

THE SKY'S THE LIMIT

Skills, service and experience elevate *MRG Construction Management*

by Susan Diemont-Conwell

When founder Matt Genzale first began *MRG Construction Management, Inc.* (MRG) in 2011, he and friend Rich Yebba worked in close quarters out of Genzale's basement in Peabody, Massachusetts. Genzale eschewed job titles—a hallmark of the company even today—since he and Yebba wore all hats, making cold calls and putting together proposals for retail and restaurant construction projects.

Though the two still wear many hats today, a lot has changed. Genzale manages a staff of 18 out of the company's new headquarters in Peabody, and in just seven years, MRG Construction Management ranks among the Inc. 5000 fastest-growing companies in America.

"We've been on the Inc. 5000 list for two years now," Genzale says. "We're still hiring and have experienced pretty linear growth. Today, we manage an average of



Headquartered in Peabody, Massachusetts, MRG Construction Management, Inc. is one of the fastest-growing companies in the U.S. Pictured left to right: Kelsey Garrity, Rich Yebba, Rick DeLoreto, Lauren Chase, Stephanie Blomberg, Matt Genzale and Courtney Genzale.

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60 commercial construction projects a year with more than \$12 million in revenue."

The company provides construction management, design-build and general contracting services to a variety of commercial customers, including retailers, end users, developers, property managers and private corporations. Projects range from tenant build-outs and property improvements to new builds.

"Some projects we're building from the ground up, while others are interior or exterior renovations or reimagining projects," Genzale says. "The work is often fast-paced, but I love it that way."

MRG counts among its client base high-profile retailers, including Starbucks Coffee Company, Bed Bath & Beyond, Barnes & Noble, FatFace LTD and Party City. With an extensive network of subcontractors, the company manages projects across Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine.

"Our team works closely with clients on preconstruction requirements, subcontractor selection, construction management and initial scheduling," Genzale says. "One project manager serves as the point person for all project-related questions and concerns."

While there is one point person for each project, Genzale says the company has a collaborative mindset. "Every project has at least six to seven MRG employees who have helped in some way to get that project to completion," he says.



MRG Construction Management provides construction management, design-build and general contracting services to a variety of commercial customers, including Tartine Kitchen & Eatery in Beverly, Massachusetts (top) and a newly renovated TONI&GUY Salon in Hingham, Massachusetts (right).

"We're a growing company, and we don't stand by job titles. Everyone pitches in where needed to provide exemplary service."

GREAT FOUNDATION

Genzale began his career in 2000 after graduating from Boston University with a Bachelor of Science in mechanical engineering. "My uncle had been in the construction business, and I liked what he told me about the satisfaction of completing a project," he says. "I wanted to be out and about. I thought the construction management industry was a good fit."

Genzale went to work for his uncle's former company, a general contracting firm, and gained experience as



a project manager over the next 11 years. He managed a wide array of commercial construction projects, including retail, restaurants, sports complexes, a medical office, dental office, public works and research and development facilities.

"I was fortunate enough to learn from some amazing co-workers," he says.



"The experience gave me broad exposure to the construction industry and a great foundation."

Along the way, Genzale met his wife, Courtney, who worked as an assistant controller for an international private equity firm. Not long after—with baby No. 1 on the way—Genzale made the decision to strike out on his own and started MRG. "Courtney encouraged me to trust myself, trust my experience and to have faith in my vision," he says.

Genzale says he had no fear about starting a company. "At that stage and size and with minimal overhead,

I didn't see how the company could fail," he says. With just a couple of computers and desks in his basement, Genzale and Yebba began procuring larger and larger projects. "From that basement, we began doing several million dollars in work."

Genzale recalls the company's first big project. "It was for PVD Products in Wilmington. I somehow got on the bid list and came in with the lowest bid. I spent two weeks trying to convince the customer to use us since we were a new company with not as much experience as others. I remember telling him that he could trust us because my family was counting on

me to succeed. We not only got the project, but also completed work a whole month early."

In 2013, Genzale's wife decided to join the growing business and today manages the bookkeeping and accounting needs of MRG. "She has the office next to mine. When our second son starts preschool in the fall, she'll join us in the office full time."

IMPORTANCE OF ACCESSIBILITY

The company has found its niche in small retail and restaurant construction projects up to \$2 million in size. "It's what differentiates us from our



With an extensive network of subcontractors, MRG Construction Management, Inc. manages projects across Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. Shown here: the newly renovated True North Ale Company brewery tap room in Ipswich, Massachusetts.

competitors,” Genzale says. “A lot of larger construction firms won’t bother with these smaller projects. We provide the quality, experience and professionalism of a larger firm with the attentiveness and responsiveness of a smaller firm.”

Genzale says that MRG can be reached any time, day or night, weekday or weekend. “Being accessible to clients is one of our most important jobs.” Clients receive weekly reports that detail progress made and expectations for the week ahead, and project managers meet with clients on-site to discuss potential issues and solutions.

HELPING THE COMMUNITY

Two of Genzale’s favorite construction projects are those in which MRG provided its management services pro bono. For Northeast Arc, which helps those with disabilities become full participants in the community, MRG managed the conversion and renovation of a warehouse

into a black box theater, a simple indoor performance space with plain black walls. “The Black Box not only gives the Northeast Arc a performance and fundraising events space, but also provides the nonprofit with a way to generate income through rentals to local community groups for concerts, business meetings, parties and community theater,” Genzale says.

For Citizens Inn, which works to end homelessness and hunger across the North Shore region of Massachusetts, the company managed the renovation and installation of a new, fully equipped, code-compliant commercial kitchen.

Citizens Inn serves more than 15,000 meals a year. The renovation tripled the size of the kitchen and brought it up to code, improving safety and sanitation. “Thanks to MRG, we have a larger, safer and cleaner space,” says Executive Director Corey Jackson. “The renovation provides a better working space for volunteer groups and enabled the relaunch of our summer lunch program for kids, which provides daily lunches during the summer months.”

The kitchen will also be used in training future chefs, with space for eight students from a nearby culinary arts training program. “MRG is very generous and an amazing community partner. Matt promotes a culture of philanthropy. That level of compassion and caring is seen from the top down at MRG,” Jackson says.

In addition to his work with community nonprofits, Genzale co-chairs the Peabody Main Street Economic Vitality Committee, serves as treasurer of the Peabody Area Chamber of Commerce, is director of the Allergy and Asthma Awareness Initiative and is a member of the Mayor’s Economic Development Council.

“This is an awesome community. We at MRG don’t just work here. Each of us does our part to be a part of this community and to make it a better place for others,” Genzale says. “When you work hard and surround yourself with good people, the sky’s the limit.” 🐾

Susan Diemont-Conwell has had the pleasure of writing about many industries—from health care to energy to nonprofit—for over 20 years.