

Who really is the Owner?

In construction-speak, when we talk about the “**Owner**”, with reference to a project, we are referring to the entity that initiated, is financing, and will benefit from the project. In most cases the owner is not a person. In fact, when discussing the project internally, the words “*the Owner*” are often times replaced with “*the hospital*”, “*the university*”, “*the building*”, “*the city*”, etc., Clearly, a building or a geographic location cannot be an owner per se, but since these facilities are rarely owned by an individual, it seems cleaner and more efficient to use the term “Owner”. That said, there will be an individual within the organization who is responsible for all construction projects and will essentially be the Owner’s “avatar”. This person might be the Vice President of Operations, the Director of Buildings and Grounds, the Vice President of Construction Services, or any one of a dozen titles depending on the organization. Such a person may have many other high-level duties and responsibilities beyond the specific project at hand or may be responsible for several simultaneous projects.

Are you this person? The Owner’s avatar? If so, it is with you that we wish to discuss the advantages of having an experienced and independent engineer as part of the team that will help you represent the Owner and protect you throughout the project. As an Owner’s Representative, we would be separate and apart from your Design Team. Our intention and purpose would be: to improve communication with the Design Team when presenting your requirements, protect you from additional costs due to possible errors by identifying and correcting them early in the design process before they are incorporated into the final CD set. All to ensure that the completed project reflects your unique and specific needs. In order to accomplish this we will:

- Be the expert voice, that speaks the same language as your Design Team, to ensure that your wishes are correctly expressed and incorporated into the project.;
- Be the expert eye, to be charged with review of the drawings as they are developed from Schematic through Design Development and final Construction Documents. The purpose being to ensure the use of good engineering practice, and that all the details are incorporated, correct and properly coordinated;
- Assist with bid review and contract award when the CD set is complete and released for bid;
- Monitor the review of submittals and shop drawings and ensure that the Design Team turns them around in a timely manner;
- Attend job meetings during construction and perform independent and unbiased periodic inspections for compliance of the Work with Plans + Specs, and for adherence to the Construction Schedule;
- Review as-built drawings and close out documents submitted by contractors as construction nears completion;
- Assist with the Testing + Commissioning process;
- Additionally, as an early liaison with Con Ed, we could assist with the often difficult task of obtaining an Electric Service Ruling for the project and for completing installation of the Electric Service.

We can offer all of the above services from Design through Commissioning, or only those desired by the Owner on a given project. Whether all-inclusive or selected services are employed, this consulting position is critical to a project’s success. It has the potential of saving a lot of time and money that would be spent in the event of an error getting through to actual construction in the field. In today’s environment of tight budgets and even tighter schedules, the advice and counsel of a qualified Owner’s Representative could prove to be the difference between a successful project – On Time and On Budget – and one that spirals into destructive cost and schedule over-runs.

Don’t err on the wrong side – call us....

