## Bids-A-Lot™ bids and analyzes parking lot sweeping jobs.

cleaned, the more often the customers see his lot clean, obviously increase customer satisfaction.

Using the Bids-A-Lot™ online program existing bids can be reviewed to evaluate a number of options: equipment efficiency and condition, driver expertise and training, and contract profitability, to name just a few. Within minutes, existing bids can be updated, changed and reprinted. With Bids-A-Lot™, this just takes a few minutes to do.

On every bid, a Level of Service is set before the bid is calculated. This encourages contractors to discuss with their customers, beforehand, the degree of service they will provide. That reduces the chance for small details to evolve into a bone of contention. When everything is spelled out, up front, the road is paved for a secure professional relationship.

Bids-A-Lot™ proposals can be customized to include a brief description of the servic-

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es included with the bid. In many instances, this type of itemization will motivate a customer to call the low-bid contractor to find out exactly what services come with their bid. If contractors are intentionally low-balling just to get a contract, that's definitely a call they won't want to get!

Bids-A-Lot™ software is an invaluable tool that helps the parking lot sweeping contractor keep his balance on the high-wire

of a changing, competitive business. It benefits not only the sweeping contractor, but also his customers and the parking lot sweeping industry as a whole. ■

The authors are principals in RDS Enterprises, makers of the Bids-A-Lot™ software. For more information, call them at 505-434-3737 or send email to [sales@bidsalot.com](mailto:sales@bidsalot.com). RDS also has a Bids-A-Lot™ website, which is located at: [www.bidsalot.com](http://www.bidsalot.com).