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# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 System Overview

Making use of a modern web UI, TW Project Coster is designed to enable you to keep track of and manage forecasted and actual time and costs for all your technical writing projects, so as to be able to confidently charge your customers for work you have done and report on and justify those charges in the process.

There are 3 deployment options for TW Project Coster:

1. As a **cloud-hosted** web app (at [www.twprojectcoster.com/login](http://www.twprojectcoster.com/login))
2. As a **self-hosted** web app for company intranet/private server installation (please contact your administrator for url and login details)
3. As a locally-installed **offline app** (making use of the same web UI)

## 1.2 Basic Concepts and Workflow

To use TW Project Coster, you first configure some common project variables such as project types, rates of cost, reasons for change etc.

Following this, usage is based on a 3-step workflow:

Add new project to list > Add/edit task details and costs > Report on final costs

Once a new project is added to the list, within a single page you can add and edit the different tasks (manual introduction, individual chapters, index etc.) associated with each project. From here you can make use of the pre-defined variables to track forecast and actual time and costs and note changes and the reasons for change.

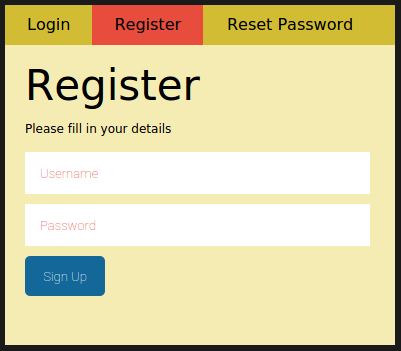
The program will automatically calculate your actual and total costs. Once a project is complete you can export a report and invoice to pdf/doc/html format.

# 2.0 Initial Setup

## 2.1 Creating an Account / Logging in

1. **Cloud-hosted:** go to [www.twprojectcoster.com/login](http://www.twprojectcoster.com/login), click ‘register’ and fill in your details as prompted
2. **Self-hosted:** go to the url given by your company administrator and either fill in the login details as provided, or click ‘register’ to create your account, then fill in details as prompted
3. **Local app:** go to [www.twprojectcoster.com/download](http://www.twprojectcoster.com/download), select the version appropriate to your OS (Linux/Mac/Windows) and download and run the installer

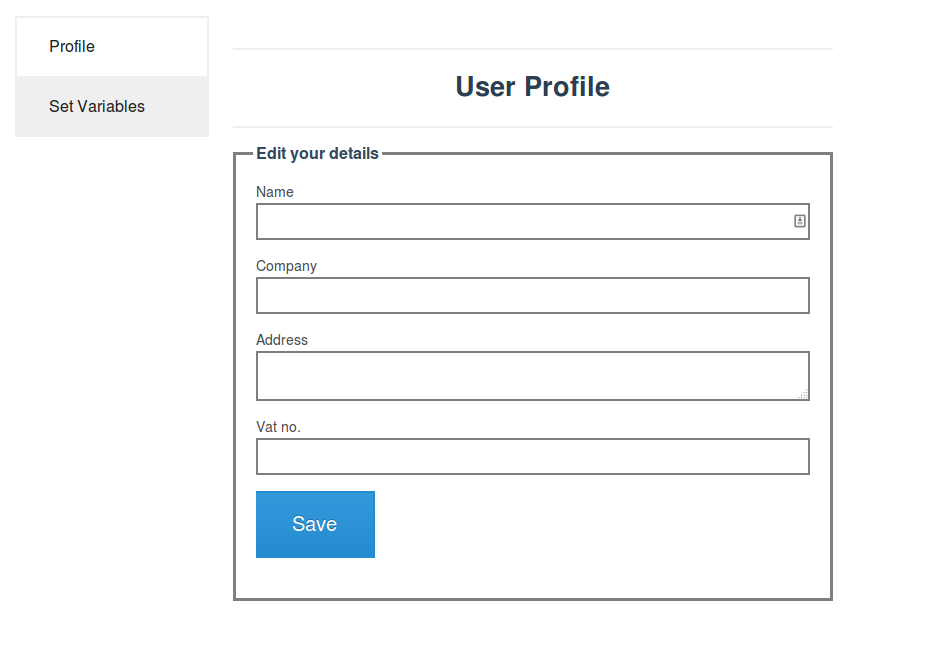
In each case, the login/register dialog is the same:



