

CNR

CONSTRUCTION
NEWS AND REVIEW™

MAGAZINE

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*Our History.
Our Future.*



APRIL 2024

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PERSPECTIVE
BY KERRY SMITH

The Secret's in the Sauce: Multigenerational Construction Industry Successes

Only 30 percent of family-owned businesses in the U.S. survive into the second generation, according to the U.S. Small Business Administration. Only 12 percent make it to the third generation. A mere 3 percent endure into the fourth generation and beyond.

Bear these statistics in mind as you read the multigenerational construction company success stories in the pages that follow. Each is a testament to surviving - and thriving - to defy the odds.

Of the companies (and industry associations) you'll soon read about in this special edition of CNR Magazine, five have surpassed the 100-year mark. Another five have been in existence for more than 75 years. Another five have been operating successfully for more than 50 years. And the rest have been around for more than 40 years.

Not only is every one of the following companies and associations bucking the odds, but they're also thriving. Why is that? In other words, what's their secret sauce?

The answer is definitely multifaceted.

Ingredients in each of these multi-gen recipes for success include family connectedness, shared values, intentional actions as stewards to their generation and the next (investing the profits back into the firm), humility, professionalism, transparency, a rock-solid work ethic, effective communication, collaboration, philanthropic generosity and much more.

Each of these companies had a first-generation founder with extraordinary vision and pluckiness. He began with perhaps a pick-up truck, a mule and a whole lot of courage. Among our 100-year-old company success

stories, you'll find founders who launched their family business just a few years after the end of World War I. Several of the stories of companies celebrating 75 years in existence hail from entrepreneurs who had just returned from serving in WWII; similarly, both trade associations featured in these pages got their start in the mid-1940s as the war was coming to a close.

As each family increased in numbers and the business increased in complexity through the years and decades, these family-operated companies developed higher levels of organization and honed their focus, adapting to what construction technology and the market made possible.

Some opted to extend ownership shares to non-family members who seemed like kin due to the loyalty they'd shown to the business for years.

These stories impress and inspire me greatly. Five months ago, I acquired this 55-year-old, continuously publishing construction industry magazine as its first non-family owner. As I write these words, I'm in awe at the accomplishments of the multi-gen companies whose incredible stories fill the pages you'll read.

May these stories inspire all of us to wake up and head to work every day with a renewed commitment to building this industry for the better for generations to come.

Kerry Smith
President & CEO

Construction
News and Review
Magazine

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THE JOB IS THE BOSS

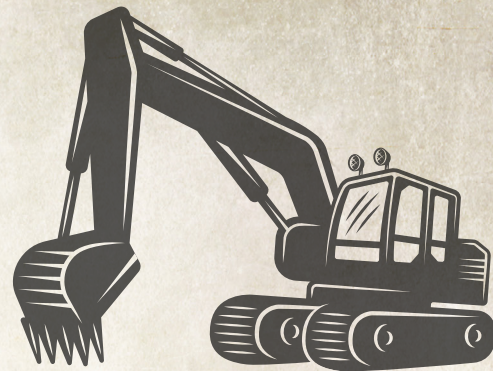
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Bloomsdale Excavating's Roots Date Back to WWII

Bloomsdale Excavating is looking ahead at its 78th year in operation. This excavating company, headquartered in Bloomsdale, Mo., is involved in general contracting, road and rail construction as well as residential, commercial and industrial projects.

Soon after returning from service during World War II, in 1946 Marvin Drury, the founder of Bloomsdale Excavating, started the company, naming it after the southeast Missouri town in which it is rooted. The busy, multifaceted man owned a feed store and grocery store at the time while also working in excavating, trucking and well drilling. Drury recognized that it would be better to focus all his energy on one thing to be successful, and that became his excavating business.

Marvin Drury and his business partner began by building ponds and terraces for farmers and excavating gravel from area creek beds with a dual-wheeled

Ford tractor and a two-ton dump truck. In 1948, Marvin's decision to purchase a five-ton, 6x6 Army truck named the Shield Bantum - the same model he had driven in Germany and swore he'd never set foot in again - opened the door to jobs digging residential basements, installing public water supplies and sewage collection systems. In 1950, Drury bought out his business partner for \$8,000 to become the sole owner of Bloomsdale Excavating Co., Inc. 1950 also saw Marvin's brother, Ralph, join the business helping develop the utility installation scope of work as well as other ventures along the way. Drury would parlay his skills into commercial and industrial development as well as site work and slip-form paving. Marvin's six sons (Tom, Larry, Wayne, Chris, Paul and Patrick) eventually joined the family business, expanding the company with a substantial amount of highway work throughout the 1980s and 1990s as larger site work came in during

the 2000s. The 2010s saw the second and third generations (Scott, Gina, Craig and Kyle) expanding the territory of the company becoming a recognized brand of high quality, performance and safety throughout the Midwest and southern states.

Today, Bloomsdale Excavating continues its efforts in the federal, residential, environmental, energy, mining and quarry and project development markets performing work for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and numerous private-sector clients. Bloomsdale Excavating has been third generation-run since 2012 with President Scott Drury (Marvin's grandson) at the helm, while also adding its first fourth-generation family member, Trevor Drury (Scott's son), to the team in 2023.

Bloomsdale Excavating believes strongly in relationship-driven, value-based contracting and setting the bar in the industry.



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Our core focus is to set the bar, and elevate our customers expectations.

Client-Focused Approach



SETTING THE BAR



Subsurface Constructors Celebrates 118 Years of Starting Projects on Solid Foundation

Subsurface Constructors was founded in 1906 and has been in continuous operation for more than 115 years. This longevity is due to a commitment to excellence and a dedication to taking the long view. By long view, Subsurface chooses quality work and long-term relationships with great clients over short-term profits. By being dedicated to quality and good service, the company keeps clients coming back and builds a reputation that attracts new ones. Combining this long-view philosophy with world-class engineering and a wide scope of services, President James Morgan says, Subsurface Constructors stands apart from its competitors.

The company's founding organizations, Smith & Brennan Pile Company and Wabash Drilling, both played major roles in the development and progress of the St. Louis area. Smith & Brennan Pile Company was founded in 1906 by a building commissioner of St. Louis and quickly became a leader in the manufacture and driving of precast concrete piling.

Throughout its history, the firm has performed work on many of the region's most important projects, including

the Mercantile Mart Building in 1930. This project alone required drilling approximately 32 miles of pile for the 21-story building. Later high-profile projects included work on the Curtis Wright Building and early work for what eventually became McDonnell Douglas. Circa 1960, the company performed foundation and surface preparation work for the Gateway Arch; this project demanded core drilling up to 300 feet beneath the surface. Who knew then that more than 50 years later, Subsurface would design and install the earth retention for a new entry and museum at the Arch?

Wabash Drilling Company was founded in 1896 and incorporated as Wabash Drilling Company in 1915. In 1960, Wabash Drilling merged with Smith & Brennan Pile Company. Together, they placed foundations under most of the major buildings and plants in the St. Louis metropolitan region. These two companies became known as Subsurface Constructors in the early 1980s under the direction of John Morgan.

