

# Henning Software Finds Longtime Success Through Cost-Effective Software Solutions

From the early DOS days of desktop computing to Microsoft Windows 10, Henning Software in Hudson, Ohio, has been a leader in providing solutions for small and medium manufacturing shops for more than 25 years. Before starting Henning Software in 1990, husband and wife, Richard and Billie Henning, saw a void in the market for affordable software designed for small to medium manufacturing shops. Mrs. Henning, whose family owned a screw machine shop, thought that if her knowledge of the industry could be paired with her husband's knowledge of the software industry, the two could deliver a product that could fulfill that niche. After successfully creating job estimating software, Henning Software realized it would need to keep expanding their software offerings into a fully developed ERP system in order to grow in the market.

"At the time, most of ERP software available was mini-computer based and priced upwards of \$50,000, which was too expensive for smaller shops," Mrs. Henning says, co-owner of Henning Software. "We thought we could make something better, but we needed more than job estimating software. We needed our software to manage all operational and accounting areas of a manufacturing business."

One of the features that make Henning Software more cost-effective for shops is its fully integrated design that supports the majority of a shop's operational functions and that it is written entirely by Henning Software. Users do not need to seek out third-party add-on software. Soon after creating its job estimating software, Henning Software developed what would become its two flagship products, Visual EstiTrack and Visual Books. Visual EstiTrack is a user-friendly software system designed to manage sales orders, shop orders, job costing, scheduling, inventory management, time collection, quality and many other important shop management functions. Visual Books is an optional add-on to Visual EstiTrack that provides comprehensive accounting solutions including payroll.

While Henning Software strives to make products with easy and convenient functionality, Mrs. Henning explains that one of the concerns in the manufacturing industry is the number of longtime employees in the shop who are at times reluctant to adapt to new technologies.

"What we have seen in some shops is an aging shopfloor workforce that is resistant at times toward using computers," Mrs. Henning says. "We have found that if we first train the foremen and supervisors on using our software, that they can be better at training their operator staff. Those working on the shop floor are more open at times to learning and using software when training is coming from one of their own peers."

When Henning Software first went into business, its first customer was sought out looking for machine shops in the Yellow Pages. "Our first customer still is our customer to this very

day," Mrs. Henning says. Today, Henning Software's customer base spans all across the U.S. and Canada. Mrs. Henning explains that PMPA has been a great tool for networking and putting Henning Software face to face with its customers and competitors while learning about new trends and changes within the precision machining industry.



"At any given PMPA conference, we could have dozens of existing customers standing right in front of us," Mrs. Henning says. "It's beneficial to attend PMPA conferences to learn industry trends and be able to answer questions and help our customers that are attending, who would normally be scattered across the country."

Unlike many of its competitors, Henning offers one-on-one training for its new and existing customers with the option of holding the training on-site, in-house or online. This allows Henning Software to provide help specifically tailored to a single customer. Along with its one-on-one sessions, Henning Software has created its own annual conference. Now in its 19th year, the conference is held in various cities all around the U.S. and has evolved into a multiple day-long event.

The Henning Software conference format was learned through attending PMPA conferences. In fact, for Henning Software's second year conference, the company teamed up with PMPA to co-host its conference. A PMPA technical member since 1998, Mrs. Henning says the organization's wealth of knowledge, great speakers and close proximity to Henning Software's headquarters has made the association an invaluable resource.

"If we need any information about the industry, they're always there to help and are always willing to come out and meet with us," Mrs. Henning says. "This is a group of your peers that are doing similar things, and they're benefiting from all these conferences and each other. There is so much knowledge to gain through our affiliation with the PMPA."

*Henning Software Inc. is located at 102 First Street, Suite 211, Hudson, Ohio 44236. Phone: 330-650-4212. Fax: 330-528-0397. Website: [henningsoftware.com](http://henningsoftware.com)*