

Los Angeles Edition

C A L I F O R N I A
CONSTRUCTION REVIEW

California's Most Challenging & Unique New Construction Projects

value engineering
site planning
network sourcebook

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Fox Network Center and New Executive Building

Fox and its parent company, News Corporation of America, were looking for a place to consolidate operations. During the search Fox discovered there's no place like home. It looked into several location options before deciding to position its Network Center and New Executive Building on the campus of its existing film studios.

"In considering its needs for future operations, Fox entertained several options before choosing to make a commitment to Los Angeles by remaining in its current [film studios] location," said Michael White, AIA, senior partner for HLW International, LLP, the design architect for the Fox Network Center and the design architect and architect of record for the New

Executive Building. "Fox has concentrated on renewing the historic resource it has and gathering its film and broadcast operations onto one creative campus, all while being sensitive to the surrounding community."

The two new adjacent structures are five-story office buildings built above a three-story underground parking structure.

Fox Network Center is a 24-hour, fully digital technical television broadcast facility for the fourth major television network, and it houses the technical operations of Fox Broadcasting Company as well as Fox Sports Network and other Fox cable channels. The main feature of the facility's operations center is the network control center that gathers, synchronizes and distributes content to the Fox affiliate stations nationwide via satellite broadcast transmission. The full-access-floor facility includes 24 editing rooms, two 7,500-square-foot live production stages for producing football, hockey and baseball game coverage and pre-game shows, and full post-production facilities.

Fox Network Center consolidates the multiple Fox broadcasting activities previously scattered throughout the city, said White.

Wrapping around part of the new stages is a large L-shape volume. This space has an inner layer that houses the technical facilities and a perimeter layer containing the offices. Technical operations are supported by redundant mechanical and electrical infrastructure that can operate independently for up to seven days.

The New Executive Building is the West Coast headquarters for the executive and administrative offices of the multimedia entertainment conglomerate, Fox NewsCorp. The

Congratulations Fox Network Center and New Executive Building *for making a difference in our community*

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Bomel Construction Co., Inc. Concrete Contractor

As the concrete subcontractor to Gordon & Williams General Contractors, Inc. on the Fox Network Center project, Bomel Construction would like to congratulate the entire team that made this job a success.

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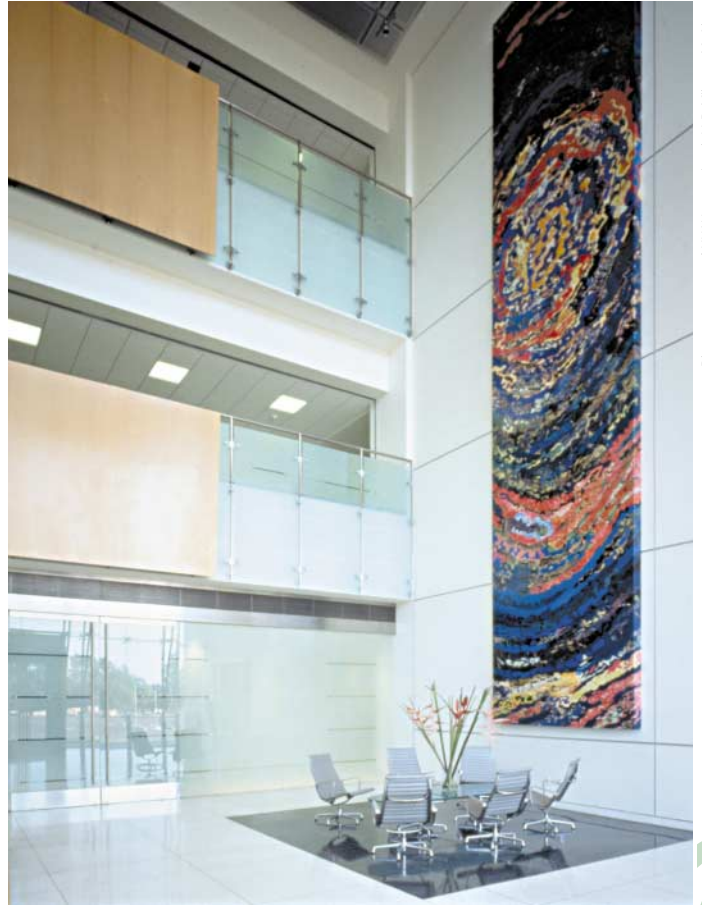
concept to completion

