An Interview With Hughes Thompson

GreenbergFarrow

*"USGN is a platform that grows with you. Whether you do modifications in-house or have USGN do them – there are **no limits**" ...says Hughes Thompson, Principal & Sr. VP of GreenbergFarrow Architecture.*

An Interview with Hughes Thompson, using USGN's software since 2007:

Q: Why did you first choose USGN?

A: We were the first major architecture firm to use USGN. We had developed our own system in-house. Our client, Home Depot, implemented another platform. When we looked for a solution, we needed something that was far more flexible. We were familiar with USGN and recognized its' value. We needed something we could customize for every client, and USGN's flexibility gave us the answer.

Q: How does it compare to others project management tools you have seen?

A: We are very familiar with the other platforms. USGN stands out. It is a platform to customize and build on. None of the other platforms are as flexible as USGN.

Q: Where do you derive the greatest value from using the USGN platform?

A: The ability to keep things organized – By example, we use USGN for IKEA which are huge projects with hundreds of submittals and hundreds of RFIs. We built a custom workflow that we can tweak at any time to change processes as needed. USGN houses everything in one place and manages the entire customized workflow.

Q: How have you used the customization options to benefit your business?

A: We have gone way beyond the customizations, building backend programming to pull multiple forms together to create personalized dashboards per user. We add custom programming on top of USGN. We use MS Project in very detailed schedules and developed integration between MS Project and USGN, using USGN for reporting. The reports go out via a web page and is converted to pdf. We also developed a custom report formatting system as a plug-in for USGN.

Q: Do you have any examples where the USGN platform created an advantage for you?

A: Bob Evans, planned to remodel 550 restaurants in a three-year period. Every week five restaurants closed and reopened the following week. The scheduled closing was determined a year in advance. Every restaurant was different and our architect had to do site surveys, drawings, get client reviews and approvals, and permits. USGN allowed each architect to build their own schedule…All reports, plans and approvals were in USGN. Everything was tracked and USGN automated the process so that when a document was uploaded, the system knew the task was complete. The reporting requirements were very intricate. Results: All stores completed on time and on schedule. It was almost painless and USGN automated the reporting and kept everyone and everything up to date.

Q: What would you tell someone new considering USGN?

A: Think of USGN as a platform that will grow with you. You won't run up against any limitations. Whether you do modifications in-house or have, USGN do them – there are no limits.