

Lami Grubb Uses SpecLink to Enhance Client Focus

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Robert Grubb
Principal
Lami Grubb Architects, LP



Lami Grubb Architects, L.P., located in Edgewood, Pennsylvania, is one of the top twenty architectural firms in the Pittsburgh area. They have been in business for over 10 years, with the principals, Suzan M. Lami and Robert W. Grubb, each having over 25 years of experience.

Each year Lami Grubb Architects provides service to over 100 clients throughout North America. They provide architectural design services for hundreds of retail shops and restaurants in virtually every major airport and shopping center in the United States and Canada.

However, their practice includes more than retail. They have an established track record of projects for educational institutions in Western Pennsylvania: Carnegie Mellon University, University of Pittsburgh and Duquesne University. In addition, they have designed office buildings and office interiors, and have worked on over a thousand housing units in a mixture of

market rate and "affordable." In its first ten years, LGA has produced over 2000 projects. This year they are on track to do over 300 projects.

The Lami Grubb people who meet with the client are the same people who work on the drawings, and the same ones who visit the sites. Every staff member has a computer at their desk where they work on all aspects of the project: from editing of specifications, to creation of 3-D modeling, to sharing of repetitive details, to virtually instantaneous communication with clients, consultants and officials. At Lami Grubb, they use modern technology to its best advantage.



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BSD CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

LAMI GRUBB ARCHITECTS, LP

The Need: Lami Grubb's embracement of technology means that each architect is responsible for his or her own specification production, including typing. Their previous specification system relied heavily on manual editing using a word processing program – typing and retyping, cutting and pasting. While it was cumbersome for smaller projects, it was even more unwieldy for larger projects. For those, they relied on an outside spec writer. This meant their architects were one step removed from the process. Lami Grubb needed a way to bring together their spec writing process with their customer focus and technical competency.

The Solution: Since they began using SpecLink in 1996, the architects at Lami Grubb have been able to concentrate on the content of the specifications - not on their typing-based production or relaying information to their outside spec writer. Robert Grubb, Principal, recalls, "We were a start-up company eight to ten years ago and were able to start using SpecLink for a very reasonable investment. SpecLink's method of editing allowed our architects to quickly arrive at the needed level of specification production with minimal typing. Plus, we no longer outsource our larger projects. Now when we write specs, we use SpecLink."

Lami Grubb uses their SpecLink Office Master as more of a 'project-type' master. "We're a client driven company," Grubb says. "Our specifications many

times have to fit the client's requirements, whether they are government agencies or large institutions. Frequently clients such as those have particular format or organizational requirements, which are often changed very late in the construction documentation process. SpecLink makes it easy to adjust to the clients' unique needs on the fly. Need a different header and footer? No problem. Need to change every instance of "Owner" to "Department?" No problem. Need to change numbering formats? No problem!"

The Outcome: One SpecLink success that comes to mind for Lami Grubb Architects is their '2nd East Hills' project. Grubb tells the story this way: "First, we were able to provide a very thorough, professional looking preliminary specification in a very short time. Second, we were able to integrate the input of developers, agencies, funders and end users quickly, and SpecLink allowed us to deal with the numerous revisions that they generated with ease. The retention of non-selected clauses is another advantage of SpecLink. When we moved on to the next phase of this project, we were able to retrieve and alter parts of specifications that were not used and were just turned off in previous phases or revisions." Grubb calls SpecLink the ideal specification-writing assistant. He says, "It maximizes our direct hands-on responsibility for the content, while it minimizes the hassles of copying, editing and formatting."



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BSD SpecLink is a powerful specification writing, management and production system with built-in intelligence designed to dramatically speed up editing tasks and reduce specification production time while minimizing errors and omissions. Users' project files are each maintained in a single database, rather than in multiple word processing files. Several model projects are included that allow the user to start with a pre-edited set of complete specifications. Because the master data is always visible and never deleted, it is easy to review project choices or select alternatives. Users can also import their own custom sections and/or create model projects specific to company or project-related requirements.