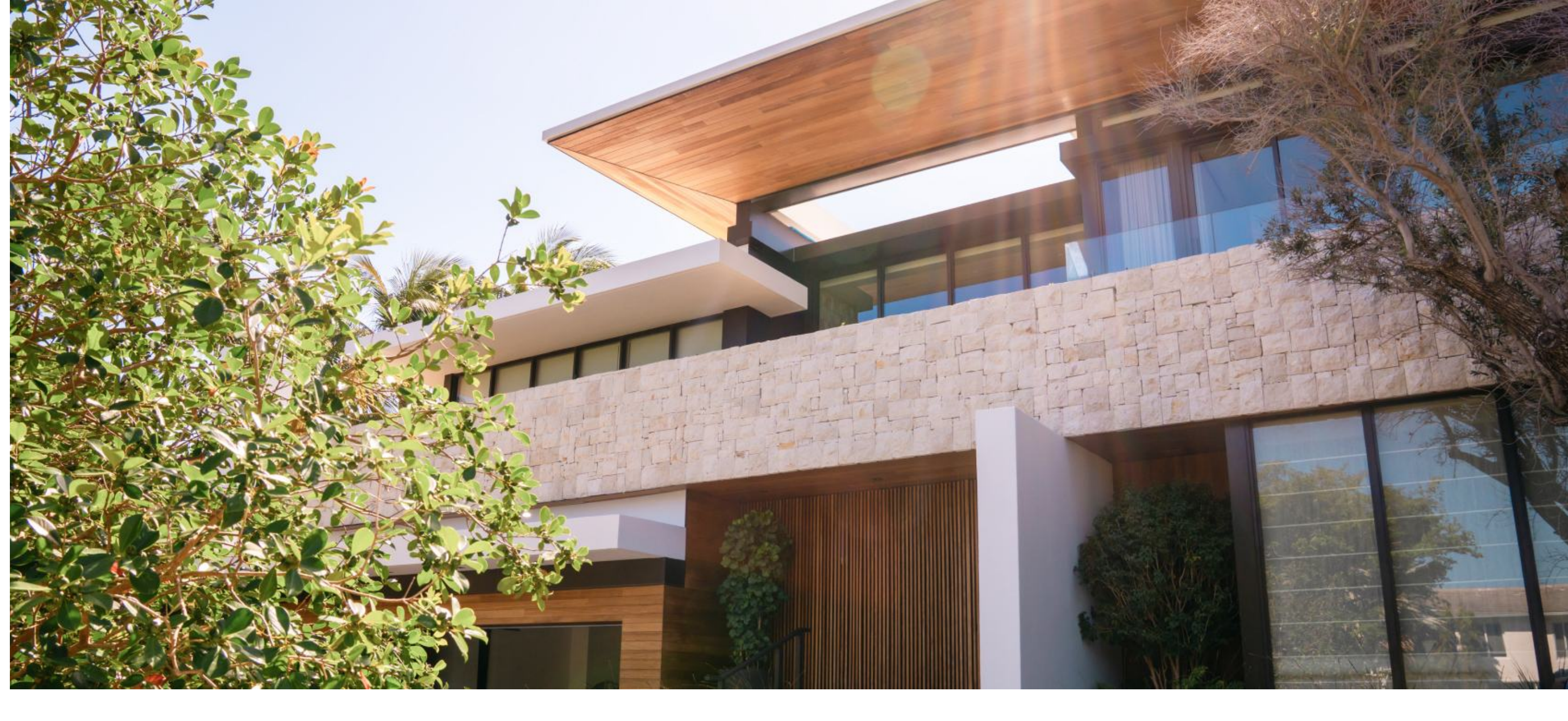


Dirty Little Secrets About Construction

5 truths no one tells you — but you should know before you build.

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**Construction runs on silence, assumptions, and hope.
These are the uncomfortable truths of our industry.
We believe saying them
out loud is the first step to doing it better.**

What's Missing Will Cost You Most



01

What's Missing Will Cost You Most

The biggest risks aren't what you see — they're what no one priced. Every budget looks solid at first glance. But then come the clarifications:

Drywall? Only standard — Level 4, no backing for recessed details, flush doors or baseboards not included.
Plumbing? Assumes floor-mounted fixtures. If you picked wall-hung toilets or ceiling rainheads, framing and costs just changed.
Electrical? Unit prices based on "typicals" — but you haven't selected fixtures, zones, or controls. That dimming system? Not in the quote.

None of this shows up as a red flag. Until it does.

Takeaway: Understand the process.
Define what's included.
And if you're unsure, assume & indicate in a narrative your considerations — it's the only way to protect yourself.

Approved Drawings ≠ Buildable Drawings

02

Approved Drawings ≠ Buildable Drawings

Permits don't mean ready. And that's not a problem — it's a step

Most clients think "approved plans" mean construction can begin. But city-approved drawings don't cover every decision, every detail, or every coordination point.

What's often missing:
Finish schedules
Basis of design alignment
MEP coordination
Shop drawings
Specialty elements like lighting, AV, and millwork

This isn't an architect's failure. It's how the industry works. Design sets intent. The builder's job is to coordinate, simulate, and align before execution.

In our case, we use a Digital Twin: a fully coordinated model that closes the gaps between drawings and construction.

➡ See how we define it here

Takeaway: Permit sets get you approval.
Coordinated documents get you a building.

GMP: The Illusion of Protection



03

GMP: The Illusion of Protection

Guaranteed Maximum Price sounds like safety. It usually isn't.

GMP contracts are marketed as a risk management tool. In reality, they often lock in inflated pricing based on unresolved design, extra contingencies, and unclear scope.

Trades quote conservatively.
Overlapping scope is priced in multiple times.
Unknowns are covered by stacking allowances across packages.
Design gaps are "filled in" with high assumptions.

The result? GMPs are often 10–15% more expensive than an open-book structure — without actually preventing change orders. And when changes do come, many GMPs don't have a clean process for cost validation or time impact analysis.

Takeaway: A contract without a system is just a sales tool.
If design isn't resolved, and procedures aren't clear, the GMP won't protect you. It'll just hide what's broken — until you pay for it.

Oversight ≠ Control

04

Oversight ≠ Control

Someone's watching. But do they know what they're looking at?

Most jobs say "we have oversight." But what kind?

Tracking submittals isn't quality control.
Updating schedules isn't coordination.
Filing paperwork isn't solving problems.

Oversight is not the same as ownership. You need someone who understands sequencing, tolerances, specs, and consequences — and who can make decisions under pressure, in real time.

Ask:
Is this person managing a contract, or managing construction?
Are they checking physical work — or just updating a dashboard?

Takeaway: Progress reports don't build projects.
People do. And not all "project managers" can manage a jobsite.

There's No Easy Job



05

There's No Easy Job

Complexity is normal. Chaos is not.

Every project has unknowns.
Design evolves. Products get delayed.
Human error shows up.

That's reality — and it's fine. What's not fine is when those changes turn into confusion, blame, or panic. That only happens when there's no structure behind the process.

A good team doesn't just "solve problems." They detect them early, escalate fast, and absorb them without drama.

Takeaway: You don't need a team that avoids challenges.
You need one that's built to handle them — with control, not improvisation.