



Elevations as Options

Cornerstone Best Practice Series

Overview

The default design in Newstar Enterprise is set to Models with Elevations, creating a distinct Model. This design is carried through to the Model Estimate, Take Offs, Crafts, Products, Subcontracts, and Option Retail Prices. In addition, it also affects the content of Purchase Orders.

Some Newstar clients, however, have adopted or are looking to adopt an alternative method, Elevations as Options. The benefits for Elevations as Options are perceived to be ease of maintenance and a savings in time or productivity. The two configuration methods shown below detail the impact of moving from the standard Newstar process of Model Elevations to Elevations as Options so that companies can make a more informed decision for their preferred method.

Elevations versus Options setup

In the Models with Elevations setup a sample plan (Plan 1) may have Elevations A, B, C and D. Each Elevation is established in the system as separate Models as follows:

- Plan 1 Elevation A
- Plan 1 Elevation B
- Plan 1 Elevation C
- Plan 1 Elevation D

For sample Plan 1 with Elevations as Options to the Base House, the configuration shown above would then be altered to:

- Plan 1 Base House
 - Option A: Elevation A
 - Option B: Elevation B
 - Option C: Elevation C
 - Option D: Elevation D

Models with Elevations

In the standard configuration, Models with Elevations, Base House plan is configured with distinct models and these configurations are then “pushed down” to the appropriate projects. The Base House models are setup with the appropriate Crafts, Tasks, Products, Parts, and Codes that are necessary to track prices, costs, materials, and inventory and create the appropriate Purchase Orders.

Options on Options

If Elevations are setup as Options, and Elevations also have Options, these Elevation Options become “Options on Options.” Elevation Options may consist of roof pitch changes, shingle options, and other options which change exterior materials, etc. Examples of Options on Options would be, “Change to full stone front on Elevation A,” or “Change to full brick front on Elevation B.”

However, while creating Options on Options companies will find that Newstar **does not** have an “exclusionary” feature. That is, when the home is being sold, there is nothing to prevent the Sales Agent from selecting Option A: Elevation A but also selecting “Change to full brick front on Elevation B.”

The greater the mix of Options on Options the greater the potential for a mis-selection of Options.

If a company chooses the Options on Options method, Cornerstone recommends setting up as many intersecting options as possible to prevent missing options. Other work arounds for preventing Sales Agents from selecting conflicting options are continuous and robust training along with up to date and readily available custom documentation. Note that system help will not apply to this method.

Establishing the Model Estimate

Because in this method each Elevation is an Option, the Model Estimate will not capture the costs associated with the Elevation Option unless one of the optional Elevations is chosen to be the “Model Default STD Option.” It is also important to note that Model Default STD Products will automatically load to the first addendum in Newstar Sales at time of sale if the “Load all Standard Options” feature is selected. If the client chooses to have a different Elevation other than the default standard, the Standard Elevation will have to be deleted and the new one selected.

Additional Considerations

- Existing Base Plan Take Offs will need to be adjusted to remove the Elevation Crafts and associated costs *OR* new plans will need to be created to reflect the changes.
- Because the Base House is no longer an Elevation, new Products and Take Offs may need to be created and/or adjusted for all Options effected by Elevation Options. Some examples may be: vaults, addition or deletion of bay windows, room extensions or deletions, room re-configurations and their internal components, etc.
- Lump-sum subcontracts and unit cost may need to be re-established or collected from the effected vendors for each Option.
- Base House and Option Retail Prices may need to be recalculated and/or adjusted to reflect the Elevation changes.
- A procedure will need to be devised to manage these changes in open communities if these changes are adopted in environments where Models with Elevations are already established.

Purchase Orders

Crafts will not be notified of the Elevation Option selected unless that Craft is employed by that Option. In all cases, the PO Header **will not** show the Elevation, only the Product will show the Elevation Option for those Crafts which participate in the Elevation Option. Additionally, any PO which is generated subsequent to the initial PO which originally contained the Elevation Option **will not** show the Elevation, even if the Craft is participating in that Option.

Conclusion

In this white paper we have outlined several key areas for investigation to assist companies in their decision process for Model/Elevation configuration. Since Elevations as Options have a negative impact on the existing system processes, Cornerstone cautions companies looking to deploy this method to first perform a thorough investigation and carefully consider both methods. Companies may also need to be prepared to have additional solutions in place to capture necessary data and insert it back into the system at appropriate junctures so that additional downstream processes are not adversely affected.

It is Cornerstone’s opinion that the amount of effort to employ a non-standard configuration such as Elevations as Options with multiple concessions not only make this a higher maintenance alternative but also more time consuming to setup, maintain, and train on than the standard Model with Elevations method.