

# SpecLink and CostLink A/E Provide Collaborative Approach for Yost Grube Hall

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**Michael Thrailkill,  
Architect/Specifier/  
Estimator  
Yost Grube Hall**



*Cabgoc Chicala headquarters building in Luanda, Angola*

**Founded in Portland in 1964, Yost Grube Hall (YGH) is a 50-person firm specializing in planning, architecture and interior design services for government, institutional, commercial, and educational clients in the Northwest and overseas.**

The firm's work is diverse, ranging from corporate headquarters and commercial facilities to housing and university buildings. However, all of their projects share a unifying theme: design that is in harmony with the community setting, client values, and user needs.

YGH offers a full range of interdisciplinary services to respond to the unique needs of each project. Firm talents specialize in planning, programming, architecture, interior design, cost control and computer utilization can be focused on a project from feasibility analysis through occupancy.

The staff at Yost Grube Hall collaborates with clients to define problems and goals, leading to creative, realistic solutions. Clients become integral members of the design team and clear communication channels are established to support a collaborative decision making process.

Their projects have received both regional and national design awards for the creative way they respond to their program, climate and context. Whatever the setting, they craft their designs with an understanding that a successful building reflects the ideas, values and traditions that make each community unique.



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**The Need:** There are many phases of design and construction, beginning with programming and design all the way through construction and post-construction. Yost Grube Hall provides both construction specifications and budgetary cost estimating for their clients. They were using a combination of spreadsheet and word-processing programs.

Because they were using a word processing-based program for their specification writing, they weren't able to preserve information that was not used in a specific project. They had to cut and paste from various specification files – which meant they basically started over with each spec they wrote. For their cost estimating, they were transcribing the information from a RS Means book to a spreadsheet. Again, there was no continuum of data – each project was self-contained.

Both of the methods Yost Grube Hall used were time-consuming. They knew there had to be better solutions for their processes. In March 2005 they took the first step toward finding those solutions: they switched to SpecLink and CostLink/AE.

**The Solution:** According to Michael Thrailkill, Architect/Specifier/Estimator, BSD's complimentary programs – SpecLink and CostLink/AE – have saved YGH considerable amounts of time, "We estimate 40% time-savings with SpecLink and 60% with CostLink/AE. We contribute a lot of this to the fact that both programs store information in a single database."

"With CostLink A/E, I have the ability to select a product, material or assembly and have the description of that item appear in the cost estimate – without needing to transcribe the information. This is because CostLink A/E includes the RS Means data already built in to the software. And with SpecLink, the database preserves the information that is not used for that particular specification. This allows me to go back and see all the options – including those I didn't choose – and still use them on the next project."

**The Outcome:** Another reason Thrailkill chose the BSD products was how easy they are to use. He has learned to use both programs on his own. He says, "The programs both have good intuitive set-ups. Because it is so easy to use, I anticipate using SpecLink in the future to get former non-spec writers to start creating their own specs, to be reviewed by me, with minimal time on my part."

Lastly, Thrailkill likes the way the final products look. He says, "With SpecLink, I like the fact that I can edit the headers and footers, edit the project information and print the whole project spec all in one pass. CostLink A/E allows me to have a final printout that is good, clean and easily understood by our clients. Plus it looks very professional – something that can't be said for other programs I looked at."



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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.

Exclusive offering of  
CSI-DBIA and BSD.

