

International construction price databases

Spanish professionals are accustomed to building their estimates by combining information from the many available public or private construction price data tables. But this situation is not common in other countries.

Background

Spain is together with Brazil the largest world producer of price databases for construction. Due to the early success of Presto and the BC3 exchange format, many private and public entities can easily publish this type of databases.

	Fecha	Resumen	Tamaño
1	07/12/2016	BPCCL	33.078.503
2	07/12/2016	BASE DE COSTES DE LA CONSTRUCCIÓN DE ANDALUCIA	13.548.376
3	10/10/2016	Precio de la Construcción Centro 2016	1.088.985.279
4	28/09/2016	Rehabilitación, Mantenimiento, Reparación y Reformas - Precio de la Construcción Centro 2015	375.218.141
5	13/07/2016	BASE DATOS CONSTRUCCION IVE	57.605.824
6	01/07/2016	DGC	2.673.698
7	29/03/2016	Precios de la Construcción Cantabria 2016	203.806.740
8	14/03/2016	Precio de la Construcción Centro 2016	1.035.284.681
9	21/05/2014	IVE2014_BDCCA14	32.827.841
10	21/05/2014	BASE DATOS CONSTRUCCION IVE	30.401.237
11	09/04/2014	Precio de la Construcción Centro 2014	783.885.282
12	08/01/2014	Cuadro de Precios de Referencia de la Dirección General de Carreteras	566.037
13	08/08/2013	JuntaExtremadura2012	30.574.798
14	17/05/2013	Precio de la Construcción Centro 2013	740.711.930
15	14/05/2013	BASE DATOS CONSTRUCCION IVE	11.004.101

Some Spanish construction price databases

The Spanish culture of construction is a main reason for this.

- The public works regulations require the breakdown of prices to be printed in the project documents, not as a summary of labor, materials and equipment, but as a complete analysis of every required item.
- Spanish architects and engineers must provide reference prices for the work units in the project, unlike other countries, where prices are provided by independent cost estimators or by the contracting companies.
- Spanish professionals use long texts for describing the work units, instead of independent specifications documents.
- Many Spanish professionals still consider the law as the main reference for their job, instead of the value added to the project. So, any "official" price, published by any state or local authority, seems more realistic than a real price taken from the market.

The result is a collection of more than forty different databases.

These databases contain thousands of materials and work units, also due to the use of parametric concepts, created by Presto and very popular among the database developers. Some of them can be downloaded or consulted through Internet at no cost, others require a fee.

Every database has its own coding system for work units and resources, which prevents a real interchange of information among users. But the coding for the groups or chapters is not intended for acting as an WBS -Work Breakdown Structure.

So, the requirement for using specific databases in public works does not result in a common WBS for the estimates.

Many databases free to use are supplied with Presto. The complete list can be consulted in the technical note "Cuadros de precios entregados con Presto 22".

These include.

SCOPE	CONSTRUCTION PRICE DATABASE
International	AllCostData International Construction Price Database
Finland	Rakennusosat Pks
France	France prix
Italia	Conservazione e restauro opere e beni culturali e paesaggistici

Price databases are considered very useful. Most estimates are created by simply picking predefined concepts from databases, creating only the very specific items needed in a project.

Spanish professionals working abroad are surprised not to find this kind of supporting tool for their work, and we receive many questions about this problem.

Databases in other countries

The existing databases are different from the Spanish ones in many senses:

- They are not free or cheap, their cost being in the range of 500-1000 €/year.
- Consequently, they have a high degree of protection to prevent illegal use.
- As a result, they are more difficult to navigate, and the information is not so easily transferred into the estimate.
- They lack the powerful price analysis of Spanish databases.

But they are useful for their purpose, providing many work items with a market price and a description good enough for contracting and for executing the works.

COMPANY	SCOPE	URL
RSMMeans	USA	www.rsmeans.com
SPON	UK	www.sponpress.com
Batiprix	France	www.batiprix.com
Compass International	International	www.compassinternational.net

Many of these databases share a common coding for chapters and work units, based on CSI MasterFormat or Unifomat, making it easier the navigation and the data integration.

