

## SpecLink Provides Peace of Mind at Slocum Architects

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**Steven Bosch**  
Vice President  
Slocum Architects



**Slocum Architects is an award-winning architectural firm located in Kalamazoo, Michigan. For the past 30 years, they have worked to create designs that fulfill both the functional and aesthetic needs that a pleasant working and living environment requires.**

Their experience in building types encompasses health care, industrial, recreational, municipal, religious, banks, office, retail, manufacturing and housing.

The list of their primary design services includes, among others: architectural design, structural design/analysis, renovation and restoration of interior design, zoning studies/analysis, building evaluations, feasibility studies renderings and facility programming cost estimating.

Since their inception, the goal of Slocum Architects has been to achieve quality projects. They believe that a well-designed

project can reduce initial costs and increase the long-term value. Their clients have embraced this philosophy. This is evidenced by the many repeat clients Slocum has gained over the years. This reflects the quality of service Slocum provides and the type of working relationship they develop with their clients. At Slocum Architects, the heart of every successful project is a strong relationship between client and architect. The more involved in the design process a client is, the more likely they are to enjoy the final product. Slocum credits the success of their projects to the team approach used throughout the design process.



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**The need:** Many of Slocum Architects' on-going relationships with clients have resulted in repeat projects. Because of this, they needed a better way to keep track of various clients' individual preferences. They needed a system that was structured enough to maintain this information, yet flexible enough to allow for easy modifications. They also wanted to be sure that the information they were using contained the most up-to-date reference standards and product manufacturers. SpecLink met all of these criteria.

**The solution:** Steven Bosch, Vice President with Slocum Architects, says, "SpecLink is an easy to use, highly interactive and comprehensive specification program. The database is updated quarterly, giving you the peace of mind that your catalog numbers and reference sheets are up to date and accurate."

While updating the database was important to Bosch, so was the ability to maintain the customized information he had entered. He states, "Customization and importing of your own spec items and terminology is easy and seamless with SpecLink." With word processing-based systems, the complete file is overwritten when updates are received – including

any edits Slocum may have made. BSD's unique updating scheme changes only selected paragraphs in the master database and does not affect or overwrite the user's project file, which is stored separately and "merges" with the master text. In SpecLink, when you open a project after updating it, all your added and edited text remains intact. Only individual paragraphs in the underlying master data have been changed to incorporate the updates, such as new edition dates of reference standards and the names of recently acquired product manufacturers.

**The outcome:** Bosch says that in addition to the way SpecLink handles updates, he also likes the ease of use and time savings he has seen, "Overall, the program – once formatted for your own office – is a huge time saver on subsequent projects. This is due to the easy manipulation of the individual line items." Slocum Architects keeps several Office Masters, based on both project type and client. According to Bosch, "SpecLink has taken the mounds of paperwork out of spec writing."



Illustrations courtesy of Slocum Architects.

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BSD SpecLink is a powerful specification writing, management and production system with built-in intelligence designed to dramatically speed up editing tasks and reduce specification production time while minimizing errors and omissions. Users' project files are each maintained in a single database, rather than in multiple word processing files. Several model projects are included that allow the user to start with a pre-edited set of complete specifications. Because the master data is always visible and never deleted, it is easy to review project choices or select alternatives. Users can also import their own custom sections and/or create model projects specific to company or project-related requirements.