

The Retail Contractor

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WINTER EDITION • 2026

NEWSLETTER

Forging Stronger Futures

How Strategic Joint Ventures Are Reshaping Retail & Hospitality Construction

As members of the RCA, you know the landscape of the industry has transformed. The projects we pursue for national chains are larger, schedules are more aggressive, and the risks are greater than ever before. In this environment, the old model of going it alone is being replaced by a more powerful strategy: the **strategic joint venture (JV)**.

It's time to reframe how we think about partnerships. Once seen as a rare solution for unusually massive projects, joint ventures have evolved into a **core construction strategy** for savvy contractors. They are no longer a last resort but a **proactive tool for growth**, stability, and winning more work in the competitive retail and hospitality rollout sector.



By Lorraine Cline DeShiro, Co-Founder & Chief Strategist, Construction Marketing Network (CMN)

members at upcoming events is the perfect catalyst to move from theory to action. Here's how to prepare to turn handshakes into powerful partnerships.

1. Conduct an Internal Needs Audit

Before you arrive, look at your upcoming project pipeline and company goals. Be specific:

- > **Geography:** Which new markets or states are your clients entering where you need a local partner?
- > **Capacity:** Do you have upcoming projects that will stretch your leadership team, working capital, or bonding capacity?
- > **Expertise:** Are you bidding on a new project type (e.g., a large-scale hotel versus a fast-casual restaurant) where a partner's specialized experience would strengthen your proposal?

2. Research and Identify Potential Partners

Use the RCA member directory and your network to create a target list. Look for contractors who complement—not just mirror—your strengths. The ideal partner often has:

- > A strong operational presence in your target geographic region.
- > A similar company culture and commitment to safety and quality.
- > A portfolio that fills a gap in your expertise or capacity.

3. Initiate Strategic Conversations

Move beyond general networking. Use meetings to explore mutual fit with your target list. Frame discussions around shared challenges and opportunities:

- > "We're seeing a lot of demand in the Southeast. How is your labor availability in that region?"
- > "We're bidding on a complex, multi-phase flagship store project. How have you structured partnerships to manage risk on similar large-scale rollouts?"

Building a Foundation for Success: Risk and Insurance Alignment

The success of a joint venture is often determined **before the contract is signed**. One of the most critical steps is aligning on risk management—particularly insurance.

When JVs move forward, experts strongly recommend evaluating **project-specific wrap-up insurance programs**. For the long-duration, complex projects common in national rollouts, a wrap-up program can provide consistent, unifying coverage across all partners and subcontractors, reduce costly

(Continued on page 2)

Why Joint Ventures Are Now Essential

The shift toward JVs is a direct response to the market pressures you face every day. Let's break down the key drivers:

- > **Scale and Specialization:** National chains are consolidating scope into larger, multi-region rollout packages. A joint venture allows two firms to combine their **financial strength** and **bonding capacity** to pursue these substantial opportunities without overextending a single balance sheet.
- > **The Geographic Imperative:** You may have award-winning expertise in retail construction, but what about when your client wants to expand into a new region where you lack local presence? Partnering with a contractor who has **established local relationships**—with labor pools, subcontractors, and permitting jurisdictions—is a decisive advantage. Owners increasingly demand both technical excellence and local market knowledge.
- > **Managing the Labor Puzzle:** The skilled labor shortage directly impacts bid strategies. A JV lets you combine your specialized traveling crews with a partner's **local labor availability**, creating a realistic and compelling staffing plan that gives owners and insurers confidence.
- > **Sharing the Burden of Risk:** Contracts today transfer unprecedented risk downstream. A joint venture strategically distributes this exposure, aligning responsibility with each partner's expertise. This shared model helps prevent any single project from becoming a **company-defining event** that threatens long-term stability.

