

# **MasterFormat™ - The Manufacturer's Friend**

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## **Preface**

Many manufacturers don't seem to realize the importance of MasterFormat to their part of the construction industry. Our purpose here is to try to explain why manufacturers should pay attention to MasterFormat and in particular MasterFormat 2004.

## **Consistency in Documentation**

As a standard format document used throughout the construction industry in North America, the main reason for MasterFormat's existence is to establish consistency in the industry. You may be asking yourselves what makes consistency in the construction documents so important? The answer of course is money. Like almost everything else in the construction industry, the "bottom line" is the driving force that causes the need for consistent documents.

## **The Benefits of Consistency to Manufacturers**

The beauty of MasterFormat is that if everyone is aware of the system it is easy to tie the correct manufacturers' products into the specification sections because everyone is using the same system. If manufacturers use the correct MasterFormat number as a cross reference to identify the products that can be used with a specific construction specification, then it makes life easier for everyone concerned.

When the contractor needs to bid on a construction project it often happens that the specification writer does not name product or manufacturer names in the specification sections of the Project Manual. How then does the contractor know where to find the products for each construction specification section? The easy way again is to look for products and materials that are again cross-referenced with the same MasterFormat number as that of the specification section. That way the contractor can find the right products for the required applications and provide the client with both an accurate bid and a facility that meets the clients needs.

Whether it is the specification writer, the designer or the contractor, the ability to find the right product for the job is made easier if the manufacturers' products are cross referenced with MasterFormat numbers. Consistency in the numbering makes life easier for manufacturers to get their products specified and installed. It saves time and money for the designer, specification writer, the contractor and ultimately the owner.

## **Summary**

In today's competitive construction industry marketplace, manufacturers need to get an edge on their competitors in any way that they can. Cross-referencing your products using MasterFormat section numbers makes it easier for specification writers, architects and engineers to identify where your product fits into their construction project. Those industry participants who design and write specifications are no different than you and me, if there is an easy way to get the results that they want then they are going to do things that way. If it's easier (and it is) to find products and materials because they have a cross-reference to a MasterFormat number attached to them then that is going to be the starting point for material and product research for most people.

A MasterFormat cross-reference number may just be the edge that you need to beat your competitors in getting the sale.