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FREEDOM

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

--First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America

"Freedom Center" Is State-Of-The-Art, Concrete-Rich Challenge --James Vlcek, Editor In Chief, Concrete News

The Omaha World-Herald "This is not a typical building," said Mark Peitzmeier, Peter Kiewit and Sons' general superintendent in charge of the recent Omaha World-Herald's Freedom Center project. "It had some of the toughest concrete forming jobs I've ever had. It probably has five times the amount of concrete found in a typical building."

Publisher turns fish story into reality

The Omaha World-Herald Freedom Center was conceptualized in 1998 by publisher John Gottschalk, while trout fishing with friend Ken Stinson, chairman of Peter Kiewit Sons' Inc., an international construction company, headquartered in Omaha, Nebraska.



John Gottschalk, chairman and president, The Omaha World-Herald Company and publisher, The Omaha World-Herald
Photo: Kent Sievers, Omaha World Herald

Gottschalk shared his vision with the man whose company would ultimately build the "Freedom Center," The World-Herald's state-of-the-art production facility. Gottschalk's dream was to make a powerful and timeless statement while reflecting the quality of the World-Herald. He also wanted to fulfill a commitment he had made to the revitalization of downtown Omaha.

Groundbreaking for the new Freedom Center was May 1, 1999. The grand opening took place on September 1, 2001 featuring keynote speaker James Baker, former U.S. Secretary of State. Final press testing was completed and the new "upgraded" Omaha World-Herald began printing Sept. 1 editions in the Freedom Center late on Aug. 31, 2001.

The \$125 million Freedom Center is the cornerstone of a major downtown Omaha building boom that will eventually include more than \$1.5 billion in new construction downtown. Omaha will reap the long-term benefits of many new recreational, travel, retail, corporate and manufacturing facilities that have been or will be built within the next four years.

Are newspapers doomed? Not this one!

While many newspapers nationwide are experiencing declining ad revenues, increasing costs for newsprint and other raw materials, consolidations or buyouts, cutting jobs or operating with



Mark Peitzmeier, General Superintendent: Peter Kiewit & Sons

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reduced profits, the Omaha World-Herald consistently ranks among the top daily newspapers in the US. Out of the top 100 US daily newspapers, The Omaha World-Herald has been in the top 10 in terms of penetration numbers, that is, circulation divided by households.

Gottschalk's optimism remains steady and true in contrast to many information doom-and-gloomers predicting the end of the newspaper industry. The fact is The World-Herald has continued to enjoy steady growth, in terms of circulation, readership, ad revenues and prosperity. An employee-owned company, the Omaha World-Herald is operated and managed by its shareholders who have a strong sense of ownership and have been on the job for decades.

New technology vs. obsolescence

The decision to build the new \$125 million manufacturing center did not come without more than a decade of planning, research, and, of course, the financial commitment from its shareholders. A major factor in the newspaper industry today is whether or not to invest in new equipment and technology...new state-of-the-art presses costing millions of dollars...and more so when everyone hears the industry predictions of less spontaneous print media giving way to speed-of-light, electronic media. John Gottschalk said recently, "People who equate technological change and the use of information make a big mistake. Even though technologies have changed throughout history, what has not changed is the use of information. And nobody does it better than newspapers."



The Omaha World Herald Freedom Center, Omaha, NE

Freedom and democracy stand in public view Gottschalk couldn't have known, while sitting in the boat with his fishing buddy, how appropriate the Freedom Center name would become, in light of recent violence against this country's basic freedoms.



From left to right: Gary Martin; Don Gray, President, Industrial Coatings; Ed Hansen

"It's there for everyone to see!", commented a passerby walking east on Capitol Avenue. "The Omaha World-Herald, Free Press...Free People," as the circular logo in The Freedom Center suggests. It stands as a tribute to the First Amendment protection of freedom of the press. Gottschalk commented on the chosen theme, "the name comes from the belief that newspapers are the daily textbook of democracy. This is about the role of reliable information as a necessary ingredient for us to remain self-governed and free."

