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The List

# How electrical contractors plan to save time and money in the new year

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A number of large and expensive projects will keep Silicon Valley's electrical contractors in demand throughout 2019, but industry trends and customer preferences have begun to shift toward work that saves time and money.

In recent years, clients of San Jose-based Cupertino Electric Inc. have been looking for a one-stop-shop type of contractor: "In the commercial space, we're seeing a trend toward mega-projects that require strong design/build expertise because designs are being developed while construction is taking place," [Rob Thome](#), the company's VP of Operations, stated in an email. "With these types of projects it is critical that specialty contractors like us are involved early to provide design and construct-ability input to ensure the project stays on schedule and within the budget."

An example of this is Cupertino Electric's work on the redevelopment of Terminal 1 at San Francisco International Airport. The \$2.4 billion project is being named for late politician and LGBTQ-rights activist Harvey Milk and is expected to be completed in 2022. When finished, it will feature 25 gates and will be the new home to both American Airlines and Southwest Airlines at the airport.

San Jose-based Rosendin Electric has seen an increase in the number of customers that are specifically requesting prefabrication. [Michael Holmes](#), the company's director of pre-construction, said in his industry prefabrication can be defined as "any portion of the installation that's repetitive." This can refer to work such as pre-measuring and pre-cutting cords for hanging lamps of uniform size or style in a hotel with rooms that have identical design needs.



CUPERTINO ELECTRIC INC.

Early involvement in planning and design is a growing part of contractors' work, such as with Cupertino Electric's work on redeveloping Terminal 1 at SFO.

"It's a shorter, cheaper process," he said.

Labor like this can be completed in a controlled environment, away from the install, which is attractive to environmentally conscious clients because of the reduced garbage waste that's produced on-site. Holmes also referenced the Valley's labor shortage, when ticking off why prefabrication has become increasingly popular: "Anything we can do to reduce labor on a job site is beneficial," he added.

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