The Evolution of Takeoff



Ancient History

Egyptians introduce proportional scale drawings and a standardized measurement system called the royal cubit.

1632

The predecessor to the modern slide rule debuts as a calculating device.

1770

Rubber erasers make it easier to correct takeoff mistakes on paper.

1970s

Pocket-size electronic calculators replace slide rules to help estimators save time doing the math.

1990s

Digitizers reduce the time it takes to do takeoff from paper blueprints by 50% or more.

Today

Takeoff from building information models gives estimators a better way to visualize the project and provide cost feedback to the building team.



How will takeoff continue to evolve?

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25-220 AD

The modern method of papermaking is invented in China, creating a popular material to write down dimensions and quantities.

1662

The first mass produced pencils appear in Germany, giving builders doing takeofflike activities a handy writing tool.

1842

Blueprints are invented and become the standard format for building plans.

1980s

Electronic spreadsheets like VisiCalc, Lotus 1-2-3, and Excel offer a more efficient way for estimators to log takeoff numbers and compute complex formulas.

2000s

Electronic takeoff tools offer an even more productive and accurate way to do takeoff directly from electronic plans.

Tomorrow