



Design-Build-Automate

Introduction

It is widely accepted in the warehousing industry that automation is here to stay. Customer demands for faster, more accurate orders coupled with a diminishing workforce all point to automation as the solution.

"The business case for it is just too strong," said Primus President Matt Hirsch. "Our customers recognize that in order to get their product on the shelves with the speed and precision that the market demands, they have to automate components of their process."

The Past

Traditionally, a cold storage owner sat down with an automation provider and asked, "What do I need to do? How can I get my product out the door faster?" Equipment, technology, and staffing were all decided before talking with an architect or builder.

"This approach wasn't efficient. Equipment issues, coordination issues, design issues... a lot of challenges would pop up during the design-build process," Hirsch said. "There had to be a better way."

Hirsch and Primus CEO Rich O'Connell looked back on the 15 design-build projects the team has completed that featured automation components. "They were all successful projects. But many had challenges that could have been avoided if the automation vendor was engaged earlier in the process," O'Connell said.

The Future

Primus's most successful projects were those that engaged the expertise of Randy Jennings. Jennings, a 40-year veteran of the automation industry, is a thought-leader and recognized automation expert. "We brought Randy on board," said Hirsch. "It was a simple decision. We knew we had to meet the business goals of our clients. Randy is an important part in helping us do that."

As Primus has grown, so have our service offerings. We started as a construction management firm, then brought in design, then insulated metal panel installation. Most recently, we have enhanced our sustainability solutions and roofing services. Our goal has always been to add services that complement our existing processes. Jennings understood this and got to work putting together a team that would complement Primus's design-build services.

"The automation solutions group is made up of people with collectively over 10 decades of automation, logistics and material handling experience," he said. In addition to Jennings, the team includes data analysts, systems supply experts and systems engineers ready to provide automation solutions that maximize efficiency for our clients.

These will be integrated into our award-winning design-build approach. "Every project team will have an automation project manager, much like our current teams have design and construction project managers," Jennings said. The chart below indicates some of the services our automation team offers during a different phase of the design-build process.

Design	Construction
Data analysis of existing owner item master and historical order data to define future productivity goals.	Work with construction field teams to ensure sites are ready to receive equipment.
Early interface with architects and engineers to ensure a clear understanding of owner goals.	Educate on-site teams on what to expect during equipment installation.
Recommendation of automation processes and equipment to ensure adaptability and fit.	Assist with installation start up and commissioning of automation equipment.
	Work with all elements to validate performance and defined functionality for the facility as was specified and designed to meet the requirements agreed to by all parties.

If you are interested in adding automation solutions to your facility, visit primusbuilders.com.