Projects in the 1990s included extensive earth retention foundation work for the Metrolink Cross County Extension and Pinnacle (now Horseshoe) Casino.

Today, Subsurface Constructors is acknowledged as among the nation's leading full-service geotechnical contractors. Through the years, the firm has continually invested in growing its capabilities and has expanded into a nationwide company, now with offices in Minneapolis and Baltimore that allow Subsurface to better serve its clients in those regions. Subsurface's technical competence and practical experience, combined with a large and varied fleet of equipment, provides a full range of services which allows it to offer the most practical and cost-effective means for clients' foundation, shoring and ground improvement projects.

Leveraging its now nearly 20 years of ground improvement experience, Subsurface is able to save clients sizable costs and shave valuable time off the project schedule. Strategies like this support the company's philosophy of always looking for the best solution to challenges its clients face.



SUBSURFACE CONSTRUCTORS INCORPORATED



ESTABLISHED IN 1906

With a rich history dating back close to 120 years, Subsurface Constructors offers comprehensive geotechnical contracting services and engineering expertise for value-added foundation solutions. Operating extensively across the US, we have completed +1,300 ground improvement projects in 40 states.



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Fred M. Luth & Sons, Inc.: Leaders in Underground Utility Construction for More Than 100 Years

For more than a century, Fred M. Luth & Sons, Inc. has stood as a testament to resilience, innovation and family-led dedication to the St. Louis region. Established in 1920 by Fred Luth and carried forward through four generations of the Luth family, the company has evolved to become an industry leader widely recognized as the area experts in underground pipe construction.

Fred Luth's two sons, Fred and Louis, joined the business after returning from service following World War II. The third generation, Bill Luth and his brother Bob, joined the family firm during the 1970s and carried its legacy well into the 21st century. Under the current leadership of Bill's son, Mike Luth, the company continues to exemplify the commitment to excellence instilled by its founder.

The firm specializes in both open cut and trenchless installations of sanitary sewers, storm sewers, force mains and water lines, alongside site development and other related services.

However, the company's mission transcends the provision of services: It is dedicated to achieving and maintaining excellence through quality and integrity. Fred M. Luth & Sons, Inc.'s extensive expertise and capabilities have grown as a result of this straightforward pursuit.

SEWER

Fred M. Luth & Sons, Inc. is probably best known for its work on sanitary and

storm sewer installations. It offers rapid, safe and precise services for projects of any scale - from new developments to complex municipal undertakings. Specializing in installations up to 50 feet deep and 12 feet in diameter, the company's expertise covers gravity sewer, force mains, pump stations, box culverts and advanced stormwater systems.

WATER

With more than a century of experience in water main and service line installation, Fred M. Luth & Sons, Inc. supports projects of all types and sizes, including new transmission mains, distribution replacements and emergency repairs. The company's experience working with area water suppliers and municipalities combined with its proficiency in system improvements and construction ensure timely, high-quality project completion.

SITE PREP

The expertise of the team at Fred M. Luth & Sons, Inc. extends beyond pipe to include comprehensive site preparation. Its experienced managers and skilled field crews leverage extensive equipment resources to successfully execute projects with demanding specifications and timelines. In addition to underground utility installation, the company performs site grading, deep and rock excavation, site modeling, soil remediation, special waste disposal and slope stabilization.

TRENCHLESS

The company's implementation of traditional and innovative trenchless technologies enables efficient and low-impact pipeline construction and includes directional drilling, guided auger boring/microtunneling, sliplining, cured-in-place lateral lining and pipe bursting. Also specializing in deep shaft excavation, Fred M. Luth & Sons, Inc. pairs expertise and experience with advanced equipment for seamless trenchless solutions.

OTHER SERVICES

Being underground pipe experts has honed the company's skills in other related construction as well. Beyond its core offerings, the company provides a spectrum of related services such as pavement and slab replacement, channel construction, mass excavation and site restoration. It is versatile and ready to support clients' completed operations through emergency response and BMP/stormwater systems maintenance.

Looking to the future, Fred M. Luth & Sons, Inc. remains steadfast in its dedication to the principles of quality and integrity that have guided the company for the past 100-plus years. The firm stands ready to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow, continuing the legacy of building communities through resilient and innovative infrastructure solutions.



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S. M. Wilson: More Than 100 Years of Putting People First

Founded in 1921, S. M. Wilson is dedicated to going Beyond the Build by putting people first. With offices in St. Louis, Mo. and Edwardsville, Ill., the 100 percent employee-owned company has a reputation for providing services such as pre-construction, construction management and general contracting while remaining committed to adding significant value and building strong client relationships.

Interim President and Chief HR Officer Rebecca Cornatzer says that for 100-plus years, S. M. Wilson has been exceeding its clients' expectations with team members who go above and beyond to provide an amazing client experience on every project. S. M. Wilson's people built the reputation the company strives to maintain and strengthen year after year. The firm's people, she adds, build communities.

As one of the region's leading Pre-K through 12th grade construction management companies, S. M. Wilson has worked in more than 65 schools in Illinois

and Missouri, totaling more than \$2 billion in educational expertise. Partnering with more than 45 school districts, S. M. Wilson has worked with Ladue School District, Francis Howell School District, Pattonville School District, Edwardsville Community Unit School District #7 and Alton Community Unit School District #3.

Ranked #20 in the Top 100 PK-12 Education Construction Firms nationwide in the Giant 400 Rankings by *Building Design + Construction*, S. M. Wilson prides itself on being a trusted partner who works collaboratively with its clients.

Current PK-12 and higher education projects include the \$64.5 million Columbia Public Schools 2022 bond issue, the \$72 million Edwardsville Community Unit School District #7 Lincoln Middle School Renovation and Rebuild, the \$164 million Francis Howell North High School, the \$45 million Jefferson City School District 2024 bond issue, and the \$130 million St. Louis Community College Meramec Campus Modernization.

S. M. Wilson also has a strong

healthcare, commercial, municipal, industrial and retail portfolio. The company has been working with Target for more than 30 years and partners with other retailers such as Ikea, Von Maur and Dry Goods. Significant projects include IKEA, Shriners Hospital, City Foundry, the City of Edwardsville's R. P. Lumber Center in Edwardsville, the City of Highland Public Safety Center and two COCA projects.

In 2019, S. M. Wilson created SKILLED®, a construction career education program. The mission of SKILLED is to "inspire the future of construction." Since its inception, the program has reached more than 13,000 students involved in 70 unique STEAM events with 50-plus Wilson team members serving as mentors. In addition to the multiple education programs offered through SKILLED, team members have logged more than 1,800 hours of training, leadership development and coaching. There has also been an investment of \$93,000 in tuition reimbursement, 529 Savings programs and student loans and annual SKILLED awards.

