

# SpecLink Keeps Studio Four Design, Inc. In Command of their Spec Writing Process

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**Michael McGuiness**  
**President**  
**Studio Four Design**



*John T. O'Conner Senior Center Addition*

**At Studio Four Design in Knoxville, Tennessee, they believe that clear business criteria and clear creative ideas lead to good design.**

With services inspired by the four dimensions – Planning (line), Graphics (plane), Architecture and Interiors (volume), and Consulting (time) - their name tells the story of why they are here; for design. Studio Four Design has created an experience-based firm offering a variety of customer-focused, professional services in a collaborative studio environment. Functioning with a multi-disciplined staff, they serve clients whose work and visions intrigue and challenge them.

Examples of the type of work they have done include site analysis, facility planning, phased development, feasibility studies and economic analysis. Their clients range from restaurants and retail to corporate and

industrial to educational and religious institutions.

While each project, client and solution is unique, the process they use is consistent each time, blending thoughtful design solutions with hard work. A clear process helps them formulate a strategy, establish objectives, and focus the creative work to keep projects on time and on budget. Throughout each stage of the process they keep all their team informed and engaged.

They have a firm belief that the most important deliverable they provide clients is exceptional customer service. It sounds simple, but too often, companies underestimate the value of listening, hearing and then acting on behalf of a client's needs.



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**The Need:** Studio Four Design places a strong emphasis on providing extraordinary service to their clients. They accomplish this through their four-step process of collecting information, collaborating on concepts, exploring ideas and evaluating results. They took a similar approach to their specification writing process. Several years ago they assessed the method they were using to create specifications. They realized that their procedure wasn't giving them the results they wanted. They were utilizing an outside specification writer, who relied on a word processing-based spec writing system. This was very time consuming and, to some extent, kept them away from part of the process.

The inability to produce specifications quickly and stay in command of the specification process impacted their level of customer service. In 2002 they started exploring ideas that would help them get the results they wanted for their specification writing. Their exploration led them to evaluate SpecLink.

**The Solution:** According to Michael McGuiness, president of Studio Four Design, their decision to switch to SpecLink can be summed up in one word: timesavings. And their time-savings started the first day

they installed the software. He says, "One of the things we like best about SpecLink is how easy it was to learn. We trained ourselves on the software and were able to start writing specifications within a few hours."

SpecLink also meant bringing their spec writing back in house. "Using SpecLink allowed the people most familiar with a project to write the specifications. This has reduced potential mistakes and helped with coordination issues. And SpecLink's quarterly updates give us the confidence to know that everyone is using the most up-to-date information," McGuiness says. All of these features have added to their saved time and increased productivity.

**The Outcome:** Because of their own commitment to extraordinary customer service, it was only natural that Studio Four Design would look for a software company that shared that commitment. They have found the staff at Building Systems Design to be very receptive to their input. When asked what improvements he would like to see made to the software, McGuiness replied, "You've made all the ones we suggested."



Images courtesy of Studio Four Design.

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**President**  
**Studio Four Design**



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For more information on BSD SpecLink, contact Bryant Hendricks: [bhendricks@bsdsoftlink.com](mailto:bhendricks@bsdsoftlink.com)

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.