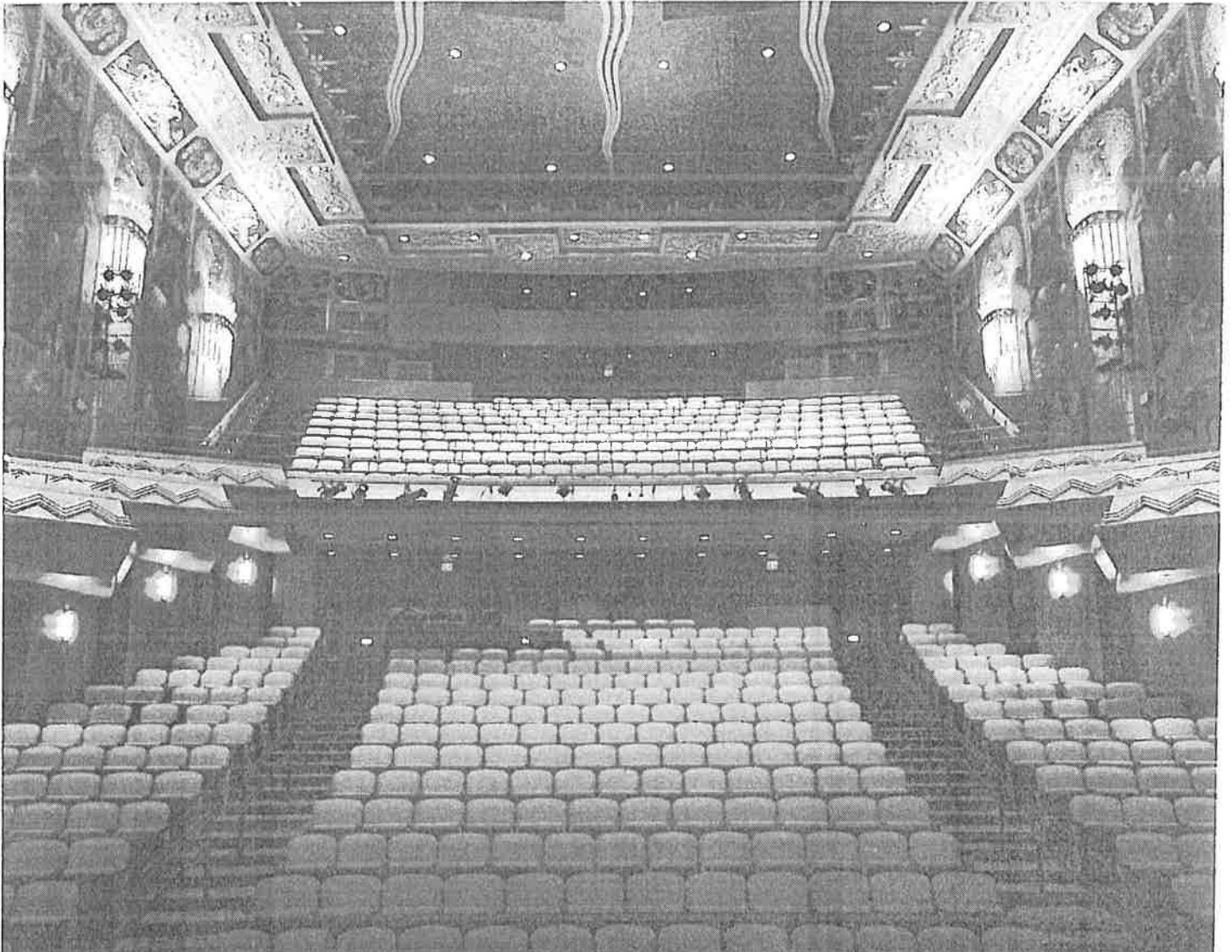


THE MAGAZINE FOR LEADING CONSTRUCTION EXECUTIVES

USBuildersReview



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An Electrifying History Throughout Hawaii Wasa Electrical Services Inc.

No matter what Hawaiian island you are on, some things are consistent. For example, if you ask for a recommendation for an electrical contractor from someone in the construction industry, the chances are he's going to recommend Wasa Electrical Services Inc. Wasa, the Aloha State's largest electrical contractor, was founded in 1950 by two brothers of the same name. From those humble beginnings, the firm has grown into a Hawaiian powerhouse with roughly 20 engineers, 350 electricians (all members of Local 1186 IBEW) and offices on the five major islands in the chain.

Wasa, which began in residential work, has grown to offer cost-effective pre-construction engineering services, as well as civil work on utilities, street lighting and traffic signaling, plus the installation of high-voltage systems, including power stations, substations, overhead and underground distribution

lines. The company's core commitment, however, is to applying the most sound practices and safety performance to industrial and commercial projects in resort hotels, hospitals, high-rise condominiums, office buildings, schools, shopping and retail centers, airports, waterfront, factories and refineries.

For the last 10 years the company has been headed by Ron Yee, who has been with the company since 1971 – his entire career except for an eight-month stint at Westinghouse immediately after graduating from college. Thanks to this impressive run Yee has the experience and the insight to lead the company successfully through even these recent unstable times. Yee maintains that the firm has been somewhat isolated so far from the downturn in the economy. "We've had three pretty good years consecutively. We grossed about \$100 million [in 2009]. Things were okay in 2010, but we're not seeing much



Dial Electric Supply Co. is committed to being a contributor to the state and construction industry of Hawaii. We strive to provide the highest quality of service to our customers and have enjoyed our relationship with Wasa Electrical Services, Inc. over the past 38 years. We wish them continued success in the coming years.