Your Partnership Action Plan

As a member of RCA, you already have an advantage—your fellow members are your perfect JV partners. Interacting with other



RCA's mission is to promote professionalism and integrity in retail construction through industry leadership in education, information exchange, and jobsite safety.

coverage gaps, and create much-needed cost predictability over the life of the project. Discussing this early with your risk advisor ensures the venture is built on a solid foundation.

The future of retail and hospitality construction belongs to contractors who are collaborative, strategic, and resilient. Joint ventures are a proven pathway to that future. Let's actively seek the connections that will build stronger, more competitive businesses.

Construction Marketing Network is a platinum sponsor of the RCA; you can meet them at the Annual Conference, and discuss their exclusive **Contacts to Contracts Framework™**, along with our step-by-step courses, peer mentoring, workshops, and resource library available in the **CMN Circle Community**. You can also take their free **Marketing Readiness Quiz**, and get your results immediately, along with a package of free resources that can help you improve the areas of your marketing that need some help.

Lorraine Cline DeShiro is Co-Founder & Chief Strategist of the Construction Marketing Network (CMN) and CMN's Circle Community—a community of commercial construction professionals who refuse to compete on price and are committed to winning on value. More information and free marketing resources can be found at www.cmncircle.com.

Milestone Memberships

Congratulations to our members celebrating milestone membership anniversaries! We appreciate your ongoing support of the RCA!

35 Years
(original members!)
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De Jager Construction, Inc.
Elder-Jones, Inc.
Weekes Construction, Inc.
Westwood Contractors, Inc.
Winkel Construction, Inc.

30 Years
Desco Professional Builders, Inc.
International Contractors, Inc.
Russco, Inc.

20 Years
Gray West Construction

15 Years
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Diamond Contractors
Solex Contracting
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President's Message

Justin Elder, President, Elder-Jones, Inc.



Greetings RCA members and friends:

I can still remember the first RCA annual meeting I attended in 2003. It's astonishing how fast these years have gone by! I was a young project manager still trying to get a handle on this unique niche of the construction world. I had a vague idea of what the RCA was prior to attending that first meeting, but I really didn't understand the association's purpose or how it could benefit me. At the time it seemed

like just one more industry function that I was told to attend. I certainly didn't know what an important and positive impact this association would eventually have on my career and my business.

It became evident almost immediately that this group was not what I had imagined. This was a group of people, many just like me, facing the same challenges and obstacles I was. It was a group of people who wanted to improve themselves and their businesses, but bigger than that, they wanted to be a positive influence on the entire retail construction industry. There are people I met at that meeting 23 years ago that I still connect with today. Some are still in business, and many have long since retired. And countless others I've met and not just learned from, but also helped along the way. **We are peers, we are each other's competition, but through this organization we are also partners that are not just willing, but eager, to make everyone in our business become better.**

Over time I became as involved in the RCA as I could. Just like anything, you get out what you put in. And that certainly holds true with the RCA. My company is better because we've made it a point to be involved. We are a more prosperous, successful company because of what me and others here have learned and taken away from our connections and participation within the association. The RCA is made up of thousands of people working at our member companies. Smart, intelligent people with countless years of knowledge and ideas. Every member of the RCA benefits from as many of our people being as involved as possible, and that involvement and dedication has continually improved our industry since the RCA was founded in 1990.

The takeaway is this: **Get involved with the RCA. Get as involved as you can be.** Start by attending the annual meeting and make it a priority to attend the regional events when they come to your area. There's much to gain through participation, and every one of our members has so much to offer.

See you all at the annual meeting!

The RCA is made up of thousands of people working at our member companies. Smart, intelligent people with countless years of knowledge and ideas.

