




OVERCOMING THE BLUes OF CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTATION

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 Case Study

Construction documentation for the building of multi-family housing in the USA



When building an eight-story, 285-unit luxury apartment complex in Florida, USA, developers had to pay careful attention to ensure construction progress was kept on schedule and on budget. To precisely track the progress of Miami’s BLU at North Bay Village project, the developer, ZOM, turned to the construction documentation expertise of Multivista.

Founded in 1977, ZOM literally built its reputation from the ground up as a leading developer in Florida. While its first real estate investment activities were broad, ZOM eventually specialised in multi-family developments in and around Orlando. Today, the company is one of the most highly-regarded multi-family developers in the United States.

Jointly and directly responsible for developing more than 16,500 apartments, ZOM is meticulous in terms of deliverables and quality assurance on every project. While architects are mandated to provide regular reports and photos detailing construction progress, ZOM wanted a more efficient and comprehensive method of tracking its projects as they were built. According to Brett Gelsomino, Development Project Manager at ZOM, “Before Multivista, the process of tracking the progression of our construction was much more manual. Aside from the regular architect reports, a ZOM employee or the contractor would snap pictures randomly or as needed. Although these were useful, we had to dig through phones or cameras to find shots, time stamp images,

upload, and organise. It just took more time away from other important tasks.”

Once introduced to photo documentation services, ZOM was hooked. Providing these services from start to finish, Multivista documents, visually tracks, organises, and communicates the progression of construction projects through an easy-to-use and highly efficient online platform. “When a Multivista photographer comes on-site to take pictures, we are getting hundreds of shots. That was incredibly difficult for us to do on our visits of yesteryear. We were really only taking specific shots, so it wasn’t nearly as thorough as compared to the amount of information and pictures we now have access to in the Multivista platform,” explains Gelsomino.

IMPROVING QUALITY CONTROL AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Already familiar with the importance of professional photo documentation, ZOM re-enlisted Multivista again for the construction of BLU at North Bay Village. For this apartment development, ZOM chose the following shoot types:

- Interior and exterior progressions
- Mechanical, electrical and plumbing (MEP) Exact-Built®
- Window Installations Exact-Built®

“The main advantage for us in using Multivista has really been about maintaining the highest level of quality control and verification,” said

Gelsomino. "Construction at BLU has been going very well, but if ever we do run into anything, it's useful having the pictures to see how things were assembled or what's going on behind the walls without having major delays or expenses associated with tearing things apart."

ZOM used MEP photographs to identify and coordinate plumbing and mechanical details pro-actively. Gelsomino also remotely accessed exterior and interior progression photos, saving him countless visits to the job site. Instead of having to physically go on site every time a reference to a detail was needed, Gelsomino simply signed into the Multivista platform where all the information was readily accessible at the click of a mouse.

"Multivista has definitely made my job easier, especially when it comes to photographic reporting. I get such a variety of images and angles that I can share with stakeholders, whether it's interior or exterior photos, micro or macro level details; it's all there in the platform - dated, organised, and easy to find."

The advantage of remaining informed between site visits extended to ZOM's capital partners as well. "Multivista has been really helpful in keeping our capital partners informed about the progress of construction from far away," explained Gelsomino. "We always keep them plugged into the development, but a picture is worth a thousand words; and in this case, a hundred pictures are worth far more words."

KEEPING EVERYONE ON THE SAME PAGE

Working with the construction documentation team has been seamless for ZOM. Multivista worked with the general contractor to schedule shoots and the photos are uploaded to the project site after each site visit. An unlimited number of users assigned to the project logged into the Multivista platform to pull up the pictures indexed directly to the CAD drawings, highlighted details, browsed thumbnails, added comments, and created favourite folders.

"My favourite feature in the Multivista platform is being able to select a few pictures and generate a report with date and time stamps, location markers, and all associated information," explained Gelsomino. "Either it can show the evolution of one detail over time, or it can show specifics in an area at a certain time, and then I can print it or email it to anyone

involved in the project." Architects, general contractors, third-party inspectors, and other stakeholders were given access to the BLU project site and found the system beneficial. For ZOM, the streamlined flow of information between all parties is another key benefit of construction documentation services.

"Again, Multivista saves us time in terms of sharing information, but it also saves us money with being able to avoid conflicts and refute change orders. Generally speaking, the verification of change orders has become much more streamlined. Minor disputes that do arise are much more black and white, and it is easier to get everyone on the same page if we can prove conditions with photos," added Gelsomino.

FUTURE BENEFITS AND LONG TERM PROJECTS

In the 17 months that Multivista captured the BLU site, a total of 19,625 images were taken and attached to the project plans. In addition, Gelsomino and the ZOM team used the Multivista App to snap their own pictures on site and directly upload and index them to the architectural drawings; access their project floor plans and photos from the field; and view their hi-resolution, live streaming webcams from anywhere at any time. This direct access from the field is yet another time-saving asset.

In a concluding statement, Gelsomino explains why ZOM has continued to invest in Multivista on an additional 11 multi-family developments since BLU. "For ZOM, there is so much value in the Multivista services and platform that we will likely continue to use it for all of our ground-up developments. Simply put, I would rather have it and not need it than need it and not have it. It's a great tool and resource to document and archive all stages of construction progress, and the documentation remains on file long after project completion."