

MEDIUM
company

Eppstein Uhen Architects Inc.

Managing a creative work force is a delicate job.

Greg Uhen, president and managing partner at Eppstein Uhen Architects Inc., knows the challenges and takes daily steps as a boss to foster a workplace culture where fellow architects and designers feel comfortable and productive.

"Sometimes I wonder if they work for me, or if I work for them," said Uhen.

Eppstein Uhen maintains a casual atmosphere, but not sloppy or unprofessional, said Uhen. He refers to the company as a loose-tight environment.

Loose in the sense that the firm is a warm, friendly, down-to-earth, people-oriented shop. Tight in the sense that the principals are careful to run a tight ship in managing design projects and meeting clients' goals.

Eppstein Uhen takes pride in its flexible working environment. Employees are empowered to take advantage of flexible hours and schedules to work around family demands.

The company has invested tens of thousands of dollars in its 3rd Ward office, a former shoe factory, to give employees a fun place to work, said Uhen. Because of recent growth, Eppstein Uhen has expanded its offices by purchasing an adjacent historic timber-and-brick building on Chicago Street.

"Our space promotes interaction via central areas and open work spaces," said Uhen.

Eppstein Uhen has 50 registered architects

and 45 other design professionals making up its staff of 158 employees.

The company recently was hired to design Manpower Inc.'s new downtown office building and the Amtrak station on West St. Paul Avenue in downtown Milwaukee. Eppstein Uhen was the lead architect on the \$320 million Bayshore Mall renovation in Glendale and the GE Healthcare headquarters at the Milwaukee County Research Park in Wauwatosa.

Uhen describes his firm as an open-book company that shares all financial information with employees. Eppstein Uhen distributes

"There are few secrets within our walls."

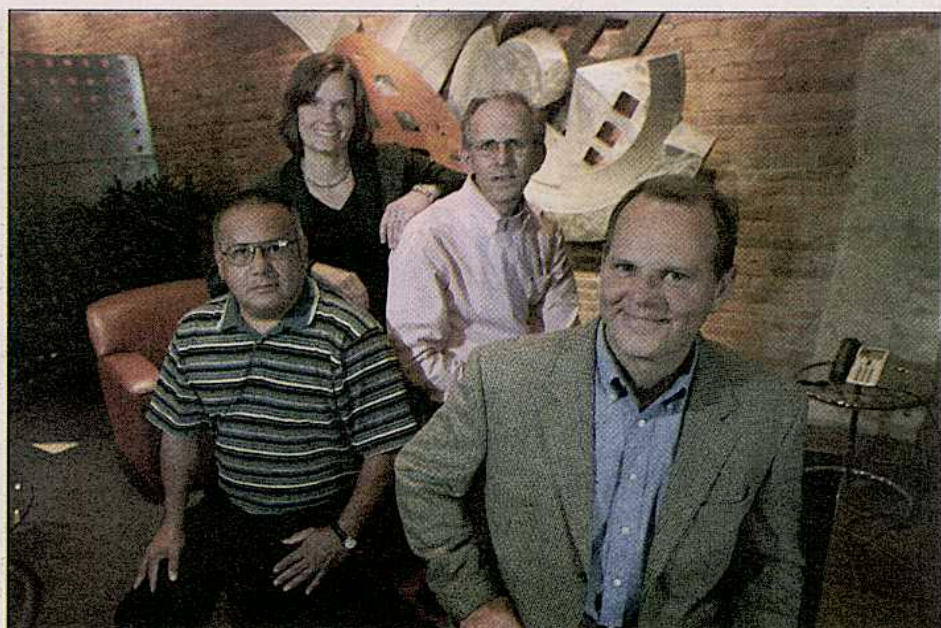
Greg Uhen
President and managing partner

profit-sharing checks on a quarterly basis, not annually like most firms.

"There are few secrets within our walls," Uhen said.

The architectural firm has employee turnover of less than 5 percent a year, far lower than the industry standard of more than 12 percent. The benefit package includes a non-deductible health and dental plan, profit-sharing plan and a matched 401(k) program.

— Pete Millard



From left, Andres Villanueva, Kristin Dufek, Ed Papp and Greg Uhen.

SCOTT PAULUS



EPPSTEIN UHEN
ARCHITECTS

333 E. Chicago St., Milwaukee

Type of business: Architectural firm

Year founded: 1907

Employees: 158

Chief executive: Greg Uhen, president and managing partner

Special employee benefit: employees are empowered to take advantage of flexible hours and schedules to work around family demands



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— Nancy Sennett, Office Managing Partner

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