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Win Johnson 2000
Dean Olivieri 2001
Thomas Eckinger 2002
James Healy 2003

Robert D. Benda 2004-2006
K. Eugene Colley 2006-2008
Matthew Schimenti 2008-2012
Art Rectenwald 2012-2014
Mike Wolff 2014-2016
Robert Moore 2016-2017
Brad Bogart 2017-2018
Rick Winkel 2018-2019
Steve Bachman 2019-2021
Ray Catlin 2021-2023
Eric Handley 2023-2025

RCA Membership

RCA members must meet and maintain a series of qualifications and are approved by the Board of Directors for membership. They have been in the retail construction business as general contractors for at least five years; agree to comply with the Association's Code of Ethics and Bylaws; are properly insured and bonded; are licensed in the states in which they do business; and have submitted letters of recommendation.

COMPANY	CONTACT	PHONE	STATE	EMAIL	MEMBER SINCE
Acme Enterprises, Inc.	Jeff Lomber	810-499-7127	MI	jlomber@acme-enterprises.com	2009
Asa Carlton, Inc.	Bradley Martin	770-945-2195	GA	bmartin@asacarlton.com	2025
Atlas Building Group	Brian Boettler	636-368-5234	MO	bboettler@abgbuilds.com	2017
Bayley Construction, LP	Steve Grasso	206-621-8884	WA	steveg@bayley.net	2024
Bogart Construction, Inc.	Brad Bogart	949-453-1400	CA	brad@bogartconstruction.com	2008
Buildrite Construction Corp.	Bryan Alexander	770-971-0787	GA	bryan@buildriteconstruction.com	2013
CE Gleeson Constructors	Charles Gleeson III	248-647-5500	MI	cegleeson3@gleesonconstructors	2024
Comanche Construction, LLC	Andrew McClung	405-740-6950	OK	andrew.mcclung@comanchellc.com	2024
Commercial Contractors, Inc.	Kenneth Sharkey	616-842-4540	MI	ken.t.sharkey@teamcci.net	1990
Commonwealth Building, Inc.	Chris Fontaine	617-770-0050	MA	cfontaine@combuild.com	1992
Connor Construction, LLC	Benjamin Connor	856-599-1765	NJ	bconnor@connorconstructionllc.com	2021
Construction One, Inc.	Bill Moberger	614-235-0057	OH	wmoberger@constructionone.com	2015
Construx Co. LLC	Laurence Mason	860-709-9280	CT	lmason@construxco.com	2025
David A. Nice Builders	Brandon Nice	757-566-3032	VA	bnice@davidnicebuilders.com	2011
De Jager Construction, Inc.	Dan De Jager	616-530-0060	MI	dandj@dejagerconstruction.com	1990
Desco Professional Builders, Inc.	Bob Anderson	860-870-7070	CT	banderson@descopro.com	1995
Diamond Contractors	Lori Perry	816-650-9200	MO	loriperry@diamondcontractors.org	2015
Division 9 Commercial Inc.	Cheryl Montour	770-919-9941	GA	cmontour@division9inc.com	2021
DLP Construction Company, Inc.	Dennis Pigg, Jr.	770-887-3573	GA	dpigg@dlpconstruction.com	2008
E.C. Provini, Co., Inc.	Joseph Lembo	732-739-8884	NJ	jlembo@ecprovini.com	1992
Eckinger Construction Company	Philip Eckinger	330-453-2566	OH	phil@eckinger.com	1994
EDC	Christopher Johnson	804-897-0900	VA	cjohnson@edcweb.com	1998
Elder-Jones, Inc.	Justin Elder	952-345-6069	MN	justin@elderjones.com	1990
Encore Construction, Inc.	Joe McCafferty	410-573-5050	MD	joe@encoreconstruction.net	2018
Engineered Structures, Inc.	Mike Magill	208-362-3040	ID	mikemagill@esiconstruction.com	2016
Englewood Construction Inc.	Christopher Di Santo	847-233-9220	IL	Cdisanto@eci.build	2024
