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Design Construction Concepts, Inc.

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Architects as Builders Offer Unique Service to Other Architects

When you think about it, it really doesn't make much sense:

Architects develop a vision for a particular construction project. Using that vision, they render a set of plans, which they then hand over to someone else for execution, thus losing all control over the final outcome.

Is it any wonder, then, that architects like Andrew Poticha and Michael Menn, AIA often end up less than enthralled with the net results?

To address that very issue, Poticha and Menn founded Design Construction Concepts, Ltd. in 1991. Based in Northbrook, the full-service design/build remodeling firm has since been about the business of giving form to their own architectural designs. Indeed, everyone at Design Construction

Concepts, with the exception of the administrative staff, is an architect.

That alone is somewhat unusual for a design/build firm. Yet, Design Construction Concepts takes it even one step further by also building projects for *other* architects and designers.

Now, given the competitive nature of the remodeling industry, why on earth would other architects want to hand over their designs to outside architects?

"Because we're more than architects. True, we understand the design integrity of the plans from an architect's viewpoint, but we also understand the construction integrity from having been construction managers on our own projects," Poticha said.

"Simply put," Menn added, "on any given project, architects serve as consultants while construction managers serve as facilitators."

"At D+CC, we do both to everyone's mutual benefit. In fact, having an



Founded in 1991, Northbrook-based Design Construction Concepts, Ltd. is a full-service design/build remodeling firm that not only gives form to their own architectural designs, but also builds projects for other architects and designers. Pictured is a Wilmette residence that D+CC worked on with architect Ken Kasten of Kasten Architecture in Chicago.

architect's eye for anticipating obstacles and creating immediate solutions helps us resolve many issues before they become problems for anyone involved with the project, and that includes the client," added Poticha.

"The firm's dual role also makes for better communications in general," Poticha said.

"We have an innate ability as designers to understand intent. Also, I think we do a better job of thinking outside the box, again not just to help clients determine what they want, but also to help them get it."

Indeed, the partners feel it is their number one responsibility to give clients exactly what they want.

"I don't want to tell them 'no' only

to have them see it exactly as they envisioned in some magazine six months later," Menn said.

That being said, how willing are most architects to turn to other architects to build their plans?

"Some do see it as a competition issue. But for the most part, once they work with us, they understand the valuable service we can provide on the construction side. We aren't out to steal their clients. We're out to give their plans the same consideration we give our own," Poticha explained.

In fact, Design Construction Concepts has a very strict "non-compete" philosophy.

"Once a client comes to us through another architect, we won't work for that client without first notifying the referring architect. For us, it's more than a courtesy. It goes to the issue of ethics," they said.

Based on projects the firm has already built for other architects, the Design Construction Concepts partners say the smoothest and best of them have been team-oriented.

"We're not into finger pointing. Our goal is to make the designer look good—because if he or she looks good, that architect will get more work which, in turn, we hope will be passed on to us. It's a win-win for everyone, most especially the remodeling clients," they added.

For more information about Design Construction Concepts' full range of services, phone the firm's corporate headquarters at (847) 498-1676. Additional information is also available on the Internet at DCC-LTD.com.