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Principles, Passion Power Emery Sapp's Firm Through Generations

One employee, one piece of equipment.

When Billy Sapp launched what he hoped would be a turnkey construction solution for developers, he didn't have much more than a vision. But that would prove to be more than enough for what would become a billion-dollar enterprise building infrastructure across the nation.

Naming the company Emery Sapp & Sons after their father, Billy and his brother started work in 1972 with grading for utilities, followed by paving - all serving the private development firms they knew from their family business growing up. The company grew slowly in the private sector until 1993, when a merger added bridge construction to the core disciplines and allowed ESS to expand its capabilities to serve departments of transportation.

That major milestone not only accelerated growth, but it also spurred the two owners to consider what the ownership succession plan would be - a process that would eventually lead to the formation of an Employee

Stock Ownership Plan in 1999. Billy also chose his son, Shawn Sapp, to join the management team to help lead the company into the new millennium (and who still serves as an executive vice president today).

The strong foundation laid in those first couple of decades - plus choosing the best people along the way - are the reasons for the success the company has achieved over the past 50 years, said Tim Paulson, who has served as co-CEO since 2019.

"The secret sauce of our business is attracting and developing the right people," Paulson said, "because any business with the right amount of talent can develop the right processes to profit from."

Paulson was appointed to the board of directors in 2016 as part of the third generation of the management team. Together with fellow co-CEO Robert Gillis, PE, he now leads the firm to unprecedented success year after year. Paulson acknowledges that some of Billy Sapp's initial founding philosophies still

lie at the heart of ESS.

"Billy always said, 'Focus on the speed of construction to our clients' benefit.' That DNA is still in our organization. We stay focused on performance, and we're always talking about how we can build faster, build better."

In fact, that mindset was there at the beginning, when Billy Sapp boasted about owning the first hydraulic excavator in the region in the early '70s and is still there today with the firm's continued investment in innovative new technologies, including stringless paving technology and autonomous equipment on the jobsite.

The incredible growth of the ESOP - with a five-year annual growth rate percentage of 27 percent - is simply the cherry on top of a well-built construction success story.

"Great businesses with great processes and great results make great ESOPs, not the other way around," Paulson said. "The secret sauce we have in place has made our ESOP so successful, and that ownership mentality has continued to drive that passion."

Voting is not only a right and a privilege, but a responsibility.

IT'S AN ELECTION YEAR

PARTICIPATE

AND LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!



"We do not have government by the majority. We have government by the majority who participate."

- Thomas Jefferson

Missouri voters will have the opportunity to vote in the August 6 Primary and again in the November 5 General Election. Most people are focused on the November election because of the Presidential race, but the earlier Primary is meaningful too.

In Missouri politics, the August 6 Primary is significant.

- In a MO primary, you must choose a ballot by party (Democrat, Republican, and Libertarian).
- Primary ballot will have candidates for Missouri Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State and Attorney General as well as down-ballot races.
- It's likely that the race for Missouri's Governor and possibly other races will be decided in the primary; as a red state, the Republican candidate for Governor is expected to easily prevail in the November election.

WE URGE YOU TO VOTE ON AUGUST 6TH BUT YOU MUST BE REGISTERED.

Registration Deadline July 10, 2024

FOUR WAYS TO REGISTER:

1. Online: bit.ly/IWanttoVOTE
2. By Mail: bit.ly/Print-Complete-Mail
(for printable form for completion)
3. In person: bit.ly/LetMeRegisterInPerson
Choose your County to get a location near you
4. Pick up Form at Any DMV office



Register in time for the Missouri Primary and vote in both August and November!



UPCOMING

SOCIAL EVENTS

MAY

1-2

AEC TECHCON

www.agcmo.org/techcon

St. Charles Convention Center

MAY

10

SPORTING CLAYS SUPPORTING PAC

Branson - Walnut Shade

MAY

14

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

St. Louis

MAY

20

GOLF OUTING SUPPORTING PAC

St. Louis - Glen Echo Country Club

JUNE

6

BUILD-A-BRAT PICNIC

St. Louis - Queeny Park

JUNE

20

WOMEN OF STEEL HAPPY HOUR

St. Louis



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Events are added and changed throughout the year. Please use this as a guide. Stay up-to-date by visiting our website calendar (www.agcmo.org or scan QR code) for final details, schedules, and registration. Also, be sure to follow us on social media.

 **Bangert**



The 40-Year History of Bangert, Inc.: Built on the Foundation of Fairness

By KURT BANGERT

Wow, how far things have come! When we started Bangert Computer Systems in the late summer of 1983, we could not fully imagine how far technology has come, nor the ultimate path we would follow.

The company was started by my father, Richard Bangert, an electrical engineer, farmer, teacher and entrepreneur. In so many ways, he was unconventional, but that trait was what led him to earn several patents on high-precision frequency oscillators, pioneering automated electronic component production (robotics) and a whole lot more. Above all else, he was fair, and that is the foundation of our company.

Bootstrap and shoestring are two words that can describe those first years. We were scrappy out of necessity which in turn drove home the value of every single customer we had, another foundational component.

In the early days, we were a computer store, selling now long-forgotten brands and types of equipment. Our next step was that we developed a specialized software system for fuel and oil distributors that then led to specific systems for convenience stores. Along the way, some of those customers also owned construction companies, and meeting that need is what began our ultimate transition to being 100 percent dedicated to serving the construction industry.

In 1988 we became a dealer for Timberline Software, and by 1991 we were its top-performing reseller. We remain one of the leading partners in what is now Sage Software. Thirty-six years on, we are in the third major technology-driven change. Starting with DOS in 1988, moving to the Windows/PC environment in 1993, to now the cloud-native Sage Intacct Construction ERP, and soon into the era of AI. All changes that were barely imaginable 40 years ago, when we were writing software that could run on 64k of RAM and 128k floppy disks.

But the real story of Bangert, Inc. is its people. Our longevity has been powered by all the people who have contributed to it over the years. Without them, we would have never been able to get this far nor realize our objectives and vision. Indescribable amounts of hard work have been contributed by our staff over all these years to the service of our customers. We have collectively gained a tremendous amount of knowledge and skill over that time, informing us of the best ways to help our customers get the most out of the software investments they make. There are far too many stories of dedication than will fit in this article. However, I cannot fully express the depths of my gratitude to the people who have shaped this company.

Of course, no history can be complete

without mentioning all of the great customers we have had the honor of working with. We have worked with some of the oldest, most established, and have seen startups grow to incredible success. In every case, I like to think we've played some small part in helping them achieve the goals they have for themselves. All these interactions have only increased the deep respect we have for the construction industry.

In so many ways, where we are today in 2024 is right back at our roots. We continue as a family-owned and operated business with the third generation deeply involved and excited to carry on my father's legacy. We have also returned to stating one price for everything a customer needs with no variables, just like we did so many years ago.

Our future is bright with exciting new technologies coming to market, and with one of the best teams we have ever had, and a culture that would have made my father proud. I have to give a huge "Thank You" to all the people who have dedicated themselves to the company over the years and all the customers who have placed their trust with us.

