



# Berkshire Development, LLC



## Timberline Office<sup>©</sup>



### Corporate Profile

**Headquarters:**  
Springfield, MA

**Type of Business:**  
Real Estate Investment &  
Development

**Website:**  
[www.berkshireusa.com](http://www.berkshireusa.com)

### **Timberline Office Modules:**

Accounts Payable  
Address Book  
Cash Management  
Crystal Reports  
Document Management  
Financial Statement Designer  
General Ledger  
Information Assistant  
Inquiry Designer  
Job Cost  
MICR Interface  
ODBC  
Project Management  
Property Management  
Report Designer

## Leading Real Estate Firm Thrives Managing Documents Online



Lav Alves is more than happy to make the term “filing cabinet” obsolete.

As the controller for Berkshire Development, LLC, a real estate company, Alves once worried about keeping track of the reams of documents his firm generated each day. Since Berkshire purchased Timberline’s Document Management software in 2005, however, Alves has left those worries behind.

Berkshire is a document-intensive business, handling every phase of the building process from real estate acquisition to municipal approvals to construction management. The company manages between five and ten projects at once in cities across the country, for clients such as Dick’s Sporting Goods, Inc., Stop & Shop Supermarket Company, CVS Corporation, FedEx Corporation and the United States Postal Service.

Berkshire generates a stream of documents that circulate among tenants, lessors, buyers and brokers. These documents -- leases, loan closings, lease abstracts, inspection documents and appraisal reports -- spell out various agreements and the due diligence supporting those agreements. As such, Alves and his team need access to those documents. On a lease, for example, Alves might check to see who pays insurance. On a loan closing, he might want to know Berkshire’s pre-payment options.

“We need to be able to reference many of the documents we generate,” Alves observes.

Until recently, Alves and his team stored their documents in filing

cabinets at their offices in Springfield, MA. As the company grew, Alves began to see the flaws in this approach. The filing cabinets ate up more valuable office space, and the documents were not always filed where they belonged. But what really drove Alves to act were too near-disasters in the office building where his team occupies space on the third and fourth floors.

In the first incident, pipes burst during a renovation project on the first floor, causing water to pour into the basement. The second incident occurred late on a Friday afternoon when a bathroom faucet popped off during a renovation on the third floor. Water seeped down to the second floor through the weekend before the leak was discovered. In both cases Berkshire escaped extensive damage, but each event was too close for comfort.

“After those two close calls,” Alves says, “I knew we needed online back-up for our critical documents.”

Alves began to shop around, sizing up five software companies who specialize in document management. However, he found the pricing, including one model at \$150,000, to be aggressive. “We’re a small company with twenty-two employees, and we are not going to spend that kind of money,” Alves says.

Besides, Alves had a trump card in his pocket. He was already using financial software from Timberline, and he knew that Timberline was about to introduce a document management module. When Timberline’s local business partner, United Solutions of Marlboro, MA., presented the module, Alves decid-

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*“Online document management is the way to go. For us, Timberline was a no-brainer. It is the best software in the business, and it gives us an integrated solution.”*

**– Lav Alves, Controller,  
Berkshire Development, LLC**

### Recent Projects

Fed-Ex Distribution Facility  
Saco, Maine  
Athens, Georgia

Dick’s Sporting Goods  
Concord, NH  
Keene, NH  
Huntington, NY

PetSmart  
Concord, NH  
Keene, NH  
Huntington, NY

ed to add it to his software arsenal.

United Solutions’ consultant Michael Kane trained Alves and his team on the use of the software. In just one hour the Berkshire team was ready to go. They even learned how to customize the software, creating categories that match their filing system classifications.

The process starts with a scanner, which Berkshire acquired for \$600. The scanner allows Berkshire to feed documents into the software at up to 20 pages per minute. One copy of every scanned document is automatically routed to the “DocuVault,” an online storehouse. The scanner provides many options – such as size of the document and color choice. Each document can be scanned into email, a document file or a PDF. Alves and his team typically scan documents into their own email system and then route documents from there.

For example, every lease agreement the company enters is scanned into the system and then assigned to the appropriate tenant and property. Lav tags commitment numbers to each contract, numbers he uses when he needs to call up a document later. Lav also scans in critical documents he might need to forward to a bank or broker – contracts, change orders, site plans, traffic study reports and paperwork from engineers and architects. In the same manner, project managers scan change orders into the software.

“We are much more efficient in re-

trieving documents,” Alves says. “We used to flip through file folders. Now we just punch in a number and the document appears.”

The document management program also saves Berkshire money. In the past, they would make a copy of a document and then send it by overnight mail. Now they use the software to simply click on the needed document, sending it by email to the recipient.

“This is a much faster way to do business, and we save forty dollars at the same time,” Alves states.

Looking ahead, Alves is eagerly awaiting an upgrade to Timberline’s software that will allow invoices to be routed to third parties. The new software will enable project managers to route invoices to clients directly from job sites. The software is scheduled to be rolled out this spring.

“Sometimes invoices sit on desks for weeks at a time, and I lose track of where they are,” Alves says. “Once we implement this solution with Timberline, we will be able to check the status of any invoice online. It will be another way to be more efficient in our daily work.”

Alves encourages other paper-intensive businesses to forge an online solution.

“Online document management is the way to go,” he says. “For us, Timberline was a no-brainer. It is the best software in the business, and it gives us an integrated solution.”

#### CHALLENGE

Install new software so this leading real estate company could manage documents online.

#### SOLUTION

Timberline’s Document Management software.

#### RESULTS

Berkshire now manages all its documents online, saving valuable office space, eliminating mailing costs and driving efficiencies into daily operating processes.



## UNITED SOLUTIONS

Technology Partner to the Construction & Real Estate Industries

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