CONSIDERATIONS TO
INDUSTRY CHANGES
IN SPECIFICATION TOOLS

Technology and tools within the industry are constantly and consistently improving. It is critical to be aware of the changes that come with upgrades and developments. Conspectus, Inc. has been writing specifications, and has used a myriad of platforms and tools for over 4 decades.

We have learned a tremendous amount and would like to provide you with a checklist of considerations when you are either looking at a new tool or preparing for the next release to be rolled out.
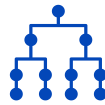
INTUITIVE FUNCTION

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CONSIDER THIS:

There is a learning curve to every upgrade and new tool.
It is important to get feedback from participants who have used the program and have applied user functions to a project.

STRUCTURING BASED ON FAMILIES

CONSIDER THIS:

Does the system allow for ease of alignment with drawing terminology or BIM families? Is there a clear connection or link between Uniformat assemblies and the sections containing the corresponding family components?

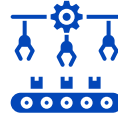## OFFICE MASTERS AND STANDARDS

CONSIDER THIS:

Does system "house" office (or firm-wide) standards to be applied to all or selected projects?

When those masters are to be updated, can changes be applied to all active projects?

Does system allow for project or firm specific standards to be applied to projects of specifiers choice?

PRODUCT AND MANUFACTURER INFORMATION

CONSIDER THIS:

Is the product and manufacturer content "Pay to Play"?

Meaning, you will only see those manufacturers who have paid a fee to be included in the platform.

That can open up possibilities for manufacturer-controlled content and reduce honest product application and information.

Is the system designed for spec-writing or for promoting manufacturers and products?

PUBLISHING FUNCTION

CONSIDER THIS:

Word documents will be around for the foreseeable future. Publishing to .docx and/or .pdf for ultimate industry usage is critical.

Flexibility in content, before and after publication is also an important consideration.

Cloud-based specifications allow everyone on the project team to have access to the most current information at all times.

INTEGRATING EXISTING SPECIFICATIONS

CONSIDER THIS:

A system that allows for ease of pulling in existing documentation from existing projects or standards can save a tremendous amount of time.

Providing the ability to edit that content and bring it into a new project is a time saver.

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COLLABORATION

CONSIDER THIS:

Are decisions provided in real-time to project team members who are in the documents?

Does system allow for:

- ·Capturing history of decisions made by the team during design.

- ·Audit trails to allow for tracking of project progress and greater accountability.

- ·Breaking assembly categories down into brief descriptions and components within the narrative and connects Owners, estimators, and contractors to the pertinent information with speed and ease.

Is the system designed to help close the communication gap in the project team and bring transparency to the project?

Does the system allow for unlimited user collaboration, or is every participant required to have a license to view the project?

GLOBAL TAGGING

CONSIDER THIS:

Make decisions or choices early. Apply those decisions throughout the specs. Update the choices quickly and easily.

For example: Apply a LEED requirement to the specifications. If the requirement is updated or removed, global tagging will allow the edits to happen quickly and easily throughout the specification.

FUN SPEC WRITING

CONSIDER THIS:

Spec writing can be fun when it is efficient, transparent, collaborative and leads to a transformation in behaviors of the entire project team.

Consider ease of use and interface: Is the system easy to navigate and designed to flow with the design process?

Does it provide convenient access to past projects and decisions to incorporate lessons learned and valuable feedback into other current and upcoming projects?

VERSION COMPARISON

CONSIDER THIS:

Comparing versions saves time and allows for many parties on the project team to quickly review changes in the documents.

UNIFORMAT® TO MASTERFORMAT®

CONSIDER THIS:

Does system reference MasterFormat® section inside Uniformat® and allow the documents to build on the narrative?

Uniformat® components refer to sections in MasterFormat®.

ASSEMBLY APPROACH IN UNIFORMAT®

CONSIDER THIS:

Does system provide Uniformat® as a checklist that allows user to identify scope of project at the beginning and throughout the process of developing project?

Does Uniformat® provide a narrative to allow the design team to think about and answer questions as phases progress? Does it function as a tool for contractors and other members of the team to review and comment on?

TEST DRIVE VS. DEMO

CONSIDER THIS:

Understand how a tool works through practical use and application within a sample project.

A demonstration should allow hands-on options to dig into areas that are of priority to you, as well as areas that provide benefits that will drive success on your firm, team, and project.

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