

Upholding Good Value

GOLDEN TRIANGLE CONSTRUCTION WAS CREATED AS A MEANS TO SPREAD WEALTH. BY GENEVIEVE DIESING

Many companies preach the importance of maintaining values in the workplace, but very few uphold them to the level that Calgary, Alberta-based general contractor Golden Triangle Construction does. The seven-year-old company's operations are so strongly guided by Christian principles that all of its projects and relationships reflect them.

"Golden Triangle started up with the intention of being a company that would be established under the principle of always doing the right thing, no matter the impact or the outcome to themselves," says Con Collins, senior vice president of construction at Renfrew Insurance Ltd. in Calgary, Golden Triangle's bonding broker. "They would be equally responsible to owners and sub trades. Coincidentally – or perhaps because of their adherence to that philosophy – they have

seen unusually strong growth in their level of activity and in all the other appropriate aspects of a solid construction operation. It has been a success story."

Tim Kerrigan from Bennett Jones LLP, the company's legal firm, agrees. "James Peloso and Golden Triangle Construction always [try] to treat its clients and sub-contractors fairly and equitably," he says.

These values also extend to Golden Triangle's treatment of its employees. Peloso mentors them personally, and he firmly believes that by instilling his values and concern for others in his company's culture, it will extend to how the staff performs. According to Golden Triangle's staff, the effort has not gone unappreciated.

"I am fortunate to be a member of a progressive organization with unshakeable governance principles," Senior Project Manager Peter Kiranas says. "Golden Triangle has established

an ethical environment with its employees and business partners that are in sync with strong values aimed at doing the right thing."

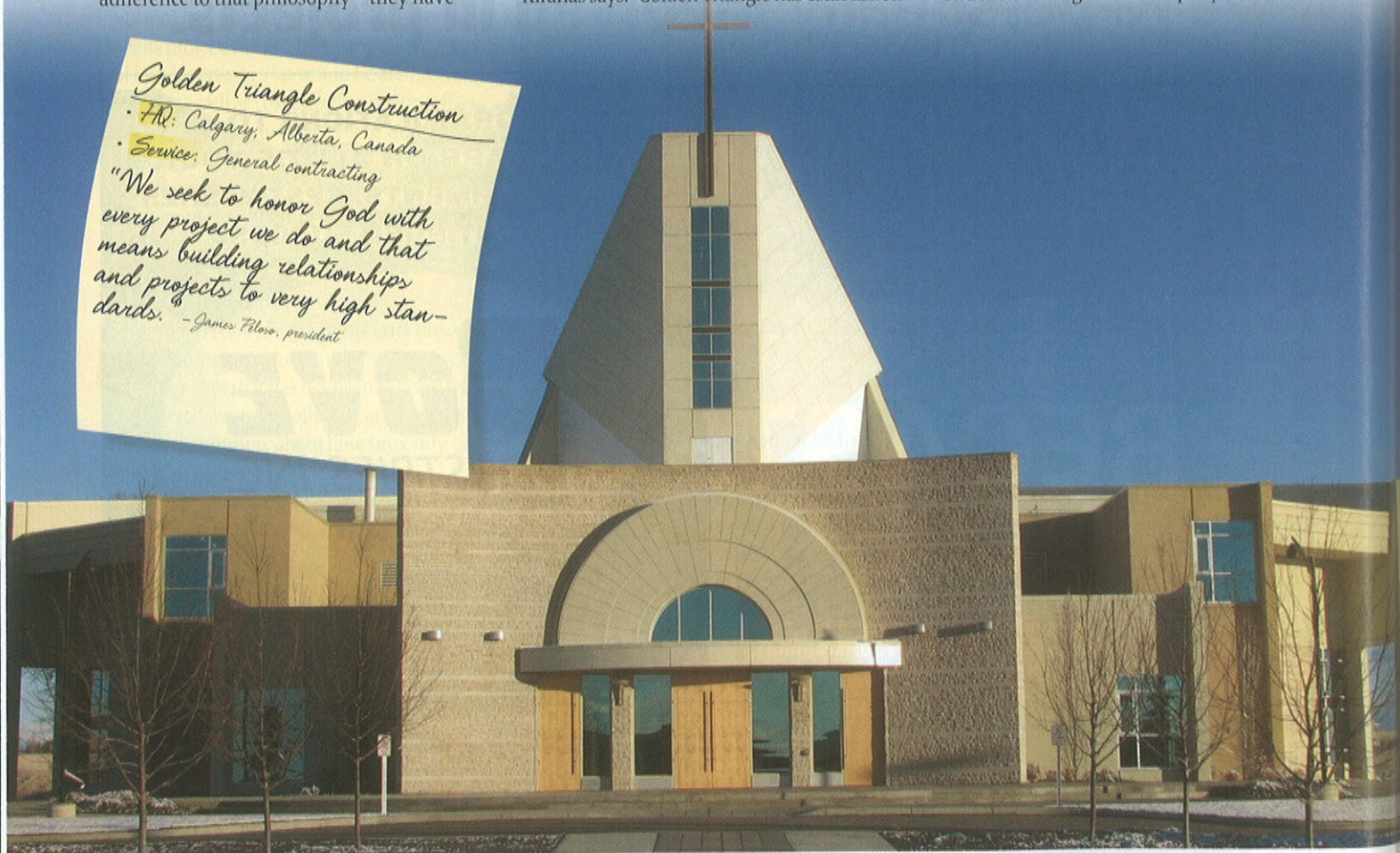
From establishing genuinely caring relationships, to only taking on projects it can handle and can get behind personally, Golden Triangle continuously goes the extra mile. These include projects such as the Brenda Stafford Women's Centre, which will provide women and children fleeing domestic violence with enhanced affordable housing options, counseling and social programs.

