



The Quantum Quote

Issue 12, October 2013

Welcome to Autumn! The leaves are sporting their golden orange hues as they prepare to freefall, weather is moving towards sweater season, and everyone wants to pour concrete before the wet season hits (that last one is an insider contractor joke).

Over the last few issues we've been focusing on home owners, especially with our "Building, Start to Finish" series. This newsletter, we'll be bringing it back to commercial. After all, the majority of our work is commercial or industrial and most of our readers are business professionals, so it should come as no surprise.

I think it's only fair to offer a coupon that pairs well with the issue!



COMPLIMENTARY DESIGN SERVICES

Is your building holding back your business potential? Do you want to add an office suite, change your storefront, or optimize your point of sale counter? Do you need a bigger conference room or more manufacturing space? Our design build team makes these projects a snap!

(360) 293-0656 Joshb@quantumci.com
Expires: Never!

That's right, for basic commercial "tenant improvements" (TI is commercial-speak for remodel) we can put together a basic design in-house. If you're a little more ambitious, we have a pool of prequalified architects and engineers that we can retain or direct you to. (They'll probably need to be paid though!)

I hope you enjoy this issue and find it informative! As always, email with any questions.

Until next time,

Josh
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Create an environment of execution; set recurring and executable goals.
-Jason Easton

Google+, Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest

Is social media your thing? Are you always looking to find fun pictures, project inspiration, interesting facts, local news, and witty commentary? You'll find all but the witty commentary on our social media outlets (sorry, I'm just not quite witty enough)! We update these two to three times a week, just enough to keep the interesting material flowing, but not so much that we overwhelm you!

Like us on Facebook!



Follow us (with lots of +1's) on Google+!

Pin our project inspiration photos on Pinterest!



Facebook blocked at work? Follow us on LinkedIn!

Hiring a Contractor

Insider Tips

Hiring a contractor to work for you on a project (any project) can seem like a big deal. After all, rarely is a contractor hired for a small job, so you're entrusting someone who is going to present you with a bill for anywhere from hundreds to millions of dollars for work you've asked for. If you've felt some trepidation at doing so, don't worry, you're not alone.

A lot of the trepidation comes the experience, or lack thereof, in hiring contractors. So to help ease the unease, here are a few insider tips to make sure you get the best deal and the smoothest construction.

Check References

Ask for references. Better yet, ask if you can view some of their previous projects. Here are a few questions to ask references beyond the basics:

- Was the price inclusive of costs, or were there lots of change orders?
- Were they dependable and on the job when they said they would be?
- Was the jobsite reasonably clean?
- Were there any issues with subcontractors or suppliers?

Scope is Everything

When you receive a quote or proposal, you'll get a price and a scope. The easiest way to get in trouble with a project is to look only at the price and not at the scope. Here's a sample proposal (highly compressed):

July 23, 2013

To Barry Business Owner:

Thank you for allowing us to bid on your restaurant remodel! We propose to do the project for \$11,894.00 (not including WSST).

Our scope includes the following:

- Build new walls
- Install new kitchen counters
- Remove existing storefront and replace with Arcadia Aluminum storefront system.
- Excludes: Permits, electrical, architectural drawings

We look forward to working with you!

Sincerely,
Charlie Contractor

Time to dissect! The first to point out is that the price doesn't include sales tax (WSST). That's at least 8% added to the cost and is rarely included in bids. Second, the scope doesn't include any reference to plans or specifications. If you have plans and/or specifications that Charlie Contractor is bidding from, you want to make sure that the proposal says "per plans and specifications."

Next, you need to pay careful attention to the exclusions from the scope. This particular example may have several hundred dollars in permit fees, but it also excludes electrical work. Now it could be that Barry Business Owner told Charlie Contractor that he has a friend who will do the electrical work. Or it could be that the existing electrical was ancient and needed to be replaced, so Charlie left it out as a way to keep his number low.

A price is only as good as the scope that's associated with it!

