



Architect

VectorWorks  
"Trumps"  
Tower Signage  
Challenge

VectorWORKS®



*With over 6,000 signs to plan, create, and place in this high-profile skyscraper, VectorWorks Architect turned out to be the tool to meet the challenge.*

When Poblacki Sign Company was given the job of creating the signage for the new Trump International Tower in Chicago, they knew it would be a challenging job. When completed in 2009, the post-modern skyscraper condo-hotel will soar 90 stories on Chicago's Gold Coast and will be the second tallest building in Chicago.

The signs Poblacki planned and developed using VectorWorks design software were "back of house" signs, which indicate stairwells, exits, restrooms, fire exits, and other information that is necessary or required by building codes. Many of these codes mandate a specific size, font, wording, location, or color. Jodi Lehner, Design and Planning Coordinator at Poblacki, was charged with overseeing creation of the signs; organizing placement; and assuring efficient, accurate implementation of the job. To accomplish this, Lehner used VectorWorks Architect 12 and the VectorWorks Location Planning Module, a free downloadable plug-in created in consultation with members of the Society for

Environmental Graphic Design (SEGD) community to create location plans and manage associated data. The module streamlines the time consuming and costly process of manually creating location plans, providing designers with a smarter, simpler way to layout location plans and related reports.

On a short turnaround schedule, Poblocki took on the Trump International Tower job with confidence. Lehner pointed out that institutional and commercial signage projects almost always work under very tight deadlines. Because there are so many other decisions to be made on the designers' and builders' ends of projects, signage often takes a back seat until it is needed for inspections and occupancy permits. Building inspectors are looking for compliance to specific signage regulations and noncompliance means delays and cost overruns.

By using the VectorWorks Location Planning Module and the Excel® export function, Lehner was able to turn around this massive, tedious, and very time-consuming job in record time. The first phase of the project covered 14 floors with an average of 70 signs per floor, depending on the floor and the function of the space. This meant planning the layout, configuration, and placement of almost 1,000 signs. There were, of course, various rounds of revisions, which she was able to export as PDF files. The compatibility with Excel and the VectorWorks built-in worksheets made it possible to make a large number of changes in an instant.

Lehner appreciated the ability to export the message schedule into Excel®, Access™, or FileMaker™. Once she got the appropriate labels, sign types, and floor names set, the takeoffs were quick and easy. The ability to export the worksheet into Excel allowed her to duplicate the identical messages for stairwell signs, making for quick work of the message schedule. She used the built-in worksheets within VectorWorks Architect as proofs before exporting and sorting by sign type or message.

"VectorWorks Architect made a huge impact in production time for me," says Lehner. "The deadlines and details of the project were mind boggling."

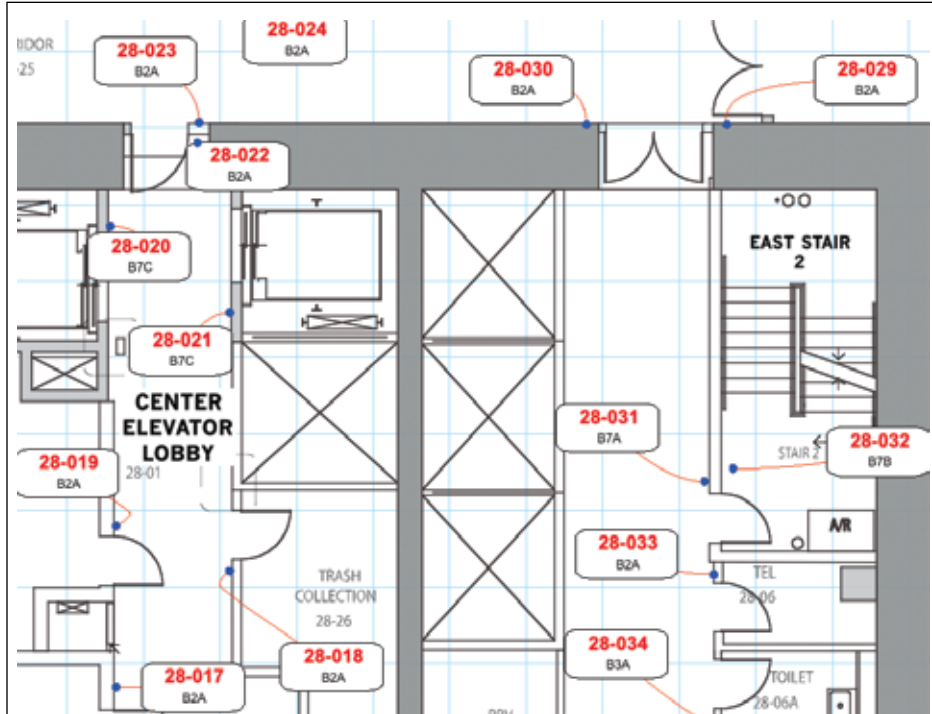
For the second phase of the project, Lehner used 12 floor-plan files for the sign locations—with two files covering multiple, identical floors—amounting to over 500 new sign messages/locations. She started the job on a Friday afternoon, setting up the drawings, and Monday she started the messages/labels. By Thursday, she had completed one 70-page message schedule and a total of 15 location plans!

