



Design/build is an increasingly popular method of construction that offers owners a single source of responsibility in the construction process, in addition to several other advantages (reduced project cost, reduced delivery time, quality control, early identification of total project cost, etc.).

In the design/build method, the owner contracts with only one firm to provide both construction and design services. As a design/build company, Keller will provide the owner with architectural design services, and will monitor the cost of such services throughout the process. We then develop a cost based on the design, and if the owner accepts the price, construction begins. Often the design/build company will guarantee the cost of the project at this early stage, meaning the owner will know the complete cost of the project up-front. Under this fixed price agreement, Keller has incentive to save costs and savings accrue to the owner.

In comparison to the traditional bid method of construction, in which an owner must first hire and pay a designer, then bid out the project to a contractor, the design/build method eliminates the typical hassles that arise between architects and contractors. In the traditional design-bid-build method, the owner becomes the mediator in any disputes that arise between the architect and the contractor. Such disputes arise because in the traditional method the contractor's involvement is delayed until after the architect has finished developing the design. In the design/build method, however, the contractor and designer are one entity, and are therefore working together from project conception to completion.

Design/build is rapidly gaining attention as the method of choice in the construction industry. The Design Build Institute of America estimates that almost 50% of all construction projects performed in the United States are design/build, and that percentage will rapidly increase in the next decade.

While the recent resurgence of design/build in the construction industry makes it appear as if design/build is a new idea, it is in fact the resurrection of an old tradition. In ancient Greece, buildings were constructed by "master builders," men who performed both the designing and constructing tasks. The tradition of the master builder lasted for more than 2,000 years and is now mirrored in the design/builder of modern day.

