SpecLink

Design evolves with SpecLink software.

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Today, savvy AEC professionals use technology more than ever. Advanced specification- writing software now features built-in intelligence and the ability to maintain and update itself. As master guide system software becomes more powerful, the role of the specification writer naturally is changing.

As recently as seven years ago, an article in the magazine *Architect* made this claim: "It is impossible to say where specs will be in 10 years, but it's clear that although the field is changing rapidly, real-world experience remains essential to defining the material qualities necessary for turning designs into well-built structures.

Tools change and trade groups evolve, but, spec writers' knowledge and their connection to the larger team shouldn't be discounted so quickly." In other words, although it appeared that specification writers were becoming obsolete due to advances in software, their technical expertise was still relevant.

The spec-writer "knowledge" that *Architect* described meant that the primary task of most spec writers was creating and maintaining their firm's office master. Firms believed that no software product could ever replicate the knowledge contained in their in-house, proprietary office master, and frequently dedicated a great deal of time and money to its upkeep and maintenance.

Today, advances in specification writing have given technologically advanced firms a new way to create and maintain their office masters.

No longer do specification writers have to dedicate count-less hours to the thankless task of keeping reference standards and manufacturer citations up to date. Instead, they can focus on improving the specialized data and content in their office master that is relevant to the types of projects the firm undertakes.

One company that embraces this model is Taylor Design, a west coast firm with offices in northern and southern California. Taylor Design has been an industry leader in healthcare facility design for over 36 years. Taylor strives to advance service delivery, patient experience, and the community presence of its client-partners.

The Taylor Design Science and Technology department is committed to designing high-tech research environments. They strive to ensure that these complex science facilities fully complement workplace goals and the demands of equipment-intensive scientific buildings.

Taylor Design chose SpecLink to create an office master for its complex projects. According to Michael McLane, AIA CSI Principal of Taylor Design, "Our firm specializes in healthcare, and since we first obtained SpecLink-E, we have also added science/technology and higher education to our project types."

SpecLink is designed to reduce specification production time through its use of its built-in intelligence. This revolutionary software also allows for extremely fast editing and supports multiple users at multiple locations. Additionally, SpecLink seamlessly integrates with BSD's specialist BIM software that "links" specifications with Revit models. This powerful tool automatically identifies discrepancies between a Revit model and the project's corresponding specifications.

Although Taylor Design might one day hire a full-time specification writer, they have so far been able to utilize SpecLink to produce their construction documents for small and medium size projects without having a dedicated specifications specialist. SpecLink is used in all project phases, from programming through construction administration. "We like SpecLink very much. It is doing what we need it to do." Michael McLane, AIA, CSI Principal, Taylor Design. The firm has an extensive project list and relies on utilizing the best software available to manage its workload.

SpecLink-E has allowed Taylor Design to update their specs automatically and painlessly without disruption; reduce errors and omissions; simplify sustainable design certification; and transition seamlessly from schematic to design development, and finally to full construction specifications using the same database.

Michael McLane, AIA, CSI, Principal of Taylor Design credits RIB by saying that "When we first obtained SpecLink-E, our Senior Construction Administrator and I were the only ones with spec writing experience. Given our workload on large projects, as well as other responsibilities, getting our master spec going took a lot longer to do than we would have preferred. However, we now have several senior staff members; one in each of our three offices, who are using SpecLink to generate project manuals for small and medium size projects.

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As we do that, we are increasing the size and level of detail in our master spec, too. Capturing our corporate construction knowledge into our master spec becomes a valuable communication tool for our outside specification consultants."

Because it's a sophisticated relational database, SpecLink offers functionality that its competitors simply cannot match. For example, the "edit by selection" feature ensures that the content in SpecLink always remains visible (whereas competitors edit by deletion). SpecLink's global formatting feature allows users to produce an automatic table of contents and make universal changes throughout a project file.

By contrast, competitors that use word processing require their users to format each specification section separately.

For Taylor Design, there is no better software product on the market to handle its specifications. The time saving and organizational features of SpecLink are far superior to competitive products.

Michael McLane, AIA, CSI, Principal, Taylor Design concludes that "We would and do recommend SpecLink to other firms."

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Find out more about how your company can benefit from SpecLink by contacting one of our experts via email at SpecLink.Sales@RIB-Software.com, calling 1-888-273-7638, or by visiting www.bsdspeclink.com.