

Alberici & Touchplan

Helping to Build a New Patient Experience



The First Significant Hospital Expansion In Several Years

Touchplan enterprise client Alberici Constructors was hired by Mercy to construct an innovative multispecialty center and 1,000-space parking garage on the campus of Mercy Hospital in St. Louis. The 272,000-square feet, high-tech, five-level outpatient center is designed with the patient experience top of mind. Specialties at the new building will include bariatrics, neurosurgery, orthopedics and sports medicine, reconstructive surgery, and urology. There will be weight and wellness programming, imaging services, and an ambulatory surgery center along with additional space for future growth.

Breaking ground in January 2021, the new construction is next to the existing, active hospital campus and is the first significant expansion for the Creve Coeur, MO, location in several years. The parking garage is completing the concrete pours on the fifth-floor deck, while the hospital building has substantially completed structural steel. Envelop construction (precast panels) is underway, and in the interior of the building; fireproofing, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and fire protection overhead roof are underway, along with some selective wall framing.

Alberici has been building up its Lean program called LeanEdge, and the project at the Mercy Multispecialty Building was one of the early pilot projects. From the beginning of the project, the Alberici team had “technology on the brain,” realizing that construction software was needed over traditional pull planning. That led the team down the path to Touchplan and piloting the software on three projects, which Mercy was one of them.



“Touchplan shines a light on what is and is not happening and that generates powerful conversations among the construction team. It generates trust to have tough conversations because of all the detail it provides.”

Brian Crawford, Corporate Lean Director and Project Director, Alberici Constructors

[above] Redering of finished multispecialty center

[below] Workers installing re-bar



LEANEDGE >



[From left] Worker conducting a site inspection and a look into the finished interior.

"We are simultaneously implementing our Lean program with our project teams while looking for improvements. We pretty immediately realized that using digital technology like Touchplan was an enhancement for our Lean program," said Brian Crawford, Corporate Lean Director and Project Director for Alberici. "What Touchplan also did for us is recognize what COVID was doing to people's abilities to be present and do pull planning. It was very difficult to host an in-person pull planning session safely, in compliance with our safety guidelines, CDC regulations, and client requirements. We could not make this work without a digital solution, and Touchplan provided the capacity that we needed."

Lean Engineer for Alberici, Grant Lanham, added, "Before the Mercy project, Brian and I were on another large healthcare project and doing Lean with spreadsheets. We realized just how many activities there were going to be, and then we started talking about our LeanEdge approach with sticky notes. When I realized we would need a wall that's 25 feet tall and 100 feet long, there's no way we can put all this stuff on sticky notes to the level of detail needed. This was another reason to use Touchplan. The scalability of the software is huge."

Being Prescriptive and Offering Options

From the early stages of developing Alberici's LeanEdge program, the team quickly mastered the basics and developed best practices for using Touchplan. Alberici's LeanEdge team is now showing project managers and trades what they have learned and how they can expand the use of the software.

"Touchplan gives us the ability to create one big phase with every one of your swim lanes in it and call it your master plan and look at everything, or you can break it down like a Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) or do it by phase plan. You have a choice," said Crawford. "Providing latitude improves the utilization of Touchplan, and we see that as a win."

Staying Aligned and on Track

The Alberici team feels that using Touchplan on the Mercy Multispecialty Building and other Lean projects provides better visibility among the project teams, and it helps teams be more deliberate about the planning that goes into each project. It has also enhanced trade partners engagement.

"One of the biggest advantages of Touchplan is the ability to put the constraints right on the plan," said Lanham. "Teams can have a hard time pulling out all the constraints that need to be visible to each stakeholder. Touchplan gives everybody visibility to the issues that might be out there."

Lanham continued, "Our project manager mentioned that he can go through Touchplan and almost do a complete P6 schedule update just by seeing how people are updating their tickets and what work been accomplished. This has been one unexpected benefit of using Touchplan. It saves the team time, and the information is more accurate than a PM can get just by walking around the site because of the level of detail."

Touchplan has allowed the project team at the Mercy Multispecialty Building to collaborate more openly which has delivered tremendous value to the project to keep construction on time and on budget.

RESULTS

Our relationship with Alberici has produced some mutually beneficial results, including:

- Enhanced collaboration during challenging situations like COVID
- Scalability to do extensive pull planning that couldn't be accomplished the traditional way
- Improved collaboration and communication among the project team
- Much easier alignment and updating of the master schedule