--Source: Omaha World-Herald, August 26, 2001

The challenge: More than just concrete, steel and glass

"Going through 3 seasons, battling the wind, rain and extreme temperatures, and, on some days, dealing with 70 concrete trucks waiting back-to-back to pour and pump 700 cubic yards of concrete in one morning can be labeled in my book at least, as worrisome and nerve-racking." Said Phil McKeone, president of Deadulus Construction. "Because of the tightened schedules, my crews worked side-by-side with the Ready-Mix guys. With a crew of almost 50 men, 2 big pumpers and with all the slabs outdoors, my crew had to work fast and accurately. Later, we had to properly install the EMERYPLATE FF with little to no bleed water...that was a real challenge. We use E-CON on almost all of our jobs, but on this one project in particular it saved our work more than once." Phil added, "Along with most of the concrete construction work in the building, my crews were responsible for the basement slab on grade floor and the other three floors above. The press table floor was a real challenge. It required a special mix design and couldn't deviate more than 1/16-inch off level throughout the entire 300-foot length."

Mix designs: Not your typical concrete either

"The engineers really threw us some challenges on the mix designs." Said Ben Ricceri, quality control manager for Ready-Mixed Concrete Company. He added, "Most of the (about 10,000 total cubic yards) structural slabs averaged out to be about 5,000psi strength, very low-shrink, non-air entrained mix design. The press table floor mix design was different, using a low heat of hydration mix and higher psi strength. In the entire building, we were responsible for the mix design and timely delivery of over 25,000 cubic yards of concrete (that's about 1050 loads total) because of the specialized type of production done there, that's a lot more concrete than you'll find in most buildings."



Ben Ricceri, QC Manager Ready-Mix Concrete

"Due to the tremendous amount of operational traffic anticipated in the completed facility, we wanted to protect that floor with our best shot," commented L&M Regional Manager, Frank Bianchi. "Upon reviewing the project requirements with the project engineers at HDR, I recommended that they consider using our best mineral aggregate floor hardener, EMERYPLATE FF." EMERYPLATE FF has been used on many manufacturing plant floors over the years, replacing traditional metallic shake-ons because of its toughness and higher resistance to abrasion. "I recommended EMERYPLATE FF to protect the high traffic areas from the many carts (1705 carts) used throughout those areas of the building. Because of the mix design used such little water, ECON was an important product to help Phil's crew get the EMERYPLATE FF properly installed."

Floor hardening



L&M's Emeryplate FF and SEAL HARD increase long-term floor durability and lowers long-term floor costs.

"Our challenge was to scrub-in over 30 drums of L&M's [SEAL HARD](#) on all the floors, all 227,550 sq. ft." said Don Gray, president of Industrial Coatings, Inc. He added; "Many of these slabs were already hardened with L&M's EMERYPLATE. Because of the time crunch due to the shortened deadlines, our crew had to get in, get done, get out and move to the next floor so that the next stage of construction could come in behind us. We used a 6-man crew with rider-scrubbers that we had customized for more aggressive scrubbing action in order to get the product into the top surface of the concrete slab in less time than by hand."

Frank Bianchi added, "Don's crew applied SEAL HARD throughout this facility. It was used both as a stand-alone treatment for the upper floors, and a companion product on top of EMERYPLATE FF. We have found that the one-two punch of EMERYPLATE FF and SEAL HARD will provide the owner an extremely durable and long lasting concrete floor finish. In the less severe wear areas SEAL HARD alone has proven itself to more than double a concrete floor's resistance to abrasion, with very low on-going maintenance required."



Frank Bianchi, L&M Midwest Regional Sales Manager

High psi Baseplates: EpogROUT 758



Frank Bianchi also commented about the grouting requirements of the project. "Due to the narrow width and high dynamic loads down in the newsprint inventory room, the specifying engineers wanted to make sure these newsprint-handling rail systems wouldn't pound and shake these railbeds to death. They wanted this system to stay level and secure decades from now. That's why they specified [EPOGROUT-758](#)." Frank continued by saying, "The forming process is almost as important as placing the grout

EpogROUT 758 (inset) was an important component to stabilizing the itself. It helped that some of these guys also
rail system. attended one of L&M's seminars where they
learned the finer points of working with this product."

Concrete Project Profiles Around the World

If you'd like to know more about the World-Herald Freedom Center project, or any of the other national or international concrete construction projects in which L&M has played a major role, free to contact us at (402) 453-6600, or visit the L&M website at www.lmcc.com. For more information about any L&M related concrete construction products or notable projects in the Nebraska, Iowa, Minnesota, North and South Dakota area, call L&M regional manager, Frank Bianchi at (402) 453-6600 or e-mail him at fbianchi@lmcc.com.