FCP Services	Brian Hogan	517-528-8990	MN	bhogan@fcpervices.com	2024
FMGI Inc.	Darin Ross	678-903-2200	GA	darin.ross@fmgi-inc.com	2022
Fortney & Weygandt, Inc.	Mitch Lapin	440-716-4000	OH	mlapin@fortneyweygandt.com	2013
Fred Olivieri Construction Company	Dean Olivieri	330-494-1007	OH	dean@fredolivieri.com	1992
Frontier Building Corp.	Andrew Goggin	305-692-9992	FL	agoggin@fdllc.com	2018
Fulcrum Construction, LLC	Willy Rosner	770-612-8005	GA	wrosner@fulcrumconstruction.com	2014
Go Green Construction, Inc.	John Castellano	412-389-2577	PA	john@ggc-pgh.com	2017
Graves Construction	Anthony Graves	949-467-1799	CA	anthony@gravesconstruction.com	2022
Gray West Construction	Eric Berg	714-491-1317	CA	EBerg@GrayWC.com	2005
Groom Construction Co., Inc.	Dwight Groom	781-592-3135	MA	dwgroom@groomco.com	2023
H.J. Martin & Son, Inc.	David Martin	920-494-3461	WI	david@hjmartin.com	2016
Hardesty & Associates	Scott Hardesty	949-723-2230	CA	scott@hardestyassociates.com	2020
Harmon Construction, Inc.	William Harmon	812-346-2048	IN	bill.harmon@harmonconstruction.com	2017
Healy Construction Services, Inc.	James Healy	808-396-0440	IL	jhealy@healyconstructionservices.com	1996
Hirsch Construction Corp.	Adam Hirsch	978-762-8455	MA	ahirsch@hirschcorp.com	2025
HL Contractors	Sidney Huguet	770-727-2599	GA	shuguet@hlcontractors.com	2025
International Contractors, Inc.	Bruce Bronge	630-834-8043	IL	bbronge@icibuilds.com	1995
JAG Building Group	Matt Allen	239-540-2700	FL	matta@jagbuilding.com	2019
James Agresta Carpentry Inc.	James Agresta	201-498-1477	NJ	jim.agresta@jacarpentryinc.com	2013
JG Companies, Inc.	Adam Shihadeh	909-993-9393	CA	adam@jg-companies.com	2024
Kerricook Construction, Inc.	Ann Smith	440-647-4200	OH	ann@kerricook.com	2012
KPS Commercial Construction	Kevin Sullivan	317-984-7764	IN	kevin@kpsconstruction.com	2025
Lakeview Construction, Inc.	Marc Delsman	262-857-3336	WI	marc@lvconstruction.com	1998
M. Cary, Inc.	Bill Tucker	631-501-0024	NY	btucker@mcaryinc.com	2014
Management Resource Systems	Travis Jarrett	336-861-1960	NC	tjarrett@mrs1977.com	1992
Marco Contractors, Inc.	Martin Smith	724-741-0300	PA	marty@marcocontractors.com	1994
Market Contractors	Kerry Lobbestael	503-255-0977	OR	kerry@marketcontractors.com	2019
National Contractors, Inc.	Michael Dudley	952-881-6123	MN	mdudley@ncigc.com	2018
Pinnacle Commercial Development, Inc.	Dennis Rome	732-528-0080	NJ	dennis@pinnaclecommercial.us	2012
PMA Construction LLC	Kamesha Washington	678-878-4141	GA	kwash@pmacllc.com	2025
Prime Retail Services, Inc.	Donald Bloom	866-504-3511	GA	dbloom@primeretailservices.com	2014
R.E. Crawford Construction LLC	Jeffrey T. Smith	941-907-0010	FL	jeffs@recrawford.com	2011
RAYWEST DESIGNBUILD	Greg West	910-824-0503	NC	greg.west@raywestdesignbuild.com	2021
Rectenwald Brothers Construction, Inc.	Art Rectenwald	724-772-8282	PA	art@rectenwald.com	1996
Retail Construction Services, Inc.	Stephen Bachman	651-704-9000	MN	sbachman@retailconstruction.com	1998
Retail Contractors of Puerto Rico	Sean Pfent	586-725-4400	MI	spfent@rcofusa.com	1996
Right Choice Development & Construction	Danielle Wright	832-567-9648	TX	danielle@rightchoicedev.com	2023