The Right People for the Right Job

You wouldn't hire a sales person to run your accounting department or an executive to drive a forklift. Likewise, you want to select the right contractor for your project. Factors such as experience, equipment, known subcontractors, field employees, and liability insurance all play into this. For example, Quantum's commercial arm is set up for projects ranging from small tenant improvements and maintenance issues to multi-million dollar research laboratories. We have staff suited for each, and we call different subcontractors depending on the project. On the other hand, we don't typically build skyscrapers, stadiums, or large apartment complexes. Our staff isn't set up to do these projects, we don't have the relationships with subcontractors for them, and our estimate is less likely to be accurate, based on a lack of experience.

Selecting the right people for your job will typically result in better quality, better scheduling, less issues, and more accurate pricing. In other words, you can trust them better!

Have a suggestion to our readers for hiring contractors based on your experience? Let us know and it may end up in the next issue of the Quantum Quote!

For additional information, you can also review our [Building: Start to Finish here](#), which not only includes information on the entire scope of a building project, but tips, tricks, and cost savings ideas as well!

Under Construction

In response to our newsletter, one reader asked for an update on projects Quantum is currently building or has recently completed. Here are a few of our recent ones.



The Stillaguamish Natural Resources Building, designed by Anacortes architect Brooks Middleton, is a



13,000 square foot Natural Resources Department and Water Quality Laboratory for the Stillaguamish Tribe.

Status: Under Construction
This photo shows structural steel complete, with work on walls and roof decking in progress.



This is a custom home in the Rock Ridge development of Anacortes. There's another lot right down the street if you want one too! It's high enough to have a great view of the Guemes Channel.

Status: Under Construction



We completed the 3,765 sf luxury home in Anacortes. With fantastic views of the bay and Mt. Baker, I bet you wouldn't mind living here...and potentially could! The owner is selling the home and you can view the listing [here](#).

Status: Complete



Quantum is adding an addition to the Burlington Pacific Woodtech Plant. The Design-Build Project will provide additional manufacturing floor space for this cutting edge engineered wood product company.

Status: Under Construction

Other projects currently in the pipeline or recently completed include two large warehouses with office suites, a commercial awning, an office remodel/point of sale tenant improvement, repairs to a marine wall, and RV storage, and more!

Building, Start to Finish: Commercial Addendum

We've wrapped up the residential portion of Buildings, Start to Finish. If you're a business person, you should be aware of the differences between commercial and residential construction. In essence, you can distill it down to two big ones.

First, you need to know that commercial construction is usually held to a higher standard in terms of building code. While homes are designed to accommodate the owner, commercial projects need to meet requirements from ADA to occupancy, and egress to fire suppression. When you're designing a commercial project, you need an architect who is familiar with these requirements. You'll also want a builder (like Quantum) that specializes in commercial construction. You wouldn't hire a landscaper to fix your toilet, so why would you trust your business to a designer or builder who isn't used to building businesses?

Second, commercial construction has a lot of differences in the means and methods used. Compare your home office to your work office. Your home office might have carpeted floors, wood trim, vinyl windows, drywall walls and ceilings over wood studs, and a wood door to the house. Your work office, on the other hand, might have a heavy duty commercial carpet, durable rubber base, aluminum storefront windows (the structural ones you see on most storefronts, hence the name), thicker drywall over steel studs, a drop-in tile ceiling system (which allows reconfigurations when your business changes), and a hollow metal door to stand up to constant use. There's a reason each too!

Take the door for example; your home office door might open and close 6 or 8 times a day. A commercial office door might open 100 times a day when deliveries arrive, workers come and go, applicants show up for interviews, and products are delivered. *That's an additional 33,580 openings every year!* Commercial products are built to take the abuse.

In summary, commercial construction is typically designed and built to a higher standard than residential projects. This includes following building code related to public safety and products and installation designed for longevity. For more a more indepth discussion, feel free to email me or call our office at (360) 293-0656.

[Quantum Construction, Inc.](#) is a family-owned general contractor based in Anacortes, WA. Quantum has been building high quality commercial, custom residential and industrial projects since 1984. For information on how we can give you the best building experience, please contact us by [email](#) or by phone at (360) 293-0656.



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