Who knows what the next 40 years will bring, but we certainly look forward to it.

Five Generations of Success and Counting: R.F. Meeh Company

In 1910, long before air conditioning and central heating systems were prevalent, Robert Fredrick Meeh opened his St. Louis shop, specializing in architectural sheet metal and gutters. R.F.'s son - and his son - at one time worked together, representing the first three generations of a company known for putting its people and its customers first.

Early photos of the R.F. Meeh Company founder show its founder with his mule and buggy. The company survived the Great Depression.

As the industry evolved, so did R.F. Meeh. In the 1950s, as heating and cooling systems became popular, Robert Fredrick II was joined by Robert Joseph, his son, who was returning from serving in the Korean War (second and third generations). In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Robert Joseph was joined by his sons, Bob and Bill Meeh. Their vivid memories as young workers include the memory of their overalls covered in black soot from tearing out coal furnaces and converting them to gas furnaces. The two

would briefly leave to pursue their goals - Bill at engineering school, Bob in baseball - before they returned to the family business.

The founder's son retired in the late 1970s and Bob Meeh, Sr. in 1992.

In 2019, Robert Fredrick's great-great grandson, Rob, assumed the role of company president. Rob and Bill (the latter of whom serves as VP) lead the firm whose early roots are still visible on the walls of the Sheet Metal Workers Local Union No. 36 on Chouteau Avenue. These walls are covered with wallpaper that replicates an original hand ledger scrawled by Rob's great-grandmother, Mary.

Bill Meeh says it's no surprise that R.F. Meeh and its third-generation sister firm, MJ Products, have remained successful. The biggest reason for their success? The longevity of their people. Bill says whereas larger companies may hire seasonally in excess and then lay off those they no longer need, R.F. Meeh's longstanding philosophy has been to "always maintain two guys short" to keep everyone employed.

Proof in point, the company's current shop foreman, Matt Williams, has worked for three generations of Meehs. Rob Meeh adds, "Without the great commitment of our current and former staff, R.F. Meeh wouldn't be as successful as we are today."

Instilling a genuine work ethic in their kids and staff is a thread that has also woven the company culture into what it is today. Bill's grandfather - the company's second-generation owner - told him that if he showed up 15 minutes early to a job, he was really 15 minutes late.

This hard work ethic that has shown itself in every generation of leadership over the past 114 years.

Today, R.F. Meeh Company's work is seen on many project sites around St. Louis, including at Washington University School of Medicine and at the just-completed Chicken N Pickle restaurant in St. Charles, Mo. and various retail and educational facilities.

R.F. Meeh is the ASA-Midwest Council's 2022 MEP Contractor of the Year and the AGCMO's 2023 HVAC Specialty Contractor of the Year.



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Korte & Luitjohan Contractors, Inc.: **Professionalism, Integrity, Honesty, Creativity**

Korte & Luitjohan Contractors, Inc., established in 1958, is a family-owned, full-service general contractor and construction management firm serving Southern Illinois and the Greater St. Louis area. Like many great American entrepreneurial success stories, K & L's journey began with a small loan and a dream.

With \$500 borrowed from his father-in-law to buy a rubber-tired trencher and a backhoe, Cyril B. "Pete" Korte began installing gas services for Illinois Power in the City of Highland, Ill. A year later, Pete's brother-in-law, Joe Luitjohan, joined him in the business. For 23 years, the company grew as a respected underground utility contractor.

In 1981, Pete bought Joe's interest in the company and soon K & L began working in the heavy construction market. Korte & Luitjohan Contractors, Inc. steadily expanded its scope in three major construction markets - building, heavy and utility.

Since 1984, K & L's portfolio has included water and wastewater treatment facilities; county, state and federal institutional facilities; production and warehouse facilities; restaurants; schools and recreational facilities; museums and historic sites; financial institutions; medical offices, clinics and hospitals; office buildings and corporate headquarters; and worship facilities.

During a celebration in 2018 marking the company's 60th anniversary, Pete Korte announced his retirement as president, turning the reins over to his son, Gregg. Pete retained the title of chairman of the board until his passing in September 2023.

Now with more than 65 years of experience and a broad range of construction knowledge and expertise among its staff, K & L produces first class projects for a variety of clientele in the commercial, institutional and industrial markets. With its ability to self-perform carpentry, concrete work, piping and excavating, Korte & Luitjohan Contractors,

Inc. maintains a high degree of control over the entire building process for a very competitive price.

"Our mission is to provide our customers the highest level of quality construction at fair and market-competitive prices," said Gregg Korte. "Fostering a work environment of professionalism, integrity, honesty and creativity is equally important."

A survey of K & L's work in the past 10 years demonstrates the company's ability to easily transition from one type of project to another. Highlights have included construction of the Belleville Water Reclamation Plant (2014), 11 South Professional Building in Columbia, Ill. (2017), Collinsville Water Treatment Plant (2019) and Immaculate Conception Catholic Education and Activities Center in Columbia, Ill. (2019); expansions of the Clinton County Rural Health Clinic in Breese, Ill. (2020) and Crown Linen of Columbia, Ill. (2023); and renovations to the Illinois Supreme Court building in Springfield, Ill. (2014), Washington County Courthouse in Nashville, Ill. (2016) and Daphne Sumner History Discovery Center in Belleville, Ill. (2024).



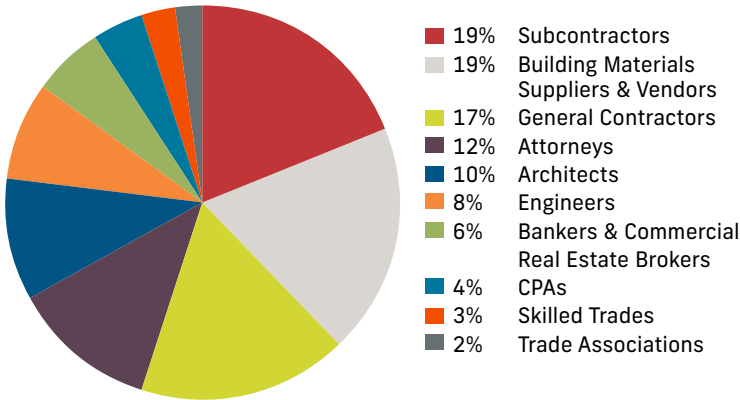
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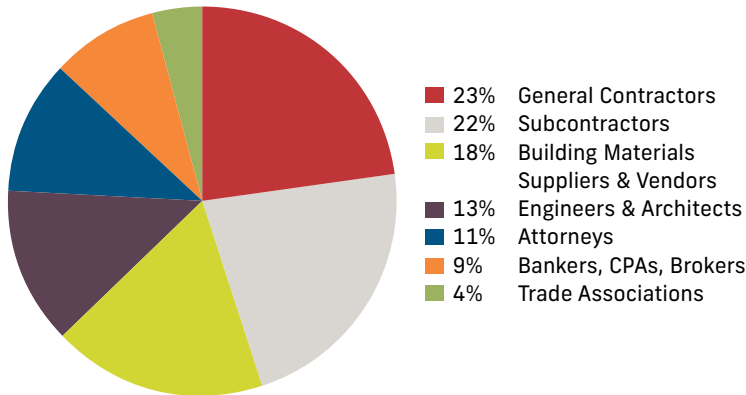
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BEX Construction Services: Family Roots Propel Today's Success

BEX Construction Services President Randy Bueckendorf's grandfather Joe Matthews returned from World War II, acquired a pickup truck and began building houses in the 1950s.

