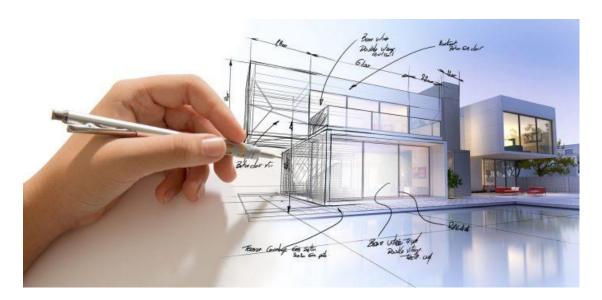
Top architectural firms in South Africa

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The South African architectural industry is changing radically from building traditions dating from prehistoric times which now survive in the shadow of high-tech structures. With such speed current business practices will be virtually unrecognizable a decade from now.

Digital integration would be the definitive driving force behind the new era of architecture and building practice in South Africa brought about by the top architectural firms in the country.

The following are the top architectural firms in the country who are showcasing a range of innovative projects with diverse materials and unconventional forms employed in their construction.

Paragon Architects

Paragon Architects is one of the leading firms in South Africa formed in 1997 by Anthony Orelowitz and Henning Rasmuss, and formalised under its current name in February 1999, following a win in the Melrose Arch building design competition.

During the period of establishment, the firm took on many private residential commissions including a successfully completion of the Peregrine Holdings head office project. Since the firm has seen a rapid growth and service extension to other sectors including; deliver design, project documentation, and contract administration services across a range of project types.

The generally defined sequence of architectural services offered by the firm include:

- 1. Briefing
- 2. Sketch Design
- 3. Design Development
- 4. Approvals
- 5. Construction Drawings and Tendering
- 6. Contract Administration
- 7. Handover and Close-out

Paragon Architects has earned its popularity with remarkable achievements which has placed them in the leading architects category. Some of the achievements include; being awarded the contract for the design and erection of the Alexander Forbes head office (38,000m2), located across the road from the Sandton Gautrain Station. The interiors were completed by Paragon Interface and the building was completed in September 2012. They also won first prize in the Aspire MOGAS Towers international architectural competition, for an 18,000m2 office tower in Kampala, Uganda

The firm consolidates technical knowledge and design ability based on strong, established working relationships with clients, consultants and contractors. It has since then embarked on designing more sculptural buildings, combining their deep skills in Cost Engineering with the capabilities of 3D modelling technology.

Hofman Architects

Starting as a small Home Office in 1994, Hofman Architects has has grown over the years to become the full Professional Architectural Practice it is today, providing a personalized hands-on professional service, tailor made to suit the specific requirements of individual clients.

The firm which is based in Pretoria is run by Tony and Marinda Hofman, a husband and wife team who have specialized in different aspects of the professional service to complement each other perfectly.

Hofman Architects provide a positive sustainable impact on the built environment, through appropriate architecture and project Management which results in high quality architectural and project management service to clients that is mutually beneficial.

AMA Architects

AMA Architects is a dynamic South African Architectural firm who practice Architecture from their Head Office in Sandton, South Afric established in 1993. The firm designs both public and private spaces but their ultimate responsibility of the architect is the Art of Architecture, which must function at an optimal level.

AMA Architects has been recognized as a leading Contemporary Design firm dedicated to its vision and passion for excellence in design. The firm incorporates the interior design services of D12 Interiors into its service function together with a Project Management Service, and has a strongly skilled presentation department with all members being highly literate in BIM and CAD technologies.

AMA Architects employs the latest technologies (software and hardware) and design techniques to ensure its Clients receive efficient and professional service and has a team which is dedicated to the profession's highest goals, through an intense collaborative and design approach, and the realization and vision of worthy design.

The firm has excelled in the design and delivery prominent projects including; SA Head Office for Volkswagen Group South Africa, a 14 000m², Patricia Road Head Office Park among others and is currently involved with the prestigious Sandton SKYE Residential Towers and Hotel Development in Stan Road Sandton, which is a stand out development.

