



Macrum Building Systems Inc.: Confident, Close Projects  
By Alan Dorich

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To **Macrum Building Systems Inc.**, close involvement of project owners is not a bad thing. On the contrary, Project Manager Ed Dolan says, the company has gravitated toward jobs where the owners wish to be actively involved. "Our reputation has become one [of a contractor] quite willing to work with owners that want to [participate]," he says.

Based in Greeley, Colo., Macrum Building Systems is a design/build contractor that specializes in commercial and industrial projects. Dolan says the company has evolved substantially since its start in 1971. Founder Chuck Macrum started the company as Macrum Quality Buildings, which focused on agriculture construction. But, by 1977, the company's business was divided evenly between agriculture and commercial work.

Slowly but surely, Dolan says, the company became more involved in complex commercial work, and changed its name to Macrum Building Systems in 1982. Today, he says, Macrum is still actively involved with the company and is its president.

According to Dolan, one of the company's key advantages is that it keeps owners involved. "We hear from other people that owners have become frustrated with our competitors just because they don't listen," he says. "We spend a lot of time in preconstruction [listening]." In addition, "We pride ourselves on taking care of the customer and being very quick to resolve problems during the construction phase or after the construction phase," Dolan says. "We'll work with the owners to get it resolved."

### Unique Applications

Macrum Building Systems' recent projects include several buildings in the St. Michaels subdivision of Greeley, including The Hobnobber Tavern. For the 2,438-square-foot pub, "We ended up doing the core and shell and tenant finish," Dolan says, noting that the tavern also features a 675-square-foot outdoor seating area. "It was a really unique application," he continues. "They wanted an old-style look to it, to give the feeling that the building was built around the turn of the



century. There was over \$50,000 of woodwork alone on the outside of the building.”

The company also completed the same services on the Harvest Modern County Kitchen, a restaurant that features kitchens in its basement and upstairs levels. In addition to restaurant services, “They also do catering, so they wanted to have one area where they could be cooking totally separately from [the restaurant],” he explains. The project, with a budget that exceeded \$2 million, also had unique features, including exposed woodwork and granite countertops. “One seating area has a complete skylight roof system,” he adds. Its St. Michaels projects also included an 1,800-square-foot location for the Marble Slab Creamery ice cream chain. “That was a fun one, since it’s a franchise,” Dolan says. Although the location’s owner was required to meet the requirements of the chain, Dolan says the project incorporated unique colors. “There’s something fun about building something that’s going to be serving ice cream,” he adds.

Its last project in St. Michaels was an event center for which it completed a tenant finish in 75 days, at a cost of less than \$337,000. The location, Dolan explains, will be used for events such as family reunions or weddings. The center features a dance floor as well as a screen that can be used for presentations. “[It has the] ability for both a festive atmosphere and also a business-like atmosphere,” Dolan says.

### **Coping With Challenges**

Dolan joined Macrum Building Systems in 1998, after working as a project manager for another construction firm. “I’ve been involved in some aspect of construction for over 30 years,” he says. Recently, Dolan says, the company has felt increasingly challenged by “the more controlling aspects” of municipal building departments. Although the company used to be able to focus 100 percent on clients, “We find a huge portion of our job becomes placating building documents,” he says. Whereas the company could once receive a permit in 30 days after drawings were completed, it now takes at least 90 because of all the revisions required to satisfy different departments. “It takes a lot more of our time,” Dolan says.

### **Educating Clients**

To move more efficiently, Macrum Building Systems is working to educate its clients about the process. “That’s one of the things we think we have to instruct owners on – that this will take some time to work through,” he says. “We spend a lot of time doing that with them.”

### **Maintaining Growth**

Dolan says he is confident about the company’s continuing growth. “I think, in the future, [we are] going to be involved in larger and larger projects, as we have now completed some that have a higher degree of complexity,” he explains. “[They have] raised our confidence level.”

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