Ten years later, Matthews had 50 workers pouring foundations and building houses for him.

Randy's father and mother married right out of high school and his father, Wayne Bueckendorf, went to work as a carpenter for his father-in-law at Matthews Construction. Nearly a decade later, Randy's father launched a small home remodeling company, Bueckendorf Construction.

Fast forward a generation. Randy Bueckendorf, faced with the choice of playing soccer for Saint Louis University or enrolling in pre-med at Washington University in St. Louis, chose to attend SLU.

Life, however - including a wife and a daughter on the way - changed Randy's course. He went to work for his grandfather as a carpenter and filled in for

his father on rain days. After spending 10 years as a carpenter, Randy's path crossed with Bob Brinkmann. That connection led to 20 years working for Brinkmann Constructors, building shopping centers and office buildings across the country.

At age 48, Randy went into a partnership with his now former brother-in-law. After seven years, Randy left his brother-in-law to start BEX, as sole owner, on June 1, 2014. He lured his son, Collin, to join him. The name BEX was the result of shortening Bueckendorf and Bueckendorf. It just made sense.

His son, Collin, ultimately left BEX after two years to pursue a career in criminal justice, his passion. Bueckendorf is currently talking with other family members about considering roles in the future operation of his firm.

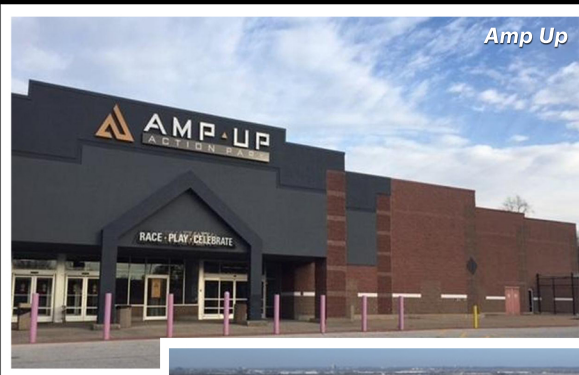
The life-size bear statue now guarding BEX's new headquarters at 12173 Prichard Farm Road in Maryland Heights, Mo. embodies the firm's - and Randy's - philosophy of "go big or go home." To that end, BEX's track record over the past 10

years is an impressive one. Since then, its staff has grown from 3 to 22, its volume from \$3 million to \$100 million (2022) and its deliverables from office buildings to restaurants, churches, schools, car dealerships and tilt-up warehouses, with an eye on the assisted living and self-storage sectors.

BEX's service territory is generally within 200 miles of the Gateway Arch. "It's important for us to make good on the promise that our workers can return home to their families at the end of the day and not have to travel," he says. "It's a great recruitment tool, too, ensuring that we're attracting the best and brightest and keeping them."

BEX's secret sauce and Randy's staunch commitment is to people first. "Kudos to Bob Brinkmann for instilling a good work ethic and providing a culture of working hard. But at BEX we work hard until 5 p.m. and then go home and don't take work with us," Bueckendorf says. "Our team knows that a strong work ethic is girded with support for our families and how important that truly is in the big picture of our success."

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Lowry Electric Company: 100-Year History Based Upon Honesty, Transparency


Lowry was founded in 1921 by Wendell Lowry. Based out of Sauget, Ill., Lowry started as a residential contractor but quickly expanded into the industrial electrical sector after landing work at the Monsanto Plant in Sauget. Lowry expanded its industrial and commercial electrical capabilities in the 1930s by working for clients such as Mobil Oil, Phillips Pipeline, Cerro Copper, Amax Zinc, Ober Nester Glass, Granite City Steel, Sterling Steel and Moss Tie.

In 1961, Wendell Lowry passed away and Lowry was sold to John Freidli, who was an employee of Lowry for 25 years. Lowry changed hands again in 1975 when Oliver Hartman, a Lowry project manager, purchased it from John Freidli. In 1987, Hartman sold the company to his son, Robert.

In 1999, Wegman Electric Company purchased Lowry because of the similarities in the companies and to gain market share further south in Madison County and St. Clair County, Ill. Wegman hired Gary Bland in 1999 to manage Lowry's operations. Wegman's market was primarily in Alton and Wood River, in both the commercial and industrial electrical sectors. The purchase allowed the companies to share resources and expertise and to leverage those assets to expand operations in their respective geographic markets.

In 2018, Wegman Electric Company and Lowry Electric Company were both acquired by GRP Mechanical Company, Inc. and both companies merged with GRP; the combined company merged as GRP|WEGMAN Company. Lowry Electric Company still operates under its name

because of the incredible reputation it has built in the St. Louis metropolitan area, but it is part of the GRP|WEGMAN family - giving it expanded support and resources to better serve its customers. The present-day operations of Lowry Electric Company are led by Bland, Ammann and Thomas DeClue III. Lowry has had strong growth and incredible success over the past 20 years, serving customers in medical, manufacturing, education, distribution, retail, chemical and municipal markets with most of these markets continuing to have strong demand for electrical services. The firm also has vast knowledge in solar installations and sees this as a major area for growth in the short and long term. Regardless of its growth or success, Lowry holds to its core values of honesty, transparency, accuracy, quality, creativity, efficiency and professionalism in everything it touches.



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GRP|WEGMAN: 72 Years of Success from Christian Values, Humble Roots

GRP|WEGMAN Company started as two separate companies, GRP Mechanical Company, Inc. and Wegman Electric Company. GRP was founded in 1952 in East Alton, Ill. as General Refrigeration and Plumbing by Thomas DeClue, Sr. One of the original service tickets from 1955 shows three hours of work to replace a motor in a frozen food case with the customer's provided motor for a grand total of \$13.50. In the 1970s, Thomas DeClue, Jr. joined GRP after graduating as a mechanical engineer from Rolla, Mo. Under his leadership, GRP's headquarters moved to Bethalto, Ill. where he started an industrial piping division; he changed the name of the company to GRP Mechanical Company, Inc. to better reflect the work it performed. In the early 2000s, Thomas DeClue III (T3) became president of GRP and helped expand into more industrial markets, HVAC service and design-build for the education and municipal markets.

