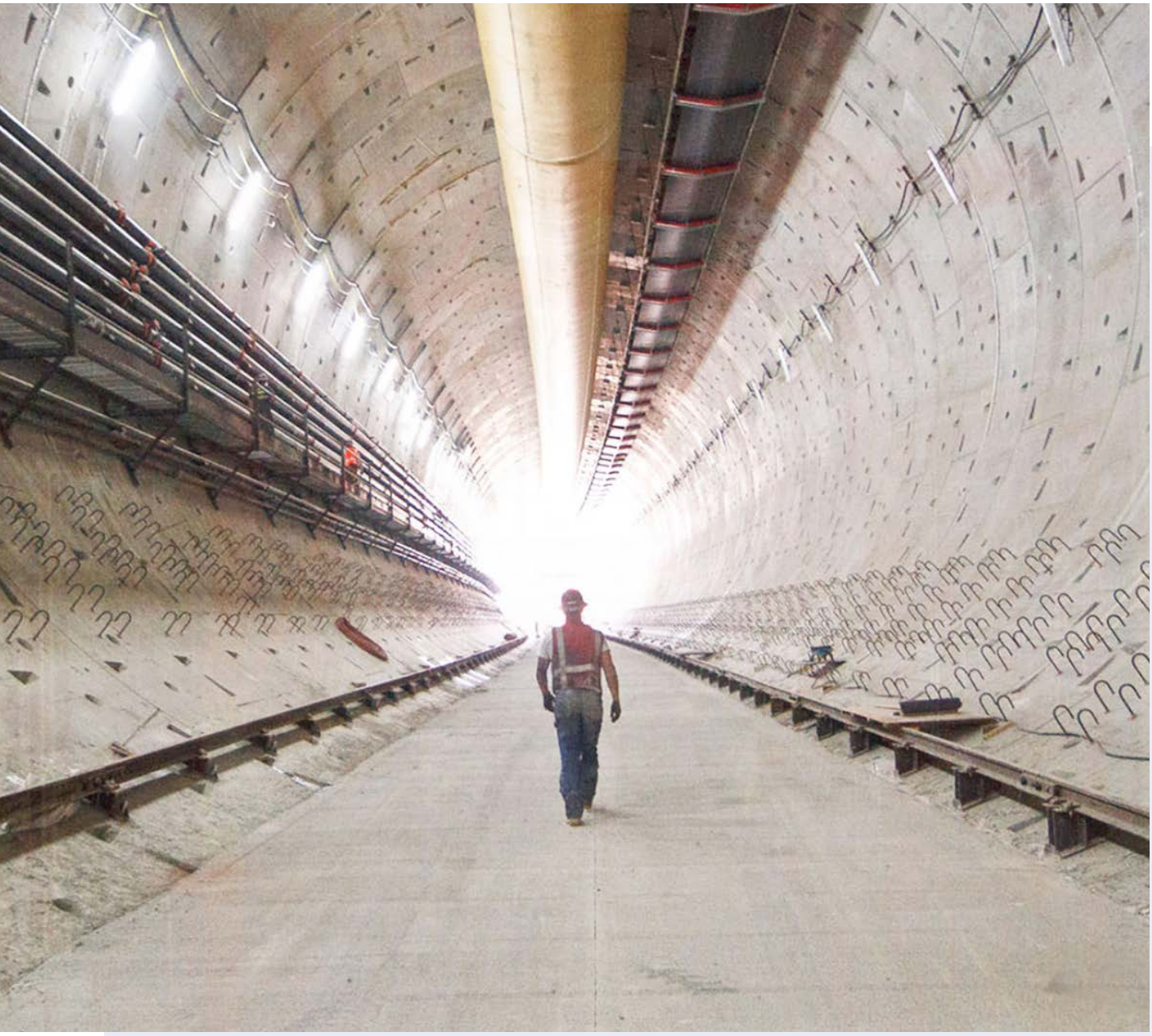
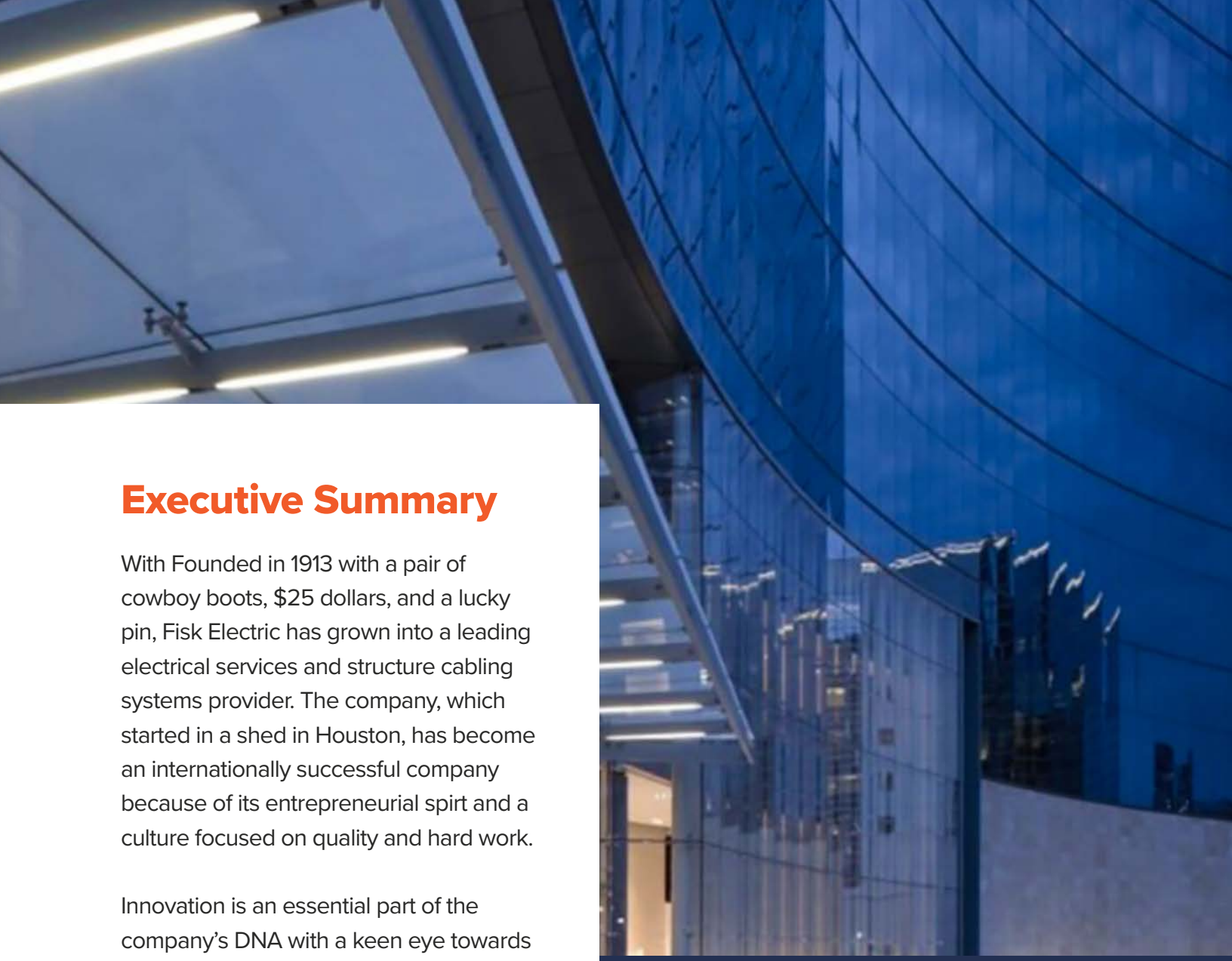
FISK
ELECTRIC