In a recent interview with *Construction Today*, President and founder James Peloso shared the company's secret to success.

Construction Today: Tell us a little about the company's history.

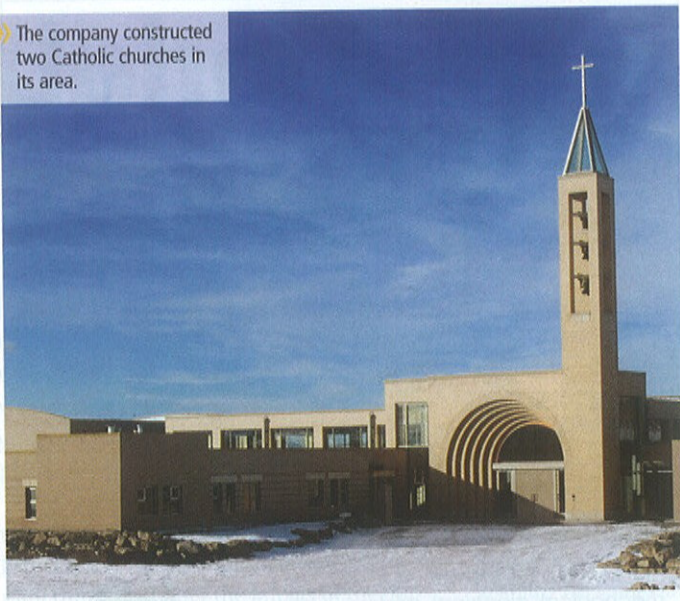
James Peloso: When I started the company, I saw there was a need for another good construction management company that was able

Golden Triangle Construction
 • HQ: Calgary, Alberta, Canada
 • Service: General contracting
 "We seek to honor God with every project we do and that means building relationships and projects to very high standards."
 - James Peloso, president

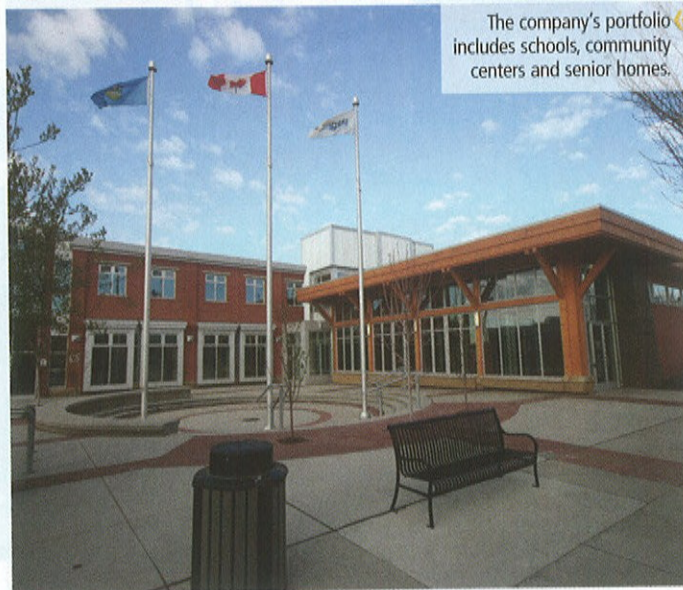


» Golden Triangle Construction is confident that the Calgary market will remain strong. Caring for its employees has contributed to the company's continuous success.

» The company constructed two Catholic churches in its area.



» Golden Triangle works on institutional and commercial projects.



« The company's portfolio includes schools, community centers and senior homes.

to work with the design/owner team from the conception of a project through to completion.

That was one of the reasons for starting Golden Triangle. Really, the vision that I had for Golden Triangle – and I still have – was to use our God-given talents to create wealth to share with those who do not have. So, Golden Triangle was really a vehicle to help those in need.

CT: What is your position in the industry?

JP: The market in Calgary is still fairly strong and we are set up wonderfully in the marketplace to move forward. We're a mid-size company. Our smallest project is \$17 million and our largest is \$30 million. We're set up to move into a project range of \$40 (million) to \$70 million.