In 2018, GRP purchased Wegman Electric Company. Wegman was founded in 1938 by Chauncy Wegman as an electrical contracting firm serving

commercial and industrial clients in the Alton and Wood River, Ill. His sons, Robert and Donald, assumed management of the company after Chauncy's retirement. In 1987 the sons formed an Employee Stock Ownership Plan and sold Wegman to the ESOP, which is when Terry Buhs became president. During Buhs' time as president, the company expanded its electrical services for both commercial and industrial customers, its largest customer Phillips 66 refinery in Roxana, Ill. In 2020, Wegman merged with GRP and the combined company emerged as GRP|WEGMAN Company.

Present-day operations of GRP|WEGMAN Company are led by Thomas DeClue III as CEO and Christopher Ammann as president, along with an incredibly talented group of division managers. The secret to GRP|WEGMAN's success is in the employees it hires and the culture that has developed over the past 20 years. One of the most defining characteristics of its culture is the autonomy of its diverse divisions, made up of: HVAC service; design-build in education, government

and nonprofits; electrical service; plant maintenance; mechanical service; fabrication; electrical construction; and renewable energy. Corporate leadership sets the strategic plan of the firm and manages to that plan, but division leaders have full responsibility for their own division and have the primary decision-making roles in its operation...truly a model of trust. Leadership of the company also relies heavily on leaders' Christian faith to guide the business. Customers see evidence of this in each employee's dedication to honesty, transparency, accuracy, quality, creativity, efficiency and professionalism. GRP|WEGMAN has grown extensively and plans to diversify the company in other areas of the U.S. by using its corporate culture to attract high-performing employees in its core business units, and by leveraging the vast knowledge base within the employees as a part of the already successful business units of the company. There is currently no top-line sales number to measure the success of the growth initiative; rather, success will be measured by the happiness of its customers, employees, third-party partners and shareholders.

Drilling Service Co.: Murphy Brothers Building the Future

The story of the founding of Drilling Service Company mirrors its 69-year history. It's first and foremost about people, while finding the very best way to do the work and build relationships.

In the early 1950s, Cliff Murphy had managed operations for several established construction companies. He believed he could do things better. In

1955, he formed Drilling Service Co. As president, Cliff was a stickler for staying abreast of the latest in underground technology and in proactively pursuing customer relationships. He was later joined by his brother, Marshall.

Cliff and Marshall grew up in a working-class family and had never been exposed to networking. Cliff learned to golf. He

and Marshall began attending industry association events. Soon the St. Louis construction industry knew the Murphy brothers and their solid work ethic.

Marshall's three sons - Mark, Bruce and Jeffrey - began working at Drilling Service as teenagers. In 1979, Cliff moved most of the company's operations to Tennessee for a nuclear power plant project. He sold five rigs and the Drilling Service Co. name to Marshall, who continued operating in St. Louis. Marshall's sons postponed further schooling in order to help their father with the company's transition. Mark joined Marshall in 1979 and his brothers, Bruce and Jeffrey, came on board soon after.

Mark returned to college a decade after joining Drilling Service, earning his bachelor's degree in business administration before becoming president upon Marshall's death in 1993. Executive Vice President Jeffrey earned a BSBA degree from the University of Missouri in 2010 and an MBA from Washington University in 2012. Bruce trained as an operating engineer.

Today, as Drilling Service's vice president, Bruce directs the company's yard, shop and warehouse operations.

The Murphy brothers have continued to build the company's management team for the future.

Prior to joining Drilling Service in 2002, Chuck Skouby, a graduate-degreed professional engineer, performed site investigations and helped design foundation solutions for engineering firms. Project Manager Sean Jackson joined Drilling Service in 2007. As a representative for a national construction supply firm, Jackson developed a knowledge of project managers' needs. He possesses specialized expertise in the planning and safety issues related to site stabilization and foundation/underground construction.

In January, 2015, Drilling Service purchased an equity interest in Taylor Ridge Drilled Foundations of Taylor Ridge, Ill, the latter of which specializes in drilled shaft foundations for communications towers, transmission lines, utility work and bridges.

This acquisition has expanded the market reach of both companies, broadening Drilling Service's joint capabilities and strong customer service. The companies operate autonomously as they work together. Chris Wynn remains as president of Taylor Ridge. Jeffrey Murphy is VP of Taylor Ridge in addition to his role as EVP of Drilling Service.

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Poettker Construction: 44 Years of a Family-First Culture is Secret Sauce

Growing from a small-town commercial contractor into a nationally recognized and award-winning firm, Poettker Construction has always maintained a family-first culture. As a core value, it's the secret sauce that keeps a multi-generational work family together and the company moving forward.

This family-first mentality was instilled early in the company's culture and values by the firm's founder, Charles (Chuck) Poettker, who was adamant that his most important resources were his employees. After 44 years in business, Poettker's biggest success has been its people and the impactful relationships they and the firm have built for decades.

Investing in your employees early on and continuously is key to maintaining a successful multi-generational business. Today, many of Poettker's employees are second and third-generation workers with deep family ties to the company's inception. Those employees have helped solidify a family-first culture by embracing an atmosphere where everyone has the knowledge, training,

coaching and oversight to be aware of their surroundings and look out for one another.

When taking the servant leadership approach of treating employees, clients, business partners and subcontractors as family, it's remarkable what can be accomplished when a company transitions from one generation to the next.

This proved the case for Poettker in 2015 when the family formalized its first and second-generational transition process with CMA and created an enduring strategy roadmap for 2020-2025. One key value from the exercise: the solidarity of the Poettker family will translate into an extended family with employees, business partners and the community.

This extended family has now grown to more than 300 full-time employees across three office locations and a roster of repeat clients who hold the same core values and appreciate building long-term relationships.

The first generation of Poettker family (and non-family) provided the building blocks for a successful business model and instilled the core values of safety, quality,

mutual respect, professionalism, integrity and a dedication to supporting company and individual goals and growth aspirations.

This year, the second generation of family owners and non-family leaders will kick off their strategic planning for 2025-2030 to build upon the firm's ongoing investment in developing quality relationships; enhancing continuing education, hands-on skill training and professional development for staff; implementing new technology to advance knowledge and streamline their approach; expanding into markets to be closer to clients and where their projects are; and investing in the communities where they live and work.

At the end of the day, the key to a successful family-owned business is living by the Golden Rule: building relationships, building trust and treating people as you would want them to treat you. When you take care of your people, clients and business partners the bottom line will take care of itself.

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BSI Constructors: Building St. Louis Landmarks for More Than 50 Years

Just two weeks before Christmas in 1972, Lorenz (Lorry) Bannes and Joseph (Joe) Shaughnessy found themselves suddenly, although voluntarily, unemployed. They had served as president and vice president, respectively, for the 55-year-old, St. Louis-based Gamble Construction Company. Lorry and Joe had become uncomfortable with the direction of the firm after it had been sold to outside investors a few years earlier. If they were going to do things “their way,” it would have to be at a new company. They incorporated as Bannes-Shaughnessy, Inc. on December 18, 1972. Unlike many startups, they established a policy that they would not grow at the expense of their former employer and co-workers. Although not subject to a non-compete agreement, and even at the expense of their new venture’s growth in the early years, they vowed to build their company without soliciting past clients nor pursuing personnel from their prior employer.