(Continued on page 5)

Royal Mechanical Services	Cindy Heigl	800-728-1155	KS	cheigl@royalsolves.com	2024
Russco, Inc.	Matthew Pichette	508-674-5280	MA	mattp@russcoinc.com	1995
S.M. Wilson & Co.	Chris Hawn	314-645-9595	MO	chris.hawn@smwilson.com	2024
Sachse Construction and Development Corp.	Jeff Katkowsky	248-647-4200	MI	jkatkowsky@sachseconstruction.com	2009
Scheiner Commercial Group, Inc.	Joe Scheiner	719-487-1600	CO	joe@scheinercg.com	2012
Schimenti Construction Company	Matthew Schimenti	914-244-9100	NY	mschimenti@schimenti.com	1994
Shames Construction Co., Ltd.	Carolyn Shames	925-606-3000	CA	cshames@shames.com	1994
Singleton Construction, LLC	Denise Doczy-Delong	740-756-7331	OH	denisedelong@singletonconstruction.net	2012
Solex Contracting	Gerald Allen	951-308-1706	CA	jerry@solexcontracting.com	2015
Sullivan Construction Company	Amanda Sullivan	954-484-3200	FL	amanda@buildwithsullivan.com	2012
Taylor Brothers Construction Company, Inc.	Jeff Chandler	812-379-9547	IN	Jeff.Chandler@TBCCI.com	2014
TDS Construction, Inc.	Robert Baker	941-795-6100	FL	inbox@tdsconstruction.com	1994
Thomas-Grace Construction, Inc.	Don Harvieux	651-342-1298	MN	don.harvieux@thomas-grace.com	2012
Tilton Pacific Construction	Robert Schroeder	916-630-7200	CA	rschroeder@tiltonpacific.com	2023
Tom Rectenwald Construction, Inc.	Aaron Rectenwald	724-452-8801	PA	arectenwald@trcgc.net	2010
Trainer Commercial Construction	John Holmberg	415-259-0200	CA	john.holmberg@trainerconstruction.com	2012
Tri-North Builders, Inc.	David Brown	608-204-7227	WI	dbrown@tri-north.com	2015
Triad Retail Construction	Jay Dorsey	281-485-4700	TX	j.dorsey@triadrc.com	2013
Vision General Contractors of GA, LLC	Tony Durand	770-769-4674	SC	tonyd@viscongc.com	2021
Warwick Construction, Inc.	Walt Watzinger	832-448-7000	TX	walt@warwickconstruction.com	2008
Weekes Construction, Inc.	Chandler Weekes	864-233-0061	SC	cweekes@weekesconstruction.com	1990
Westwood Contractors, Inc.	Robert Benda	817-877-3800	TX	rbenda@westwoodcontractors.com	1990
William A. Randolph, Inc.	Tony Riccardi	847-856-0123	IL	tony.riccardi@warandolph.com	2011
Winkel Construction, Inc.	Rick Winkel	352-860-0500	FL	rickw@winkel-construction.com	1990
Wolverine Building Group	Michael Houseman	616-949-3360	MI	mhouseman@wolvgroup.com	2012
Woods Construction, Inc.	John Bodary	586-939-9991	MI	jbodary@woodsconstruction.com	1996

Visit retailcontractors.org to view the profile of each RCA member company.
Click on "Find a Contractor" on the home page to search the member list.

Please notify the RCA Office (800-847-5085 or info@retailcontractors.org) of any changes to your contact information.



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Aubel Recognized as Leader Under 40

RCA vice president **Tim Aubel** was recognized with an ICSC+CENTERBUILD Leaders Under 40 Award in December. Aubel is the Vice President of Construction at Rectenwald Brothers Construction, Inc.

