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Mike-Hardy Brown
MHB Designs
Johannesburg, Gauteng

Revit boosts designer's capacity 10 fold

With [Autodesk Revit](#), Johannesburg architectural technologist, [Mike Hardy-Brown](#), has the capacity to take on about 10 times the amount of work he could have done using AutoCAD.

In addition to designing for his clients, Hardy-Brown has become an outsource partner for several architectural practices.

“I take projects over once the concepts are finalised and, with Revit Architecture, quickly produce relevant documentation. On one project, I singlehandedly produced documentation that would typically have required a team of about 15 people.”

Unlike computer-aided design (CAD) systems of old that simply produced 'dumb' 2D or 3D representations of buildings, Revit Architecture creates an intelligent building model for each project. This is much more than simply geometry. It is underpinned by a powerful database that contains every shred of information pertaining to the model.

Information in the database is viewed concurrently in graphic and text views – these include 2D and 3D views, plans, sections, and even elevations. Real-time revisions means a change in any of these views filters instantly throughout all the other views.

This means quick and affordable creation of 3D rendered conceptual images – even for a small practice. And rapid revisions mean concepts can be refined until both the architect and client are happy with the design.

For Hardy-Brown, this means improved communication with the entire project team – from client, to council, to contractors – helping to streamline projects and deliver better quality. For example, his House Botha project, a luxury residence in Benoni, went through multiple versions before he and his client were happy with the design.



“House Botha is a 650 square metre luxury home, with lots of double volumes, and separate family and entertainment areas. They are connected by a bridge ‘link’, so the children can be comfortable in the family living area, away from late night entertainment.”

Hardy-Brown says while he quickly captured the overall concept, selecting just the correct finishes took him a little time.

“In the end, we made use of lots of natural timber, raw concrete, natural stonework and exposed steel beams in a very ‘honest’ design. Beams and fixings, which would typically have been concealed, were exposed and turned into features.

“With Revit Architecture, there is no room for ambiguity, ensuring that I understand my client’s brief perfectly.

“The ease of creating concepts means even finishes are part of the conceptual stage, making for a much more holistic approach to a project.”

Hardy-Brown has also enjoyed accelerated turnaround time at council approval stage, which he attributes directly to his use of Revit Architecture. “The 3D images, supported with detailed 3D cutaways of complex construction elements, put the project in context and help to speed up approval.

“Once, I got immediate approval from the chief building inspector! I’m sure the 3D images had something to do with it – a picture certainly is worth a thousand words!”

The benefits of improved communication are also seen during the construction phase, with a total understanding by everyone on the project of what’s happening.

“During the House Botha project, with fixings and steel beams transformed into focus points, I needed exceptionally high quality welding work. I was able to show the contractor precisely what I expected the finished product to look like, ensuring that the client’s wishes weren’t compromised by shoddy workmanship,” says Hardy-Brown.

