



In This Issue...Why Use A Consultant? – Part 4

Why use a roof consultant?

This is the last issue on the topic of using a professional roof consultant to get your advice on solving roofing problems. We have written specific newsletters on the advantages of using a professional consultant versus architects, roofing contractors and manufacturing reps. In this issue we have a few concluding thoughts.

There are many nuances in the roofing industry to which most building owners are completely oblivious. For instance, in the last issue we shared some bid tabulations off actual projects. Here is another:

Contractor	System	Bid
J	C	96,480
K	C	107,860
L	F	121,960
M	F	124,000
N	C	124,985

We have already made the point that you should always get bids using multiple products to insure true competitive bid and best possible pricing. Well, there is another slant on this. Contract J can install either “C” or “F”. Neither roofing manufacturer (or their local suppliers) will ever recommend them, however.

Why?

Contract J does good work. The quality of his work is just as good as any of these other contractors. The reason they won’t be recommended is because the contractor, as an individual, is not too sophisticated. He has a hot temper. Periodically, he gets mad at either the supplier for “C” or “F” and shifts his work all to the other guy. Each supplier understands this and they don’t recommend him because they know that in three months he may be installing the other product. The distributor or rep will only recommend to you a contractor when he is comfortable with the contractor’s loyalty. Contractor K also does very good work. It turns out he is also very “challenging” to work with. Reps don’t recommend him either, because they don’t want you upset with them when the project is finished. They only recommend contractors who can present themselves well and will leave a good impression. If you had requested contractors from the local reps for these companies you would have paid \$121,960 for your roof. We don’t think that is good value.

What we would like for you to see in these examples is that the process of “calling three contractors and taking bids”, even with reputable contractors, is almost always to insure that you are paying too much money for your roof.

If you are not dealing with a professional that has only your interests at stake, your interests will likely be compromised. The advantage of using a professional consultant is that he is aware of all these nuances (and many others too) in dealing with the various roofing organizations and how to specify things to make them truly apples-to-apples. He knows how to sift through all the fluff and ask the right questions to make sure he gets the right contractors to bid his projects.

We deal with Contractors “J” and “K” all the time. Yes, they are challenging to work with, but the economic reward to our clients is significant. It is one of the things we get paid to do. But there are a bunch of contractors we don’t work with. The roofing industry, in general, is not “highly regarded” and does not have a good “reputation”. To the degree the industry has a poor reputation it has been earned. There are many roofing contractors who do poor quality work. Good consultants know who the good contractors are and who to stay away from. (We have had more to say about this in a previous issue on finding a good contractor.) This example on contractors applies in different ways to manufacturers.

There are manufacturers that rush products to market and then see widespread failures. Or they make changes to an existing product and the changes were not well tested and failures occur. This happens much more often than you might expect. While all manufacturers have had failures, Consultants have learned over the years who the better ones are. They know who has a good track record of performance and who does not. Of equal importance they also know who took care of their problems and who did not.

So, we hope that this four newsletter series has been both informative and eye opening. Further, we hope you have at least begun to recognize the type of value that a good consultant can bring to your organization.

Next month we are going to focus on several common problems we continually see in roof designs.