

Why You Need an Owner's Representative and How Do You Rationalize the Fee for Services

An owner's representative is what the name implies, a representative for the owner during the design and construction of a project. The owner of a project is mostly interested in the project design, the project costs, the project quality, and to make use of the project once the work is complete; however, owners typically do not have the time to manage the project and do not live near the project. Additionally, owners are usually disadvantaged when it comes to dealing with an architect and general contractor or managing design and construction as these roles are not part of their daily lives. Thus, a design and construction management professional is needed to help protect the owner's interests.

The owner has many responsibilities during the course of a project. The owner must approve the functionality and aesthetic appeal of the design, and then, the owner ensures construction comes up to the necessary level of quality. The owner is responsible for the negotiation and signing of basic agreements, reviewing design alternatives, soliciting bids, analysing and approving change orders, managing the budget, and the general management of the architect and general contractor.

Acting as your representative, Koll Consulting LLC will guide you through the process, reviewing with you the desired design and modifications with the architect, analysing the contractor and subcontractor bidding, and overseeing the construction process all the way through to project completion. This will help keep your budget and schedule in check and help to provide protection from cost overruns or contractor default. Additionally, some facets of construction are not covered by the contract for construction, and these will need to be dealt with during the construction process, sometimes on short notice. The owner must move in, supply furnishings and equipment, as well as maintain all the complex electrical, HVAC, and plumbing systems. The owner's representative will assist in this process, helping you assemble the design and construction team, and then provide you with skilled and experienced management of your team during the project's execution.

Does an owner's representative really add another layer of cost? Dollar for dollar, the actual savings an owner's representative produces is difficult to track. My goal is to be cost effective at each stage of the project, whether analysing alternatives, reviewing each component of the proposal, reviewing each contract and negotiating fees, reviewing contractor and subcontractor proposals to get the best price, making good judgments during weekly design and construction meetings, reviewing the project schedule, or reviewing the monthly construction payment application.

Professional management services have been proven to control cost overruns on a project, which can easily run between two and ten percent or more of the project cost. Some of the value added will be the peace of mind that comes from knowing someone is involved in the process who is constantly looking out for your best interests.

While design and construction can be a challenging industry, it can be one of the most rewarding. As an owner's representative, I strive for a successful project on every endeavour, and I look forward to working with you and your team towards that goal.

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