

## BCArchitects Create Clear and Concise Specifications With SpecLink

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**Larry Cohan**  
President and CEO  
BCArchitects AIA, Inc.

**BCArchitects AIA, Inc., located in Coral Gables, has created some of South Florida's most distinctive architectural designs, and is annually responsible for providing services for projects with construction values in excess of 300 million dollars.**



*Akoya, Miami Beach*



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Their award-winning portfolio includes luxury residential, retail and facilities design for some of the region's most respected developers and corporations. The full service architecture and planning firm provides a single source for clients seeking innovative solutions that are elegant, efficient and cost effective.

Design of the highest quality, together with outstanding professional service, have been the hallmarks of BCArchitects since its inception over a decade ago. Their ability to listen to their clients and respond creatively has earned their respect. Their clients benefit from BCArchitects' multi-disciplinary expertise in design,

production and construction. They have the flexibility to work successfully within the framework of a strong development, or serve as the lead team – all depending on their client's needs.

Their 34-person staff is closely committed as a team. They don't just deliver a product; they operate on the principle that their clients buy into a relationship with BCArchitects – a relationship where they work as partners for the long term. They listen to the client, cater to their needs, and do not try to impose their desires onto them. Many clients are repeat, constantly providing referrals and recommendations that continue to grow their business.

**The need:** A consistent goal of BCArchitects is to provide outstanding service, while working in partnership with their clients. In 1998, they were outsourcing their specifications, and determined that the outsourcing process didn't completely fit with this objective. Larry Cohan, president and CEO at BCArchitects knew there had to be a more efficient way for them to produce specifications. Explains Cohan, "We were using an outsource consultant for our specs who was not always available for meetings and therefore not always in the direct communication line. Making changes and updates was a hassle and took too much time." He decided to look at SpecLink.

**The solution:** "With SpecLink, our specifications are now prepared in house by two of our project architects and myself," says Cohan. "And changes to the specs can now be easily made by our administrative staff. Having our project architects prepare the specs has created better checked and coordinated drawings along with saving us money by bringing the process in-house. As a matter of fact, SpecLink paid for itself after the first project or two compared to what we were paying for out-sourcing. Also, being able to have our administrative staff make the necessary changes and updates has saved time and money on the preparation of the specification manuals." Cohan estimates that compared to the time it took to work with the outsource consultants to write the specs, they have reduced their spec writing time by at least 40 percent with SpecLink.

And the time savings came quickly. While some firms think that bringing spec writing in-house is too tedious and time consuming, Cohan says that with SpecLink they were able to learn the software immediately with

no formal training.

**The outcome:** When asked what helped him decide to make the switch to SpecLink, Cohan comments, "Along with the benefits listed above with bringing SpecLink in-house, the ability to have a correct template format, combined with a subscription that updates reference standards and products on a regular basis." The quarterly updates have been a great time-saving tool as well. Because the updates occur in a controlled environment, their administrative staff, who are not necessarily familiar with standards, are able to assist with the specification updates.

And it's not just the program and updates that have impressed Cohan. He talks about his high regard for the technical support he receives as well. "The SpecLink technical support is excellent. One particular person in BSD's support department has been there as long as I can remember and has helped me through numerous install issues, even when I cause them, along with various upgrade and technical questions."

BCArchitects used SpecLink to create the specifications for One City Plaza in West Palm Beach (the project pictured on the this page). Cohan states, "This was a very complex urban project with over 350 units and a 500-car parking garage. Therefore, the specifications needed to be extremely clear and concise, so that the general contractor and his subs clearly understood their tasks and the standards of quality required by the Owner. With no room for error, SpecLink helped us produce a set of specifications that accomplished this."



One City Plaza



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Images courtesy of BCArchitects AIA, Inc.



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For more information on BSD SpecLink, contact Bryant Hendricks:  
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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.