The Need:

A building to house Fox broadcast operations and a building for its executive offices

The Challenge:

Planning buildings around site-specific restrictions involving historic district covenants and entitlements



Photos courtesy of HLW International, LLP, Milroy & McAleer



Photo courtesy of HLW International, LLP, Milroy & McAleer





ground-floor suites are headquarters for media mogul, Rupert Murdoch, and his corps of senior executives.

A completely high-tech facility, the building offers sophisticated telecommunications capabilities, state-of-the-art conferencing suites and multimedia screening rooms. Unique building features include a tunnel and exterior bridge connecting the building to the Fox Network Center.

Amenities include a 10,000-square-foot restaurant, a 65-seat private screening room and a large "blue sky" media laboratory. A central plant and electrical substation feed the southeastern quadrant of the 45-acre Fox Studios lot. The communications infrastructure provides internal digital transmission of broadcast and film product for review and editing within the building and to a campus-wide network of post-production, scoring and editing groups.

A challenge faced by HLW was designing buildings that would be located on the landmark Fox Studios lot. The design was dictated by site-specific restrictions involving historic district covenants and entitlements, which are part of an extensive development agreement with the city of Los Angeles, White explained.

"In rising to the challenge of working within these varied constraints, as well as [consider-

ing] the presence of the existing landmark executive building just opposite, HLW designed [the New Executive Building as] an elegant, linear building. Its principal exterior feature is its intersection with a large entry courtyard," he said. The courtyard is the terminus of the main palm tree-lined entry drive into the studios and provides one uniform entry space for both executive buildings.

The design/build efforts by Gordon & Williams General Contractors, Inc., the projects general contractor, were key in making both projects a success, said Keith Simizu, project manager for the Fox Network Center part of the project for the firm. Gordon & Williams provided preconstruction services on both buildings from schematic design through construction documents. "The successful team effort coordination among Gordon & Williams, the architects and the owner was key in getting the project done on time," he said.

There were numerous challenges in both buildings, said Mike Zion, project manager for the New Executive Building part of the project for Gordon & Williams. "The work was re-sequenced due to an underground methane gas condition as well as the identification and capping of abandoned oil wells on site," he said.

"The majority of the project work was at the main entrance of the 40-acre lot, which required logistical planning to avoid interference with studio personnel arriving and leaving. There was also live studio filming taking place during construction."

White said another of the major challenges on this project was the schedule. "The two-year time frame demanded an extremely fast-track schedule for design and construction."

This unique commission has been the highlight in HLW's 10-year relationship with Fox, White said. "A project such as this is one of those rare instances in which a true landmark is being restored and infused with new life.

"Fox, recognizing the valuable asset it has, is showing both incredible respect for the past by restoring the studio as well as vision for the future by creating this cutting-edge broadcast facility. We all benefit from its continuing investment in Los Angeles." ●

— J.P.

facts & figures

Name:

Fox Network Center and
New Executive Building

Location:

Los Angeles

Owner:

Fox, Los Angeles

Type of Project:

Construction of a broadcasting
headquarters and an executive building

Architects:

HLW International, LLP, Los Angeles
(design architect for the Fox Network
Center and design architect and
architect of record for the New Executive
Building); Langdon Wilson, Los Angeles
(architect of record for the
Fox Network Center)

General Contractor:

Gordon & Williams General
Contractors, Inc., Irvine

Size:

206,000 square feet (Fox Network
Center); 165,000 square feet
(Fox NewsCorp Executive Building)

Cost:

\$133 million

Construction Time:

1996 - 1999