

Builders' Hardware works with clients to understand a door's purpose and how it should open.



CONSTRUCTION

FALL 2009

Opportunity Knocks

BUILDERS' HARDWARE AND SPECIALTY CONSTANTLY WORKS TO DEVELOP THE EXPERTISE OF ITS STAFF.

Builders' Hardware and Specialty Co. prides itself on "over-servicing our customers," says David McBrier, director of business development. Whether it's a facility manager, general contractor or architect, the Erie, Pa.-based business enjoys getting involved with projects early in the design phase to help develop solutions for openings throughout a structure.

"The first thing we do, if provided the opportunity, is assist the architect in writing their door, frame and hardware specifications," McBrier explains. "Our involvement can help eliminate a lot of unforeseen issues while enhancing the end result for the building owner. This gets us into the project early and gives us an understanding of what the customer needs vs. just supplying what was written on the specification."

Each and every trade can benefit from the expertise provided early on in the project life

cycle. Properly chosen products combined with various details in the specifications can help eliminate a lot of unnecessary complications between trades on the jobsite including: door and hardware installers, electricians, aluminum and glass suppliers, access control and security providers, fire inspectors and the authority-having local jurisdiction.

Architects, contractors and end users say that they value Builders' Hardware's professional services. Builders' Hardware has seen the results first-hand with a higher level of respect from the clients to deeper, more meaningful long-term business relationships, McBrier says.

Founded in 1956, Builders' Hardware supplies and delivers frames, doors, architectural door hardware and division 10 specialty products to customers throughout western Pennsylvania, northeast Ohio and western New York. McBrier explains the company tries

Builders' Hardware and Specialty Co.

www.builders-hardware.net

- *2008 sales: \$20 million+*
- *Locations: Erie, PA; Pittsburgh, PA; Youngstown, OH; Akron, OH*
- *Employees: 75+*
- *Products: Commercial doors, frames, architectural hardware and specialty items*

"[We] can help eliminate a lot of unforeseen issues."

-David McBrier, director of business development

very hard to focus on the project-specific needs of each and every client.

"This includes recognizing the required operation of the door opening," he adds. "Whether trying to protect and secure the

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building from environmental elements, theft, vandalism or utilizing access control to keep people from going into spaces they shouldn't without a certain authority level."

Tackling the Unique Challenges

No matter what the project requires or the specifications that must be met, Builders' Hardware professionals put forth their best effort to identify and document all the potential issues and conflicts that may exist with the building plans. The firm works to ensure that its products meet the stringent code requirements and building regulations within the various jurisdictions in which it does business.

"We continue to encourage our staff to participate in industry education and industry certification programs," McBrier says. "The products we provide into the commercial, industrial and government building markets are constantly evolving to meet the needs of customers, codes and regulations. Our staff

needs to be constantly developing and honing their skills," said McBrier on the importance of having professional and knowledgeable staff.

In today's building industry, security and access control is a top concern, especially on educational campuses and healthcare complexes. These sectors are constantly evolving, and Builders' Hardware stays on top of the changes by utilizing building applications that range from simple to complex.

"It is important to review all of the requirements of the opening before making a determination of product application," he says. "This includes openings that are getting more intelligent on each and every project that we do. Over the past couple of years, various openings continue develop with more of a demand for intelligence."

Intelligent doors react to information provided by a security manager in terms of authority levels and accessibility. Access controlled doors today, if desired, can easily mon-

itor and act upon all movement in relation to that particular opening. Based on the time of day and the event that occurs, users can generate alerts, enable alarms, move or start closed-circuit television cameras, and create audit trails that can generate an alert to e-mail, text or page someone or an entire department.

"We're really trying to ensure that customer needs are met for security and convenience irrespective of the type of building," McBrier says. "We play a key role in that supply chain process to meet the needs of the building and its occupants."

This expertise came into play during con-



» Builders' Hardware supplied nearly \$3 million of products for the Children's Memorial Hospital of Pittsburgh.

struction of the Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh. Between the renovation of an existing former hospital building and the ground-up construction of a second tower, Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh has more than 3,000 openings that Builders' Hardware supplied for approximately \$3 million.

Operations Manager David Fetzner says Builders' Hardware was experiencing smooth sailing on this project – which was completed in March 2009 – until the construction team realized that 150 doors needed to be added to the overall access control system of the hospital. However, Builders' Hardware handled the challenge with ease.

"That's where our expertise comes in," Fetzner explains. "We look at the required products on the project so that Builders' Hardware can coordinate a big change and ensure it goes smoothly.

"The contractors are happy and the owners are happy in the end, and they get the product they want and need to run an efficient and pro-

ductive facility."

The company had to merge the controls of existing doors and entries in the building that once housed St. Francis Hospital with the control system for the ground-up structure.

"All it came down to was providing a high level of coordination," he adds. "We talked to them on-site, they let us know what was going on and we figured out what to do before it became a problem." Although it required a great deal of synchronization, Fetzner says the project was manageable because everyone communicated effectively.

Builders' Hardware brought a variety of products to the table to meet the bevy of needs the Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh would have. Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh had numerous requirements synonymous with healthcare structures, including 24-hour access, main entrance, emergency room entrance, emergency exits and surgical-room doors, as well as secure pharmaceutical access. Getting

involved with the project in 2005, before the start of construction and renovation of the former St. Francis Hospital, was crucial to success for both Builders' Hardware and Children's Hospital.

McBrier explains that surgical-room door openings have become more of a challenge in the past few years as specification requirements have called for inbound and outbound access control solutions to control, monitor and document hospital staff and personnel entering and exiting surgical rooms. There has also been a "vigilant push" to decrease and/or eliminate bacteria and mold in these clean room environments, he says.

The goal is to free these clean rooms from any microbes and other unsanitary agents that could lead to health issues for patients. To help the hospitals accomplish this "germ-free goal" Builders' Hardware has implemented various hardware applications and recommended various products finishes to help alleviate and stop this undesired outcome.

A hospital's pharmacy is another area that has high demands for its openings. McBrier notes pharmacies are traditionally a target for theft, so these areas must be outfitted with high-level theft resistance and restrictive access control systems.

Future Openings

As Builders' Hardware continues to establish itself as a company offering expert consulting services in addition to meeting client's physical supply needs, McBrier expresses the desire to expand into complementary business lines and additional regional markets.

"Once a foothold has been established in these new markets, Builders' Hardware's reputation for nurturing long-term relationships and delivering on its promises and commitments should be enough to be a fighting force for years to come," McBrier says.

"We're always working to develop healthy business relationships with customers, clients, vendors and suppliers that share our culture, our passion for building, and our vision for success," he adds. "Everyone at Builders' Hardware works very hard to meet the challenges presented each and every day.

"Very few things are simple and routine, and as a value added distributor, we play a vital role between the manufacturer and supplier, the architect, the general contractor and the building owner," McBrier says. "It is all about delivering on your promises and good communication, those are the keys to success." ♦



» Director of Business Development David McBrier (left) and CEO Jim McBrier believe Builders' Hardware plays a vital role in the market.