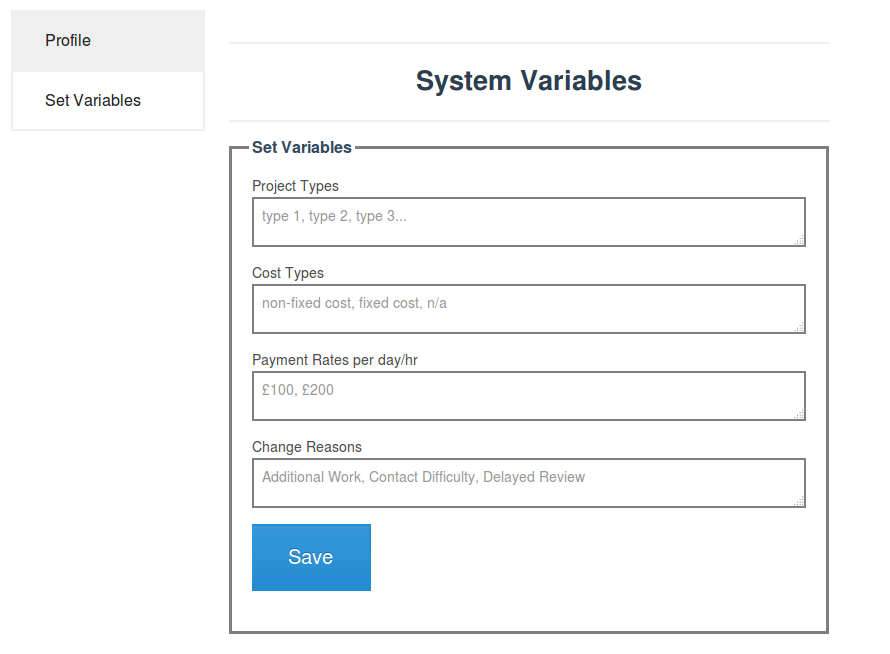
Once registered, you will receive a confirmation email to activate your account.

## 2.2 User Profile and General Settings

Once logged in, click on the **‘Settings’** button, and select the **‘Profile’** tab to edit your business details, which are used when exporting reports and invoices:



Next, click on the ‘Set Variables’ tab, to define the options that are available for all projects:



These variables will then be available as drop-downs for each section of your project. As in the above screenshot, use commas to separate each option. Note that ‘n/a’ can be set as an option for any of the variables.

Project Type: e.g. Software Manual, Appliance Handbook, etc.

Cost Type: default options are 'fixed cost' and 'non-fixed cost'. Can be used if you ever agree to doing a certain part of a project for a fixed price.

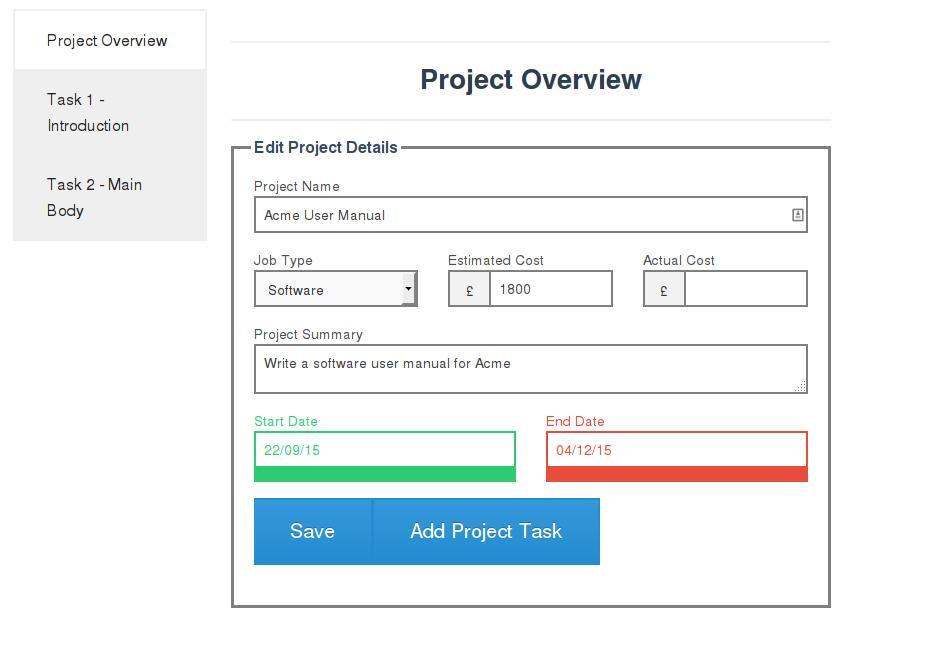
Payment Rates: you can set a specific payment rate for each section/task in a project. These can be per day or per hour and you can include both hourly and daily rates in the list (e.g. £100, £200, £250, £23, £26, £35)

Change Reason: enables you to specify the reasons that have led to extra charges on a particular task in a project. Default values are set as above.