Golden Triangle serves the institutional and commercial markets. We built the last two Catholic churches in the area and the last two municipal centers. We've constructed emergency services buildings and secondary and post secondary schools. We're currently building the domestic violence center in downtown Calgary and a 104-bed senior's lodge in Innisfail. For our next phase of growth, we will build on these relationships and our mission to work in a way that leaves all of our stakeholders looking forward to the next opportunity to work with us.

CT: How do you do this?

JP: We manage growth carefully by making sure we prepare our team before we take on additional work. We're really building a team of leaders. I take a personal interest in the professional development and success of each member of our team – they will be the key to our future.

We also want to make sure we have the right people and the right culture in place. There is a key staff meeting this week with our entire team to talk about our culture and what I want for the company, why I want it and how we are going to get there together. We're driving toward a high-quality workplace experience.

We get really purposeful about developing a dynamic culture. I don't think a lot of companies get quite that deliberate in their steps to form a strong, healthy culture.

I believe it is important to sincerely care for the people who surround us in the workplace. We think about conflict resolution and encourage our staff to deal directly with issues. We work one-on-one with individuals and if they have an issue – positive or negative – we want to see it resolved with grace, kindness and a sincere hope for a win/win solution. As we continue to embed this culture throughout the whole organization, it cultivates a level of trust that will ultimately reveal itself in better projects and our ability to serve our clients better.

CT: What else is unique about your company's operations?

JP: My faith informs the way I do everything in the workplace and any other place. For me, (this company) is an opportunity to put Christian principles into practice. Golden Triangle looks to the future with excitement, hope and (the desire to) give glory to God in the way we operate and serve others.

CT: How does this affect client relationships?

JP: It affects the way we relate to our clients in a significant way. The senior's lodge we are building is a good example. It was brought to our attention that the owner wanted to keep a wing of building that was originally slated for demolition. As it became apparent that some of the residents may not be able to afford the new building, the owner had a change of heart. We agreed and (we felt) the right thing to do was to support the owner in keeping the wing, so we put all our energy into making that a reality.

(At the time) we were 60 percent complete, so the team had to change gears, but we were happy to do that. It was a change that affected many involved in the project. I couldn't help but think, "What if it was one of

us in the wing that was going to be demolished? How would we like someone else to respond to our needs?" Golden Triangle and Group 2 Architects played a key role in moving this change forward.

CT: How did this affect the schedule and budget?

JP: It's going to have a positive impact on the budget. We believe at this point that the owner will be saving money. I don't believe it will negatively affect schedule either. The project is slated for completion in the later part of this year. We had another project where one trade ran into financial difficulty, which is not so unusual within the construction industry. However, the way we responded might be a little unusual. We didn't take the easy way out.

I spent a significant amount of time and energy researching the project: who hadn't been paid as well as what work was outstanding or deficient, all in the midst of a project

being constructed. Then we developed a plan to get the project back on track. We also contacted the employees of the company that was in financial difficulty to find out if their wages had been paid. We did what we could to turn a bad situation around and make sure people were compensated as best as possible.

We did it because it was in the best interest of the project and those we were serving. Every project is important to us and we won't leave one until we are satisfied it is right.

Other projects (include) the Oilfields High School (addition and modernization), the Chestermere Town Hall, Town of Chestermere Emergency Services Building, the University of Calgary MacEwan Hall Student's Union Third Floor Redevelopment and the Okotoks Municipal Centre.

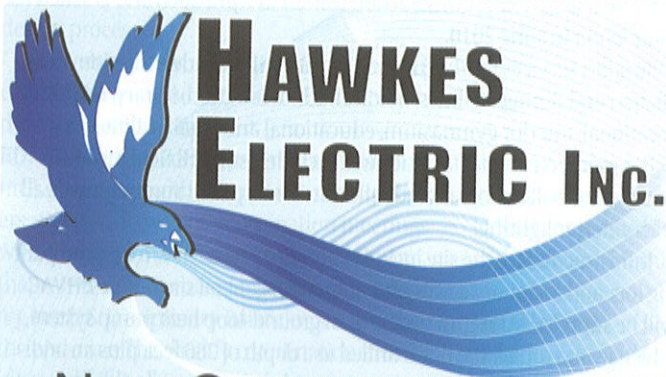
For me, it's all about relationships. The projects we've built to date have been meaningful community centers, churches, schools, care

centers and senior homes. (We've) been focused on institutional, service, values-based projects. This work means a lot to us. When we're asked to look at a project, we look at the potential for long-term relationships – it's about who we're working with.

CT: What is your strategy for the future?

JP: We have been told that over the last 20 years, Golden Triangle is the only general contracting company that has started from scratch and is now doing projects in the \$20 (million) – \$30 million range. We are poised to move into larger more complex work. For the future we will continue to make sure nothing comes ahead of our values. At Golden Triangle, the quality of the work will always be a focal point. We seek to honor God with every project we do and that means building relationships and projects to very high standards. So we'll be prudent about our growth, always ensuring we have the team in place to deliver quality. ♦

'We're driving toward a high-quality workplace experience.'



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