

EDITOR & PUBLISHER

Dario Designs Retained for Studies, Analyses, Planning

By Jim Rosenberg
September 11, 2008

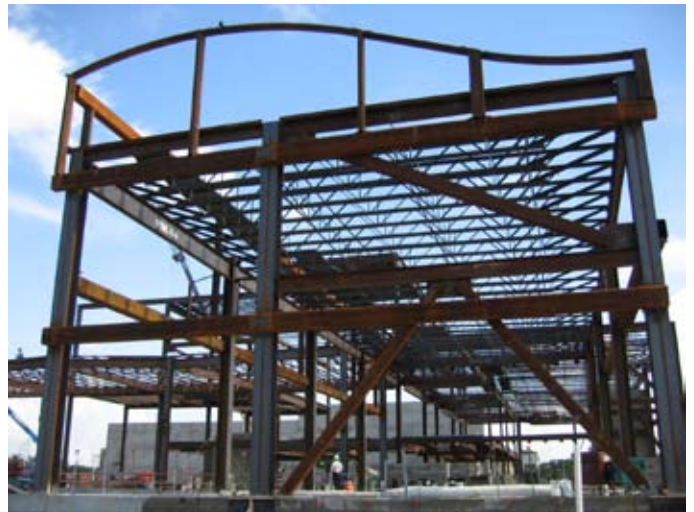
NEW YORK Architecture firm Dario Designs in Marlboro, Mass., reports it has signed contracts with five media/printing companies to conduct consolidation studies and operational analysis. It also was hired for masterplanning and strategic planning on three other projects.

The firm also noted that construction on the Naples (Fla.) Daily News headquarters and production plant is on schedule. A \$95 million project by parent company E.W. Scripps, the 186,503-square-foot structure is going up on an 18-acre site northwest of Naples (E&P Nov. 2007).

Still under nondisclosure agreements, the latest projects (including two outside the United States) include analyzing the potential for centralizing operations among several newspapers and evaluating options for outsourcing production to sister papers and to newspapers and/or commercial printers under different ownership.

One project is for a chain that seeks to use surplus capacity at many of its print sites to print other companies' newspapers. Dario Designs is using computer modeling of production to quantify that capacity and match it with potential customers, according to Vice President David Ehrhardt.

Another project involves managing the due diligence process for a large newspaper's possible conversion to a compact format. The process will consider the product's redesign, impact on advertisers, revenues and ad-rate structures, reader acceptance and impact on circulation, newsprint savings, production and operational considerations, experience of other newspapers that have made the change, and risks associated with making and not making the change.



Steel construction, Naples, Florida

A third project involves working with a metro daily that is investigating consolidation. "we are considering the impact of reducing surplus capacity [by] shutting down print sites, changing the way the newspaper is printed and packaged and/or looking at alternative equipment scenarios," said Ehrhardt.

While architecture and engineering work on U.S. media facilities has slowed, Dario Designs Vice President David Ehrhardt said in a statement, "the overseas work has picked up." The new work, he added, brings the number of 2008 new projects to 28, "with our total number of active projects still exceeding the 50 mark."

His firm has "12 projects overseas right now," says President Dario DiMare, "from nothing two years ago."

