



Smart design key for busy Dunedin firm

Russell Fredric

Award winning Dunedin firm, The Design Studio, has never been busier.

Director Brent Alexander says the city is fair brimming with positivity, which, combined with low interest rates, is creating considerable confidence in commercial and residential construction.

Large scale projects on the horizon include a new hospital and the proposed Steamer Basin development.

Although The Design Studio's work is about 75% residential, Brent expects there to be a flow-on effect.

"While we may not be directly involved, the benefits of the larger projects will filter through the whole local construction economy.

A great summer and the Ed Sheeran concert have also contributed to the city's positive vibe, he says.

"The last six months have just been absolutely phenomenal."

"It's the busiest I've ever seen in my 30 year working career, that's for sure."

The Design Studio services mainly Dunedin and Central Otago and employs seven staff; six are tertiary qualified CAD designers.

Established by Brent in 1995, the business aims to work with clients who share a passion for good design and quality construction "so together we can create great buildings".

"We wanted to reject the mediocrity of the houses that litter our urban landscape by designing durable, energy efficient and well-considered buildings.

"Our desire to provide a quality design service for a fair price is genuine; one that bridges the gap between low-end volume housing and uber-expensive high-end homes.

This and membership in Architectural Designers New Zealand (ADNZ) have been pivotal to the company's professional approach and ongoing success as well as the personal development of Brent and his staff.

The ADNZ's code of ethics is designed to provide guidance to its members regarding expectations about ethical standards

"Within the ADNZ we have a very strong profes-

sional development programme so we are constantly updating ourselves in terms of the technical

elements, materials, construction best practice and design trends."

Brent says the core driver behind The Design Studio is to improve our clients' world through smart design.

"This is what we do for all our clients every day."

"We work hard to streamline the complex process of design, consent and construction to make it easy for our clients."

The Design Studio's extensive experience in designing and managing a wide variety of projects, ranging from complex multi-million-dollar commercial buildings to small bathroom refurbishments, creates peace of mind while a pleasing result is achieved through close collaboration.

"Our clients and colleagues like our down to earth and easy to deal with approach."

The company specialises in eco-sensitive buildings incorporating principles of passive solar and energy efficient design.

These are highly functional, cost-effective and carefully considered to maximise sun and views while being a joy to live or work in.

In the renovation of older homes the extensive use of enlarged glass areas to allow natural light

to fill interior spaces and to improve heating from solar gain is transformative.

"Our energy smart homes and buildings will cost less to heat and are warmer and healthier.

"Generic design and cheap construction is not what we do and we know that well designed homes and buildings last longer, sell faster and are worth more."



The Design Studio focuses on durable, energy efficient, well considered buildings that bridge the gap between low-end volume housing and expensive high-end homes.