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The 10 must-haves in selecting a Technology Consultant for your project.

Today's successful new builds and retrofits begin with a good foundation – Architects and Interior Designers working together with Technology Consultants from the project's beginning provide this.

A strong and good foundation is key; though as with buildings, not all Technology Consultants are the same, and the choice selected can impact the strength of the overall project. In today's market, there are many options to choose from and cover a range of focus. These include specialists that focus on a specific stream of tech, in-house teams, vendors, along with supplementary departments to traditional mechanical & electrical firms.

Based on our extensive expertise and experience, here are our suggestions on building the strongest foundation for your project, with ten essential criteria that Architects, and Interior Designers need to look for in a Technology Consultant.

1. Independent technology counsel

There are countless technology products and services available to support the building experience for owners, tenants, and end-users. Finding options is easy. Determining the right solution can be hard.

It is essential that the Technology Consultant on a project comes from a place of independence. They need to be open to different types of products, vendors, and methodologies, and even varieties of contracts and agreements for the servicing of technology. Many Technology Consultants who aren't independent end up facing a difficult journey, juggling the needs of the project and client with the products and companies they are often beholden to or affiliated with. While they have the best of intentions to provide the ideal solution, they are limited by what they have access to or represent.

A Technology Consultant that is truly independent will provide a full assessment of the needs of the client and project and provide a guided structure on how to rank the options on quality, value, and functionality — with no affiliation or requirement of representation skewing their recommendations. The approach is driven by best fit, not by what they have access to or who they represent.

2. Breadth of experience

When we lift the hood on “technology solutions,” it becomes apparent that several different components are required for them to work well, and to work well together to support the rest of the design. The best outcomes for project technical solutions are born of an expertise in AV, IT, Security — as well as expertise in how these systems need to integrate with each other allowing for Smart capabilities — and the user-experience that owners and tenants expect.

Having a thorough comprehension in how each of these areas of technology integrate with building and workplace design is also fundamental to the success of the project and end-user experience.



An experienced Technical Consultant will have this fundamental background and knowledge.

3. National and local coverage

In the current real estate market, we need to consider the unique needs of a particular building, and in many cases the role and fit of that building within a larger local, regional, or even national portfolio. To provide this support, a Technology Consultant with the ability to provide national coverage — with portfolio expertise a must — is key. Scalability is crucial. Just as National experience is important, so is being able to provide expertise at a local engineering capacity, with single building or regional focus.

The Technology Consultant must also understand the trends that are specific to each market, and the vendors and services that are available to them in a particular area.

When a company does a national roll-out of brand standards, consideration and knowledge of local regulations is key to a successful launch and integration. This requires experience dealing with each Local Authority Having Jurisdiction. By selecting a Technology Consultant who has this local knowledge and is aware of the potential roadblocks and resources to solve them, it ensures that the national standards are adopted to local regulations and achieves the best results possible.



4. Creativity

Whether it be a retrofit requiring cabling and sensors in a Heritage Building, or the integration of AV and cameras with specific finishes in a new build, many technology solutions require 2 parts expertise, and 1 part creativity. Technology Consultants need to be able to flex solutions to fit with a vision for the design, and at other times help design pivot and flex to meet the needs of the tech requirements. A technology partner makes the space for the end-user something that appears effortless, the symbiosis between design and tech fluid and purposely thought through.



5. Beginning-to-end coverage

Building design, workplace design and technology solutions are like a three-legged stool. They all support the common vision of creating a space that enables the end user — but this vision only comes to fruition when the three legs work and support each other. The right technology partner provides expertise and support from the project scoping to requirements, and from requirements to installation. Their integration in the project team should be foundational, from the beginning on through.

Technology Consultants whose roles are limited to nodes or fringes of a project do not carry the same accountability for a successful project outcome. You need a Technology Consultant that will start when the pencil meets paper for the first time and stay until the finish line.

6. Capacity

The right Technology Consultant has the right breadth and experience as well as **bench strength**. Bench strength will provide the capacity and agility that can allow projects to start on time and stay on course. There are no silos of knowledge. The Technology Consultant has built-in corporate redundancy to ensure that no matter what, the service and expertise required is translated and implemented in your project all the way through.

7. Accountability

Successful projects require that multiple teams come together to provide the best end-user experience. The integration of this must be seamless but the teams must also manage any overlaps to ensure minimal redundancy of scope or a missed responsibility. Technology Consultants need to be able to work with the clients, other technical leads, and be able to bridge with any internal technical support that may exist within an Architecture or Interior Design firm to ensure the project's success. Remarkable things happen when everyone can focus on their core responsibilities while supporting each other as needed.

8. Value

Not to be confused with price, a value-focused Technology Consultant focuses on meeting the needs of the client. This requires vision and oversight — from planning to installation — to ensure that critical connection points do not lead to changes and comprises that cost both time and money. Even the smallest cross coordination issue such as the compatibility of door hardware with electronic security, can become expensive challenges that impact building design, and ultimately client satisfaction.

If you value design at the beginning with the right Technology Consultant, headaches of time and money overtures can be potentially avoided while ensuring your design intent is carried all the way through.

9. Client focused

From building owners to tenants to the end-user themselves, clients are increasingly informed about the building options, and pressured to create spaces that engage and meet the needs of a variety of consumers. In today's market, clients have pointed questions about costs, connectivity, safety, and security, as well as future proofing their spaces. 'Enterprise Risk Models' to assess requirements are becoming the norm.

Technology Consultants need to be able to instigate and facilitate these conversations, in conjunction with Architects and Interior Designers, and help arrive at appropriate solutions.

10. Easy to work with

An expected addition to the list? Perhaps. But remember, projects can be long and require a team effort every step of the way. The best Technology Consultant is the triple threat that comes with expertise, accountability AND is easy to work with.

Whoever you bring to the table to support with technology on projects, make sure you assess their fit based on the criteria above.

Trust us, this is the secret sauce to a successful project.

Let's Chat

Want to connect about a project?

It's never too late to bring on a Technology Consultant.

Where We Can Help

- Pre-Design
- Schematic Design
- Design Development
- Construction Documentation
- Technology Implementation

