



Integrated design and construction firm, O'Neal, Inc., was founded in 1975.

O'NEAL

THE BUSINESS OF PROJECT DELIVERY

Adaptability, Creativity and Commitment Contribute to Forty Years of Growth and Success

O'Neal, Inc. celebrates its 40th anniversary this year, and the milestone date finds them stronger than ever. Maybe that's because O'Neal is a company that knows when and what to change... and what should always remain the same.

The company's history spans decades that have seen enormous shifts in the industry landscape, most notably, a technological revolution and the great recession. But

throughout it all, O'Neal has simultaneously proven itself to be adaptable and remained true to its core ideals.

Who Is O'Neal?

O'Neal is in the business of project delivery. Challenging industrial capital construction projects with complicated processes and intricate designs are the specialty of O'Neal.



O'Neal specializes in complex capital projects.

Since 1975, some of the largest domestic and international manufacturers doing business throughout the U.S. have relied on O'Neal for complete services or a customized mix of their services to meet their specific needs. The company integrates overall project planning, design and construction to create cost-effective capital solutions. Industries they serve include automotive, pharmaceutical, biotechnology, process chemical, manufacturing, energy and pulp and paper markets worldwide.

It all started as a two-person structural engineering firm, founded by Paul O'Neal in 1975. During its early years, the company set the tone for making carefully considered business moves with an eye toward remaining local. As a young engineer, Paul O'Neal had worked for a company that offered profit sharing to its employees, and he recognized both the integrity of this choice as well as the competitive advantage that could be gained from the profit-sharing model. In 1985, O'Neal employees were able to begin buying stock. This helped the company attract quality employees, giving them an advantage over competitors. Employee-ownership also provides a higher level of accountability and commitment for team members.

But "what really speaks volumes

about our company is the years of employee retention and satisfaction our employees demonstrate. Our employees own stock in this company, an incentive-based practice that is proven to increase client and employee satisfaction," said Judy Castleberry, O'Neal's CFO.

The carefully charted moves of its early years allowed O'Neal to grow to the 280 person firm that it is today. During the transition, its small family business culture was not lost, but merely matured into an engaged and supportive community of workers.

"Work doesn't feel like 'work' when you love what you do and who you do it with," said Kevin Bean, O'Neal, Inc. President and CEO. "Our fantastic team brings a wide range of talent and diversity to each project, allowing us to provide the best service possible to our clients. We are proud of what this company has become over the last 40 years and look forward to continued success over the next 40."

The company also earned recognition being named an ENR Top 500 Design Firm and Top 400 Construction Firm, ABC of the Carolina's General Contractor of the Year, a ranking of Hot Firm #3 on the Zweig Group's 2015 Hot Firm List, and being named one of the Best Places to Work in South Carolina for the last four years.

"We strive to provide a positive, family-oriented work atmosphere and challenging work," said Brian Gallagher, director of marketing. "We have a great combination of seasoned, long-term employees and younger team members. We do have a number of events focused on our employees. Other perks include training programs, investment in technology, and a compressed work week (four full days and half-day Friday)."

Not Afraid to Change

Now, as in its early days, O'Neal is keenly attuned to changes in the business environment. This means not only watching trends, but quickly reacting to them. With each industry shift that has occurred throughout the years, O'Neal has responded. The company has expanded into new strategic business units and developed unique innovations in technology to decrease planning time while increasing coordination among stakeholders.

O'Neal delivers multi-discipline services to its clients, learning how those clients do business and recognizing the value in providing a guaranteed cost and schedule. As O'Neal continues to respond to external changes, they have fine-tuned their methods, and even developed a proprietary SCOPE Site Assessment and Preconstruction Process to assess and optimize potential sites and define project cost, scope, and schedule. They also created a Capital Appropriation Process that reduces project risk, delivers predictable results and maximizes the effectiveness of capital funding.

"Identifying new opportunities, rather than becoming a niche service provider, has, I believe, allowed our company to stay relevant and competitive in this ever-changing market. O'Neal continues to evolve processes based on client needs, business climate and industry demands and regulations," said Bean. "We develop and deliver multi-discipline services to our clients, recognizing the value in providing a guaranteed cost and schedule, and learning how our clients do business. We have fine-tuned our

methods and developed our processes that reduces project risk, delivers predictable results and maximizes the effectiveness of capital funding.”

Its ability to adapt and grow has resulted in O’Neal’s recent expansion into the international market. The company has a rich history of working with international clients who are making capital investments in North America. For this reason, O’Neal ventured into a new partnership with the Beck Group to start operations in Mexico. This partnership will help O’Neal provide more comprehensive services and deliver successful capital projects on an engineer-procure-construct (EPC) basis.

“We’ve seen a steady increase in demand and construction services from our clients in Mexico,” said Bean. “Our clients, particularly those in the automotive, consumer goods, and packaging industries, are investing in grassroots facilities, expansions and upfits for manufacturing operations in Mexico, and we have invested to meet their needs.”

Along with the Mexico initiative, the company also announced a recent \$5 million expansion that will include 60 new hires, training, and upgrading its technology. With an increase in chemical and manufacturing investment, O’Neal recognized that a proactive investment was crucial to keep up with demand. South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley said, “Founded nearly four decades ago in the Upstate of South Carolina, O’Neal, Inc. is a testament to the strength of our workforce and our business climate and Team South Carolina’s progress.”

And it doesn’t stop there. According to Bean, the company is actively seeking smaller companies to acquire.

Challenging Projects are Prized

It’s not enough to spot a trend – to be successful over the long haul, companies have to have a creative response. And creativity abounds at O’Neal. The company specializes in complicated projects with complex processes and intricate design. Professionals in the

company excel in solving the most challenging concepts in project delivery. By having all of a project’s design and construction professionals in-house, clients benefit from a true collaboration of disciplines.

As a result, O’Neal has built successful relationships with Fortune 100 and industrial clients like Michelin, Milliken, Domtar, Solvay, Huntsman, Coca-Cola, Mitsubishi, General Electric and others.

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**– Kevin Bean, O’Neal, Inc.
President and CEO**

According to Ellis Bellew, an electrical engineer at O’Neal, the company “makes efforts to stay at the forefront of technology in the form of software advancements, training opportunities for employees, and paperless upgrades to construction sites, among others. O’Neal’s primary

goal is to provide satisfactory project delivery while simultaneously creating an inviting workplace for both its employees and clients.”

“I came to O’Neal in 1985 from a large national engineering firm looking for an opportunity to work for a company where I could have more involvement in company decisions, operations and direction,” said Randy Chandler, a senior project manager with O’Neal. “In the 30 years that I have been with O’Neal the company has grown from 50 to almost 300 employees; taken on increasingly larger, complex and interesting projects; and added procurement and construction services. Through all this time and growth the company still has a culture of openly sharing company information, seeking ideas from its employee’s, and giving all an opportunity to be involved. “

O’Neal’s adaptability and creativity is, in all likelihood, an outgrowth of its employee ownership. Being privately held allows the company to have a degree of financial independence, and enables them to make changes as they see fit. They have put together a team with a wide range of diversity and talent, each member a truly independent thinker.

According to Troy Callahan, project manager at O’Neal, “the size of the company and the culture makes each employee important.” And companies full of important people provide important services to their customers. ■



Employee ownership is a hallmark of O’Neal.