The first ownership transition at Bannes-Shaughnessy, Inc. occurred in early 1989. After 16 years of steady but controlled growth, Lorry Bannes had decided to leave the company and pursue other interests.* Through execution of a previously established buy-sell agreement, Joe Shaughnessy became the sole owner and renamed the company BSI Constructors. Also in 1989, two of Joe Shaughnessy’s sons joined BSI – Paul in March and Jim in May. Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s they continued to build a reputation for tackling some of the most unique and complex projects in the region.

The year 2000 saw the beginning of a management transition when Joe Shaughnessy handed over the CEO role to Paul Shaughnessy. Not long after, Jim Shaughnessy became EVP. In 2005, the company’s second ownership transition began with Paul and Jim taking the first steps to buy out Joe as well as other family members, with the final purchase of remaining shares occurring in 2020. This set the stage for BSI’s third ownership transition which began in 2021 when, for the first time in company history, non-family members were offered the opportunity to buy stock. This first group of new shareholders consisted of executive committee members Tim Hudwalker, Steve Schrage, Paul Sharamitaro and Brian Bell. Since then, BSI has added nine more shareholders including third-generation family members who work at the company.

While BSI manages a very diverse

mix of institutional and commercial projects throughout the St. Louis area, it is often most recognized for its many area landmark cultural projects and clients such as the Pulitzer Building, Central Library, Soldiers Memorial, Citygarden, Forest Park Forever, the Missouri History Museum and Powell Hall (underway).

Achieving excellence on this type of work demands an ingrained culture

of quality and a laser-like focus on what’s important, while minimizing the distractions of what’s not. BSI has never had any revenue goals or five-year plans. It has always just been about building great projects for great clients.

**Note: After an impressive “Post-BSI” career of consulting, teaching, mentoring and volunteering (and touching many lives along the way), BSI co-founder Lorry Bannes passed away earlier this year.*



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Southern Illinois Builders Association: 79 Years of Support

In 1945, 10 contractors from two counties decided to form an association to improve industry conditions and stimulate development in Southern Illinois.

Seventy-nine years later, that organization - Southern Illinois Builders Association - is 450-plus members strong and thriving, promoting the growth and well-being of the 39-county territory it serves. Advocacy, scholarships, networking and promoting collaboration between organized labor, management and builders are but some of the successes for which SIBA is known and respected.

Through the decades, SIBA has enjoyed a continual expansion of services, programs and facilities. Through the hard work of members, staff and others, SIBA has noticeably broadened its scope of activities directed toward the betterment of the construction industry and the communities in which it builds.

“The region’s growth and economic development of the past several years would not have happened without the

results-oriented committee work of many SIBA builder-members,” said Donna Richter, chief executive officer. “But of course, there’s much yet to accomplish before we celebrate our 100th year.”

The Southern Builders Association is headquartered in O’Fallon, Ill., with a digital plan room in O’Fallon and a physical plan room in Marion, Ill.

SIBA administers the Southern Illinois Construction Advancement Program (SICAP). The organization is a unifying force within the Southern Illinois construction industry, developing programs aimed at opportunities to improve all aspects of the industry. Among SICAP’s goals are promoting safety and accident prevention, supporting educational seminars, training programs and economic development programs and promoting affirmative action, equal employment opportunities and diversity efforts.

Chief executive officers who have led SIBA through the years include Harold

Gangnath, Wayne Barber, Leonard Boyer, Tim Garvey and current CEO Donna Richter.

Current SIBA officers are President Jeff Limbaugh (Limbaugh Construction Co., Inc.), First Vice President Scott Plocher (Plocher Construction Co., Inc.), Second Vice President Rich Boyer (Boyer Fire Protection) and Secretary/Treasurer Matt Fricke (Warning Lites of Southern Illinois).

Past presidents of SIBA are: Howard H. Hall, John A. Barnes, Charles A. Rook, John J. Keeley, Joseph W. Ganschinetz, William F. Keeley, Freeman M. Wolfe, Newton S. Gorman, J.J. Altman, Gene H. Sternberg, Richard E. Rook, Clyde E. Nelson, Fred A. Wuellner, Michael P. Keeley Jr., John R. Bauer, Leo Wolf, Alois Luhr, Thomas H. Reese Jr., Howard H. Hall Jr., Ralph Korte, Byron Farrell, Jack Haydon, Emil Crook, Monty Docter, Cyril “Pete” Korte, Jim Peters, Bruce Holland, Glenn Lindsay, Sam Hutchinson, William Orrill, Michael Luhr, Ken Killian, Eugene Keeley, Robert Wolf, Scott Boeker, Alan Owen, Robert Germann, Rod Schimpf, Brad Bickhaus, Bill Tindall, Jr., Steve Ashe, Kent Kampwerth and Hank Rohwedder.



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Mississippi Valley Equipment Company: Upholding Tradition, Core Values and a Commitment to Its Employees

In an era marked by rapid changes and fierce competition, the longevity of family-owned businesses is a testament to resilience, adaptability and a steadfast commitment to its employees and the companies' core values. Among these enduring companies stands Mississippi Valley Equipment Company, a leader in the pile driving and foundation industry for nearly a century.

Founded in 1933 by Roy Whisler, Sr., the business began as a small company focused on renting and selling sheet piling. Roy Whisler, Jr. joined the company in 1966 and shortly after brought the actual pile driving equipment into the mix. The company then was able to rent the piling and facilitate the equipment for driving the pile all at the same time. From there on out, Mississippi Valley Equipment Company has served as a premier one-stop shop for contractors servicing the pile driving and foundation industry. Most recently through the guidance of Mike Whisler, third generation, MVE has expanded its enterprise and product lines, weathering economic downturns and

evolving market landscapes.

Central to the success of Mississippi Valley Equipment Company is an unwavering commitment to fostering a positive work culture that prioritizes employee well-being and development. Unlike many corporations driven solely by profit margins, MVE's leadership team understands that its greatest asset lies in its workforce. As such, it has cultivated an environment where employees are not just cogs in a machine but integral members of a supportive community.

At the heart of this culture is a deep-seated respect for each individual's contributions and aspirations. From the factory floor to the front office, every employee is valued and empowered to reach his or her full potential. Regular training programs, mentorship opportunities and educational assistance initiatives ensure that employees have the tools and resources they need to succeed, both personally and professionally.

Furthermore, MVE recognizes the importance of maintaining a safe work environment along with a healthy

work-life balance. Flexible scheduling options, remote work opportunities and comprehensive safety programs are just a few of the initiatives implemented to support employees in achieving harmony between their professional and personal lives while giving them a safe place to work and grow. By prioritizing the holistic well-being of its workforce, MVE has cultivated a loyal and motivated team that consistently goes above and beyond to achieve excellence.