The relationship of these databases with estimating software is not as easy as it is with Presto and Spanish databases. Units have to be selected one by one, exported, and then imported into the software.

Sometimes, the database developer also develops and sells the estimating software, in which case the integration is better, but only one of the two components, either the database or the software, reaches professional quality.

Using the existing local databases, when available

The user has to subscribe or purchase the desired database, receiving some software to select the required work units. Normally, the result is an Excel file or some other type of listing, from which components may be copied to Presto one by one.

Even it is more difficult than using Presto with Spanish databases, this procedure is the same that the local professionals use everyday day.

It is convenient to begin with a try period or a sample, in order to understand if the content satisfies the needs.

RIB Spain is eager to work together with the user, to improve the import process, while it is feasible from a technical point of view, or even to establish a commercial or technical agreement with the database provider.

Translating Spanish price databases

When using a database from a country in a different country there are three local aspects to consider: the language, the prices, and the construction environment.

The local language

Presto can translate the texts of estimates and databases using the services supplied by Google.

This service, that can be also used and tested for free in the Google translation web page, provide fairly good texts, especially in technical contexts.

The automatic service included in Presto has a cost, directly satisfied from the user to Google, very low for the size of a normal estimate but can be relevant for the whole content of a database.

español inglés francés Detectar idioma

inglés español francés Traducir

Acero laminado S275 JR, en perfiles laminados en caliente para vigas, pilares, zunchos y correas, mediante uniones soldadas; i/p.p. de soldaduras, cortes, piezas especiales, despuntes y dos manos de imprimación con pintura de minio de plomo, montado y colocado, según NTE-EAS/EAV, CTE-DB-SE-A y EAE. Acero con marcado CE y DdP (Declaración de prestaciones) según Reglamento (UE) 305/2011.

Laminated steel S275 JR, in hot rolled sections for beams, pillars, straps and straps, by welded joints; I / p.p. NTE-EAS / EAV, CTE-DB-SE-A and EAE are used for welding, cutting, special parts, blunts and two coats of primer with lead paint. Steel with CE marking and Dop (Declaration of performance) according to Regulation (EU) 305/2011.

Google translation of a Spanish work unit

If the goal is to understand a Bill of Quantities received in an unfamiliar language, the result of translation is normally good enough to allowing for pricing the project, or for deciding not to bid.

If the intention is to translate an estimate to another language, it will probably require a professional revision.

There are some rules for getting better translations:

- The original text should be well structured
- Abbreviations and localisms don't translate properly

BUDOWA	CONSTRUCCIÓN
PRZEBUDOWA I BUDOWA SIECI WODOCI?GOWEJ	Reconstrucción y construcción de RED DE AGUA Sistema de alimentación
<i>Przebudowa sieci wodoci?gowej rozdzielczej</i>	<i>Reconstrucción del suministro de agua? Distribución del sistema de suministro</i>
<i>Budowa sieci wodoci?gowej rozdzielczej</i>	<i>La construcción del sistema de suministro de distribución de acueducto</i>
PRZEBUDOWA I BUDOWA KANALIZACJI	Reconstrucción y construcción de las aguas residuales
<i>Przebudowa kanalizacji sanitarnej</i>	<i>Reconstrucción del sistema de alcantarillado sanitario</i>
<i>Budowa komór ?elbetowych kanalizacji sanitarnej</i>	<i>Construcción de las cámaras de trasdosados de alcantarillado sanitario concreto</i>
<i>Budowa kanalizacji sanitarnej</i>	<i>La construcción del sistema de alcantarillado</i>
<i>Budowa przepompowni ?cieków sanitarnych</i>	<i>Construcción de saneamiento de aguas residuales de bombeo</i>

Quote in Polish language and translation into Spanish

A good practice for validating the translation is to retranslate the result back into the original language and check the meaning. If the meaning is wrong or difficult to understand, refine the original text until the reverse translation is good enough.

The local price

Price must be adapted to local market. Sometimes the labor may be cheaper and the industrial products more expensive, or the other way around.

The local construction culture

Products and systems are different in every country. No translation or software tool can handle this difference.

Please feel free to contact Presto to improve our support for using any international database.