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The Premier Magazine for Commercial and Residential Roofing & Insulation

A **bnp** PUBLICATION

ROOFING CONTRACTOR

NOVEMBER 2017
RoofingContractor.com



COMMERCIAL
ROOFING CONTRACTOR
OF THE YEAR



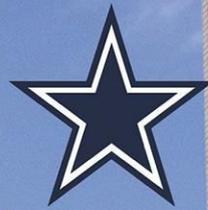
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KPOST ROOFING & WATERPROOFING

PARTNER OF THE DALLAS COWBOYS



› The KPost executive leadership team poses for a photo on the roof atop Dallas' landmark Statler Hotel, which is set to reopen next year after spending more than a decade vacant. **From left:** Renae Bales, vice president; Steve Little, president; Jayne Williams, CFO; John Barker, vice president; Keith Post, owner and CEO; Shawn Morgan, director of sales; Tracey Donels, service manager; and Ryan Little, vice president. Photos by Stacy Bratton.

HOME SWEET

HOME

KPost Roofing & Waterproofing Continues to Thrive Working Almost Exclusively in the Dallas Market

By Art Aisner

If roofing is indeed a team sport, then few — if any — commercial roofing contractors around the United States embrace the philosophy quite like the team at KPost Roofing & Waterproofing in Dallas. It starts with President Steve Little, who prefers the title of head coach, and it trickles down through the company's organizational structure, which he prefers to describe in football terms.

"We're made of three separate units: the offense, which is our sales team; the defense, which is our field leadership and crew; and the special teams, which is our administration," Little described. "We built the company up like a football team because we knew that if we operated like a football team, that within that team we could train, manage and excel in our skillsets."

The process, which evolved since CEO Keith Post, Little and CFO Jayne Williams set out to mold their own company in one of the most robust construction markets in the country in 2003, is working. KPost's 430 employees tallied a company-record \$63 million in revenue last year, an increase of roughly 30 percent from the previous year and good for 19th on *RC's* Top 100 list for 2017.

That success, coupled with the scope, safety record and quality of KPost's work, laid the groundwork for its selection as *RC's* Commercial Roofing Contractor of the Year for 2017.

The continued growth and industry accolades certainly exceeded the expectations the trio had when the doors opened. Little said the initial game plan was to build a company that could generate \$10 million in revenue and sustain about 100 employees within the first three years. However, early success fueled their drive, and there seemed no sense in stopping any momentum the company was building.

In football terms, that meant protecting their home turf and clearing the field by proactively organizing a plan that challenged obstacles that could get in the way of reaching the goal line. Little said they did it by stepping out of the way and letting the offense, defense and special teams find their own ways to excel independently, while still keeping the team's long-term success in mind.

He left no doubt about his appreciation for all three 'units' upon accepting *RC's* 2017 Commercial Roofing Contractor of the Year award at the Best of Success conference in Tucson in September.

"We're deeply honored to receive this reward and humbled," he said. "We have tremendous people, and try to give back at every opportunity. This demonstrates that when you give, it comes back to you ten-fold."

The Winning Combination

As with any successful team, the values instilled by the company and the direction KPost heads is directed by decisions made at the top. Where some professional sports franchises show fractures between ownership and management, and management to players that can grow into chasms without proper care, KPost's leaders set the tone with accountability, discipline and instilling the belief that each employee plays an important role in the team's success.

It helps that Post, Little and Williams trust one another to do their own jobs well enough without having to blend responsibilities, and can maintain and excel in roles that best suit their personalities. Post focuses primarily on the estimating and project management side of the business and is the eternal optimist who, Little says, believes his staff is capable of handling any request from a client and of convincing others of the same. Post also brought a stellar reputation of integrity and industry knowledge that established credibility right away.

In addition to his coaching duties, Little is responsible for day-to-day operations and keeping an eye on emerging industry trends, the KPost brand and KPost's strategic planning.

On paper, Williams manages three critical business functions: company finances, human resources and safety. But Little acknowledges her role is much larger — and often refers to her as the 'moon' of the company — setting the pace and flow of the tides that can impact the company's overall performance.

