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architectural • financial • consulting  
construction management

## Super-Structure

"What type of building structure should we use? Steel? Laminated Arches? Concrete Block? Wood frame? Post and beam?" Every building system is particularly designed to meet a unique need... and comes with its own limitations.

Post and beam structures are economical, but are often suited only for simple gable designs. Wood frame buildings offer open spans to 70', great design flexibility, ease of construction and economy but are usually limited to more traditional designs. Laminated arch structures can enclose even greater spaces, and can create warm yet impressive interiors. However, laminated arch buildings may lack flexibility and expandability. Masonry, especially decorative block, can serve double duty as a load-bearing wall and as a finish system, but may lack warmth. Pre-engineered metal buildings can house very large open areas economically, however, there may be substantial cost in finishing the interior and exterior of the building to create an aesthetically pleasing church facility.

Obviously, there are many factors to consider... such as the use of the building, the architectural style, the ambiance desired, the span of open interior spaces, interior wall and ceiling finishes, insulating factors and climate, operating costs, maintenance, and more.

A systematic approach is usually required to sort through all the pros and cons of these systems. The church should first develop a prioritized list of needs and wants in the new building, establish a construction budget, and then make a careful analysis of several of the available solutions to their particular design criteria.

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