

**In sourcing: Confidence, Competence and Commitment  
Bring Projects Home On Time and In Budget**

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## **Abstract**

*The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art is near completion of a three-year four building construction initiative (176,000 square feet) that doubled the Museum building and collection exhibition space. In sourcing projects, which were connected with new construction significantly, contributed to successful building projects, which came in on time and in budget. Many staff members contributed to planning and implementation. However, three projects with a combined cost avoidance of over \$380,000. clearly demonstrate the cost effectiveness of using in-house expertise as well as reminding us that staff often rise to heroic levels because of their dedication and organizational commitment.*

## **Introduction of the Organization**

The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art and The Center for Performing Arts are affiliated with Florida State University.

The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art is the largest museum/university complex in the Nation. The 66-acre estate is the legacy of John Ringling (1866-1936), one of the great business tycoons of his day. The Museum of Art, recognized as the State Art Museum of Florida, includes 21 galleries of internationally recognized European and American art with paintings by Rubens, Van Dyck, Poussin and other Baroque masters. In addition, the estate encompasses Cà d' Zan, the recently restored 32-room Ringling mansion; the Circus Museum, the Original Asolo Theater; the Rose Garden and beautifully landscaped grounds overlooking Sarasota Bay.

The Center for Performing Arts is the home of the professional Asolo Theater Company performing in the Mertz Theater, which was brought to Sarasota from Dunfermline, Scotland. The Center is also home of the Masters in Fine Arts Degree program FSU Conservatory for Actor Training. Their performances are held in the intimate Cook Theater. And finally, the Sarasota Ballet conducts training classes and holds performances in the Mertz Theater.

**State of the Problem/Initiative**

Tackling a \$50 million dollar 176,600 square foot construction project involved more than just erecting four buildings. There were many details and side projects that were attached to the buildings and new space. Bids were received for preserving, restoring and installing the eighteenth century Historic Asolo Theater gilded panels into the new Visitors Pavilion, new buildings’ landscape and 61 acre grounds beautification, and campus-wide technology infrastructure integration/installation. As construction project costs mounted, it became clear that prudent cuts in expenses were inevitable. Stepping up to the plate, the Estate Grounds Crew, Office of Technology Team and Art Conservation Laboratory Staff all volunteered to take on these special projects in addition to maintaining their current job duties.

**Design**

Based upon anticipated new building completion dates the following methodology was applied.

- Verify project in sourcing using existing staff is cost effective
- Identify tasks required to ensure successful project implementation
- Establish a project timeline with milestone completion sequences
- Monitor the projects weekly/monthly to ensure planned target dates can be met

Budget ramifications:

Historic Asolo Theater Cost Figures (Three staff / Two years)

<b><u>Project</u></b>	<b><u>Expense</u></b>
Phase 1 - Documentation, panel cleaning, panel removal and crating	\$98,000
Phase 2 - Panel restoration, ornament recreation	\$98,000
Phase 3 - Panel reinstallation and misc. specialty carpentry	\$92,000
Additional costs for curtains and sconces	\$15,000
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Total restoration expense	\$303,000
Less Bid estimate	- \$428,000
<b>\$125,000 Cost avoidance - based upon outsourced bid estimate</b>	

## Landscape Project Management and Installation (Nine Staff / Fifteen Months)

The dollar figures in this report are tangible figures. There has been a substantial amount of money not included that would reflect management fees for the coordination of the entire landscape installation process. Those management fees would have included but not limited to: review of the master landscape drawings, landscape plant bed placement, management of the irrigation installation, coordinating and securing the plant materials from various nurseries for size and quantity and quality, coordinating the deliveries of all landscape materials-plants, mulch or other miscellaneous, coordinating and securing the mulch and fertilizers for all projects listed, coordinating all landscape efforts around other contractors and target deadlines, mature tree evaluation and subsequent removal or protection.

