

ALAN FINDLATER

Donald Cant Watts Corke Management

- Interview by Gina Marich

Alan Findlater, Managing Director of the growing project management company Donald Cant Watts Corke Management (DCWC) says he began his career by counting bricks.

That's how he jokingly describes the quantity surveying business. When he arrived in Australia from the UK 20 years ago he found the way business was done here very different, "here they [the surveyors] don't lead on projects."

From a crisp modern office overlooking the MCG in Melbourne, Mr Findlater laments the limitation to potential placed on quantity surveyors in Australia.

Findlater's philosophy is that quantity surveying enterprises can offer their clients more diverse and specialised services by performing project management duties.

It's a philosophy that has been very successfully adopted by DCWC in the past few years.

Founded in 1966, DCWC provide a full range of project management services from initial optimisation studies through to strategic management of property assets. It allows a multi perspective view of projects that helps things run a bit smoother.

Wholly Australian owned the company began in Melbourne but now has offices in the major east coast cities as well as Perth.

They have worked on a wide variety of high

end projects including Parliament House and the National Museum of Australia in the capacity of quantity surveying. Many of the top projects in Australia have had some input from DCWC.

But project management is a new addition.

Alan Findlater sees this as a big step for the company and part of a wider trend in the construction industry; "Quantity surveyors are changing and broadening their range of services," he says, citing several Australian firms that are following the trend.

Project management has allowed DCWC to take a more hands on approach that allows them to "see the project from both sides."

One of DCWC's current major undertakings is the 'Neuroscience Facilities Project' that comprises two new buildings, one at the



adherence to a number of key principles".

One of these principles, and what he believes sets the company apart, is the involved, hands on approach of its directors and employees.

"The directors are always there in a very proactive way," he says. Mr Findlater believes this offers a sense of comfort and continuity to clients and assures them of good outcomes. "It's about trust and confidence and working from that platform."

Though he has years of experience in a diverse range of environments, Alan Findlater has no intention of taking the company in a different direction, he sees his role rather as "focussing and energising that direction."

Part of this is fostering a strong team dynamic and consistently meeting client expectations.

Within the next ten years he believes the company will continue to grow and reach consistently high standards.

How does he explain DCWC's success?

"We are good to work with and we do what we say we are going to do."

University of Melbourne in Parkville and another at the Austin Hospital in Heidelberg.

Taking a leading role, the company will oversee the entire project from initial design to the facility's handover. Their role is to provide leadership and direction by understanding the needs of the clients and the demands of the project.

He says this is a particularly challenging development, as most involving laboratories tend to be, but is also extremely satisfied with the challenge. "This project aspires to be one of the top ten in the world," he says.

Mr Findlater has been with the company for one and a half years and in that time he has seen some strong growth; his own team which started with two people has grown to ten. Nationwide the company employs about 80 people.

He says managing that growth involves "careful selection and development of staff and



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