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D.F. Pray completes 173,000 s/f construction project at 257 Ferris Avenue for IGUS, Inc. headquarters

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D.F. Pray has completed a 173,000 s/f construction project at 257 Ferris Ave. This state of the art design build project will house an assembly plant and the new international headquarters of IGUS, Inc. The new building represents the latest installment in a years-long partnership between IGUS and D.F. Pray.

Because IGUS manufactures extremely unique products, D.F. Pray had to conceive a specialized design build to fit the company's needs. In addition to the new headquarters' office space, 120,000 s/f was set aside to house IGUS' new Rhode Island manufacturing and storage facilities.

Breaking ground in 2012, Pray resourcefully overcame a number of initial snags in the construction process. Working with expert engineers and architects, D.F. Pray pragmatically altered design plans to account for unexpectedly high water tables. To ensure the new building's lasting stability, D.F. Pray substituted the site's existing gravel bank with new, sturdier filler material. Additionally, the construction company replaced the peat under which the facility's foundation would lie with far more reliable structural soil.

Steady footing thus ensured, D.F. Pray laid the foundation and began construction on the building's shell. Throughout the entire ten-month construction process, D.F. Pray worked closely with IGUS to ensure its new headquarters met all the company's design needs and desires. Over about a month, D.F. Pray erected the facility piece by piece using a panelized construction system, allowing the company to see to every last detail.

As high-tech and efficient as facility's manufacturing space is, the real crown jewel of IGUS' new building is its office space. Modeled somewhat on IGUS' original German facility, the new international headquarters boasts what D.F. Pray's project manager Kenneth Spader calls a "very European-looking floor plan"-lots of open space, natural light, and communal areas in which employees can congregate.

The 20,000 s/f allotted for IGUS' corporate office consists of a two-story mezzanine layout. The space features over 150 skylights, keeping the headquarters bright with a tremendous amount of natural light. Aesthetics, however, was not the only consideration in the design collaboration between IGUS and D.F. Pray. IGUS is a company whose work is always on the cutting edge of technology, and as such, energy efficiency was a top priority in order to keep things green and, of course, to reap the benefits of reduced costs for heating and electricity.

To that end, energy efficiency is perhaps the most impressive facet of D.F. Pray's finished project. Working with field experts, the company installed a system of LED exterior lighting and T-5 step down lighting on the interior which, in conjunction with the building's 150 skylights, operate variably based on atmospheric conditions. If the day is dreary and rainclouds darken the sky, these "smart lights" operate at full blast to keep the office bright. But on sunny summer days, the lighting system

recognizes the surplus of natural light and reduces its energy output accordingly. D.F. Pray also made sure to construct the building in such a way to keep heating costs as low as possible, using the most advanced insulation technology available. Spader said, "Back in the middle of winter and it was ten degrees out in the parking lot, it was sixty-eight in the office, and we didn't even have the heat on."

In just over 10 months, D.F. Pray, working closely with IGUS, was able to complete construction on one of the most impressive and technologically advanced new manufacturing/corporate facilities in New England. The headquarters' state-of-the-art computer center is now fully operational, and IGUS plans to have its corporate operations up and running in its new headquarters by early June. This carefully conceived and expertly executed design build is sure to serve as a model for the next generation of construction projects—builders and owners working together in close partnership to conceive innovative, efficient, "smart" facilities.

Founded in 1959, D.F. Pray has specialized in hands-on general contracting services regionally in New England as well as nationally for 55 years. The firm excels in both design build projects as well as renovations to existing structures.

Employing over 100 industry professionals, D.F. Pray is headquartered in Seekonk, MA, and maintains satellite offices across the US, as well as in Toronto, Ontario.

The project team on this project included:

- * Design/Build: D.F. Pray
- * Structural Steel: Canam Steel Corp.
- * Environmental Engineer: GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc.
- * Civil Engineer: Fuss & O'Neil
- * Electrical Contractor: Wayne J Griffin Electric
- * HVAC: R.W. Bruno

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