The story of Mississippi Valley Equipment Company exemplifies how a steadfast dedication to core values can transcend generations and propel a company to greatness. By placing employees at the forefront and nurturing a culture of support, development and team engagement, MVE has not only stood the test of time but has set a standard of excellence for businesses around the world. As it continues to write the next chapter of its storied legacy, one thing remains certain: MVE and its entire team will continue to thrive, guided by the timeless principles that have defined it for nearly a century.

Succession Planning in Construction: Money & Time Drive Your Exit Strategy



BROWN



MAXWELL-COOK

Construction owners are looking hard at their exit strategy as they eye retirement and future goals. But succession planning can pose challenges; your timeframe and liquidity will drive key decisions. Here's how to prepare your business for the transition.

When would you like to exit the business? If you're five to 10 years out, you have many options on the table, from selling to a third party or private equity group or transferring to family or employees through an employee stock ownership plan, also known as an ESOP. If you're two or fewer years out, the options shrink and trade-offs escalate.

1. Attract, develop and retain great talent

Already have great talent? Wonderful. Your people are an invaluable asset. Have you addressed the last mile of skill development to ensure they're ready to take ownership of client relationships and the business's future strategy?

Are you paying that great talent competitively? Many

owners offer a base salary plus annual bonus. This means you're paying your people for short-term performance. Owners considering their exit strategy need to retain the best talent and secure their commitment for the future. Tie bonuses to a longer-term vision such as a five-year, cumulative bonus for staff who have invested in making the company more profitable.

2. Strengthen the balance sheet

Lofty succession goals built on a subpar balance sheet won't work. Build in room for error and the unexpected rough patch so your cash position, working capital and equity can advance your retirement and exit planning goals.

3. Set realistic expectations

Seek an objective evaluation of what the business is worth and a good understanding of the transactions common in your niche. General contracting doesn't see many third-party sales; they're more likely to sell for book value or through an ESOP. Others

working in specialty trades may very well sell in a multi-EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization) scenario. Understand when an ESOP works and when it doesn't, and what transactions look like for similar companies in your space - and what drives values up.

4. Customize your succession plan

A succession plan and exit strategy can be as distinct as the construction business and its owner - as long as they're grounded in reality.

Which brings us back to timing. The longer your window, the more opportunities you have to define priorities, strengthen the business, grow your wealth and shape your exit strategy to fit your goals.

Shane Brown and Lonnie Maxwell-Cook are partners in the business advisory firm, Plante Moran.

BUSINESS
BY SHANE BROWN AND
LONNIE MAXWELL-COOK



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MULTI-GENERATIONS
BY BRANDIE WEIKLE

Multigenerational Construction Firms' Complexity is Biggest Asset

Today's construction workforce is more complex than ever. For the first time in history, it consists of employees from four distinct age groups: Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials and Generation Z. With these groups, it's possible to have a more than 50-year age gap between employees.

The construction industry - like many other industries - is no stranger to this multigenerational workforce. It's no surprise these diverse groups hold varying values, work styles and communication preferences, which can create both challenges and opportunities for employers. Managing a multigenerational workforce can prove difficult for even the most seasoned leaders.

According to the 2020 Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends, only 6 percent of survey respondents strongly agreed that their leaders are equipped to lead such a workforce effectively. The other 94 percent said they must quickly adapt to not only accommodate but lead and learn from the multiple generations present within organizations today.

Within the construction industry, many employees are often outside of a traditional office environment - whether at jobsites or other project locations - making it even more difficult to connect and engage with them. While it may be a bigger challenge, it's possible to unlock the industry's full potential to build a successful construction workforce.

Because different ages and phases of life bring about different goals, it's important to maintain regular check-ins with employees. Team members should be asked to define their short and long-term goals during the annual review process. Instead of using these goals as benchmarks to

measure against, go above the conventional review process and determine how the company can help make those goals happen - in or outside the organization. Whether it's a dream to retire soon, expand responsibilities or grow toward a new role, construction industry employers need to support each team member's dream and tailor growth plans and company strategy to better assist and support every person's future.

Although culture has become a buzzword over the past decade, it's a main driver of overall growth and success.

A company's culture drives teams forward or backward. Leaders should create a culture that values diversity, inclusivity and collaboration, regardless of age. By fostering

an inclusive environment, employees feel empowered to bring their unique perspectives, experiences and ideas to the table, and collaborate effectively with colleagues. This often unlocks comprehensive and innovative solutions and creates stronger relationships and increased productivity across the organization.

If society has learned anything over the last few years, it's that flexibility is key. The organizations that remain flexible are those that flourish, regardless of how many generations are represented on the team roster.

Brandie Weikle is a Canadian journalist specializing in the multigenerational fabric of construction companies.

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From Refrigeration Repair to Process and Industrial: Haberberger Celebrates 76 Years

In 1948, Frank Haberberger started a refrigeration repair business in the basement of his home in Affton, Mo. In its beginning, the company was known for heating and cooling repair for mom and pop businesses such as corner grocery stores, butcher shops, confectionary stores and bakeries.

While Haberberger Inc. has grown exponentially since then, the company still calls South (St. Louis) County home, celebrating four generations of Haberberger ownership and success.

Frank's son, Joe F., joined the company after completing service in the Marines in the late 1950s. Around 1960, Haberberger Inc. became signatory with US Local 562 and as commercial heating and cooling systems gained popularity, the mechanical contractor expanded its client list to include schools, churches and commercial buildings. The company's first pipefitter was Ervie Konert, Frank's brother-in-

law. Father and son wound up working alongside each other until 1973, when Frank retired.

During the early 1970s, Joe F. brought on John Lissant as partner. Lissant is credited for moving the firm to embrace industrial process piping for industrial power and water plants, food/beverage, pharmaceuticals and in later years, semiconductor plants.

In 1980, third-generation ownership emerged. Steve Haberberger Sr., a construction pipefitter and father of current President and CEO Steve Jr., joined the business along with his two brothers, Mark (a service pipefitter) and Neil (a project manager and estimator). The three sons built the firm's original fabrication shop in 1993. All three sons and their dad worked side by side until 1997 when their father retired. Mark's son, Joe R., is the company's service manager today.

And in 2011, Haberberger began self-performing sheet metal projects in alliance with SMART Local 36, the Sheet Metal Workers Union. In 2016, the company launched a full-service commercial plumbing division.

In 2021, Steve Jr. was named president and CEO and serves in that capacity today. He says the company's motto, "Performance on time, every time," remains as true as it ever was. Steve Jr., his brother Ben and Mark's sons Joe and Jeff all work together. Mark's other son, Jeff, currently leads sheet metal operations while Ben is an estimator and project manager in the plumbing department. Neil's son, Sam, joined in the late 2010s as a project engineer/estimator.

Haberberger Inc. still calls South County home. With more than 200 employees and a commitment to follow through with excellence on every project it begins, Steve Jr. says the firm is poised for continued success in the decades to come.



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