



MARK III AT 40

40 STORIES IN 40 DAYS

Day 1: The Mark III Story Profile (1976)

On January 1, 1976 in a Denny's restaurant in Sacramento, Mark O'Brien sat down with Buzz Oates and Charlie Massie to discuss a partnership that, little did they know, would stand the test of time. With both a General and Electrical Contractor's license under Mark's name, the name "Mark III" represented the original three investors and they hit the ground running. While Buzz and Charlie were merely investors, Mark found himself running a company without the slightest idea of how to handle payroll or purchase orders. His first hire was his brother Tim. His next hire was an accountant who happened to be his neighbor and was eager to take the job at \$4 an hour. They grew to be 25 strong, "basically overnight."

Their days were spent in the field and their nights were spent doing paperwork. Within months Mark saw an opportunity to expand from electrical to include other trades and with this, the "Power of One" concept was born. Plumbing was to join first, followed by underground, service, fire protection and eventually, low voltage. While it was difficult at first to get the various trades to communicate and see the value in a multi-trade company, Mark and Tim refused to give up. They saw the potential it had to set them apart in a fast-growing industry. "If I had any advice for someone I'd say, just never give up; Stay focused; Treat people how you want to be treated and if it doesn't scare you, you're not pushing hard enough."

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-Mark O'Brien





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Day 2: Mark O'Brien Profile

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Find out what you're great at and make it your life long profession.

-Mark O'Brien

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Mark O'Brien was born and raised in Sacramento and spent most of his free time hunting and fishing. Mark always liked construction and found a knack for picking up work with anyone that needed him. At 23 years old, he found himself newly married, going to college and attending an electrical apprenticeship program three nights a week. Over the next seven years, Mark went on to finish school and start a family. By the time he was 30 years old, he was starting Mark III.

From very early on, Mark realized that in order to win and be the best, the team around him had to be full of talent. "I recognized that I didn't know everything, but with special people like Tim O'Brien, Ed Mette, Ed Matis, Cindy Frost, Prem Atwaal, and Bruce Thompson (all current employees), we couldn't lose."

Around the year 2000 Mark remarried and with Marilyn his family continued to grow. His kids Danny, Jennifer and Megan gained a step brother, Dan Carlton.

Throughout the 40 years, Mark has learned a lot about the construction industry, himself and how to run successful businesses. "To the field employees just starting out, my best advice to you is to treat the next four to six years like a learning process. You can go to college and graduate with no money or a lot of debt, or you can take this opportunity to really learn the trade, find out what you're great at and make it your life long profession."



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Day 3: Tim O'Brien Profile



Tim (left) and Mark - 20th Anniversary party (1996)

“ Mark is the rainmaker and I am the one running around with buckets.”

-Tim O'Brien



Tim O'Brien has a love for the outdoors, his family and Mark III Construction. Married to his wife Phyllis for 44 years, they have three children, Jeanine, Mike and Kate and a total of seven grandchildren.

Before working full time, Tim graduated from CSU Sacramento with a degree in Business Administration and was supplementing his income by bartending at Club Raven off J Street. Upon graduating, he took a job with Perkins Lumber and had plans to help them open another lumber yard in town when Mark approached Tim with the opportunity of a lifetime; a chance to build a company that became Mark III. The offer matched what he was making at the lumber yard (\$5.00/hour) but he was only guaranteed 30 hours a week. So at the age of 23, with a family to support, Tim took a chance and never looked back.

He soon realized that a weeks' worth of work actually looked more like 50-60 hours a week. Days were spent in the field; nights were spent doing paperwork and laying out the material in the warehouse for the crew the next day. Forty years later, Tim says that Mark and him have always been a good team. "Mark is the visionary and I'm the details. Mark is the Rainmaker and I am the one running around with buckets."

