



## **Executive of the Month: Adelhardt, CEO of Adelhardt Construction: Leading a relentless pursuit of excellence**

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David Adelhardt, CEO of Adelhardt Construction, is leading the third generation construction management, general contracting and consulting firm to new heights - literally.

Adelhardt Construction was founded in 1929 when David's grandfather bought a small carpentry shop on 44th St. and 3rd Ave. for \$2,000. The company was then run by Andrew Adelhardt, David's father, for roughly 30 years. During that time, the business expanded into architectural woodworking, metal fabrication and general contracting. David purchased Adelhardt Construction from his father in 1998 and made the decision to focus solely on general contracting, moving his team from Queens to Manhattan the following year. When the company outgrew its multi-floor offices at 535 8th Ave. in 2014, it moved into its new headquarters on the top floor of the iconic One Penn Plaza.

Adelhardt's new 16,500 s/f space occupies the entire 55th floor. With a welcoming, open floor plan designed by David and sweeping views of midtown, downtown, and the Hudson River, the new office provides the perfect setting for the creativity and collaboration that are at the heart of Adelhardt's approach to doing business.

David initially pursued architecture, earning a B.A. from Syracuse University before finding his true calling in construction. On his first day at his first architecture job after college, David's manager sent him to a house in East Hampton, Long Island, where a set of beautiful custom mahogany windows had arrived for installation. There was one big, expensive problem - they were all the wrong size. David walked onto the job site and into the middle of a group of contractors arguing amongst themselves over a pile of unusable windows.

"While everyone was blaming each other, I was just looking for a solution," David said. "I went through every single window and opening, probably about 80-85 of them, first figuring out just how big of a problem we had, and then coming up with a cost-effective solution that made it affordable for the contractor to change the framing."

The experience influenced David's move toward the construction side of architecture. He realized that the greatest architects - people like Filippo Brunelleschi, Mies van der Rohe and Frank Lloyd Wright - were actually master builders. They knew just as much about building as design, and possessed the ability to realize people's dreams by physically constructing them. That's where David's passion lies, in creating physical solutions to complex construction challenges.

Adelhardt Construction is built on a foundation of values that are deeply rooted in the company's history - safety, accountability, courage, humility, partnership and trust. The result is a highly collaborative and refreshingly genuine client-contractor relationship.

Adelhardt partners with the construction departments of companies in a wide variety of sectors, including financial services, hospitality, fashion and retail. Their clientele is headlined by Fortune 500 corporations and global financial leaders such as Citi, Bank of America, Chase, TD Bank and

Capital One. The common ground between these companies is that they know they can rely on Adelhardt to consistently deliver on high-stakes projects requiring the greatest degree of professionalism and trust. Many of Adelhardt's clients have been with them for decades; each of those longstanding relationships is its own testament to the Adelhardt brand.

"Our reputation is based on our ability to perform consistently. We strive to make certain that our most recent project with a client is as impressive as our first project with them," David said. "It's not just our commitment to excellence, but also the way we do business that enables us to build and sustain relationships. Those relationships - with our clients, employees and subcontractors - distinguish us. We recognize that they all have a choice in who they work with, and we're determined to be their construction partner of choice."

David is involved in every aspect of Adelhardt Construction, from client acquisition to project management and daily operations, ensuring that the company's values remain at the heart of its culture and value proposition.

The key to Adelhardt Construction's growth strategy is strengthening existing relationships while expanding into new partnerships. Adelhardt's reach spans the entire Eastern Seaboard and into the Midwest with licenses in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland, Delaware, Florida and Illinois. Most states that require licensing enforce stringent construction guidelines that only top firms like Adelhardt are able to meet.

David learned the value of leadership coming up through the industry ranks as he navigated the ever-evolving landscape of New York City's construction industry. His leadership style was influenced by his father, and he also draws from lessons learned through his life passions and experiences, particularly sailing and travel.

"People have to want to work with you," David said. "You have to be clear in your communication and everyone needs to know the plan. Above all, you need to treat everyone with respect and offer them an environment where they are positioned for success."

For prospective employees, the allure of Adelhardt Construction is simple: work for a firm that embraces your ideas and cares for your well-being, in a high-energy atmosphere with a dedicated team.

David is a registered architect with the State of New York and a member of the AIA. He also serves on the advisory board of the Fashion Institute of Technology's School of Interior Design. Because of his wealth of knowledge and reputation for honesty and integrity, David is frequently sought as an expert witness and for construction dispute.

A self-proclaimed architecture and engineering "nerd," David enjoys giving back to the community and profession. David serves on the board of directors for the ACE Mentor Program of Greater New York, where he is an active mentor in the program for high school students who are exploring careers as architects, contractors and engineers. Adelhardt Construction hosts frequent mentorship sessions at its One Penn Plaza headquarters, an inspiring experience for any ambitious student.

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