

# DESIGN-BUILD

# Solutions

ESI specializes in food processing and distribution center design and construction.

FALL 2013

## PROJECT FEATURE



Photos courtesy of Tom Myers Photography

## Fast Growth? Limited Funds? No Problem.

"Foodservice distributor." Just taken by itself, the word "distributor" suggests a business in a constant state of movement.

Observers can see that Saladino's Inc. has been continually moving since its 1944 origins in a Fresno, Calif., grocery meat department. In fact, Saladino's has grown into one of California's leading foodservice distributors with a broad, multi-temp line of perish-

ables (meat, seafood, produce, dairy, beverages and other prepared grocery items)—in addition to disposables, small wares, linens and even equipment.

Officials say Saladino's has averaged more than 30 percent sales growth every year during the past seven years. In tandem, the company has re-invested in its brick-and-mortar operations and expanded and

opened as many as seven driver terminals/distribution centers including six in California and one in Nevada.

In this scenario—when a fast-growth company simultaneously needs to grow in multiple locations—how does it leverage a limited capital expenditures budget?

Last year, Saladino's identified West Sacramento, Calif., as a key new customer >>

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# Keep Quality, Cut Cost



Photo courtesy of Gregory Campbell

School's back in session and one classroom tenet is simple: if there's any doubt or confusion, don't hesitate to ask a question.

The same principle applies to food processors, warehouse operators and distributors. For those experiencing extraordinarily fast growth—or expanding quickly to leverage an opportunity—the next few steps can be confusing.

How does a company quickly allocate precious capital resources *and* realize the best quality value in a new facility, retrofit or expansion? How does it leverage the latest technologies and reduce energy costs and maintenance? The solution in all those situations is simple: Ask ESI Group USA a question. Get help.

With more than 20 years' experience in food processing and distribution center facility projects, ESI knows how to design, construct and/or retrofit facilities within a short or limited time schedule. Moreover, ESI recognizes that any prospective facility—and the accompanying capital—all belong to the client. That's why ESI understands that its role is to advise and provide options to receive the best value for the investment.

Then again, ESI also does its homework, to

leverage the best market cost. ESI competitively bids all work to numerous subcontractors and material suppliers. During the bidding phase, ESI asks vendors for alternative pricing to allow for different levels of quality on certain materials, then advises its clients about the pros and cons associated with any alternatives.

From experience, ESI also knows there are two common and critical trouble spots

for fast-growth companies.

**Accurate Accounting:** Budget accuracy is a factor that's critical for every owner. A client is making possibly one of the biggest decisions related to growing its business. Officials also use this budget to prepare "return on investment" models. An inaccurate budget can either kill a project or leave the owner without adequate funds.

**Inside-Out Design:** Any facility—whether it will serve distribution or food processing—needs to be designed from the "inside out." In a distribution facility example, that means the rack layout first must be designed to satisfy the owner's order selection process. Once complete the remainder of the building will be designed around the rack. It's better not to simply declare: "I need a certain amount of square footage." Unfortunately, many owners don't thoroughly think about the interior layout and actual work space/process needs.

It's vital to use a knowledgeable firm like ESI throughout this process to ensure the facility design meets all your needs. ///

— **Brad Barke** is president of ESI Group and a 30-year veteran in the design-build services industry.

## CASE STUDY

### Work Fast, Smart

It's a good problem to have, but a problem nevertheless.

One ESI client, a food distributor, has been battling rising transportation costs. Even so, the company is experiencing tremendous growth. For those reasons, owners have embraced an aggressive, 10.5-month schedule for ESI to design and construct a 900,000-sq.-ft. food distribution facility. Meanwhile, the client has asked that ESI keep related costs to a minimum.

#### » Continued from page 1

service location. After review, officials identified a shell warehouse and then asked ESI Group to convert and equip it as a high-volume, multi-temp distribution center.

ESI developed 117,635 square feet with multi-temp (convertible) coolers, freezer storage, dry storage, a perishables dock, dry dock, battery charging and equipment rooms, office areas and employee areas. Moreover, ESI prepared another 8,000+ square feet for future freezer use and nearly

6,000 square feet for future cooler needs.

ESI started with a conventional warehouse that had tilt wall construction, a single-ply membrane roof, reinforced concrete floors and a conventional steel structure with a wood panelized roof structure. After considering Saladino's needs, ESI developed the site with a halocarbon/freon (R-507) refrigeration system; glycol under-floor warming system; vertical storing dock levelers; insulated metal panel walls and ceilings in warehouse; metal studs and drywall in office areas; and dry pen-

dent sprinklers fed from existing wet system. ESI installed in-rack sprinklers for dry storage oil/plastic storage racks. The site also includes a fuel island and truck trailer wash station.

ESI began the project last October and completed it in June 2013—both *early* and *under budget*.

"ESI was fantastic to work with. They listened to our needs and provided a facility that exceeded our expectations," says Chris Chatoian, Saladino's director of company facilities. ///