

Building a Legacy

It may have lasted only a few minutes, but Curtis Way remembers a conversation he had with Wayne Gretzky's manager decades ago that resonates with him still today. "He said if you work hard enough, you could make your own luck," says Way, the president of Edmonton-based RMS Builders.

And work hard he has, growing RMS Builders, one of three divisions of The RMS Group, into what it is today – a company with a known track record of building with integrity across Alberta, B.C. and Saskatchewan.

When asked what sets RMS Builders apart, Way cites diversity, and the ability to handle a range of commercial and residential projects while delivering products that are on time and on budget. He says the company, which has constructed everything from warehouses and hotels to large-scale apartment complexes, benefits from having its own equipment and in-house operators.

"RMS Builders Inc. has been doing construction for over 10 years now and we are fully developed from A-Z, with estimators, project managers, site superintendents, equipment operators – we're as much akin to an old-time true general contractor as you can get," explains Way, noting larger renovations account for about 30 per cent of RMS Builders' business. "We have our own excavators, and loaders and bobcats; we do our own sewer and water work. So we have guys that are excavating the earth and putting pipes in the ground. We do a lot of the work ourselves – which is a huge benefit."

Despite a small staff of about a dozen in the office and another 20 to 60 employees in the field, RMS Builders has been able to stay on top of the market, in spite of labour and equipment crunches. With equipment readily available (and worked into the price at a discount), RMS customers can count on a better bottom line, as well.

The builder is currently crafting two Edmonton Marriott hotels, one in the south and another in the northwest. Recently, Way says, RMS Builders worked on three major suburban apartment buildings, with a total of about 500 units. All told, the company has \$30 million in construction projects in the works and is considering expansion into Ontario.

Way, who started Royal Management Services back in 1996, came to the construction business honestly. As a young man he considered becoming a carpenter, but soon learned the business side of things was a better fit. "I ended up apprenticing as a carpenter. But it didn't take me long to realize that was not going to be my place in life. I frankly got lucky; I worked hard, and was able to move into commercial construction."

It's not much of a stretch to find a satisfied client of Way's. Ari Silverberg, president of Harbour Equity Capital Corp., worked with RMS Builders recently on several apartment projects in Edmonton, including two in Tamarack, one in Windermere and one in MacTaggart. "I think we are at six or seven projects right now," says Silverberg. "They have been extremely reliable, they have had great ideas along the way in terms of value engineering projects, and they've brought projects in generally under budget, and not just on time, but a little bit in advance of schedule. RMS has been as good, if not better, than anyone else we have used and we do projects across the country."



FIRM FOOTING: RMS Builders is known for its diversity and integrity of projects, including the new Fairfield Inn and Suites, which is under construction in Griesbach. From left: Laura Way-Olenek, RMS Builders' director of asset management and administration, Curtis Way, president, and Hashem Bakir, vice-president of operations, survey the site.

RMS Builders Inc.



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RMS Builders is based in Edmonton and has extensive experience in construction.

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