



# Contractor PROFILE



## ADCO Roofing and Waterproofing

Training and Learning Every Day While Roofing Some of the Biggest Projects in  
Tinseltown

By Art Aisner

**L**os Angeles may be internationally known for a long list of other attributes, but the roofing market in and around America's second-largest city is strong. Between the lush housing market, high-rise buildings and major commercial structures facilitated by the entertainment and high-tech industries, there are seemingly endless opportunities to succeed.

That's how the Triphon family viewed the market when they delved into roofing in 1987. A successful entrepreneur and restaurant franchise owner, Dmitri Triphon got his start as a working professional in civil engineering in his native Russia. He immigrated to the United States at age 22 and landed in Los Angeles in 1975, taking up odd jobs — including construction work — to make ends meet for his wife and young daughter.

After starting multiple companies that included a car wash service, plumbing, and outer door manufacturing, Dmitri settled into success as developer of the Numero Uno pizzeria franchise that became a national brand. However, he always wanted to get back into the building trades. By 1987 he decided to leave the franchisee business and started ADCO Roofing and Waterproofing from the second-floor offices in the Numero Uno building in Hollywood. Triphon's business strategy was modest — focusing primarily on commercial properties and earning the trust of several different homeowner's associations and apartment building developers.

The company proved successful and started building a reputation with a solid bedrock of business clients as the property development in and around Los Angeles skyrocketed in the 90s and early 2000s. It wasn't until Triphon's son, Andrew, took the reins of day-to-day operations that ADCO elevated into southern California's roofing stratosphere.

Involved with the business in some capacity since he was a young boy, Andrew officially joined the company upon graduating from the University of California-San Diego with a degree in political science. He was a quick study on the leadership team and was appointed vice president in 2005. While working full-time, he earned an MBA in business at Loyola Marymount University and helped implement several efficiencies in both office operations and the field.

The company has since tripled in size with 100 employees and become a go-to contractor in the region for built-up, single-ply and torch-applied flat roofing systems, as well as multiple sloped-roofing systems, maintenance repairs and roof coatings. And the younger Triphon isn't stopping there, steering ADCO to offer a host of waterproofing services for patios, decks, walkways and even parking decks.

### Trust is a Process

Building the customer base and expanding product offerings



› The team at ADCO Roofing and Waterproofing has become a go-to contractor for built-up, single-ply and torch-applied flat roofing systems in southern California. Photos courtesy of Polyglass U.S.A, Inc.



➤ ADCO Roofing and Waterproofing installed a new, highly-reflective roof system on the Campbell House HOA building in Glendale, Calif. For the cap sheet, the contractor used 17,000 sq. ft. of Polyglass' Polyfresko® G, a white modified bitumen membrane that has improved granule adhesion and is resistant to puncture, stain and UV.



And just like his father before him, Triphon sees the potential for profits staying close to home. ADCO will soon relocate its second office from Santa Ana a few miles north to Orange. Despite what you read about wildfires and other natural disasters, the economy in California has been generally good for roofing contractors.

The Triphons understand that business is cyclical. During the Great Recession, single-home construction dropped as the mortgage funds dried up. However, apartments and multi-family dwellings were in demand.

“In the last downturn, new construction apartment buildings and public works

while dealing with the roofing industry's workforce crunch is a continual challenge. Triphon said the key to his company's recent growth is trust.

ADCO is an account manager-centered firm, meaning each building owner or facility manager is assigned a specific account manager for their project who is tasked with overseeing the entire customer experience. That person incorporates the work of ADCO's production division on large jobs, and with the customer service division on the smaller ones. Every job also has a superintendent who is responsible for quality control.

They're all designed to work together to get the customer what they need and feel secure in their roofing investment.

Though he's involved in all company operations and vital to the long-term business strategy, Triphon's approach with the account managers and division leaders is generally hands-off. The working atmosphere created as a result breeds accountability and helps retain the best talent.

“I treat everyone with respect and grant a great deal of autonomy,” he explained. “That autonomy is checked through reporting, and reporting tracks goals.”

Trust with a business owner requires patience, and is often built the same way.

“We start with small jobs out of the customer service division. We build trust in each other,” he said. “But trust is a two-way street. I need to trust that the customer will treat ADCO and its employees well, and pay their bills.”

## Bright Lights, Big Roofs

Judging by just some of the names of companies ADCO works with, paying the bills is rarely a concern. The portfolio of completed projects includes the Budweiser Brewery in nearby Van Nuys, the Louis Vuitton property on Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills, and the historic Fourm arena in Inglewood.

Working on so many high-profile projects, Triphon said the company has had the chance to work alongside some of the best architects, builders and manufacturers in the business. It's the people, however, not the brands that make all the difference, he said.

“Honestly, it's the people that help,” he explained. “Manufacturers and suppliers have turnover. I follow the good people in our industry wherever they go.”

were booming. So we're working in those sectors,” Triphon said. “We always look for a mix of market sectors to be in at all times so we can stay relevant in all of them.”

While diversifying products and service offerings is important to stay nimble in today's fast-paced business climate, it's the customer service piece that separates ADCO from others.

“Solving problems profitably are the best,” Triphon said when asked about his company's best experiences. “Even the bad experiences turn into good ones. Service your customers well and keep your company financially healthy.”

## Safety Standards

As a family-owned company, ADCO proudly emphasizes its safety record and continued commitment to improve wherever and whenever they can to ensure every crewmember makes it home at the end of the day. In addition to making safety a daily point of discussion and preparation, the leadership team long ago implemented the use of outside education and even auditing to ensure they're following the newest advances in technology and trends impacting the industry.

Each week, members from every crew are required to plan and complete toolbox talks that drill down on the important safety concerns and features of the respective job they're working on. Foreman lead the weekly exercise and document the meetings in writing for the leadership team.

Company-wide safety meetings occur monthly at the North Hollywood headquarters, and attendance is mandatory. The training is conducted by Safety Compliance Company, a California-based safety consulting and training firm with clients around the country. Facilitators are sure to cover a different topic each time. The same company also conducts unannounced worksite visits and inspections to ensure the lessons from the education sessions are taking hold in the field.

ADCO also tries to meet and exceed the safety goals of every customer, no matter how challenging or dangerous the roof.

“Making sure each of our employees makes it home safely at the end of the day is a top priority,” Triphon said. **RC**

*Art Aisner is editor of Roofing Contractor. He can be reached at 248-244-6497 or [aisnera@bnpmedia.com](mailto:aisnera@bnpmedia.com).*