The cost savings for the projects list below are based on the installation of plant materials, mulching, fertilizing and the labor for preparing the landscape plant beds (multiple *Round Up* applications and sod/debris removal along with some final grading).

They do not include the expense that would have been incurred

<b><u>Project</u></b>	<b><u>Savings</u></b>
Pond 1	\$18,882.25
Pond A	\$14,052.48
Pond B	\$28,094.23
Bus Drop Off Lane and C.P.A. Crosswalk Area	\$18,620.00
Visitor's Reception Pavilion	\$14,500.00
Cà d' zan Gatehouse	\$ 4,220.75
Dwarf Garden	\$12,034.00
Main Galleries Expansion Landscape*	\$20,119.00

**\$130,522.71 Cost avoidance – based on out-sourced bid estimate**

## Technology Infrastructure Installation (Eight Staff / Two years)

The Technology Team upgraded the entire technological infrastructure of the Ringling Museum by planning and coordinating contractors but performed much of the hands on work for the projects listed below.

<b><u>Project</u></b>	<b><u>Savings</u></b>
Technology Infrastructure	
New high-speed fiber optics (campus-wide)	\$10454.00
Communication Equipment Racks	\$10454.00
Integrated Data switches/routers (campus-wide)	\$30,937.00
New Telephone System (campus-wide)	\$11,744.00
New Data Center & Communication Hub	\$25,939.00
Admissions & Museum Store Equipment	\$30,161.00
Visitor Pavilion Audio Visuals	\$ 7,474.00

**\$127,163 Cost avoidance – based on outsourced bid estimate**

## **Implementation**

The projects were not without their many challenges.

Historic Asolo Theater Example: When erecting the three story scaffolding required to install the third tier gilded panels, took two weeks instead of the contractor's two day estimate, the Conservatory staff quickly compensated by moving forward with the second level panel restoration work in the Ringling Conservation Laboratory. In sourcing saved what would have been multiple off site conservation technician travel expenses.

Landscape Project Management and Installation Example: In the Fall of 2005, the Ringling Grounds Crew met with multiple challenges as four hurricanes swept through or nearly missed Florida Sarasota Bay area. One might think that rain was good for landscape plantings. However, keeping the newly installed Royal Palms and other trees

from falling over during hurricane force winds was nerve racking. Hundreds of cubic feet of mulch was soaked making it harder to distribute to beds.

### Technology Infrastructure Installation

Technology Infrastructure Installation Example: Ringling Museum is a 24/7 operations.

It is open to visitors 362 days per year. Grand openings for two buildings, the Tibbals Learning Center and Visitor Pavilion, were scheduled for the first week in January.

Activities included gala events, visits by VIP dignitaries, press and media coverage. The

Visitor Pavilion date of completion was delayed several times. In order for the Pavilion

to open and be ready to receive visitors, The Technology Team worked through the

Christmas and New Year holidays to ensure the Admissions and Museum Store new sales equipment and software transition to the new building was seamless to visitors.

Transition to the new “high tech” telephone system was the same, seamless.

### **Benefits**

Because of the prudent fiscal management and effective use of in-house resources, to date three of the four buildings have come in on time and in budget. The fourth will be completed Fall 2006. The most inspiring benefit of the hard work during the last three years has been to watch individuals come together as a teams who took ownership and dedicated themselves to successful project outcomes which ensured Ringling had black ink on its bottom line.

### **Retrospect**

We know of no other Museum in the country that has attempted a building project of this magnitude. The 66-Acre Estate has been beautifully transformed. In retrospect, it was a

tremendous effort running through the three-year construction gauntlet to maintain daily operations in service to visitors as Florida's State Art Museum and manage the hundreds of projects and details. What was management thinking? Florida State University believed in the Ringling Museum vision for the future and provided many support services. Ringling Senior Management had the confidence in its staff to allow them to rise to the occasion, demonstrate their professional expertise and that in sourcing can be a significant cost savings. What was the staff thinking? We can do it!...and they did.