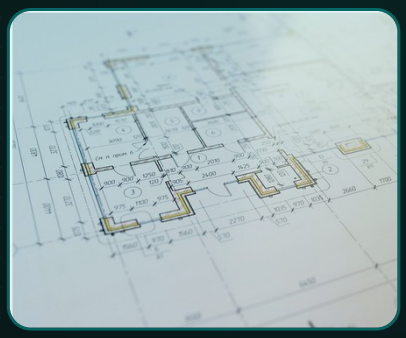


THE ONE VOICE NOT SELLING ANYTHING

Every Other Voice at the Table Is Selling You Something. ABECA Isn't.

By Dr. John M. Thurber, RCDD, CSI

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Every other company in the room during a technology build is also trying to sell you something — the cable, the hardware, the labor, or all three. ABECA doesn't install, doesn't manufacture, and doesn't distribute. The only thing we're selling is whether the plan in front of you is actually right.

That's not a knock on installers, distributors, or manufacturers — it's just how their businesses work. A low-voltage contractor who designs and installs the same system has every incentive to spec what they already stock and can install quickly, whether or not it's the best long-term fit. Engineering ethics boards have flagged this exact structure for decades: a firm that designs a system and profits from what gets specified into it has a conflict of interest, disclosed or not.

ABECA's design work gets the attention, but design is one stop on a longer path. Before a design is drawn, we help plan the infrastructure a building needs and evaluate technology and vendor options against the owner's actual requirements — not what a sales rep happens to carry. After the design goes out the door, we stay engaged: co-managing delivery, standing in as owner's representative through construction, and providing construction management oversight to whatever extent the owner wants it.

What Independent Oversight Is Actually Worth

None of this is abstract. National studies on owner's representation consistently find $4 to $10 returned for every $1 spent on independent project oversight — not because the oversight is magic, but because someone without a stake in the outcome is finally checking the math. That matters in a market where 85 percent of construction projects run over their original budget, and roughly 70 percent of those overruns trace back to poor planning and change orders that could have been caught earlier by someone whose job was to catch them.

That's the role ABECA plays across a project's Audit, Inspect, Protect, and Support phases: reviewing what exists before you build on top of it, verifying what actually got installed against what was specified, confirming the certifications and documentation a warranty depends on, and staying available after occupancy instead of disappearing at closeout. None of it requires ABECA to have drawn the original design — it requires ABECA to be independent of everyone else in the room.

The cable installer is selling cable. The distributor is selling what's on the shelf. The manufacturer is selling its own product line. ABECA is the only party in the room being paid to tell you the truth about all three.

That's not a slogan. It's the entire reason an independent RCDD firm exists.

Infrastructure Planning and Technology Selection

Long before a cable gets pulled, most owners are already making decisions that lock in years of cost and capability: which technology platform to standardize on, how much pathway and space to reserve, whether a system needs to scale to a future building or campus. ABECA's infrastructure planning and technology selection work happens at exactly that stage — evaluating the options against the owner's actual requirements, budget, and timeline, with no stake in which manufacturer or platform gets chosen.

Owner's Representative and Co-Managed Delivery

On projects where the owner doesn't have the internal staff or bandwidth to manage a low-voltage scope day to day, ABECA can sit on the owner's side of the table as their representative — reviewing submittals, attending progress meetings, holding the installing contractor to the design intent, and flagging problems before they become change orders. On other projects, that role is shared: ABECA co-manages delivery alongside an owner's existing project manager or facilities team, adding low-voltage-specific expertise without duplicating a role that already exists.

Construction Management and Inspection

Where a project needs boots-on-the-ground construction management, ABECA provides it to whatever extent makes sense — site visits, progress inspections, and verification that what's being installed matches the design intent, the applicable code, and the manufacturer certification the warranty depends on. That inspection role isn't a formality bolted onto the end of a project; it's the same discipline applied throughout, catching a deviation while it's still a conversation instead of after it's behind drywall.

Support Doesn't End at Occupancy

Most design relationships end at substantial completion. ABECA's doesn't. Systems need annual recertification, technology needs periodic reassessment, and buildings change tenants, floor plans, and use cases over years the original design never anticipated. Being available after occupancy — for a public safety system's annual test, a warranty question, or a build-out that needs the next zone of fiber run — is the difference between a design relationship and a partnership.

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