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# Vision from Conception to Completion

## AMG & Associates Inc.

*Produced by Sean Barr & Written by Mark Fitzgerald*

Listening carefully to a client means more than just simply nodding your head and jotting down some notes. The best contractors are able to anticipate and connect with a client's vision practically from the very first hello.

AMG & Associates Inc., a general contractor based in Santa Clarita, Calif., is one of those firms that goes well beyond the usual courtesies and brings to the table an imagination and passion for every project it pursues. "We embrace our clients' vision every step of the way," says Albert Giacomazzi,

president and CEO, who has spent more than 30 years in the industry successfully completing and managing over \$500 million worth in construction projects for local, state and federal agencies.

### **Robust Competencies**

Founded in 2005, AMG provides preconstruction, construction management, general contracting and general engineering services to the private and public works





markets. The company, which has a staff of 13 and average annual revenue of \$16 million, often manages large construction projects, bringing together the skills and experience of a variety of other companies and individuals (including consultants, subcontractors and suppliers) to complete the work in a timely and cost-efficient manner.

“We’ll do work for almost any public entity, including every branch of the federal government,” says Giacomazzi, who has overseen projects for the Air Force, Army, Army and Air Force Exchange Service, Defense Commissary Agency, GSA, Marine Corps, NASA, Navy, U.S. Army

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Corps of Engineers, USFPO and the U.S. Postal Service. “We’ll also do work for the state of California and any county or city agency,” adds the president.

The company targets small- to mid-sized private and public works projects, primarily in the Santa Clarita Valley, San Francisco Bay Area and the extended Los Angeles market, which includes Los Angeles County, Orange County, the Inland Empire and the San Fernando Valley.

“The projects we take might range from \$100,000 to \$15 million,” says Giacomazzi. “So they could take anywhere from a month to a year to complete.” The county of Los Angeles recently hired AMG for a \$4 million project on Santa Catalina Island that involves building a new paramedic and lifeguard station. “We had to hire a barge to get all the materials to the island,” explains Giacomazzi. “Every piece of building element has to be shipped, so you can imagine the planning that’s gone into this.”

### Dependencies and Collaboration

AMG works closely with designers, architects, engineers and owners to ensure that projects are being designed in an appealing and cost effective manner. Although it staffs project managers, superintendents and engineers, the company relies heavily on subcontractors as it doesn’t perform any work in-house.

“It’s not unusual for us to have 25 to 30 subcontractors on a job,” says the president. “We utilize subcontractors from many different disciplines.” Some of these areas include demolition, earthwork, underground utilities, reinforcing steel, masonry, concrete, structural steel, metal decking, metal fabrication, rough carpentry, finished carpentry, cabinets, insulation, roofing, sheet metal, doors, frames, hardware, windows, mechanical and fire proofing.

“We’ve developed excellent relationships with subcontractors throughout California, Nevada and Arizona,” Giacomazzi says. These cooperative working relationships have encouraged subcontractors to be competitive with their pricing without compromising on quality. For subcontracts exceeding \$250,000, AMG typically requires subcontractors to provide a payment and performance bond.

An advertisement for Andresen Architecture Inc. The top half shows a night view of a large, modern building with illuminated windows and a prominent entrance. Below the image is the company logo, which reads "ANDRESEN Architecture INC." in a stylized font. The bottom half of the advertisement contains a block of text describing the company's design approach and capabilities, followed by contact information including a website and phone numbers.

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“Our attitude regarding subcontractors is very simple,” points out Giacomazzi. “We pay them on time and treat them the way we would want to be treated.” At least once a week, one of AMG’s three principals visit the job site to review the work, perform a budget analysis, address any outstanding issues and evaluate the impact the current progress may have on the overall schedule.

**Planning and Persevering**

The company utilizes Primavera P.3 or SureTrack software

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to develop Critical Path Method schedules that allow for the inclusion of necessary resources, materials and equipment. AMG also incorporates its budgetary data into the CPMs to streamline the monthly pay application procedure. To insure that schedules are maintained, it updates the CPMs every month. AMG also utilizes Short-Interval-Schedules on a weekly basis to facilitate the management and scheduling of all necessary project elements.

As far as the impact of the economic downturn, Giacomazzi admits the company has experienced some challenges. "The whole industry is pretty much in an upheaval right now," he says. "So there's no doubt the economy has wreaked havoc, and we haven't been entirely immune to what's occurring. Being a public works contractor, we've noticed that the competition is fiercer than ever before."

The company is naturally prepared, however, to weather a storm from its reputé all the way to its on-site routines. "The biggest thing we have going for us is that we've established a reputation as a contractor with high ethical standards and the highest level of integrity and trust," recognizes Giacomazzi. "The architects and owners we interface with

know this and know that when we do a project we're going to be very straightforward and honest with our pricing. They know we're in the business to develop longstanding relationships."

Looking ahead, the president expects AMG's steadfast values and good reputation in the industry to help it continue winning projects and, in turn, bolster its presence throughout California. ■



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