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Ekotrope makes HomeSEED software available

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Ekotrope, a developer of software for analyzing, managing and designing energy-efficient buildings, has announced the general availability of its HomeSEED software.

HomeSEED is available as an entry-level solution, HomeSEED Estimator, and an advanced version, HomeSEED Analyst. Ekotrope's software is a practical way to gather green and business intelligence for new construction projects and renovations. The solutions are based on Ekotrope's energy and cost optimization engine which aggregates a range of construction options and building components. This enables architects, contractors and consumers to sort through thousands of construction options and building options to find the best option to fit their energy and cost goals before construction begins. HomeSEED solutions also enable the research of potential cost savings in retro-fitted home projects and provide trade-off analysis to identify the environmental and financial impact of any design changes.

The solution was conceived by professor Edward Crawley, MIT Professor of Aeronautics and Astronautics. He was inspired to develop the software following his failure to find software that would help him to optimize decisions while building his own energy-efficient home.

The entry-level solution HomeSEED Estimator costs \$399 for an annual license. It will provide estimated energy use, cost, emissions and compliance for home design, as well as conducting cost-benefit analysis for component upgrades for new homes. HomeSEED Estimator also makes recommendations for meeting energy and cost goals. Energy and cost tradeoffs are graphically shown with side-by-side alternatives, enabling home designers to analyze and compare different housing designs.

It is visually driven and easy to use - subscribers simply log on and fill in some simple initial parameters. HomeSEED's algorithms calculate a number of parameters, including breakdowns of financial and environmental benefits for energy-related investments in new builds, as well as identifying energy investment 'sweet spots' which would significantly lower out-of pocket costs such as utility bills.

The advanced solution, HomeSEED Analyst, is available to Estimator license holders on a per-project basis at a starting price of \$1,999 per project. It is also available as a site licenses and with volume discounts. HomeSEED Analyst includes all the features available within Estimator, plus advanced features designed for architects, builders and construction professionals. These include detailed design analysis tools to ensure accuracy of calculations, specific component research including costing estimates, free performance, pricing, research support and conversion of architectural plans to a format compatible with HomeSEED.

Blake Bisson, vice president of sales and marketing for Ekotrope said: "Growing environmental concerns, tougher government mandates and more widespread and deeper personal convictions have all led to a significant increase in demand for energy-efficient buildings that deliver measurable

green advantages while maximizing investments in design and construction. HomeSEED is proof that environmentally-friendly building practices do not have to prove more expensive than standard methods, while allowing architects, builders and project managers to compare the pros and cons of energy conscious builds in a rapid, visual manner."

Brian Anderson, partner at Anderson Porter Design, said, "Our architectural practice uses cutting edge technologies to give us a competitive edge and deliver breakthrough value for our clients. We are using HomeSEED to provide innovative design for a unique Net-Zero Energy multi-family townhouse development. HomeSEED's capabilities allow us to quickly analyze the energy performance of each building component, from windows to insulation, and understand how each affects the whole system and maximizes cost efficiency and construction effectiveness. It enables us to compare options and understand different energy and cost tradeoffs, making it easier to maintain and achieve our goals for every project."

Billy Craig, ABX Director, Boston Society of Architects said: "As Ekotrope is due to exhibit at the ArchitectureBoston Expo, we expect the company's new HomeSEED product to be of great interest to show attendees and our members and I can't wait to see it in action."

Event note: Ekotrope will be demonstrating HomeSEED at Building Energy 12, March 6-8 at Boston's Seaport World Trade Center (booth 721), organized by the Northeast Sustainable Energy Association (NESEA).

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