Post said that having known them both while working for other companies in the industry, he felt they had the right experience and skills to build a roofing company that did things differently.

"I was 48 and had started my own company before KPost, and I ran into these characters," he said, pointing coyly at Little and Williams sitting across the conference table at their headquarters. "And I knew that we all still had gas in our tanks. And that we were all going to grow KPost into a successful business."

A key to their operations is actually running the company like a general contractor.

There's outside sales that does the sales work, and a pre-construction team that does the bidding, Little explained. Once the job is won, it's handed off to the project management team, which then works with operations to schedule and oversee the installation or service project.

Not many roofing companies were set up that way when they started, but many are catching on in the Dallas market and beyond,

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company officials have noticed. Another aspect of the company's successful formula is focusing on selling, and targeting those sales pitches directly at multi-facility owners and developers that they can build long-term partnerships with. And despite the opportunity and temptation to capture work in other cities and states, company officials said they'd like to stay local to North Texas, where construction cranes dot the skylines of Dallas, nearby Ft. Worth and most places in between.

The Star Rises

No business partnership that KPost has cultivated over the past 14 years has been as impactful or lucrative as their work with the National Football League's Dallas Cowboys and team owner Jerry Jones.

The courtship started in 2006, when KPost won the job to coat the Texas Stadium roof above where the Cowboys used to play. And it evolved to the 2009 installation of the membrane atop what's now called AT&T Stadium — a \$1.3 billion monumental structure that opened in 2009 and draws millions of college and professional football fans each year.

Co-branding as the official roofer and waterproofer of one of the most recognizable and successful sports teams on the planet pays obvious dividends both internally and externally. The sheer size and notoriety of the jobs associated with the Cowboys draws interest from other major corporations, and showcases KPost's ability to perform, even under tremendously challenging circumstances.

That became crystal clear when the eyes of the nation and world were transfixed on Dallas leading up to Super Bowl XLV in 2011.

Warning signs of bad weather started early in the week and

the forecast for major ice storms only worsened as the big game approached. By Friday, Little said they called the Cowboys and asked them to turn down the stadium temperature and develop some contingencies for ice removal.

Team executives and local authorities were already discussing the situation with officials from the NFL and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. They urged Little and other top company

officials to get to the team headquarters as soon as possible as the ice began to thaw.

"We jumped in two cars and headed out there," Williams recalled. "And as we entered the war room we could hear people saying 'The roofers are here...' and the room full of people just parts so we could

get through. The NFL, Homeland Security, the Joneses were there listening to what we had to say. It was pretty surreal."

While on their way there, ice chunks began to fall from the stadium roof's south end some 200 feet into a concession area, causing injuries to six stadium employees and a photographer prepping for the event.

"These chunks of ice were almost as big as a conference room table and very thick," Post said. "They said it sounded like a locomotive as it was coming down, and when they hit the bottom, they just exploded."

Officials closed all but one entrance of the stadium while KPost crews got busy trying to clear sections they could. Teams worked around-the-clock de-icing the roof through 11 a.m. the day of the game.

Winning Jones' trust, the company earned additional option years to their initial three-year sponsorship pact with the Cowboys. Little said they're currently negotiating a new deal with the team, and are excited about working with Jones, a real estate mogul said to be solely responsible for developing more than 90 million square feet of building space in the greater Dallas area over the next five years.

Chief among those developments is The Star in nearby Frisco. The 91-acre campus is home to the world headquarters of the Cowboys, and the Ford Center, a 12,000-seat capacity covered arena where football-crazed fans can watch local high school teams compete.

Surrounding the athletic facilities are the Omni Hotel, and major retail developments that will be open to the public year-round. KPost installed multiple roof systems on those buildings, and is also responsible for the work on the Liberty Mutual world headquarters, the Toyota North American headquarters and the JP Morgan Chase building along what's locally called the \$5 Billion Mile in nearby Plano.

"This market has been very good to us. It's very strong," said Post, who's been in business in Dallas since 1980. "We've never seen a market like this, and figure it could be a once in a lifetime deal. Frankly, we're very fortunate that we have some great talent here. There's nobody else that does it like we do." **RC**

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