

# South Florida contractor addresses building green



SIKON recently completed the first Publix Greenwise Store, a LEED Certified facility located in Palm Beach Gardens, and is breaking ground on a LEED Certified office campus in Davie.



"The Promenade at Coconut Creek, a LEED certified, mixed use town center" Scott says, "is a very good example of a project that the city mandated to be LEED certified and is now nearing completion without any substantial overall cost impact."

Founded in the late 1950s, SIKON Construction Corporation started as the in-house contractor for a development company, a relationship that remained intact until 2000, when Sikon spun off as its own autonomous company. It has since been carving out its own market niche as one of Florida's premier retail contractors, generating an impressive \$134 million revenue in 2007. SIKON's main office is in Deerfield Beach and has a second office in Orlando.

Dale E. Scott, who joined SIKON as senior executive vice president a little more than three years ago, says, "In 2000 we started pursuing the marketplace and our growth has been pretty rapid. Our intent was to become a much larger company and in the last several years, we've done that."

Ed McWhorter, SIKON's president and chief operating officer, has been associated with the firm for 15 years and is the driving force behind the company's excellent reputation of honesty, integrity, quality construction and long lasting customer relations.

SIKON offers a full scope of construction services. "I would put our pre-construction staff up against any I've ever worked with in the business," says Scott. "It gives us the ability to analyze the constructability of the project design and give the client the best building value."

Scott says SIKON stumbled into green building quite accidentally, but has fully-embraced the approach. "A project came to us

that the city required being LEED certified. Going through the planning process, we realized energy and environment conservation is what's happening in our industry, and we'd better learn what it's all about. So we brought in USGBC representatives and other professionals to teach courses to our people along, with inviting architects, realtors and developers to these symposiums. Now one of our LEED certified Senior Project Managers teaches a class for our employees and clients".

Also, Scott has lectured on green building from the contractor's point of view to client companies and at industry related conferences. "It is the wave of what we're going to be involved in and if you don't become part of it, you're going to be left behind."

Scott notes that green building "means something a little different each time it is used." For example, developers can build green projects without them being LEED certified. "LEED certification brings a project to a different level and is another process to go through. Today, you're seeing just about everyone trying to save on energy and water usage. Energy conversation, along with environmental protection is discussed

on virtually every project now and in most projects, something is being done that would be considered building green".



Dale Scott

Adapting to this, Scott says, is not a major challenge, but "you have to do it right. You need to assemble a team that has bought into the concept and understands it. Everyone has to be on the same page, including the planning and design staffs, and it is important to have a LEED consultant involved. To control costs and schedule a contractor becomes a vital part of the project planning team. In most cases, it's not that big a cost hit to a

project and if carefully analyzed may not be any dollar hit at all. Life cycle-wise, it's definitely a payback."

Although the industry may be experiencing a slowdown in comparison to recent years, Scott says he has "found that retail developers are about as creative a group of people as there are. They generally find a way to work within the economy, and I feel that with the emphasis on building green by many communities, building green may be one of the driving forces that will keep development and construction going."

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