



## Home Improvement: Successful Scheduling Builds Client Trust

Jersey Shore remodeler relies on FastTrack Schedule to meet deadlines, keep clients up-to-date



### Customer Profile

Sawbucks Contracting LLC  
Ocean Grove, New Jersey

### Industry

Contracting/Remodeling

### Challenge

Improve cumbersome, manual project tracking system and enhance customer communication regarding project status

### Solution

Standardize on FastTrack Schedule to increase project efficiency, strategic planning, and customer satisfaction

### Benefits

- Quick set up, requiring no special instruction or IT expertise
- Better team collaboration, productivity, and attention to detail
- Improved customer communication with weekly progress schedules via email
- Accurate tracking of scheduled payments and improved financial planning

Sawbucks Contracting recognizes the frustration some homeowners experience when working with builders and remodelers, so it stakes its business on two differentiators—efficiency and professionalism. FastTrack Schedule is one of the most important tools that Sawbucks counts on to deliver on both promises.

As Sawbucks Contracting grew, it needed a way to both assure projects remained on deadline as well as to communicate to its prospects and clients about project goals and progress. Paper-based planning and tracking had become too unwieldy to enforce for every project. Yet, management wanted to assure a process-oriented approach. Enter FastTrack Schedule.

### From Conception to Completion, Confidence is Key

Sawbucks is a family-run enterprise, owned and operated by Michael and Susan Solebello. For Susan Solebello, the ability to establish and maintain a close trust with her clients is one of the reasons people choose Sawbucks for their projects, and she sees trust as key to the success of her business.

“Trust is a huge factor for people who are investing a significant amount of money in what for many is their life’s project,” explained Solebello. “It had been a growing challenge dealing with clients who were often not around their homes to physically see how projects were going. Without day-to-day visibility into status, the reasons for these delays were lost on our clients, and this had the potential of eroding the trust we work so hard to build.”

Prior to implementing FastTrack Schedule, Solebello’s teams relied on a system of hand-drawn calendars, which required constant manual updates and redrawing. These calendars were used within Sawbucks as a means to keep the internal team on track. But the paper-driven process was highly time-intensive, and in some cases, especially for longer duration projects, the documents became too long and cumbersome to be of practical use.

“People basically abandoned the process,” noted Solebello. “Just at the point we realized our manual methods weren’t working, we happened upon a review of FastTrack Schedule in a trade magazine. It was just what we were looking for.”

Sawbucks was able to put the software in place within its Windows-based environment very quickly, requiring no special instruction or existing IT expertise to begin planning and tracking projects within FastTrack Schedule.

**“FastTrack Schedule really sets us apart from other companies.”**

Susan Solebello  
Sawbucks Contracting



#### **A Fast Track to Customer Satisfaction**

Just as Sawbucks had used its paper calendars as an internal planning tool, it initially implemented FastTrack Schedule solely to communicate within its staff on projects. But quickly, Solebello realized that the software had the potential to help the company on other fronts.

“We started sharing the visual plans from FastTrack Schedule directly with our customers, and they loved it,” said Solebello. “Once they could see exactly what was to be done on their house and the practical reasons why it takes so much time to do some things, their expectations fell right in line.”

Sawbucks also started incorporating FastTrack Schedule into weekly project meetings, sending customers weekly status emails with calendar views, expanding and deepening customer and subcontractor communications.

**“Being able to show the entire project from beginning to end in an attractive visual format adds to our prospects’ perception of us as professional, innovative and efficient”**

Internally, Sawbucks began using the software to track scheduled payments, leveraging FastTrack Schedule for financial planning, as well as using project consolidation functions to get an overhead view of all projects taking place at once, often as many as eight.

“Before FastTrack, people within our own company would fight over the plumber because planning wasn’t as tight as it could have been,” added Solebello. “Now

we are able to strategically plan and everyone sticks to an agreed upon schedule across projects. It not only makes us more efficient, but eliminating unnecessary delays further demonstrates our professionalism. Our productivity levels have also risen dramatically. We no longer have backlogged jobs – in fact we are more than prepared and ready to take on more work.”



A final but significant benefit was Sawbucks’ later discovery of the value of the software for sales purposes.

“Being able to show the entire project from beginning to end in an attractive visual format adds to our prospects’ perception of us as professional, innovative and efficient,” noted Solebello. “People really like that bigger picture.”

Overall, Sawbucks considers FastTrack Schedule a vital tool for its business that brings both efficiency and polish to its offering – with ease.

**“We no longer have backlogged jobs – in fact we are more than prepared and ready to take on more work.”**

“It makes prioritization easy – even if you aren’t tech-savvy it’s easy to understand and see all the information to manage toward the critical path to success,” added Solebello. “FastTrack Schedule really sets us apart from other companies.”

For more information, visit us online at <http://www.aecsoftware.com>

AEC Software, Inc. • 22611-113 Markey Ct., Sterling, VA 20166 USA • [www.aecsoft.com](http://www.aecsoft.com) • 703.450.1980  
FastTrack Schedule and Details are trademarks of AEC Software, Inc.  
©2007 AEC Software, Inc. All rights reserved.

