



**FDEPFAA:**  
*How “Factory Direct” Made  
An Architect Happy*

  
**DYNAMIC**  
FENESTRATION



**Once upon a time, there was an architect.**

**He dreamed and he drew.**

First, he designed a small addition for a house down the street (actually his Mum's but that's largely irrelevant).

Then he designed a cabin on a lake.

**Life was good.**

He was asked to design a house for the Mayor, then the Judge. Before long, his fame spread far beyond his hometown. Dukes, Princes, Kings, Queens and [Rupert Murdoch](#) all wanted him to design their houses. Yes, life was good indeed.

And yet, a small voice in his head kept whispering, "You can still do better." (As it happened, he was mildly schizophrenic but his doctor didn't want to tell him until he had finished designing the doctor's sun-room extension.)

One night, as he sat in his favorite bar as architects do, he found himself sitting next to a little old man in a pointy hat with a black cat whose name was Morris. (It was that kind of bar.) He had a glass of water with what looked like a pickled worm in the bottom. (Apparently, the worm's name was Tequila but the architect didn't get out much.)

Anyhoo... the little old man said, “What troubles you, young man?” The architect told him of his fame and good fortune and the voice in his head, nagging at him.

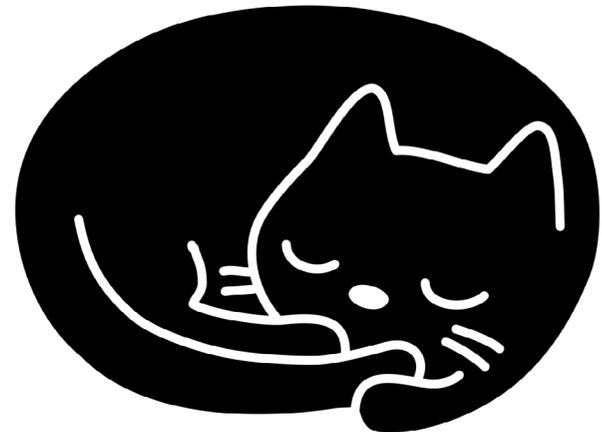
“Well, young man, you clearly need the architect’s elixir, the mysterious FDEPFAA!” he said. “What’s that?” asked the architect, intrigued.

“It’s an acronym you idiot!” he replied (he was drinking a lot of worm water you see). “It’s a magic pill. The letters stand for ***Factory Direct Eureka Panacea For Aspiring Architects***... obviously.”

The architect quickly popped the pill the old man gave him. The sun broke through the clouds and shone like gold. The birds sang. The air smelled like lilacs and roses. It all became instantly and beautifully clear what had been missing. He jumped out of his chair and ran to his Studio.

This is, of course, a familiar story to many of us. It’s a fable filled with wisdom passed down by architects by word of mouth through the ages (Morris the cat may be an embellishment added in the 1690’s by Samuel Pepys, but that has not been confirmed at time of writing.)

Let us get specific and plumb one of the enigmatic ingredients of excellent architecture.



# Collaboration is King: How Factory Direct Can Be The Eureka Panacea For Luxury Residential Architects

## What is Factory Direct?

Factory Direct is when the architect is talking directly to the fabricator with no one in-between. Designing and building luxury homes is a complex, multi-faceted effort requiring a team, each member bringing a specific area of expertise to a highly collaborative process.

Due to the complexity of luxury home designs and the sheer number of decisions and options, **concise, timely and accurate information flow is critical in maintaining the design schedule as well as restraining costs through efficient time management.** Time is money, spend it prudently. It isn't efficient to spend hours in meetings and conversations only to have critical decisions and details "lost in translation" when they are communicated via a third party to the fabricator in a far-away factory. Talk to the fabricator from the factory directly – problem solved.



## **Solutions and knowledgeable fenestration input where talking directly with the factory makes a big difference:**

1. Aesthetics relevant to the design intent
2. Materials and finishing
3. Engineering and performance
4. Delivery and logistics
5. Budgets and value engineering
6. Code compliance assistance
7. Coordination with installation & water-proofing

Luxury homes comprise a series of unique solutions, usually stretching the envelope of what has been done before. By definition, unknowns abound. Successfully achieving the optimal outcome takes planning from the schematic phase onwards. It may be calculating header spans and structural deflection by the engineer to ensure continuity of a desired datum line. Or perhaps it is the review by the window fabricator -- to ensure the design intent of the envelope can be implemented with a system that combines the aesthetics and engineered performance appropriate to the design, site conditions, wind loads and exposures. **Avoiding costly re-design later is a key goal of collaboration at the schematic design phase. Factory Direct is optimally designed to deliver this value. Start with what works, go from there.**

## Typical design challenges with fenestration for luxury homes:

1. Designing to achieve critical horizontal and/or vertical datum lines across elevations within engineered parameters.
2. Maintaining consistent alignment of header heights and/or daylight openings across elevations incorporating potentially different sill conditions and window and door types and necessary structural components
3. Maintaining consistent horizontal and/or vertical sightlines, minimizing structure and maximizing glass while maintaining engineered structural deflection performance



*Alignments of headers, daylights & mullions across multi-component elevations on a 3 sided wrap around glass wall.*

For the architects and contractors, the ability to work directly with a custom fabricator rather than through a third-party dealer or distributor has a multitude of benefits related directly to the challenges mentioned above.

## Key Benefits

- You're talking to the people who design, customize, fabricate and test custom windows & doors every day.
- Requesting different custom details isn't considered a nuisance, it is an expectation of the process on every project. The business model is designed to deliver on this expectation.
- A team of people back up the effort, each team member bringing a depth of experience & expertise in their particular specialty, whether it's R&D, engineering, project coordination and management, global sourcing or logistics.
- Factory direct offers single source supply, accountability and continuity of support from schematics through to handing over the keys and beyond.
- Condensing design time by having a dedicated project manager who is intimately familiar with the design, details, challenges and conversations that are guiding the process on your project. The PM is the point man for the fenestration team, right there in the factory alongside the other primary functions.
- A genuinely collaborative process is the surest path to success. Each party brings an intimate knowledge that informs the process in the formative stage so the construction and completion phases are as seamless and efficient as possible – the process anticipates, identifies and provides solutions to challenges before they become physical, costly problems.

## Specialists Bring Value

With windows and doors representing 8-15% of the construction costs in a luxury home, depending on the design and product mix, having a clear understanding of how the system integrates into the architecture and the remaining unknowns that are inevitable at the schematic stage are of considerable importance.

By specializing to the exclusion of all other activities, a factory direct business model in the custom window and door fabrication niche understands the overall agenda of the project and the role they need to play. And it isn't selling windows.





Luxury residential architecture today demands a team of specialists and requires the assembled specialists to communicate with each other in a shared architectural language so each contributes the maximum value.

Morris the Cat may indeed be fictional but there is nothing fictional about the FDEPFAA. It works and it's real. We work with a lot of leading-edge architects. Ask them.

***NOTE: The introduction to this post is a fictional story and is not meant to imply or infer any connection, true or fictional, between Dynamic Architectural and Rupert Murdoch, Morris the Cat, or any specific Royalty, Politicians, Judges, doctors, parents or other characters from the story. Furthermore, we do not endorse taking pills from strangers.***

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