The Leaders Under 40 Award recognizes the next generation of influential thought leaders in the design, construction, and development of retail real estate.

Following his nomination, Aubel submitted a video describing his accomplishments and what sets him apart from others in the industry. He noted, "Fifteen years ago, I got into the commercial construction industry, and from day one, I knew I had found my passion. It was fast paced, exciting and challenging! There's something truly rewarding about seeing a project evolve from concept to completion, knowing the success is built on the collaboration, integrity, and pride of all the people involved."

Aubel shared: "Through the years, I've had the opportunity to learn from some of the best in the industry. Whether it's in the field, office or an industry conference I have always tried to be a sponge and soak up as much as I can. That experience, combined with a drive to grow, helped shape the leader I am today. Now, as leader in my company, I take great pride in this industry, driving project excellence, and helping both people and projects reach their full potential where I can. The industry at-large has many challenges facing it but I truly believe hard work, collaboration and passion can work through the challenges for future success."



In talking about the impact of the RCA on his career and the industry, Aubel said, "While bolstering our own members to be the best in the industry, we are also actively looking at ways to disrupt and affect change to the challenges within the industry. This industry can be challenging; the RCA seeks to do its part for the betterment of it and to help change the narrative."

Aubel wrapped up his presentation saying, "Construction isn't just about building structures—it's about building people, teams, and trust. I'm honored to be part of a company and an industry that demands excellence, rewards passion, and constantly pushes us to grow."

At the ICSC+CENTERBUILD conference, recipients were recognized at an awards breakfast and again during a luncheon for all conference attendees. They were also afforded the opportunity to attend an invitation-only mixer where they networked with fellow winners, alumni, other young professionals, and members of the conference planning committee.

This award showcases how Aubel's commitment, vision, and success reinforces the strength and creativity of our industry. We are proud to call him one of our own—congratulations, Tim!

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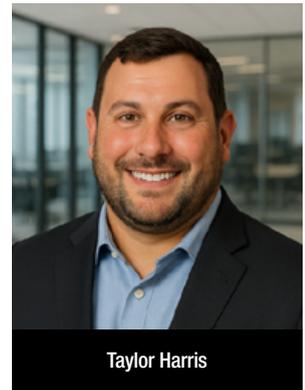
New Advisory Board Member

RCA's Advisory Board is comprised of representatives that work in retail markets including specialty, big box, restaurants and department stores; attorneys; developers; and architects/engineers. Advisory Board members are appointed by the President and serve three-year terms. During that time, they actively assist the RCA Board of Directors in identifying key industry issues and formulating policies and programs designed to positively impact those issues. A list of our current Advisory Board and the companies represented by the Advisory Board over the years can be found at retailcontractors.org/advisory-board.

Meet RCA's newest Advisory Board member.

Taylor Harris is a Brand Development Project Manager at Bath & Body Works, where he oversees all aspects of store delivery from initial design through turnover. In his role, Taylor manages a diverse portfolio of projects, including new builds, relocations, remodels, and refreshes, ensuring alignment with brand standards, and execution of brand design innovation projects. He collaborates closely with general contractors, design teams, and logistics partners to deliver high-quality results while driving innovation in store design and construction processes. Taylor's leadership extends to implementing new software solutions and training team members, reinforcing his reputation as a strategic thinker with strong technical expertise.

Taylor's path to his current position reflects a steady progression through the construction and retail sectors. Beginning his career with Turner Construction Company, he gained hands-on experience in project engineering and site coordination for large-scale projects, later transitioning into retail construction management with Luxottica Retail. These roles honed his ability to manage complex projects and foster cross-functional collaboration. Taylor holds a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from the University of Dayton, where he was a four-year letterman and team captain of the football team—an experience that shaped his leadership and teamwork skills.



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