

WHAT IS DESIGN-BUILD?

A Design-Build Done Right Primer



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A DESIGN-BUILD DONE RIGHT PRIMER

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DESIGN-BUILD IS A SYSTEM OF PROJECT DELIVERY.

By Project Delivery, we mean a comprehensive process including planning, design and construction required to execute and complete a building facility or other type of project.

Within the construction industry there are a number of project delivery systems that owners may choose to complete their project. Design-build is one of those choices.

Over the past few decades, use of design-build in both private and public sectors has greatly accelerated in the United States, making design-build one of the most significant trends in design and construction today.

Among the project delivery systems that owners may choose are traditional design-bid-build, multiple-prime contractors, construction management at risk and design-build^{1,2}. Choosing the right project delivery system is a critical part of the strategic acquisition plan every owner must develop when embarking on a new project. Owners can influence desired results from everyone involved by the way they strategically and proactively plan from the beginning of the project.

DESIGN-BUILD IS SOLE-SOURCE RESPONSIBILITY.

Design-build is where one entity, the design-builder, enters into a single contract with the owner to provide both design and construction services.

In all other project delivery systems, there are separate contracts for design and construction. The single contract for both design and construction is the design-build distinction.

A single contract changes everything.

With one design-build entity, the roles of designer and constructor are integrated. One entity drives one unified flow of work from initial concept through completion.

Streamlining project delivery through a single contract between the owner and the design-build team transforms the relationship between designers and builders into an alliance that fosters collaboration and teamwork. United from the onset of the project, an integrated team readily works to successfully complete a project faster, more cost effectively, and with optimized project quality.

Change orders and disputes are rare in well organized, performance-based design-build projects, because the sole-source responsibility of a single contract for both design and construction clearly places the responsibility for coordinating all project elements squarely in the hands of the design-build team.

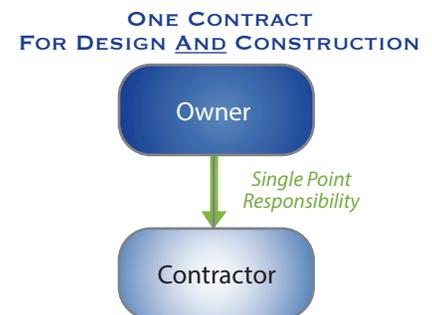
By contrast, in all other systems of project delivery, the owner must manage two separate contracts, one for design and one for construction. (Or in the case of multiple-prime delivery, many contracts for construction).

In all other forms of project delivery, the owner becomes the middleperson and potentially becomes engaged in disputes between the designer and the contractor(s).

The frequency and intensity of those disputes are often exacerbated by the contractual nature of traditional design-bid-build project delivery.

Architects and engineers provide design services under the legal concept of a Standard of Care. They prepare plans and specifications to the best of their abilities, but do not warrant those documents to be perfect and free of human error.

The designer then presents the completed plans and specifications to the owner, who in turn, distributes those documents to the contracting industry in the form of an invitation for bids. The Spearin Doctrine is a legal concept that goes into effect when the owner requests bids from



¹ For a more complete description of the features of the various project delivery systems available to owners, see DBIA's Design-Build Done Right! Primer on "Choosing a Project Delivery System" ² "Integrated Project Delivery" or "IPD" refers to a contractual model where the owner, constructor, designer and potentially others enter into a single, multi-party contract. Although there have been relatively few projects delivered through the use of this multi-party model, the contract forms currently available anticipate that the owner, constructor and designer will enter into the same agreement, share some of the risks and rewards of the contract and potentially limit the liability among the parties. Due to the limited history of IPD, it is not included in the list of predominant project delivery systems.



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