



AE clinches signage for the new Baiá Mall in Moz

Anatomy of successful shopping centre signage – it's all about professional signage manufacture – and in this case, carefully managed logistics.

In the second half of 2017, AE Plastics was contracted by Stefanutti Stocks, in co-ordination with DBM Architects and Metrum Project Management, as the selected signage supplier for their Baiá Mall Project in Maputo.

Baiá Mall is a 25 000 m² shopping centre on the main tourist stretch of Maputo's seafront, Avenida Marginal. The initial overall project cost for the centre was 55 million USD. AE Plastics was involved on a full service basis on the signage for this project, which saw design, prototyping, manufacturing and installation being included in the scope of works. Additional to the mall signage, AE Plastics was also ultimately awarded the contract for supply and installation of fire signage for the centre as well as for most of the shops within the centre.

Manufacture of the signage took place in AE Plastics' production facility in Wadeville, South Africa. Top of the range components were used on the project signage with installations being managed by experienced rigging teams from South Africa as well as by local installers in Maputo. When doing business outside of South Africa, AE Plastics believes in empowering local installers. This approach has also had the benefit over years that relationships have been built up with installers in many parts of Africa.

The signage programme, through many facets and phases and with close collaboration with all stakeholders, was managed by a team that had their work cut out for them from the outset. The signage was manufactured by AE Plastics in their state-of-the-art manufacturing facility to tight deadlines. The team nursed each element through the development, production, logistics, and finally installation phases, resulting in the ultimate success of the project – made possible by the dedication and commitment of the AE production and manufacturing staff.

In short, the Baiá Mall signage project has been a triumphant achievement for AE Plastics, and certainly one to be proud of.

Challenges faced during production and delivery of signage

Whilst design and manufacturing challenges are a way of life for AE Plastics and are managed with relative ease given the long history and expertise of the company – the stringent timeline schedules, logistics and transport timeously to site in a foreign country required yet another brand of professionalism.

Rising to the occasion, all signage manufactured was designed within specified sizing limitations, where constraints posed by road transport requirements were definitive. Larger signs were manufactured in sections in order to be easily transportable and were designed for easy assembly on-site.

Baiá Mall tenant mix

The carefully orchestrated tenant mix comprises the all-important notable anchor tenants such as Woolworths, Premier SuperSpar, Game, Mr Price and PEP, and, as to be expected in a tropical seaside town – a plethora of top class restaurants abounds, from Ocean basket, to Shawarma Show, Pizza Hut, Mash Braai House, Al Bar and Baiá Grand Café – to name a few.

Standard Bank, Barclays, Unico Bank and BCI Bank lead the banking mall and the centre is rounded off with a range of jewellery and fashion stores, fragrances, shoe stores and a full complement of tech and cell outlets.

Planning of the actual transport of items had to be projected far in advance in order to get approval on shipments before sending, and as can be expected, clearing took longer than usual even though the project was zero duty rated by the Mozambican government.

On signage installation, coordination and management of a combination of local Mozambican installers and AE Plastics' own rigging crews played a crucial role in distributing work in an organised way taking into account the abilities and capacities of the various installation teams. Furthermore, direct site supervision by the senior Project Manager as well as meetings with all relevant parties on site was an essential part of driving the process and ensuring maximum efficiency in the installation process.

Close collaboration with the architect

From an early stage regular meetings were held with DBM Architects in Johannesburg in order to firm up the design parameters for the project. Subsequently signage designs were submitted to the Architect and through a final round of discussions, were finalised and approved.

Positioning of various elements on site was fine tuned and confirmed between the senior Project Manager from AE Plastics and the Architect on site using the detailed final drawings drawn up in collaboration between the Architectural Designer at AE Plastics and the Architect's team.

There were also regular walk through meetings with both the site agents under direction from the architect from time to time, as well as with the architect directly where possible. This allowed slight changes to positioning to be expedited and for the project to remain on track.

DBM Architects and Baiá Mall

The developers, through consultation with the Architect and a design agency, arrived at a vision to bring the turquoise blue of the ocean, and the reds and yellows of the rising sun into the design of signage for the centre.

The design consideration was very much the sun rising over the bay of Maputo. The main logo and its rounded shape in turn became echoed through the curvature on directional and internal signage. The directional pylons of the entrance were inspired by the sails of the little boats often seen in the bay, and taking all of this into account ensured a seamless flow and cohesion between the beautiful vistas just steps from the centre and the signage.

DBM Architects (Jhb) (Pty) Ltd

Headed up by Wynand du Plessis, Isak Bothma and Jared McCormick South African based architectural firm DBM Architects (Jhb) (Pty) Ltd were appointed as lead architects on the new Baiá Mall, Mozambique project.

DBM Architects was established in 2003 by Wynand du Plessis. Now in its 15th year, the firm has grown into a team of highly skilled and passionate individuals with extensive experience gained over a multitude of various architectural disciplines including Retail | Residential | Industrial | Office & Corporate Buildings | Places of Worship | Specialised Buildings | Hotel & Leisure | Motor Showrooms | Healthcare Facilities | Urban Design & Master planning.

DBM Architects strive to make a significant and lasting contribution to the architectural profession by providing the highest level of design, service & expertise to clients. By fully comprehending the client's requirements & project objectives DBM ensure consistent, personal service & ultimately aim to surpass all expectations.

Meeting time constraints, within budget and to the highest standards of quality regardless of the size and scope of the project, DBM Architects work together as a team with the personal involvement of management from the inception of a project to create innovative & functional designs utilising the latest resources and technology to ensure that all these objectives are successfully achieved. ■



Baiá Mall - Professional team

Developers:

ACTIS, RPP AND Foundation Capital Consortium

Project Manager and Principal Agents:

Metrum Project Management & Tenant Coordination

Architects:

DBM Architects

Quantity Surveyor:

NWS

Structural and Civils:

DG Consulting Engineers

Principal Building Contractor:

SS Construcoes (MOC) LDA

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and so are we...**

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