*Jodi Lehner knows that many of the tools in VectorWorks Architect could be an asset to Poblocki as both a shop planning tool and sign planning tool. "I hope to be able to get more VectorWorks users here in the future."*

Lehner is the main user of VectorWorks Architect at Poblocki. While she doesn't get many opportunities to use Architect, she wishes her schedule could be adjusted so she could get into 3D rendering. She now knows that many of the tools in VectorWorks software products could be an asset to Poblocki for both shop planning and sign planning. "I hope to be able to get more VectorWorks Architect users here in the future," says Lehner. "And, this project is a great example of how it can help."

Lehner notes that VectorWorks Architect allows her to open the architect's AutoCAD files to get the location plan, adding that Illustrator doesn't always work well with AutoCAD. Before getting Architect, Lehner could open a PDF file in Illustrator® and mark location numbers. And that's it. She'd have to handwrite messages or type them line-by-line. Now, with the almost instant placement





Left: Sign location plan in VectorWorks. Above: Built in VectorWorks worksheet identifying sign location.

Sign Location Schedule					
Sign ID	Type	# Panels	Message 1	Comments	
27 - 2	B7B	1	27 CW LEVEL STAIR 1 WEST		
27 - 3	B2A	1	20-06 TELEPHONE/CATV EQUIPMENT		
27 - 4	B2A	1			
27 - 5	B2A	1	20-05 LAUNDRY		
27 - 6	B7C	1		COPY FROM OTHERS	
27 - 7	B2A	1	20-02 ELECTRICAL ROOM		
27 - 8	B2A	1	20-03 CECO		
27 - 9	B2A	1	22-14 PRV ROOM		
27 - 10	B2A	1	20-07 TELEPHONE EQUIPMENT		
27 - 11	B7C	1		SEE OTHERS FOR COPY	
27 - 13	B7B	1	27 E LEVEL STAIR 2 EAST		

schedule, she can go into the worksheet and make a live change to the message schedule, location plan, and all related documents

Lehner found the technical support team at Nemetschek to be a real asset. She was new to VectorWorks Architect when she started the project and had just updated the VectorWorks Location Planning Module for sign planning. Her training came from the VectorWorks training CDs and web demos. When she had questions, Lehner contacted tech support, where trained technicians were happy to walk her through the new sign planning features of the VectorWorks Location Planning Module.

"Using VectorWorks on this job saved both time and money," says Lehner, "allowing Poblocki to meet a tight deadline...and projects like Trump Tower are all about the deadlines."

Now Lehner is looking forward to upgrading to VectorWorks Architect 2008 with its two-way worksheet capability. With the two-way worksheets in Architect 2008, Lehner will be able to update the plan or message schedule and have the changes made in both.

Beginning as a creator of one-of-a-kind movie mar-quees in 1932, Poblocki Sign Company, LLC, has grown to become one of the world's foremost architectural sign fabricators. Three generations have built a company that today, has the experience, skill, and creativity it takes to handle any signage challenge.