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Phenomenal KZN growth for interior architect firm Tower Bridge

Tower Bridge KwaZulu-Natal is restructuring and expanding its operations to accommodate unprecedented growth across the region and to align itself with the national Group’s design and service standards of excellence.

“The recipe for our success as a specialist interior architecture and turnkey project management company is a formidable, committed and professional team who lives the company mantra of conducting business with integrity, transparency, honesty and trust,” states Iwona Bazylko who heads up the KwaZulu-Natal office.

“People are key to the success of any business but the right people are the winning formula.”

Tower Bridge’s Johannesburg head office provides intelligent interior design and refurbishment solutions to the corporate, industrial, hospitality and retail sectors. Recognising the business potential in KZN, Directors Lindsey Alexander and Wayne Austin opened the Durban office in the late 2000’s. From humble beginnings, the Umhlanga-based office rapidly made a name for itself as a market leader in the supply of world-class interior design solutions. Under the new and capable leadership of Iwona, supported by her 19-strong self-motivated, enthusiastic team of fresh go-getters, Tower Bridge KZN is taking interior architecture to the next level. “Our focus is on tapping into global design trends to create workspaces that present a perfect balance between aesthetics, functionality and efficiency and that are conducive to our clients’ areas of expertise.”

Iwona, who joined Tower Bridge in 2013 and was recently promoted to a management position, says that thanks to the individual expertise and experience of her incredible team, they are able to take on any project, large or small, simple or complicated, with professionalism and dedication. “To ensure that we are able to deliver best-in-class services, our team has been substantially increased through a number of new appointments,” explains Iwona. “The permanent employment of our labour force gives us a ‘hands-on’ team of nine. The recent appointment of a Quantity Surveyor/Estimator as well as a P.A./Receptionist, have swelled the ranks of my almost all-women team to bring our Durban staff complement to 19. This dynamic team’s energy is palpable. We love our careers and the company that created them. Our many satisfied clients are affirmation that we walk the design talk,” adds Iwona and she highlights two recently completed projects that set unique challenges that her team conquered.

“We are very proud of a new build we completed for CMA-CGM, one of the largest shipping companies in the world, in a record time of only seven weeks. Our client’s requirements for this 1500sqm Ridgside project were predominantly based on international specifications, from I.T. right through to the colour of the leather couches. The project needed approvals from France on every item within a strict timeline and prescribed budget.” Iwona adds that the project was in fact the second successfully completed assignment for CMA-CGM, the first being for their offices in Cape Town.
Angela Roodt, Administration Supervisor at CMA-CGM, affirms the company’s satisfaction with the scope of work delivered by Iwona and her team. “Tower Bridge understood our vision from inception to completion and complied with our Group Standard and the set time frame of completion of the project. It was a pleasure working with Iwona and her team.”

The second flagship project saw Iwona and her team, in collaboration with the Partners of Ebb & Flo, re-invent, re-name and conceptualised a new coffee bar and restaurant within three weeks. “We created a franchise gem for our client with fresh and contemporary décor and design, from kitchen to after-hour work areas and since opening, Ebb & Flo has been the hype of Gateway.” Satisfied Ebb & Flo partner, Jason Caradas, says “Tower Bridge worked closely with us on the concept and design of Ebb & Flo. Senior Designer, Tarryn De Bruyn, was able to turn our vision into reality and Iwona was extremely attentive to our needs. We were very happy with the design and the space became exactly what we had envisioned.” Jason adds that he has already appointed Tower Bridge to assist him in his next venture and concept that he will be opening in Durban soon.

Extremely optimistic about the future, Iwona anticipates great potential in the commercial and retail sectors in particular. “And we have barely tapped into Durban’s industrial and hospitality markets which form a large portion of Tower Bridge’s business in other regions.” A number of turnkey, blue-chip projects that collectively cover thousands of square meters recently secured by the KZN office, bears testimony to Iwona and her team’s expertise and capability of delivering smart design solutions to create efficient and aesthetic spaces for their clients.

The KZN success story continues for Tower Bridge’s Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town and Mauritius offices. “While there are a number of factors contributing to our success, our people top the list,” says Lindsey, adding that staff are the mainstay to ensuring the company’s sustainable growth. “As a level 2 B-BBEE compliant group, our more than 100 staff represent the diversity of our country’s people; three of our five offices are managed by ladies.” Ewa Bazydko, Iwona’s sister heads up the Cape Town branch while Pretoria is managed by Bernise Venter. Shannon Becker, ex-head of design in Johannesburg, recently left South African shores to join the design department in Mauritius.

Tower Bridge remains committed to investing in and up-skilling staff and the soundness of this policy was once again proved when former junior site labourer, Trevor Ncube, qualified as one of the company’s electrical wiresman. Lindsey reveals that reputable, highly experienced doyen in the Durban property market, Colin Sher, has joined Tower Bridge as national business development and marketing executive. “We are confident that the group will flourish under Colin’s remarkable industry knowledge and expertise.”

Innovation and creativity is not only reflected in Tower Bridge’s interior architecture design but also in its client service, being the first company in this market sector to assist clients with convenient financial packages including 100% tenant installation finance.
Whether a brand new design, a refurbishment or a corporate move, Tower Bridge creates beautiful, functional and efficient spaces that communicate the client’s ethos. “With the celebration of our 10th anniversary in October 2015, we have opened up a new chapter in the company’s illustrious history,” concludes Lindsey.

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