Case Study



FISK electric Since 1913

eVolve ELECTRICAL



Executive Summary

With Founded in 1913 with a pair of cowboy boots, $25 dollars, and a lucky pin, Fisk Electric has grown into a leading electrical services and structure cabling systems provider. The company, which started in a shed in Houston, has become an internationally successful company because of its entrepreneurial spirt and a culture focused on quality and hard work.

Innovation is an essential part of the company's DNA with a keen eye towards improving both services and efficiency. The organization is always on the lookout for technology that can improve their workflow. That's why Cory Borchardt, Senior Vice President of Operations, and his team took a hard look at eVolve Electric and then purchased the software.

Unlike other solutions he considered, Corey quickly recognized that eVolve Electric could "change the way that we do our business," specifically in the field and pre-fab operations.

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Cory Borchardt
Senior Vice President of Operations

The Challenge

Fisk offers the broadest range of electrical and technology services to be found anywhere in the construction and building technology industries. The company has regional offices in Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio, employing 1,200 employees with a revenue of $360.4 million.

Among its notable projects are lighting up the Houston Astrodome; installing 16 miles of electrical work in Saudi Arabia; rebuilding a substation in Port-au-Prince; and more recently, helping to build the impressive Alaska Way Viaduct Replacement Tunnel in Seattle.

