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## OAKLEAF Waste Management

is the largest independent waste management services company in the U.S. with annual revenues approaching \$200,000,000. They employ over 240 people in East Hartford, Connecticut and at branch offices in Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Florida, Ohio, Minnesota, Tennessee, California, and Toronto, Canada. OAKLEAF has been named for the third year in a row as one of the fastest growing companies in the U.S. by *Inc Magazine* and is listed in the 2003 Inc 500.



## challenge:

### The Challenge of Growth

OAKLEAF's business was growing, and at the same time, the nature of their business was changing. Staff were sharing workstations, when what they really needed was more private, and less open space. This dynamic company desperately needed a new space to both accommodate their existing staff and to help attract the best and brightest new recruits. In addition, the new space should reflect the right image to investors and potential clients alike. OAKLEAF's lease was running out and there was no question that a new facility was in order. But the transition would involve moving 245 workstations, 22 network servers and a PBX telephone system and it all had to be done without interrupting OAKLEAF's 24/7 operation and services. How could they make this happen economically, in the right location and on time? OAKLEAF decided to assign this mission critical project to bkm Total Office.

"We started the business in 1995 and eventually moved to a renovated warehouse, which we outgrew by 2002. Rapid growth and enhanced workspace needs of our employees drove us to quickly find a new home. Having toured available office space for over a year, we found a desirable location in East Hartford, CT in late 2002. We needed to be up and running by mid-2003 and were scrambling to assemble an array of vendors who could complete essential tasks and provide furnishings on time and at an affordable cost. Serendipity struck when our bkm representative visited us. We had been purchasing furniture from them since 1995. The opportunity evolved from 'What can you get me for used furniture?' to a turnkey solution where bkm would take ownership of the entire process from assessment through move into what has become Class A space."

Jim Barnes  
President & CEO  
OAKLEAF Waste Management, LLC

## solution: bkm

bkm was equipped to handle every aspect of the move from planning to construction, to the actual move into the new space. Having bkm as their single source partner was very appealing to OAKLEAF, who acknowledged that they would have been challenged outside their core competency by having to manage the deliverables of multiple vendors under difficult time constraints.

The bkm total solution included:

- construction management services
- wiring and cabling
- electrical support for voice, data and power needs
- lighting
- move services
- refinishing and mill-work
- product fulfillment of window treatments, rich wall coverings and carpets, and new and upgraded furnishings

# project details:

## Partners in Planning

The planning process began with a tour of bkm's headquarters. OAKLEAF's CEO Jim Barnes was impressed with bkm's "intelligent space" concept and thought it was an excellent prototype for what he envisioned for his company's new space. He liked the "earthy feel" of the building and believed that details such as movable walls with integrated glass would provide an open and visually natural feel - a perfect working environment for his employees.

By bringing its "workplace performance model" to their attention, bkm educated OAKLEAF on how to coordinate space to meet its business needs. OAKLEAF and bkm brainstormed ideas and developed a mutual understanding of what workspace needed to do for OAKLEAF, and how to best use the new space. bkm felt confident in its ability to convert the two floors of raw space into a Class A environment through the optimal placement of people with furniture and equipment to fit their needs. "OAKLEAF was very hands-on, which helped in optimizing time", said John Gallagher, bkm's VP of Engineered Interiors.

## Construction Phase

bkm recruited an outside architectural firm to complement its own talented internal team. In the space of one weekend, and prior to the lease being signed, four essential pre-construction services were completed:

- Program Assessment
- Requirements Specification
- Detail Design
- Construction Documentation

A contractor with in-house mechanical design/build skills was recruited to assist in the construction phase. A detailed Project Plan defined every action to be completed, as well as a timeframe for completion. bkm was 100% accountable for project management, implementation and product fulfillment.

The project was completed on time, under budget and with no interruption in operations or service. In addition, OAKLEAF received money back from their progress payments to bkm.

## The Results

OAKLEAF moved into a new headquarters representing the leading edge of workplace design. The 35,000 square-foot space (the largest office transaction east of the Connecticut River in 2003)



captures the essence of OAKLEAF with workspaces that enhance individual performance.

"Our executive team is very pleased with the new design," noted Frank Wilk, VP Information Technology "Our environment facilitates greater ease in collaboration and communication, resulting in more efficient exchanges of information and ideas."

## Reflections

Looking back, bkm Market Manager Linda Bianchi stated, "We minimized a painful situation for OAKLEAF. Everything evolved around space, and we helped them to objectively define what they wanted to accomplish. The synergy of bkm's product and space management knowledge helped OAKLEAF optimize its investment based on budget constraints and business objectives. We were able to apply the right economic mix of

"Our New Corporate Headquarters achieves four strategic objectives for us:

- Doubling our existing square footage and providing expansion for our rapid growth.
- Utilizing state-of-the-art IT infrastructure and facilities to maximize efficiency.
- Providing comfortable offices and work environment for our employees, clients and vendors.
- Obtaining excellent accommodations at a reasonable rate.

We now have the ability to grow in a timely and affordable manner through painless moves, adds and changes. We will retain and attract the best employees. Our customer retention efforts will be optimized and we will be better positioned to attract new customers."

Jim Barnes  
President & CEO

OAKLEAF Waste Management, LLC

off-lease product and refurbished existing furniture. New furnishings were placed in customer visible and workplace specific areas. Like many of our clients, they were willing to spend in certain areas, but needed savings in other areas not as critical to productivity or appearance. For example, Barnes saw the value in installing demountable walls. In addition to flexibility, this feature enabled the landlord to remove fixed construction costs from the lease. bkm refurbished non-critical existing furniture as an additional savings over buying new."

Dan Sabia, bkm President, stated, "We used our own folks to get this done. We were constantly reviewing budget, options and performance - constantly weighing trade-offs and optimizing based on total value. We had access to the total picture. We bring knowledge with a myriad of resources at our fingertips."

## working with bkm:

Smart investments in the work environment are integral to successful business strategies. They enable people to be efficient and processes to be effective. bkm creates effective workplace environments by integrating knowledge, product and service. We provide a single point of accountability from assessment and design through construction and move. We tailor our approach to address immediate needs, while also building a workplace strategy to be used as a roadmap for evaluating future investments. Interior architecture, furniture and technology are seamlessly integrated so that fast track companies can execute rapid change when windows of opportunity open to them. bkm provides dramatic business advantages to these companies through single source, turnkey, design/build solutions.



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