



Robins & Morton Becomes Proactive with AutoSpecs, Uncovers Accurate Project Requirements from the Beginning

AutoSpecs provides actionable data from 2,000 page spec document in minutes, allowing projects to quickly identify and eliminate recycled specs.

BACKGROUND

Founded in 1946, Robins & Morton is a privately-held construction firm based in Birmingham, Alabama, with seven offices in the Southeast. They have completed 1,500 successful projects in 35 states, totaling more than \$10 billion.

Although Robins & Morton's work started with a small, 800-square-foot gas station, their current projects vary from major new hospitals and complex renovations, to hospitality projects and a variety of other commercial work. In 2018, Modern Healthcare ranked them third in top general contractors nationwide.

CHALLENGE

Robins & Morton frequently deals with large scale projects with large spec books to match. In fact, a typical spec book can reach more than 2,100 pages. Building a draft log from that would take a Robins & Morton Project Engineer about a month of work. As common throughout the industry, they would take a hard copy of the spec book, read through it section by section, and create an Excel sheet. They eventually moved over to using Timberline, but that process wasn't much better. According to Jon DeHondt, Project Manager at Robins & Morton, "It was a tedious process that no one wanted to do."

Robins & Morton knew they wanted to update their process. They tried a different submittal building tool readily available, but they still had major problems. DeHondt reported, "It didn't spit out accurate information. We had to edit and redo the whole thing."

SOLUTION

Robins & Morton knew they could no longer afford to spend a full month turning the spec book into a useable log. Jon had heard about Pype through both the IT and the Virtual Design and Construction Departments. A different project team had been using AutoSpecs on a project in Daytona Beach, Florida, and after the submittal building tool DeHondt's team had tried produced disappointing results, he decided to give Pype AutoSpecs a test run himself on Horizon West's 2,100 page spec book.

TIME SAVED

After a quick conference call with Pype, Robins & Morton found AutoSpecs both user friendly and easy to navigate. "It's pretty easy to understand; we didn't need much training," said DeHondt.

The initial tedious, page-by-page read through under their old system now took AutoSpecs a mere 15 minutes, providing time for their team to review and read for comprehension. The time saved was clear: a process that previously had taken a month, was now done in two days. That's over 90% time savings, with presumably equal stress savings.

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FOCUS ON WHAT IS ACTUALLY NEEDED

Sometimes the spec books that GCs receive from architects are reused and repurposed from previous jobs. They can include extraneous and irrelevant information that aren't tailored to the project at hand.

DeHondt uses AutoSpecs to weed out recycled requirements in the specs. As soon as he gets a spec book, he can pull a report of submittals like pre-install meetings and QA/QC requirements by spec section, and send it to the design team. The architect is able to then clarify which requirements are truly relevant, which coordination meetings and mockups can be combined, and which don't actually need to happen at all. As a result, Robins & Morton only does the work necessary to that specific project. "We use Pype to dive into the specifications and make them more project specific," says DeHondt.

QUALITY CHECK

Dividing requirements by type in AutoSpecs also allowed Robins & Morton to easily understand the scope of work. "This helps us dive in and coordinate better," said DeHondt. When the spec book was so cluttered, it was easy to focus on some aspects of the project like product data, shop drawings, and samples, while forgetting others. Certain requirements such as QA/QC requirements and coordination meetings would often get overlooked.

INDIVIDUALLY TAILORED REPORTS

One of the features DeHondt's team loved about AutoSpecs was the ability to use filters to create individually tailored reports. Prior to using Pype, they would hand each trade contractor the entire submittal log with hundreds of submittals. Using AutoSpecs, they found a better way.

After creating the whole log on the smart register, DeHondt's team used the available filters to organize everything by spec section and then by action

submittals. Using the now-sorted action submittals in AutoSpecs, they can print and distribute a *personal* submittal log for *each trade contractor*. Providing 30 or so submittals needed from each sub cuts out a mountain of irrelevant information for them to go through, making communication easier. The process was streamlined, specific, and therefore more successful.

PROACTIVE, NOT REACTIVE

The Robins & Morton team was able to use AutoSpecs to be proactive instead of reactive. The reports and actionable information produced by AutoSpecs early on helped them stay on top of the process. Instead of delaying timelines for missed mock-ups, DeHondt's team knows exactly what meetings need to be had and when, and can include them in the project schedule.



"AutoSpecs allows us to be more proactive with the process instead of reactive like we have in the past. We're able to do everything up front and know exactly what we need. Our projects flow a lot better."

Jon DeHondt, Project Manager,
Robins & Morton