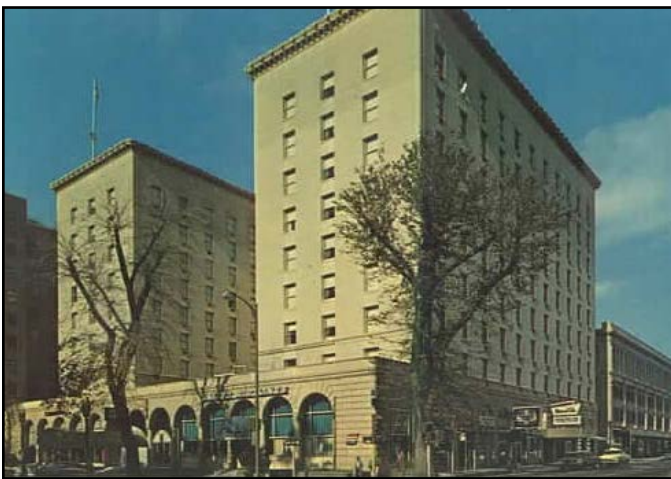
Tim's biggest success is creating a company with a good reputation. The bills are always paid, people know what to expect and Mark III stands behind what they say. When it comes to advice, Tim says, "Keep your eyes and ears open. If you desire to learn, Mark III will give you the opportunity to better yourself."



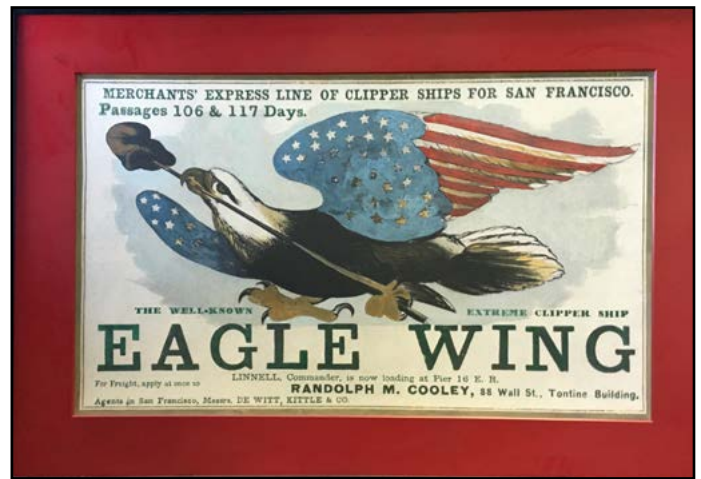
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Day 4: Senator Hotel Project Profile (1981)



Senator Hotel



Painting that hung above the hotel bar and currently hangs in the Mark III conference room

In 1981, approximately five years after the company started, Mark III took on a major renovation at the Senator Hotel. The 11-story building was to be turned into office space at the midtown location off 12th and L Street. The building was owned by Buzz Oates and Mark III was hired to remodel the electrical and plumbing throughout the building in approximately nine months.

Besides the fast-paced construction schedule, there were quite a few hurdles the Mark III team had to overcome to call this project a success. Considering the numerous floors of the building, the largest cause for concern was learning how to use bus duct for the first time and maneuver it to run vertical without falling flat. Distributing the electrical and mechanical materials up multiple floors, through multiple offices in order to cater to each tenant, was quite the undertaking.

The takeaway was the bragging rights to have our name connected to one of Sacramento's well known historical buildings and the experience it gave the Mark III team. The money didn't hurt either. In 1981, this project was worth \$942,000 which is approx \$2.4 million by today's standards.



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Day 5: Mark III HQ Project Profile (1976)



Mark III Construction has spent the majority of the past 40 years in the office space off Florin Perkins Road. However, it wouldn't be Mark III if it didn't have a story behind it!

1976: Mark III starts the company sharing office space with Buzz Oates and Charles Massie off Florin Perkins Road. Mark III had the space that now occupies the gym and a 10x20 yard for material.

1977: We had outgrown the small space and decided to open an office two miles away on Signal Court.

1982: After five years we were granted the opportunity to move back into the Florin Perkins office as Buzz Oates had moved his development company out. We had the whole building (including current Fab Shop) but shared some of the offices with employees from the "Lumber Jack" (similar to Home Depot).

1987: Mark III bought the building and took over the entire office.

1997: Bought adjacent building to our office, formerly owned by Al's Tropical Plants, and is now known as the HVAC Fab Shop.

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: Fun Fact: In the 1980s a man named Dave Joy was hired to live in the downstairs apartment on the :
: premises, to protect the trucks and buildings from burglars. Joy took his job very seriously and was :
: known for "booby-trapping" the place. One of his most memorable stunts is when he sat on the roof :
: with a bucket full of rocks perfectly positioned to fall as soon as someone walked through the gate. :
: The police weren't a huge fan of his vigilante approach but it still makes us laugh 25 years later! :
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