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Customer Success Story

Sheer Architectural & Interior Design



"Autodesk Revit delivers efficiencies of such a magnitude that they ripple throughout the practice, impacting positively on all aspects of the business."

– **Sean Couzyn**,
Sheer Architectural & Interior Design, Johannesburg.

If he could, Johannesburg architect, **Sean Couzyn**, would play his cards close to his chest. He'd keep the technology that he's been testing, and which he says has given him an immense competitive advantage, to himself! The secret weapon, which has transformed the way in which he operates and manages his practice – trebling his capacity without increasing his staffing levels – is the new building design and documentation system, **Autodesk Revit**. **Couzyn** is one of a handful of progressive South African practices that recently ran pilot sites of the new software.

Breakthrough Efficiencies

Autodesk Revit, from the industry leading design software developer, Autodesk, is based on new technology, which hasn't previously been available in South Africa. Specialist architectural Autodesk reseller, Cadplan, introduced the new software to **Couzyn**. Easy to learn and easy to use, it features a model-based approach to building design, which delivers breakthrough efficiencies that transform architectural practices at both operational and business levels.

Instead of creating conceptual images and then re-drawing the same information to create technical construction documentation, architects create a single digital building model for each project. The model contains every shred of information about the project – from the contour of the land on which it will be built, to the width of walls and window sills, details of all finishings, the pitch of the roof, and a bill of quantities. It is the intensity of this intelligence that sets the technology apart from other building design software.

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R1.8-million coastal residence

In just two months, Couzyn has used Autodesk Revit to design 11 residential projects. They varied in scale from alterations to new homes, and ranged in value from R300 000 to R2-million. The most significant project was a new plush coastal residence valued at R1.8-million. The multi-level home is located in Hermanus, approximately one hour outside of Cape Town. The efficiencies generated by Autodesk Revit have enabled Couzyn – who typically works on 10 projects simultaneously – to boost his project level significantly, without altering his staffing levels.



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Drawings Produced In A Matter of Days

Couzyn says time savings triggered by Autodesk Revit have had positive bearing on activities throughout Sheer Design – from training to operations, client communication and the overall structure of the company.

“The typical hindrances of moving to a new software program are minor. Often people are concerned about the drop in productivity after introducing a new program. Autodesk Revit is very easy to use. I was producing acceptable working drawings a few days after my first training day.”

The effect of time savings achieved by the concurrent creation of a model, sections, elevations, and 2D plans are exponential.

“This is the first time that a package which claims to have self-generating sections and elevations actually delivers,” says Couzyn. “Many have promised this feature, but haven’t had sufficient detail and were difficult to control graphically. With Autodesk Revit, it’s all there – the hatching, the line thickness and the dimensions – as promised – and you can easily control the way it looks!. There’s no need to worry about a huge productivity lag when changing to Autodesk Revit.”

Revit stands for ‘revise instantly’ – a feature that Couzyn doesn’t ever want to have to do without. “Shortly before I had to submit plans to council, my Hermanus client decided that he’d prefer to change the pitched elements of the roof to flat ones. With Autodesk Revit, I made the change to all the plans, sections and elevations – it

was about 10 drawings – in less than an hour. It would have taken at least a day’s uninterrupted work with a traditional CAD package.”

Another more intangible benefit of the ‘revise instantly’ feature is the sense of security it gives users.

“You don’t have this niggling worry about whether or not you’ve remembered to include that additional window in all sets of the documentation. It’s comforting to know that once you’ve made to change to one view, everything else is modified instantly,” says Couzyn.

Communication Aid

Couzyn also finds the new software a great communication aid, which enables him to involve the client at a much earlier stage of design development.

“Some people feel involving the client during this phase slows down a project. I find that the more the client is involved, the more satisfied they are at the end of the whole design process and that means fewer expensive design changes on site. I’ve spent a lot of time with clients rotating designs on the screen of a laptop and looking at their homes from all angles. In Hermanus, we actually looked from the inside of the client’s home over a model of the neighbouring houses, to ensure that the sea views wouldn’t be interrupted.

The new technology has influenced Sheer Design’s staffing levels as well as future personnel selection. Not only has Couzyn increased his capacity, but he’s done it without having to take on additional staff.

“And when I eventually have to take on more staff, my selection won’t be dictated

by my software. Autodesk Revit is so easy to use that I can confidently employ the right person, even if they’ve never used the software. I know I can quickly bring them up to speed with Autodesk Revit training,” says Couzyn.

While many people thought the simple automation offered by 2D CAD had changed the industry, the scale of the efficiencies offered by the model-based approach of Autodesk Revit can only be described as a quantum leap.

Learn More

More detailed information about Autodesk Revit is available on the Autodesk website at www.autodesk.co.za. You can also phone Amanda Wesson on (011) 805-1555 for more information about the technology.



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Autodesk (Africa)
Block 12, Central Office Park
257 Jean Avenue, Centurion
Pretoria, Gauteng
Tel: +27 (0) 12 664 8115
email: geo-south-africa@autodesk.com
web address: www.autodesk.co.za

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