The window wide web

We are in a time when you can buy anything you want or need online. Log into your chosen supplier, pick your product, give them your card number and sit back to await delivery. True for everything. Well almost everything – windows and doors are still an exception: perhaps until now. Rod Sait, sales director of Real Window Quoter, the company behind D-mods has come up with software that has the potential to make buying/selling windows online a reality

D-Mods comprises many modules that starts, at its simplest level, with a rapid quotation service. Any window company can load this onto their website to provide visitors with a quick way to obtain a quote for windows and doors; it is a fantastic lead generator according to Rod Sait.

The Data Exchange module is where it gets exciting. The fabricator can input his price book. He also inputs all of the window components at cost. He can then input profit and discount margins. Discounts can be applied on a customer-by-customer basis so allowing accurate individual quotes based on business levels.

One of the reasons it is not possible to buy windows online is the long quotation chain. A customer – householder perhaps – goes to an installer, the installer must, potentially, ask the fabricator for a quotation, then the installer must go back to the customer with the price. At best it might take a week. Through D-mods the customer can access the installer's website. If the salesman is with the customer he can input the customer's

requirements and obtain an accurate quote on the spot. And for the installer on-the-go there is an app becoming available soon for his smartphone. It could make the difference between securing the order or not. The potential is to reduce a transaction from days, maybe longer, to hours. Rod Sait says: "This can make a huge difference to a window company closing a sale. And the system has the potential for a fabricator to expand his customer base in all directions.
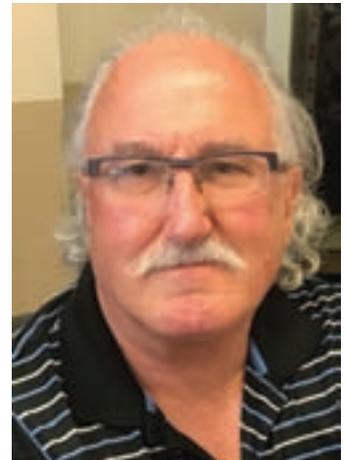
"There is a huge trend for trade counters to supply windows to, for example, builders. As things stand it is likely that the people on the trade counter will not have the full program knowledge currently used for windows. If he has one of our easy-to-use modules on his computer he can give the builder a quote on the spot."

Another powerful feature of the software allows a window company to expand its trading area

Rod Sait

without leaving home. The D-mods central module has the capability to create online branches. Rod Sait says: "Let's say an installer wants to set up in the next town. The cost of renting, fitting out and manning premises can be prohibitive. With our system he can have an online shop with its own web address so it will look as thought he has an actual presence. Joe's Windows has a link on its website to 'Next-town' which opens up as a complete website in its own right with a complete quotation system."

This even gives the potential for householders to buy online. Rod Sait says that while such quotes must be subject to survey there are guidelines for domestic customers – or DIYers on how to measure their windows and doors.

He says: "We believe that this software has the potential to change the way that the whole industry trades. To open areas of the market we have not previously been able penetrate. For example, builders merchants don't tend to sell windows. They know nothing about them. D-mods can change all of that. With this system they don't need to know – it will do all of the work for them.

"There has been quotation software before, we launched Real Window Quoter, but until now it was only able to do part of the job. It is essential for window manufacturers and retailers to fully take advantage of the opportunities offered by the internet. This new software will do exactly that." ❐