The challenges of projects like these are many, and Cory focused on one goal that is at the heart of every successful business: improving efficiency. For a large MEP contractor, money is made through the smart management of labor. On a 100,000 hour contract, even a one percent increase in efficiency can equate to a significant amount of money.

At Fisk, employees spent a lot of time and effort modeling a project, but that information wasn't always being successfully translated into useful layout and prefab drawings. Corey believed his company was missing the opportunity to make the model into a useful tool for the field.

"It's unrealistic to just put the model on an iPad for a foreman and expect him to be able to build off of that," he says. "The solution is to identify all the data the foreman could possibly need to do their job on one drawing."

Specifically, Fisk wanted to find a way to standardize modeling on its projects and to incorporate that modeling into a design practice that could be used from prefab to installation, beyond the contractual requirement to build a model.

"I was challenging our BIM guys to create libraries to replicate the same assembly over and over again. They were struggling with identifying the way to do it, what the right components were, and what were the right things for prefab," Corey explains.

He brought his team together and issued marching orders. "You need to find a way to get this done. I know other people do it, so there's got to be a way. Find out what they're using."

The challenge is how to get from that detailer to the executive level. They needed to see it as an investment. It's a capital investment just like buying a truck or a big piece of equipment.

Cory Borchardt
Senior Vice President
of Operations

The Opportunity

His team asked associates in the industry what they were using for improved modeling and library creation. Repeatedly, eVolve Electrical was named so they decided to trial the software.

Corey was a bit skeptical. While knowing there was a solution out there, he was constantly being approached by companies trying to sell him technology. He said the problem with most technology is two-fold. “First, it creates a bunch of extra work and secondly, it ends up not being used because it doesn’t do what is needed. It simply doesn’t add increased efficiency.”

For example, he said his company spent a million dollars on iPads and iPhones for the field over three years. “Then we realized that we didn’t have a program that puts the drawings on the iPad in a way that’s user friendly. Now we had a million dollars’ worth of iPads that they’re playing solitaire and watching Netflix at lunchtime.”

So, he walked into the evaluation meeting both questioning and frustrated. “I went right into almost a defensive mode. ‘You want me to spend how much money? What am I going to get out of it?’”

When I asked those questions, they responded very quickly. “Here’s how we did it the old way; here’s how we drew a feeder; and here’s what we can do with eVolve. Here’s what we can deliver as a deliverable, and this is how much time I can save per detailer per run.”

The automation of design tasks was simple, seamless, and the potential time savings were significant.

The automation of design tasks was simple, seamless, and the potential time savings were significant. The detailer now had time to get everything the foreman struggled with on a job onto one drawing. Improved efficiency for the detailer translated into an installation return.

However, expenditure wasn’t a given, even with the endorsement of his BIM team. Corey had to get the buy-in from other executives who would also be asking: “What am I going to get out of it?” He needed to reset how they thought about software purchases.

“ Most of the time, the doers in the company--the modelers, the project engineers, the field engineers-- are tasked with laborious tasks that are very time consuming and create opportunity for errors. They’re the ones finding the solutions. That’s how we found eVolve,” he explained. “The challenge is how to get from that detailer to the executive level. They needed to see it as an investment. It’s a capital investment just like buying a truck or a big piece of equipment.”

The Result

The potential effect of eVolve MEP on Fisk's productivity was undeniable. "It checked all the boxes," Corey says. "The only question was how quickly we could deliver this into the hands of everyone who's got a BIM license."

After implementing eVolve, Fisk began utilizing their drawings and modeling in a more efficient manner. Workflows were shortened. Drawings improved, and the information those drawings provided increased. These were improvements that Corey doesn't believe would have happened with another software platform.

"You can get stuff from different vendors, but does it make your drawing better? Is it a way that it makes the model more user friendly for the installation? Or gets you more information out of your investment into the model? The answer is no.

"If you're using eVolve to model feeders, create spooling, verify conduit fill and all those different types of things, you're getting more out of that investment into the model. From the big picture, you can stretch your modelers to do more when you're fully implemented and up and running with eVolve."

An added benefit is that models are now used for purchasing bills and materials, pull planning, prefab planning, and installation details. Traditionally, lots of details could get lost between the detailer, the purchaser, and the installer, leaving the end product noticeably different from the original intent.

"That's no longer the case. eVolve made that happen," Corey concludes.

more details at
evolvemep.com