

BUILDING savvy

MAGAZINE



Charter Builders

Charts steady course for
Weatherford High School



Charter Builders, VLK Architects

Construction Data International Prebuilds for Success.

In a perfect world plans arrive at a contractor's office in a state of "immaculate conception" precise and flawless. The job would progress as if on magic rails from start to finish with nothing to slow it down or stop the forward motion from hidden snares lurking in the shadows. But this is not a perfect world. Design teams are under increasing pressure with budget tightening and younger, less experienced help joining the ranks from school. Last minute changes by owners for a myriad of reasons can set up a chain reaction to an otherwise perfect set of plans. We are humans and humans are by definition - imperfect. Our best defense against the variables of chance is procedure. For John Spencer, owner of CDI the definition of PROCEDURE is this - when a problem is encountered, the solution is found and it should never be a problem again.

In the construction world, with all of its built-in inertia, some remarkably similar,

and repetitive difficulties are addressed and solved for each project until they appear to be "normal". CDI has dared to challenge this "norm" and has combined 20th century technology with 21st century technique to produce a product called "Project Prebuild". Using this system, International Construction Data, Inc. has been involved in the successful completion of 120 projects in just the last 24 months. These jobs range from \$2 million school additions to \$300 million private ventures.

"We perform our service on any size project", explains John Spencer, owner of ICD. "The bigger and more complicated the job, the more effect we have on the bottom line."

Prebuild Control is the combination of computer modeling and data coordination with the net result of identifying and eliminating "hidden" problems buried within the pages of

the project plans. These problems can range from simple missing dimensions to serious blunders. The impact of these oversights can range from work slowdowns to complete work stoppages. The "trickle down" effect can impact prefabricated components and have devastating consequences on schedules, confidence and profits.

"Our objective is to find problems that can slow or even stop a project cold, then we put everyone involved on the same page with the same data to build by. Everyone in this business can relate a story of how a simple miscalculation or missing dimension has produced a negative impact on their project's completion schedule, confidence, and profit margin." -John Spencer

Reduce building time.
Eliminate design or layout delays.
Simplify projects.
Help coordinate contractors.

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This system reviews your plans to prevent stoppages.

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"I would never start another job without it".

Aaron Scates, project manager for Charter Builders



International Construction Data

| More than 30 years of experience

The product evolved from over 30 years of actual construction layout, the last 20 as owner field staking crews. As the business grew so did the need for accurate data. Said owner John Spencer, "As our system evolved, contractors began to notice how fast our jobs progressed and began to pay me for my data. Two years ago the demand for this data outweighed the time required for field crews and caused the company to focus full time on prebuilding and data coordination."

Project Prebuild has changed the way many contractors have approached their projects. These are forward thinking companies who recognize a procedure that works. They have realized a significant difference in the way their jobs progress and in their bottom line. They include Charter Builders (the featured builder this month), Cadence McShane Corp., Hunt Construction,

continued on page 19

Prebuild ...continued from page 14

Lee Lewis, Steele Freeman, Buford Thompson, Rogers-O'Brien, Thomas S. Byrne and others including many sub-contractors.

Noted Spencer, "It is truly a win-win process for everyone involved. Once the design team members recognize that we are actually redrawing the structures looking for problems, we become part of the team. Instead of field personnel trying to explain the problem in terms of numbers, we are working in the same medium as the designers and the problem becomes readily apparent - as does the solution. When the guys "in the trenches" find the problem, the job may have to wait on the answer. When we find something that doesn't work, it is answered before the first machine fires up."

*In a perfect world,
Project Prebuild
would have no
place. Given the
world we live
in however, why
would anyone start
without it?*

When the civil, structural, and now some of the major architectural components are checked and combined in the Prebuild system, conflicts such as piers or light poles and utilities are identified and addressed. When all of the pieces are finalized, field coordinates are assigned, given to layout crews for the final check, and the job simply flies.

One of the most important aspects of Project Prebuild is the overall

confidence boost in the field. The data and accompanying maps make checking the fit of each piece of the puzzle very easy. The final check is the secret to a practically perfect beginning for the project. If there is a loss of a key person in the field, this data makes it possible for virtually any engineer to step in and complete the project.

"Very seldom do we actually see a project, the standard layout tools of this industry make it possible to directly use the data straight from our computers to the instruments", commented Spencer. While CDI finds themselves concentrating on the Dallas/Ft. Worth area for the moment, the company can "address the world" with this technology.

International Construction Data is currently working on their first job outside of the Metro-Plex. It is a large performing arts center for the Corpus Christi campus of Texas A&M. Other current projects are: Grapevine Opryland, the ninety million dollar expansion of the Duncanville high school, several elementary and middle schools, and the University of Texas at Arlington work force center. Coming up in the near future are three different Richardson high schools additions, fifty five million dollar high school for Denton and several municipal buildings for McKinney, Texas. 🏠

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