



PRECISE ENGINEERING, QUALITY CONSTRUCTION

How World-Class Facilities Get Built

An Interview with Matt Eddleman, Senior Vice President,
The Austin Company

How long have you been with The Austin Company and in what capacity have you worked for them?

I started with Austin in 1988, and except for a brief break in the early 1990s, have been with the company ever since. I began in purchasing, and have worked in estimating, project management, business development, regional management and now as a Corporate Officer.

How have manufacturing facilities evolved in recent years (or since you have been in the industry)?

Several changes come to mind, including increased automation, “smarter” buildings, lean manufacturing, and sustainable construction and operational processes. In addition, reshoring: manufacturing previously shifted to lower-cost labor parts of the world are now returning to the U.S.

What are some notable projects you have worked on over the years?

Due to The Austin Company's breadth of industry experience, I've had the opportunity to work on food processing facilities, pet food plants, bottling facilities, rocket

factories, television studios, newspaper production facilities, aircraft manufacturing facilities, aircraft paint facilities, laboratories, office buildings, engine and turbine plants, and more. Overall, I've been involved in projects totaling more than 5.5 million square feet of special use facilities, valued at over \$1.3 billion.

What was a particularly challenging project you worked on and how did The Austin Company overcome the challenges you were presented with?

When building the rocket plant, the overall scope of the project was drastically changed two weeks after we mobilized on-site and began preparing for foundations. Due to the size of the rocket, certain portions of the manufacturing process could not be performed anywhere else in the world – it had to be manufactured at the new facility. Due to the dramatic scope changes, the schedule was in jeopardy. Working with the team of designers from around the country and the local construction team, we were able to reorganize and re-sequence portions of the work. Along with a lot of overtime, we were able to maintain the original completion date, so that the rocket production and ultimate launch could proceed on schedule.



What do you think is unique about the way The Austin Company operates or approaches a project?

One of the unique differences of Austin is the full integration of design, engineering and construction. We are not a group of companies that enter into a contractual relationship to perform a particular project, but rather, we are a group of individuals bound by a shared set of values and mission to deliver the results we promise to our clients. Our designers are better because we build what we design, and our builders are better because we design what we build.

Another is that our work is focused on some sector of the manufacturing industry, often unique and special use facilities.

Typically, Austin engages with a client to provide preliminary concept or feasibility studies to determine if a project is viable or not. As the project progresses to advanced stages of design and ultimately into construction, Austin is never assured that the next step will be awarded. Our clients are under no obligation to move to the next step with Austin. It is up to our team to earn the right to be the service provider for the next step.

Austin offers a flexible approach to contracting. We are comfortable with lump sum or open book contracting where we serve as an extension of our client's organization.

What are the main goals you seek to achieve when taking on a project? How do you go about doing this?

Our primary goal is to achieve the objectives we establish with our clients early in the project development process. Once we have defined the solution that will solve the problem identified by the client – the scope of service - we

create a customized Project Execution Plan that contains a variety of critical information, such as key metrics for safety, quality, cost, schedule and client satisfaction. Each of these key metrics are monitored and evaluated to ensure we are meeting the established project goals.

How do you align site selection and design with a client's strategic goals?

Austin's site location consultants take into consideration a client's strategic needs when conducting a detailed site location study. The outcome is to recommend the best property and community for an organization to maximize profits while minimizing annual operating and one-time costs. Operating costs typically include a thorough analysis of the client's transportation, labor, utility, taxation and other important costs factors that can be influenced by geographic location. These factors also consider future growth projections forecasted by the client to assure the recommended location will serve them well into the future.

What in-house subject matter expertise does The Austin Company have for different industries and how does that help create complex facilities unique to specific industries or products?

Because of our long history (140 years this year!), Austin has established subject matter expertise across multiple industries.

With regard to different specialties for food plants, this includes food processing, baking and snack, and meat and poultry. In addition, Austin also has extensive expertise in aerospace manufacturing facilities and recently celebrated 100 years of serving this industry. Austin has designed and built more facilities in this sector than any other firm. Austin has growing expertise in automotive manufacturing, as well – both in OEM and Tier 1 suppliers.

Within each of these industries, some Austin team members have expertise in both the design and construction of these types of facilities, and also working within the specific industry from the owner's perspective.

This level of knowledge with specific facility types allows our team to bring experience gained from related projects, along with knowledge of what works well and what may not work so well. Experience working within the various industries offers an understanding of and empathy for the challenges faced by operations personnel who maintain and operate these facilities on a daily basis. As a result, we can design and build better projects that meet the needs of today, while considering and allowing for expansion capabilities in the future.



About The Austin Company

The Austin Company has been serving the manufacturing industry since our founding in 1878. Today, we continue to provide state-of-the-art facility and equipment design and construction solutions for manufacturers of a wide range of products, including aerospace and automotive, chemical processing, food processing, and laboratory facilities.

Our in-house team of industrial engineers, industrial architects, facility engineers and construction professionals, combined with our consulting services for site location, incentive planning and negotiation, results in full-service or a-la-carte capabilities that efficiently and innovatively integrate the facility, process and business requirements.

Austin has the unique ability and experience to handle large and complex facilities and processes. Using Lean project delivery and value engineering principles, we provide clients a comparison of the advantages of various facility options, including replacement, remodeling, renovation or retrofit of existing facilities, enabling them to quickly and cost-competitively determine the best approach to meet and exceed changing market demands.

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