AMA Architects are also at the forefront of the latest Building Information Modelling (BIM) software, enabling them to deliver designs on time and within budget. BIM enables the client to fully grasp the project from the earliest concept to the most complex detail of their unique project.

A3 Architects

The A3 Architects was founded in 1991 and has since the become an industry leader, providing a comprehensive and highly specialized service, both within South Africa and throughout Africa.

Dedicated to achieving exceptional concept design and harmonious solutions, the firm's practice is geared with a high ratio of qualified professional staff, ensuring the maintenance of a dynamic approach at all levels of project execution.

Through a process of careful investigations, interviews and gathering of information, A3 is able to fully understand all practical aspects of the project and consider all physical requirements before the design wheels are set in motion.

The firm understands their role to ultimately satisfy the needs of the end user by creating spaces that are not only functional, but also efficient,

desirable and attractive. One of the project the firm boasts its popularity is designing of the Nelson Mandela children's hospital, green park office park.

The firm has branches in Johannesburg, Kwazulu Natal and Mbombela. It has created a work environment that is well planned, practical, functional and convenient. This in return results in staff satisfaction and a respect of the workplace.

Integrated Design Consultants (IDC)

Integrated Design Consultants (IDC) has wide range of local and international experience over the past 20 years since its establishment in 1999.

The firm through its principals and professional staff, is committed to the creation and design of people-centered environments, focusing strongly on ergonomics and anthropometrics as the foundation for the creation of functional built forms.

To this end, IDC have been intimately involved with the writing of the National Building Regulations, and are involved with several national and international initiatives aimed at improving the quality of the lived environment.

The firm's design of functional spaces are is best illustrated by the practice's continued work and competency in the field of Universal Design, a design paradigm that emphases the creation of environments that are usable by all persons.

IDC projects range in size and complexity from small alterations, small or large housing, multi-level commercial, industrial, public buildings to even parts of cities. Their approach is multi-disciplinary and holistic, embracing not only Architecture, but Urban Design, Interior Planning, Industrial Design, Training, Tourism, Transportation etc.

IDC believes in developing designs derived, but also transcending, from planning and transportation policy, architectural design, development economics, engineering, environment and landscape.

Jeremie Malan Architects & Interiors

Jeremie Malan Architects & Interiors based in Pretoria, South Africa, has been in practice since 1994 providing a wide range of proven expertise and design quality and specializes in architectural and interior design and decoration projects.

Skilled pro-active management and creative commercial design has made the firm produced large and medium sized buildings on programme and within budget. This has made it earn popularity including recently been awarded The South African Institute of Architects 2016 Awards of Merit and for Excellence for the South African Military Health Base Depot Project.

Jeremie Malan Architects and Interiors specializes in projects for Government, Hotels, Medical, Office, Residential and Educational Projects. One of its remarkable project is designing of National library of South Africa.

SVA International

SVA International is one of the preferred architectural practice firm in South Africa offering an inclusive design led service providing creative and viable solutions for clients since 2004. This includes development frameworks, master plans, detailed precinct plans, design codes and development guidelines.

The firm is a majority black-owned company with a qualified B-BBEE rating. They aim to achieve tangible environmental outcomes appropriate to the context that earn Green Star ratings while also appreciating the values of property and income.

Each project embarked by SVA, is packaged into a specific set of work stages, deliverables and processes to achieve the client's vision. The firm apply expert knowledge to lead our clients towards creative and viable solutions.

SVA's long-standing alliances and relationships with clients and colleagues continue, while a more comprehensive service and permanent presences in major African centres are offered. This strengthens the position of the practice as a leader in providing multi-disciplinary architectural services to both private and public sector development throughout the continent.

The firm uses and urban design approach which aims to create people places that enrich the city and various techniques, ranging from hand-drawn vision sketches to accurate technical 3D computer models.

Some of the firm's achievements include designing of The Palms shopping and entertainment mall, the first and largest centre of its kind in Nigeria and is on par with similar shopping centers anywhere in the world, providing an international standard shopping and cinema experience to Lagos, and The East Extension in Capetown which is designed to complement the existing CTICC complex and include contemporary design features.