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## Building a business

Jennifer Pinck didn't see a lot of women in the construction industry when she launched her career in the late 1970s. Today, she runs Pinck & Co. Inc., an owner's project management services firm.  
Entrepreneur. **P12**

## ENTREPRENEUR

# Construction vet builds niche as project manager

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Jennifer Pinck entered the construction industry at a time when she saw very few women in the field.

Jennifer Pinck has always liked a challenge, and seeing the concrete results from her efforts. That realization ultimately led her to the construction industry, where she began working in the late 1970s. Building on experience, she eventually became president of her own firm — Boston-based **Pinck & Co. Inc.**, which specializes in owner's project management services.

Early on, it wasn't always easy being in a profession where she observed few, if any, other women. In the late 1970s, Pinck was a painter on large commercial projects. In the early 1980s, she was hired by **George B.H. Macomber Co.** as a field engineer — a job that entailed everything from ordering concrete to coordinating tradespeople on the site.

"It was really tough sometimes," Pinck said. "But I developed a thick skin and was very determined."

Pinck was ultimately promoted to construction superintendent. And in 1986, she gained two key credentials — the Boston ABC Building License from the city's Board of Examiners and an MBA from **Simmons College**. From 1988 to 1996, she served with the **Massachusetts Water Resources Authority** as construction

## PINCK &amp; CO.

**Business:** Owner's project manager  
**Based:** Boston  
**2010 revenue:** \$1.4 million  
**Chief executive:** Jennifer Pinck, founder and president

manager on the Boston Harbor Project and as mitigation manager on the Central Artery/Tunnel Project for **Parsons Brinckerhoff**.

Pinck launched Pinck & Co. in 1998, with a focus on serving as an owner's project manager (OPM). The company — which primarily represents nonprofit and institutional owners, both private and public — is a 15-employee outfit whose revenue has grown to projections of \$2 million for 2011 from \$1.4 million in 2010 and \$1.3 million in 2009.

Pinck sometimes likens the OPM role to marriage counseling: As the owner's representative on development projects, her firm oversees the efforts of a number of different parties — including architects, civil engineers and general contractors — through all phases, while ensuring the project stays on schedule and on budget.

"It's all about problem solving," said Pinck, 56.

That problem solving requires managing a wealth of moving parts — from de-

veloping feasibility and site assessments to assembling the project team to implementing a permitting strategy.

An ongoing effort, Pinck said, has been getting clients to understand the value of her services: "It can be challenging to sell something to people who don't quite understand what challenges they will face when they undertake a development project."

Over the years, Pinck has broadened her market focus. For instance, affordable housing, which once represented about 80 percent of the firm's revenue, is about 50 percent today. A key growth area for Pinck & Co. in recent years has been the educational market.

"It was a conscious effort to diversify," Pinck said. "It was to be better protected from market cycles and to grow the business by moving into other segments."

An example of a current project for which Pinck & Co. is providing OPM services is a \$115 million green energy retrofit at Castle Square in Boston. Another recent project involved a \$43 million master plan implementation for Fay School in Southborough.

"They're so reliable and responsible — which is important, because the company is representing your best interests," said client Veronique Le Melle, executive director of **Boston Center for the Arts**.