# 3.0 Costing a Project

## 3.1 Create a new project

In the main screen you will be looking at an empty project list. To create your first project, click on 'Create New Project'. You will then be presented with the Project Overview of your new project, where you can fill in the basic details:

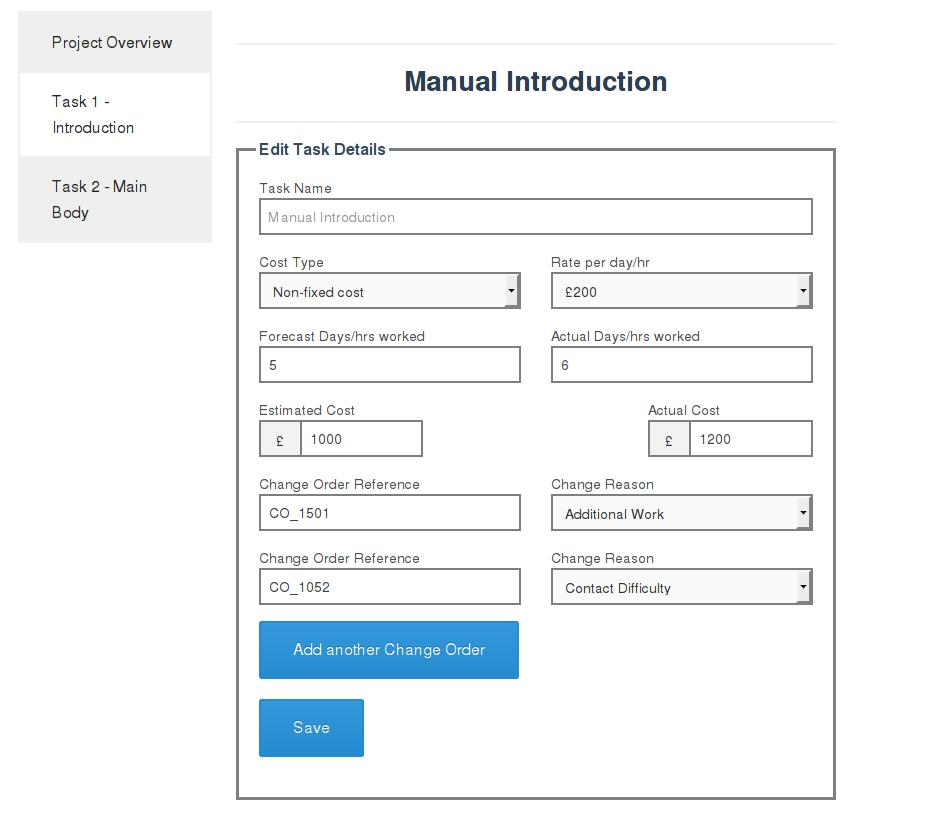
Note that the 'Job Type' drop down corresponds to the list you configured in the system variables.

Also note that the 'Actual Cost' figure is automatically updated as a running total of the 'Actual Cost' figures from each project task.

Once you have entered all the project overview details, click 'Save'. Then you can click on 'Add Project Task' to add your first task (note that the screenshot above shows two tasks already added)

## 3.2 Adding/Editing Project Tasks

From the Project Overview, you can click on 'Add Project Task' to add your first task (note that the screenshot above shows two tasks already added)



In the above 'Manual Introduction' task, note that the 'Cost Type' and 'Rate per day/hr' drop-downs correspond to the lists you configured in system variables.

Also note that the 'Estimated Cost' is calculated automatically by multiplying 'Rate per day/hr' and 'Forecast days/hrs worked'. Likewise for 'Actual Cost' and 'Actual days/hrs worked'

TW Project Coster can help you keep track of your Change Orders associated with extra costs in each task.