

SpecLink Helps Saratoga Associates Increase Efficiency

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Nina Oldenquist
Specification Writer
Saratoga Associates



The Spa at Mohonk Mountain House, New Paltz, New York.

Photo by Jim Smith Photography

From their offices in Boston, New York City and Saratoga Springs (NY), Saratoga Associates provides Planning, Landscape Architecture, Civil Engineering and Architecture services to clients.

In these many capacities, they see what happens when projects are carried out with imagination, intelligence, technical mastery, and a strong environmental conscience: people's lives are richer and more productive and their communities are both stronger and greener.

The people at Saratoga Associates understand that it takes many skills to bring a plan from concept to fruition: responsive programming, inspired design, efficient engineering, savvy

community planning, and pragmatic economic analysis.

They are dedicated to coordinating these diverse skills to deliver quality results. In creating compelling destinations, enriching communities, and safeguarding special places treasured for their historic, cultural or natural importance, their commitment to their clients' success remains the same. They help them shape, visualize and realize the changes that are needed in a way that uses their resources wisely and efficiently.



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The Need: Saratoga Associates believes good resource planning is important to any project. This includes all areas of the project, including specification writing. In 2004, they were using a word processing based spec writing software package. While this resource worked for them, it didn't provide them with the greatest efficiency. Their specifications took too long to develop. And the outcome was anything but efficient. They knew there was a better, more proficient way to do things: It was called SpecLink.

The Solution: "We now have an easier, faster way to produce and print specifications," says Nina Oldenquist, Specification Writer with Saratoga Associates. "The ease of reporting makes construction administration easier — and that alone has made a huge difference in how long it takes us to produce specifications."

The efficiencies gained by switching to SpecLink manifested themselves in many ways. Oldenquist recalls one of the main features that helped her decide to make the switch to

SpecLink, "I like the fact that the entire project manual is a single document — instead of 50 or 60 different word files. In addition, we can print reports that list sections where a specific topic is discussed."

The Outcome: Saratoga Associates works on many environmentally responsible designs. Oldenquist says, "One of our best projects to date was a recently completed LEED-certified cultural center. Being able to take advantage of the LEED front-end sections available in SpecLink is what made this such a great project to work on."

Oldenquist continues with the list of SpecLink features she likes, "We can add our own links — that greatly increases automation. And the ability to change the project name, headers, footers, and the page format just once for the entire document is great — especially for those in our office who are not accustomed to doing a lot of word processing. Because SpecLink is a specification writing program and not a general purpose word processing program, they can be more efficient using the software."

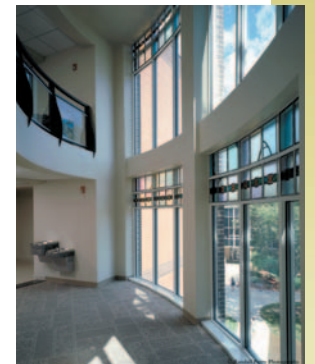


Photo by Randall Perry Photography

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A strategic partner of



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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.