

Caruso Engineering Case Study

How a homeowner inspection service turned a side hustle into a successful, professionally run business after switching to Square Invoices



Business Overview

Chris Caruso is the owner of Caruso Engineering, a homeowner inspection service that details structural defects or issues in written engineering reports that tell homeowners whether their house is safe or needs repairs. The company is a side hustle and passion project for Chris, who also maintains a full-time job in structural/civil engineering.

The Objective

Chris wanted to find an easy payment workflow for collecting from customers, as well as communicate that fees are non-negotiable.

He also wanted a streamlined, professional payment system; to move away from paper invoices and checks; the ability to communicate billing details, and to make it all easy for customers to pay.

The Challenge

Chris found that using separate tools for payments, invoices, and other tasks was counter-intuitive and slowed down his workflow process.

He wanted a single solution for contracts and invoices that had a polished look and feel. After struggling with a handful of tools that were clunky and a payment solution that looked dated, he was in a dire need to streamline his business tools with a centralized solution.

At a glance

2017

founded

13+ years of experience

in structural design of heavy civil, commercial, and residential properties

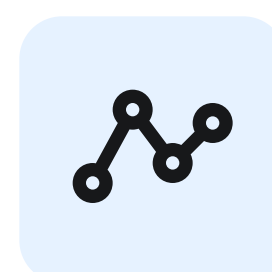
33% growth

from 2020 to 2021

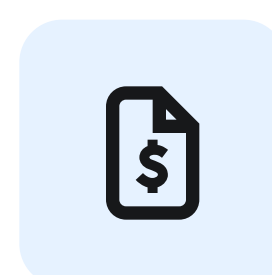
Business Needs



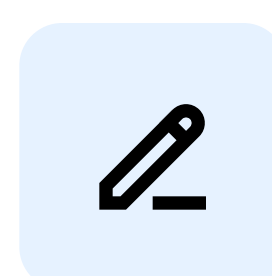
Flexible, all-in-one payment system



Integrated estimates, contracts, and invoices



Polished, professional-looking invoices



Ability to specify payment conditions

↳ The Solution: Square Invoices

With Square Invoices Chris has an all-in-one payment system that he uses to manage his end-to-end business operations. Square Invoices integrates with other Square tools, such as Square Appointments, to help him manage the entire customer contract and sales process in one centralized location.

When a prospective client reaches out, Chris creates a customer account in his Square Customer Directory and schedules an initial visit with Square Appointments. After the initial visit Chris generates estimates and contracts in Square Invoices to get the project moving forward. Everything is sent digitally to customers, who can sign online in just a few minutes. All the services and fees for Caruso Engineering are saved in Square Invoices, saving him time building out new proposals for each customer.



Side hustle to professional business

When it comes to collecting payments, Chris can accept deposits at the homes of customers with Square Reader and set up a payment schedule and reminders based on specific milestones or phases of the job, all sent via email or text. Square Invoices has the polished, modern, and professional look and feel that are important to Chris as he grows his business.

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The look of that invoice was very much like a reflection on my business, **so that’s why I’m paying attention to it.**

Chris Caruso, owner of Caruso Engineering

Less time spent on administrative tasks

The Square ecosystem makes it easy for Chris to manage business tasks in short bursts of time — perfect for a side gig — and has significantly decreased the amount of time he spends on administrative tasks. He estimates that Square Invoices has decreased his administrative load by 67%, so he’s been able to take on more work.

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The time savings is in contracts. I can get somebody fully contracted with a retainer invoice in 30 to 40 minutes, where previously it would take me over two hours.

Chris Caruso, owner of Caruso Engineering

More time spent with customers

Square Invoices also gives Chris the confidence to tackle more customer projects because he won’t have to spend as much time on administrative work.

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It all ties back to competence. You’ll take on the job if you feel you have the confidence to execute it and keep the people happy. There are at least two jobs for which the software was instrumental in actually executing the job.

Chris Caruso, owner of Caruso Engineering

↳ The Results

67%

decrease in time spent on administrative work

\$12,000

increase in direct revenue