

A History of Building the Future

Kajima Building and Design Group

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With a history dating back to 1840, Japan's Kajima Corporation has grown to be an \$18.9 billion construction and development firm employing over 9,000 across four continents. In the 1960s Kajima USA was established as a bridge for the Kajima Corporation to expand throughout the western hemisphere, and this North American division now handles a substantial \$1.5 billion in annual sales.

Contributing a backbone to these group companies is Kajima Building and Design Group (KBD), a company with over 40 years of experience in providing integrated architectural-engineering-interior services. KBD has 140 employees spread between eight office locations: its Atlanta, Ga., headquarters; Los Angeles, Calif.; Chicago, Ill.; Memphis, Tenn.; Cincinnati, Ohio; New York, N.Y.; Rochelle Park, N.J.; and Dallas, Texas. These offices focus on industrial manufacturing facilities, as well as warehouse and distribution facilities, data/cloud computing centers and phone switching centers.

Tools of the Trade

Mike Rhinehart, KBD's director of business development, marketing and sales, has been with the company for two years. He says "[the KBD] mission is to design and construct buildings, but also to make our world a better place for generations to come."

Under this promise, KBD follows a philosophy of development that focuses on designing buildings that will stand the test of time and will be functioning efficiently for many years to come. By earning client's trust now and working with them to begin designing and building in a beneficial way, KBD paves the way for continued efficiency improvements in the future. KBD meets these goals through cutting-edge technology and a focus on sustainable structures that extend from site



selection/development to mechanical installations to energy- and cost-effective interiors. "America would be a better place if we all adopted some sort of corporate social responsibility," Rhinehart insists.

As part of its corporate social responsibility, KBD has made vast efforts to become an expert in the green trend. "I would say we currently have 28 Accredited Professionals, with 60 percent on the design side and 30 percent on construction," says Yoshi Koshiyama, one of KBD's LEED APs and director of architecture.

More of KBD's employees are in training for eco-friendly design certification. "We held lunch time training classes, reviewed the exams we took as a group, which helped motivate individuals," says Koshiyama. "Each month we assisted more who had passed."

Emery Hildebrand, another KBD LEED AP, has created a LEED training manual for fellow employees. "When I was studying for the exam I found it easier to create a binder of what I needed to learn. After passing [the exam] I created a six-week training course with an exam for each week. We tried to get as many people together as possible for group training sessions, compare our exams' strong and weak points. This assisted quite a few," he says. "If we don't aim for 100-percent scores we'd hit far lower, and LEED is too important in the industry to take lightly."

Through this process of getting certified and helping others, Hildebrand realized "that most of the materials available are already LEED-specific; you can turn a project into a LEED project without really having to spend appreciable extra





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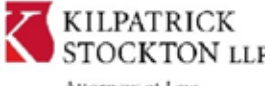


Tools of the Trade

Kilpatrick Stockton attorneys are fully-engaged in the success of our client, Kajima USA. We strive at every level to maintain a relationship built on trust and mutual respect. We share Kajima's commitment to creative progress and development based on sound legal and business principles, and we're proud to be a part of their contributions to the construction industry and society.

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money if you're careful," he says. "One other interesting thing I learned is that right now is the easiest time to get a building certified, because the USGBC [U.S. Green Building Council] is still working against a building standard, which is already outmoded; many standard materials and concepts have already become greener."

Similar to Hildebrand's further understanding of green design, Koshiyama believes "our next challenge is investing [less] time and effort with each certification process ... hopefully in the future we can make it even more efficient, with less time consuming efforts."

Even with its strong focus on sustainability, KBD still observed some effects of the recession. "Our sales rate remained the same

in '09 as in '08, but what we have seen is the typical project size has reduced significantly," says Rhinehart. "We don't have those large \$100 million projects that we've seen in the past. We've done a lot of planning, conceptual design and pricing on those and we're hoping sometime in 2010 those are going to move forward, but a lot of them are sitting on the shelf waiting for the economy to turn." Since January 2010 KBD has seen a steady, but modest increase in the number and size of projects closing all across the U.S., and is happy to have emerged from the recession unscathed with only a few small adjustments.

Putting New Knowledge to Use

KBD did recently complete a successful green project, however: a 23,000-square foot engineering center for the Toshiba America Nuclear Engineering Corporation (TANEC), located in Charlotte,

N.C. "We did an interior renovation – it was a pretty good-sized project, very nice visually, very modern-looking interiorly. The unique thing about it is it's a build-out of space in a non-LEED certified building, but we were able to design for a LEED certification," says Rhinehart.



KBD used all the recyclable and LEED-recognized content it could, and did all the paperwork on its own, without consultants, as Toshiba was not familiar with LEED certification when KBD first proposed that approach and were wary of the cost. “Emery is the one instrumental in putting it all together, coordinating all the design and construction groups. We had to go through the learning curves, but it was quite rewarding,” says Koshiyama.

Incorporating LEED features into a pre-existing, non-LEED building was a challenge. “In an existing building you have little control over what’s already there,” says Hildebrand, who was project manager for the Toshiba job. “In order to get a head start on the LEED parts, I talked to our L.A., Chicago and N.J. offices, because they had been working on other LEED processes. I asked them what to be wary of and obtained samples of specifications. By gathering all this information I was able to create standardized forms that we handed to the contractors, mirroring and enhancing the letter templates the USGBC uses.”

Hildebrand made a standard list of the credits possible in a commercial interiors building and went down them one-by-one, selecting those he expected to meet. “We originally had it planned to easily attain Silver, but as we discovered things like how daylight credits were not economically attainable we were reduced to 26 points, one point short of a Silver certification, which isn’t bad as we were unable to obtain any credits for Sustainable Sites since building wasn’t originally designed for LEED compliance,” says Hildebrand. “Plus, we had to keep the overall cost to a minimum, and to keep the schedule when it came to meeting LEED-specific requirements.”

To complete the project on schedule, KBD relied on 3-D building modeling/conflict management software, specifically the program REVIT, to create the building’s images. “We use REVIT all the time – everybody is now capable of creating 3-D designs, so there is no reason to go back



to 2-D,” says Koshiyama. “During design-review and presentation, even at the construction site for the contractor, we can now quickly and efficiently provide the 3-D images.”

With the TANEC project successfully completed, KBD has created a lessons-learned questionnaire for all team members – design, construction and administration – to assure no mistakes are ever repeated, and to enable the company’s team to apply successful techniques to the next project. Next, KBD has plans for its future growth that will synchronize its stance of sustainable efforts with its approach to being far more than a link in the chain of projects. “We don’t want to build a wind farm, but we want to build the manufacturing plant for the assembly,” shares Rhinehart, explaining KBD’s positioning of itself as integral project starters within markets. “And we’re putting a lot of emphasis on the mission critical market of data centers, because that is becoming an enormous growth market.”

Rhinehart sees these expansion steps taking place over the next couple years. “In 2012 the economy should certainly turn around; I think some strong survivors will emerge from the design and construction industry and we’re going to be one of them,” he says.

Based on the company’s long, proven history of conscientiously controlled expansion, along with its corporate social responsibility approach, Kajima Building and Design Group has all the facets required to further its position as an innovative consulting,

contracting and efficiency integrating powerhouse across the nation. ■