ML PROJECTS™ SOFTWARE CASE STUDY: **ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN FIRMS**

Increasing Productivity and Client Satisfaction by Design

About Young+Wright Architectural

Founded in 2003 and headquartered in Buffalo (NY), Young+Wright Architectural (YWA) provides design solutions that let its clients get more from their buildings.

In the past eleven years, the firm has grown to more than 30 employees with additional offices in Rochester and Syracuse. In 2013 *Buffalo Business First* business journal ranked YWA 35th out of the 65 fastest-growing private businesses in Western New York.

The firm's licensed professionals approach construction design projects with a holistic view that honors the historic integrity of the past while developing living, breathing environments that harness the power of technology to increase the building's usable life.

Young+Wright's Design/Build/Operate/Maintain (DBOM) philosophy made MasterLibrary™ Projects™ Construction Administration Software a natural fit for the firm. The software's Electronic Facilities Records (EFR) approach to construction project development creates a historic repository of invaluable information for operations and maintenance long after switchover has occurred.

Cutting Clutter With The Cloud

Like many small- to medium-size firms, prior to implementing MasterLibrary™ software, Young+Wright lacked an integrated project administration technology system. Instead, staff manually logged various types of construction project paperwork in Excel spreadsheets to electronically capture key data. Supplemental paper and electronic file storage was decentralized making it difficult to find the documentation needed for specific tasks (e.g., Submittals).

While the company had tested one application—primarily for Submittals—it was soon found to be too cumbersome and limited in scope to justify the software's cost. Soon after, one of the firm's principals saw a demonstration of MasterLibrary™ software at a trade show and was drawn to its robust capabilities with unlimited projects for one price.

As a Project Coordinator for six years at Young+Wright's Buffalo headquarters, Cheryl Parsell was charged with using and evaluating MasterLibrary™ software for the firm's projects starting in January 2013. As she put it, MasterLibrary™ software was "way more user friendly" than the previous system YWA had investigated. Cheryl began using the software for RFIs (Request For Information) and Submittals where she immediately saw the benefits of a secure cloud-based application that enhanced communications and dramatically reduced paperwork and turnaround time.

Meanwhile, a Project Manager at the firm tried MasterLibrary's Contract Administration module and was soon using it for all his projects' contracts. Word of the module's ease of use and increased productivity soon had Cheryl and most PMs at the firm using the software for this vital function.

"I'm with a project from beginning to end," Cheryl explained. "For me to have everything in one spot is so much better. I used to have to track everything from e-mails to contract numbers. Now everything is all together where it's easy to find and share."

(continued)

The Gow School's Dining Hall is one example of Young+Wright's approach to architectural design for usability and aesthetics.

AT A GLANCE

Professional Discipline
Architectural Design Firm

MasterLibrary Client
Young + Wright Architectural, Buffalo, NY

Client's Industry Markets
Education (K–12 & higher ed), assisted living, municipal, historic preservation, construction administration & others

Key MasterLibrary™ Features
- Unlimited projects/subscription
- Ease of use
- Single shareable repository of all project paperwork
- Usable with any smart device

Key MasterLibrary™ Benefits
- Dramatically reduced Construction Project Admin costs
- Embraced by everyone on project team including PMs, PAs and drafters
- Improved client satisfaction
- Increased productivity among all project team members

The Benefits of Everything In Its Place

While there are many features and functions of ML Projects™ Construction Administration Software that Cheryl likes, it's the ability to find all project-related administrative elements quickly and easily in one place, and to share this information selectively and electronically, that provide the most valuable benefits.

"I put SED (State Education Department) packages together all the time. They need a lot of background paperwork with our packages and I know exactly what they need," Cheryl noted. "At this point, when everything is in MasterLibrary, all the PM has to tell me is 'this is ready to go to SED.' They don't have to get me anything other than the Change Order number. I go in, print all the background paperwork, put it together, get the required signatures, and send it out. It's so much easier than the way we used to do it."

"When you compare my PA (Project Administration) time billed for projects that use MasterLibrary versus those that don't, it's much less for the ML projects especially for Submittals and RFIs. A lot of that bypasses me now; I just kind of oversee things."

It also frees up time for PMs who can now get almost any piece of project data themselves via a desktop, smartphone or tablet without the need to contact the PA.

> "It's so much easier than the way we used to do it."
>
> — Cheryl, Project Coordinator,
> Young+Wright Architectural

Easy To Use Every Step Of The Way

One of Cheryl's responsibilities is training Project Managers (PMs) and other team members how to use ML software, especially during project startup and with contract details such as entering budget amounts. Overall she has found the training easy due to the intuitive software interface design.

"It's a very self-explanatory program. As an example, I'm working with a Construction Manager right now who's new to the software but we're doing all his projects using MasterLibrary. He's probably had to call me three times with questions since he's been using it."

When it comes to MasterLibrary™ user support, Cheryl rates it as "absolutely the best" with live, U.S.-based support that provides consistent, fast, accurate answers and solutions to software usability and functionality questions.

Solar arrays on the roof of Canandaigua (NY) Central School District that help reduce client energy costs underscore Young+Wright's commitment to green building design. MasterLibrary™ software does its share by reducing the number of hard copies required during every phase of a project.

Results That People Notice

After a full year of use, Young+Wright has embraced MasterLibrary™ software with PMs taking an increasingly active role in the program's success. "Now that MasterLibrary™ is going stronger with our projects, I have more time because everyone from PMs to Drafters are entering information themselves because they see the value of the system. Their hands are all in it."

For her part, Cheryl has found that MasterLibrary™ software "has helped make a turning point in my career because I now have time to grow in different aspects of my job that I didn't have before because I was bogged down with paperwork."

Just as important—from YWA's clients' perspective—"everything goes smoother" Cheryl explained. "They notice that. Plus we give them access to MasterLibrary™ so they can always see what's going on. They can access the status of their projects and see details like outstanding items and budgets. They always want to get in it to see how it's going. They love it!"

For more information, please visit MasterLibrary.com for features, available modules, pricing and to subscribe. To schedule a live demo, please contact Tom Rauscher at **585.270.6676, x22,** or trauscher@MasterLibrary.com

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