

US BUILDERS REVIEW

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HARRISON FRENCH & ASSOCIATES

Nationwide architectural and
engineering services





Harrison French & Associates (HFA)

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Produced by Sean O'Reilly and Written by Tom Faunce

Founded in 1990 by Harrison French (AIA) Harrison French & Associates (HFA) began as a small architectural firm working on projects for major retailers. Located in Bentonville, Arkansas, HFA has grown into a leading 180-person architectural and engineering firm, licensed in all 50 states and has completed over 7,000 projects across the U.S. in its 25-year history.

“It’s been a true story of someone who started out small and through wise business decisions was able to grow,” says Chris Horton, executive vice president and chief financial officer for HFA. “By staying out of debt, we’ve allowed ourselves the freedom to make certain decisions that we needed to.”

“It wasn’t necessarily my intention to grow the company into a large firm, but as we worked hard, did quality work and serviced our customers well, the work continued to flow in at larger and larger volumes and we began the upward spiral of success feeding more success,” says founder and CEO, Harrison French.

The exceptional service that HFA provides for its clients has been the platform for the organic growth that the company has experienced over the years. With a portfolio that includes completed projects all over the country, HFA has a high level of experience and expertise. “It’s tough to find this level of experience with a small regional firm,” says Horton. “We bring so much experience from across the country to the table.”



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HFA is prepared to grow and expand if necessary for a client. “We love to do as much as we can with a client and if that means that we need to add 20 people then we’ll do that,” Horton explains. “We’re not afraid of growth. We’ve done it, we’ve gone through it and we know what it’s like. We’re aware of the challenges involved and what we bring to our clients is the genuine desire to give them the best product we can give them. We believe that our client’s success equals our success.”

“An important aspect for our continuous growth has been the talented staff who really care about taking care of our clients by building long-term trusting relationships which is at the heart of our core values and why we are in business,” details Larry Lott, president and COO.

DIVERSIFICATION

While HFA often works in its target market of retail outlets, the company continues to maintain clients and projects in an array of different areas. The amount of talent that HFA has within its doors allows the company to accept and excel in different and interesting projects whether new construction or renovation.



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“Although most of our regional and national retail work is based on a fairly consistent corporate design, we have some very talented individuals on our staff who are excellent designers and understand what it takes to work with a client and produce a project unique to the client’s own needs and circumstances,” says French. “We are extremely proud of these local projects whether they be restaurants, museums, or other types of projects which serve our clients and the community.”

A project which HFA is very proud of is its very own headquarters. “We outgrew our previous office which created the need for a larger facility,” say Lott. “We were fortunate to find an existing vacant home center which we accepted

the design challenge to transform it from a dormant building into an active part of Bentonville’s city fabric. It’s a credit to our staff’s abilities to fully utilize their sustainable design creativity and expertise resulting in a LEED-CI Gold office which rewards us with a meaningful and exciting place to enjoy every day.”

The unique work that HFA performs in each area of the industry allows the opportunity to display the many talents of the company. HFA has done work in the higher educational field with the University of Arkansas as well as in the health care sector with The Indian Nations in Oklahoma. “We are very proud of the work we’ve done with the UofA and The Indian Nations of Oklahoma,” Horton explains. “Especially knowing the direct impact they have on people’s everyday lives.”

BUILDING LASTING RELATIONSHIPS

As a full-service architecture and engineering firm, HFA provides all professional services in-house, while working with contractors to provide the best team for construction of every project. “Architecture, engineering, civil and structural engineering, fire protection, fueling system design and refrigeration are all done under one roof,” says Horton. “Although we aren’t involved with the actual construction, we do work very closely with the contractors on projects to ensure our client is getting the best possible product.”



“As we added engineering services to HFA, it was very important to us that we develop into a true architectural and engineering collaborative environment in alignment for our clients,” says Lott. “I’m very proud to say that we have fostered a great learning environment, working together which continues to generate efficiencies that is a distinguishing characteristic of our successful business model.”

The long-term relationships that HFA has built upon with its clients are what gives Horton the biggest satisfaction about his job. The company’s history with a client of 20-plus is testament to the quality of products and services the company continues to provide. “When we begin working with a new client, we hope to establish a working relationship for years to come,” says Horton. “Our belief is that if we are taking care of our client then the bottom line will take care of itself.”

HFA plans to continue the growth of the company. “Although we’ve always focused on organic growth, we are prepared to entertain all opportunities in order to provide new challenges to our team,” says Horton. “Some of our staff are just about ready to step into a management role and it’s up to us to bring in the clients to give them that opportunity.”

As the company progresses into the future, Harrison French & Associates will continue to provide exceptional service to all of its clients throughout the United States and beyond. •

COMPANY PROFILE



ESTABLISHED:

1990



EXECUTIVE VICE

PRESIDENT:

CHRIS HORTON



EMPLOYEES:

170

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