

Factors to Consider When Replacing a Door on an Existing Building

By Carol Bilt, President, Well Bilt Industries, Williston, Fla.

Well Bilt Industries has been a longtime manufacturer of custom steel door systems primarily for aviation, marina and industrial facilities. Therefore, Well Bilt Industries, Williston, Fla., encounters several projects a year that require retrofitting a new door system onto an older, pre-existing structure. In many cases, such a project entails as many, if not more, details as new construction. Information gathering and communication with all parties involved should be your first priority.

Whether your door replacement is for the purpose of

the new door system. In either case, whether utilizing the existing track or replacing with a new track system, it is imperative that the top guide track and the bottom rail must be plumb to ensure a smooth and proper operation of the new rolling door system.

Sometimes, just adding electric door operators, such as the Hercul-Eze by Well Bilt Industries, to an existing rolling door system can update a building and door's efficiency.

Another important consideration when replacing a



updating your existing building for cosmetic purposes and conveniences or necessary to bring the entire structure up to current building code requirements, there are many critical factors to ensure the success of such an undertaking.

First, your structure must be thoroughly inspected to establish its structural integrity. In many cases, the structure will require remedial work to satisfy the current codes.

The clear opening where the new door system is to be installed must be carefully measured to ensure a proper fit at the time of installation. When replacing a bi-fold door system, it is critical that the framed opening vertical jamb columns are straight and square with the opening's header beam. Verify that the existing framed opening is sufficient to support the weight of the new door system. The electric source and connections must also be considered to ensure sufficient power for the replacement door system.


When retrofitting your building with a bottom track rolling door system, the same criteria would apply. Also critical to this project is the existing track (ASCE rail). In many cases the existing bottom rail and/or top guide may be in poor condition or may not be compatible with



door system is to explore all the available options offered. It is always more cost effective to include additional safety and convenience devices at the time of design and purchase. Because of electrical requirements, many such features may not be added at a later date.

When replacing a single door system in a building

that contains several doors, such as a T-hangar at an airport facility, it is very important that the replacement door match the existing doors. This will also apply when replacing a door in a building, which is part of a community that may have existing association and deed restrictions.

Once again, communication among all parties involved on the project and attention to details is critical to the success of any project. 

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