

LUXURY HOME

quarterly



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HIDDEN FROM VIEW
Wojcieszak & Associates designed the air-conditioning system and other new technologies in this home—unseen additions that support the luxury of the environment. Photo: Smith Architectural Group and Sargent Architectural Photography.

Wojcieszak & Associates, Inc.

DESIGN PHILOSOPHY AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS
SET ENGINEERING FIRM APART IN THE MEP FIELD

by Julie Edwards

A full-service mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP) engineering firm, Wojcieszak & Associates, Inc. has continuously adapted to changing times, adding distinct services over the years to supplement the company's design base. "Times are constantly changing as are technology, client expectations, products, and governmental regulations," says David Wojcieszak, owner of Wojcieszak & Associates. "Thus, we also have changed, combining our technical foundation with our service-oriented business style to position the company for the future."

After graduating from Brown University in 1977 with a degree in electrical engineering, Wojcieszak returned home to Stuart, Florida. He worked as an electrician before forming Wojcieszak & Associates in 1982. Since then, the company has grown to a full-time staff of nine, seven of whom have been with the company for more than 10 years.

"I started my own design firm that subsequently filled a void for engineering services in the Treasure Coast area," Wojcieszak says. "I owe a great deal of my

engineering expertise to my years working in the field. Since the company was established, I've become licensed in electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, indoor air quality, total building commissioning, LEED AP, and electrical contracting."

Experienced in residential and commercial projects, Wojcieszak & Associates is known in south Florida for its proficiency in building-envelope design and air-conditioning design for warm, humid climates. "With the help of a dedicated staff with similar credentials and



THE FINAL PRODUCT

Featuring mechanical systems designed by Wojcieszak & Associates, this finished estate home in Palm Beach, FL blends museum and resort styles with luxury living. Photo: Bridges, Marsh & Associates, PA.

business philosophies, we have been able to expand our services beyond our MEP design base,” Wojcieszak says.

The firm’s goal is to find simple solutions to complex engineering problems. “We believe that to achieve owner satisfaction, we must listen to our clients and include them in the solution process by educating them on available options, which allows them to choose the best suited option for their project,” says Darcee McAninley, senior engineer for the firm since 1995. “We’ve been using this common-sense approach for more than 25 years, and it has worked well not only for us but, more importantly, for our clients.”

By far, estate homes on Palm Beach and Jupiter Islands in Florida have been the company’s stronghold, accounting for approximately half of its business. “The complexity of these homes is unlike other buildings,” Wojcieszak says. “Over the years, we’ve worked on hundreds of estate homes, each with its own set of requirements, but with a common demand for a superior product.”

Wojcieszak explains that estate homes (homes exceeding 10,000 square feet) are much more like a high-end resort or museum than they are a residence. As a

result, estate homes cannot be treated like other residences, yet no published guidelines for estate homes exist. However, by blending the guidelines available for museums and resorts, Wojcieszak & Associates feels that it has found the perfect balance in its design for estate projects. “We preserve the furnishings, artwork, and interior finishes according to the museum guidelines for climate control, and we model the use of the homes based on how resorts are operated, with building managers, cooking and cleaning staff, and overnight guests,” Wojcieszak says.

Wojcieszak & Associates has had the opportunity to work in other areas of the United States and abroad, adapting its MEP design based on the local availability of labor and materials without compromising its design philosophy.

“As each project evolves, it takes on its own personality—our specialty is finding the most effective way to manage the project so the ultimate goal of owner satisfaction is reached,” Wojcieszak says. “We feel that we can steer the project to make it successful by developing a good rapport with the contractors who understand the intent of our design and are able to implement it with superior workmanship.”

“We’ve learned over the years that our design philosophy and communication skills are not the norm for an engineering firm, but the exception.” DAVID WOJCIESZAK, OWNER

The company believes in fostering long-term relationships, a philosophy that has resulted in a business that operates primarily with repeat clients and word-of-mouth recommendations. “When we receive phone calls that start with, ‘I know you weren’t the engineer on this job, but could you help me out?’ we feel grateful that our input is valued and trusted,” McAninley says.

As far as challenges, McAninley says that owners can easily be blinded by low bids; however, making a decision on cost alone can result in larger costs down the road due to increased operating costs or premature failure of products. “Educating clients about the technical aspects of their decisions, combined with showing them how the costs play out over time, helps broaden their perspectives to a long-range outlook,” she adds.

For the future, Wojcieszak & Associates plans to continue using its design expertise and construction experience in three areas: MEP design, total-building commissioning, and energy engineering. “MEP design is the bread and butter of the company and will remain its primary function,” Wojcieszak says. “Total-building commissioning is a delivery process that improves the quality of the constructed product and reduces maintenance, and energy engineering is a strategy we’re developing to assist existing owners in saving energy in all types of buildings, including estate homes.”

When asked what sets his company apart from the competition, Wojcieszak doesn’t hesitate in his answer. “Our staff makes the company unique,” he says. “We’ve learned over the years that our design philosophy and communication skills are not the norm for an engineering firm, but the exception.” ■



WOJCIESZAK & ASSOCIATES, INC.
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Wojcieszak, Lauren Crossan,
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