



Kerri Olsen  
Estimator – Writer – FabSuite Diva

In the days before FabSuite, Kerri Olsen was teaching dance – ballet, tap and jazz – in a small town on the West Coast. After realizing that teaching dance was not going to provide much of an income, Kerri decided she better get a 'real' job. As luck would have it the small fabrication shop across the street was looking to hire someone for the accounting department and she just so happened to know the owner's son.

Kerri started her steel fabrication career by answering phones, typing and helping in the accounting department. As the company grew, Kerri grew with it. Since she was fast with a 10 Key Calculator, she began helping out with estimating by extending weights, pricing and labor hours. She also ran prints and sepias for steel shop drawing approval submittals and prints for the shop. While working near the estimators and detailers she began asking a lot of questions and starting offering to work late nights and weekends to help them out. Next thing she knew; she was promoted to the estimating department! Kerri has since gone on to work in many other steel fabricator positions such as Purchasing, Project Management, Steel Detailing, Vice President of Sales and Vice President of Manufacturing.

In 2011, Kerri had self-published her book that was then called 'The Art and Science of Steel Estimating' (Now known as 'Commercial Steel Estimating') and was looking for advertising opportunities when she ran across a Steel-Link website. She called Randy Sedlacek to see if he may be interested in trading some advertising spots, her book on his website for FabSuite on her website. At some point Randy brought Kerri to Bill Issler's (CEO of FabSuite) attention. Suggesting that she may be a good fit for FabSuite, Bill asked Kerri to meet with him in Olympia during his travels to a meeting in Portland. Shortly after that meeting Kerri started her career with FabSuite as an Onsite Trainer.

Between traveling for onsite training with FabSuite Clients, Kerri would also do online web training and act as back up for the Technical Support team. She was also the one who came up with the idea to create individual FabSuite User Manuals for each module as an effort to provide more detailed help for the clients. She continues to create them with each new FabSuite Software Release. Though she no longer travels in her work, she still does online web training and back up for the support lines. Most recently she has been working on the program feature videos for FabSuite. As Kerri said, "There is always something new to be talking and writing about with FabSuite".

Kerri has also been the speaker for several different organizations such as NISD (the National Institute of Steel Detailing) and AISC (American Institute of Steel Construction). Several of the articles that she has written over the years has gotten the attention of professional trade groups. In 2003, Mr. Robert Beauchamp, a member of the NISD, had contacted John Linn (who had been the NISD President between 1999-2003) regarding her first published article called "Bringing the Steel Detailer into The Design Team". They asked her if she would speak at their annual meeting regarding her thoughts behind the article. That is how she originally got involved with the NISD and is now Marketing Chair and writes articles for 'The Connection'. Kerri was also asked to speak at the NASCC in Toronto a few years back.

When asked what her favorite part of her job with FabSuite is, she replied that she enjoys "helping people, writing the user manuals and now the blog writing". "I love teaching", said Kerri, "Seeing that spark of understanding appear in someone's eyes and feeling their excitement about being able to do something new – there is no better feeling in the world".

You can read some of Kerri's work on the FabSuite Blog (<https://www.fabsuite.com/news/blog>) or on her website ([www.steeladvice.com](http://www.steeladvice.com)). Find her book, 'Commercial Steel Estimating' is for sale from the 'www.steeladvice' website, and from any online bookseller.