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come in for next year. We're usually about year to two years behind whatever happens on the mainland, so I'm looking for a full recovery sometime in 2012."

One contributing factor to Wasa's unwavering presence in the technologically advanced systems design and integration market was that the company was bought out by one of the world's largest electrical contracting firms, Kinden Corporation, in 1987. Yee reveals, "Officially, we are called U.S Kinden, but we're doing business as Wasa Electric. I told them, if they changed the name to U.S. Kinden, no one will recognize us. Wasa Electric is pretty well known here in Hawaii. We'd lose our 60-year history."

Beauty and the Beach

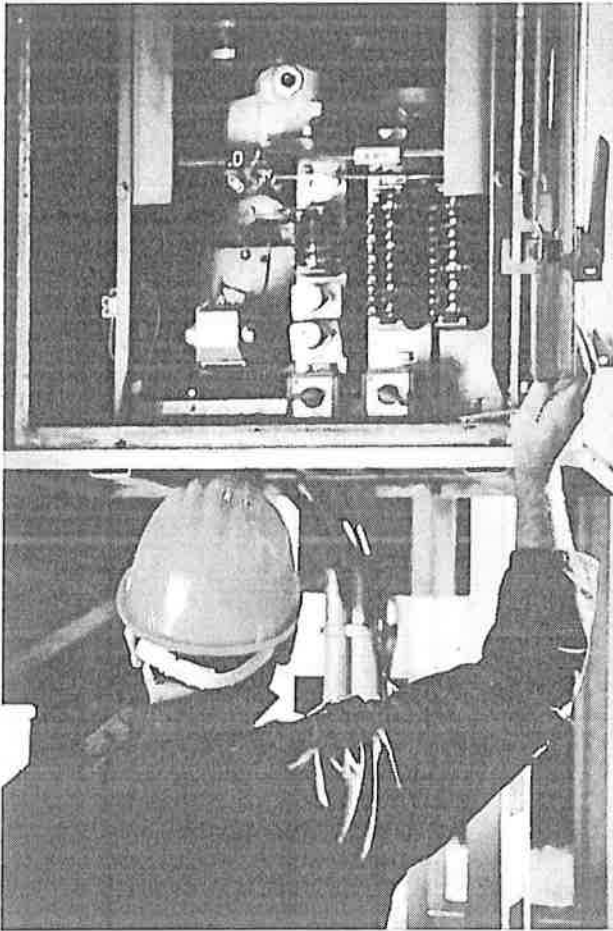
The relationship with Kinden has benefited Wasa tremendously. Kinden built Disneyland Tokyo, and when Walt & Co. decided to open a resort in Hawaii it turned to Kinden's U.S. operation. Yee believes it to be "the largest building project going on in the United States right now. It's a very large project for us." The resort – Aulani, located on Oahu – is the result of collaboration between company engineers and input from locals in order to create a place celebrating Hawaiian culture and history.

And, because Hawaiians layer rich meaning in their words, the name "Aulani" has more than one meaning. It is "the

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Wasa Electrical Services, Inc.

On behalf of the management and staff of Noguchi & Associates, Inc., congratulations on your recognition as the Top Electrical Contractor in the State. Your outstanding performance is a tribute to the leadership and management of your firm. We are proud to be associated with your firm and look forward to your continued growth and success.

Aloha, Noguchi & Associates, Inc.

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restaurants, a convention center, a 15,000-square foot spa and a massive water play area that includes a volcano tube slide and snorkel lagoon. It sits on 21 acres on Oahu's Leeward Coast in the Ko Olina development, known for its white sand lagoons, scenic golf course and colorful sunsets. Ko Olina is about an hour west of Waikiki, where most of tourists typically stay.

Hawaii's First Light Rail System

In addition to the Disney project, Yee is hoping that Wasa wins the bid for Hawaii's first light rail system. "It's a large project," Yee says. "It will be the largest in our company's history if we do win this project. I'm headed to Japan, to one of Mitsubishi's factories, to learn how to build the cars. It will be part of our work to not only install the system, but to have the cars constructed here in Hawaii."

messenger of a chief," yet it is also "the one who delivers a message from a higher authority." And Aulani is certainly a message that there is luxury to be found on these grounds. Aulani will have 359 hotel rooms, 481 time-share units,

Yee's also proud of a design-build contract the firm completed about three years ago for the U.S. military. Yee explains, "We

built the Pacific Command Center. It's where, if there was ever a war in the Pacific, it would be the headquarters. All of the generals and admirals would go [there]. We had to build it into the side of a mountain." The project is classified, so Yee is unable to provide more details of the systems Wasa designed and installed.

A Little Bit of Everything

Wasa's experience, especially over the last 20 years, has been pretty extensive, Yee avers. "We've worked on a lot of the bridges, most of the major hotels, virtually every condominium that has come up in the past 20 years, and all of the highways." And Yee is confident the firm will retain its prominent role for the near future, but he is hesitant to increase the firm's size despite the opportunities. Yee explains, "We've had up to 500 employees in the past, but I find that this company does best when we have about 350 men. It's controllable."

Considering that Wasa Electrical Services Inc. has been involved in almost every major project on the islands for the past 20 years, and has proven its ability to balance cost-efficient designs and a cutting-edge approach, it's no surprise that the company is the largest electrical contractors in Hawaii and a highly respected name among the 1,400 licensed journeyman and union electricians in Hawaii. The only surprise would be if the firm didn't remain the number one choice for developers. •



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