## History and Evolution of Job Order Contracting (JOC)

Origin and Development

Job Order Contracting (JOC) was developed in 1982 by the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in Belgium by Harry H. Mellon while serving as Chief Engineer for Nato. Recognizing the need for a more efficient method to execute multiple small to medium-sized construction projects, Mellon introduced JOC as a means to streamline procurement, increase responsiveness, and improve cost and schedule control for repair, renovation, and minor construction efforts.

Following his work with NATO, Mellon brought the JOC concept to the United States, where it was adopted by the U.S. Army. In 1990, he founded The Gordian Group, a private firm created to provide software, cost data, training, and implementation services supporting JOC programs for facility and infrastructure owners.

### SABER: The U.S. Air Force Adaptation

In parallel, the U.S. Air Force developed its own version of JOC known as Simplified Acquisition of Base Engineering Requirements (SABER). Approved for Air Force-wide use in 1987, SABER adapted the JOC model to the Air Force's specific base operations and contracting requirements. Many regard SABER as a refined and highly successful implementation of the JOC methodology, often cited as a best-practice model for operational efficiency and integration of planning, contracting, and execution.

### Clarifying Misconceptions

While The Gordian Group played a pivotal role in scaling and commercializing JOC in the United States, it did not invent the methodology. That credit belongs to SHAPE, Harry H. Mellon & supporting team members during their tenure with the U.S. military. Gordian's current marketing materials have occasionally implied or stated that the company created JOC, which conflicts with the well-documented historical development of the process.

### Concerns Regarding Oversight and Conflicts of Interest

Over the years, several public audits[1] and reviews have raised concerns regarding the implementation and management of JOC programs where Gordian has played a central role. Issues identified include:

- Inadequate internal controls and insufficient program oversight
- Overpayments tied to questionable pricing or contract administration
- Lack of rigorous review of contractor and subcontractor qualifications
- Consultant (Gordian) performance deficiencies relative to contractual obligations

[1] See Independent Audits https://4bt.us/job-order-contract-audits/

A notable audit concluded that one such JOC program was developed with internal control weaknesses, implemented with management deficiencies, and abused by a contractor, with the JOC consultant also failing to meet contractual requirements. These findings underscore the importance of transparency, objective third-party oversight, and clear separation of roles when employing JOC as a project delivery method—especially when a consultant or software provider is also financially incentivized based on construction volume.

(Source: ChatGPT 2025716 - https://chatgpt.com/c/6877ae66-0f64-8012-b9d8-1816e0de18ca)



About Four BT, LLC (4BT) - Join us as we pave the way toward a new future for public and private sector efficient project delivery.

Help shape an innovative yet proven approach to repair, renovation, maintenance, and new build planning, procurement, and project delivery where empowerment, shared actionable information, and choice fuel collaboration and mutually beneficial outcomes.

Established in 2016, Four BT, LLC. (“4BT”) is a certified veteran-owned small business (VOSB) focused upon providing objective, verifiable, and current local market construction cost data, associated secure cloud-based technology for construction cost estimating and professional support services. Data is organized via expanded CSI MasterFormat as well as the expanded UNIFORMAT dependent upon the use.

We are championing a future where everyone can make informed choices about the quality of the data that powers your repair, renovation, maintenance, and new build Planning, Procurement, and Project Delivery Process.

To unlock the full potential of efficient lifecycle management of the built environment and achieve economic and environmental benefits, we must prioritize openness, reliability and set the highest standards for cost and technical data and associated information sharing.

We must all prioritize TRUST.