

Green:
Ecologically Sustainable
Design

an Insight by Steve Costi
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Straight from our Vision Statement, framed and enshrined in our office foyer, ecologically sustainable design is a key focus for Thomson Adsett.

Our Vision Statement states that our Architecture is "Shaping excellence" by being innovative, inspiring, and ecologically sustainable.

For any design professional the question is: "How do we design for a sustainable future?" Similarly, how do building manufacturers and suppliers provide for a sustainable built environment? Our natural environment is screaming out for help to bring some sort of equilibrium in our ever-demanding hunger for resources, be it water, air, natural materials.

After all, it is all about saving our environment, the most vital issue facing the world at the beginning of this millennium.

The expanding economies of two nations, China and India, in their race to catch up to our standards of living will have a huge impact on our environment. Their construction economies will be the largest in the world for the next decade or two, adding a further burden on our fragile

environment. Australia has benefited and will benefit for many years to come with our huge deposits of natural materials.

Our buildings consume 40% of our planet's materials and 30% of its energy. It is obvious that sustainability should be a major focus for all designers involved in the industry. Here at ThomsonAdsett it is our aim to increase the level of knowledge about ESD among our architects and to provide them with the information and tools necessary to apply ESD principles in their projects.

Nelson Mandela is credited with saying "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." Our current Continuing Education Program seeks to increase understanding of the importance and degree of influence that design can exert over the environmental, economic, and social-cultural sustainability of our built environment. Over time, all stakeholders should be encourage, be it clients, other consultants, builders or tenants, to pursue continuous ESD innovation in the roles they play in the built environment.

I was thrilled to hear today that one of our clients has decided after some discussion with all key stakeholders, to install a grey water reticulation



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system to all toilets in their entire future facilities. A small step you may say, but every drop counts in our attempt to reach equilibrium with our fragile environment.

Saving our environment is a global effort and we can all contribute: here at ThomsonAdsett we are constantly reviewing our office and practice procedures:

Minimise waste

Paperless office? We use more paper than ever and the introduction of computers with attached printers has increased paper consumption. Our Retail Company has introduced recycling of paper, which we plan to introduce to all offices.

Our standard Specifications

About 6 years ago our standard Urinal specification was for a waterless fixture! We laughed at the time, but now with the water crisis all sanitaryware manufacturers are promoting and marketing

waterless urinals! It is our policy to constantly update our standard specifications with “green” products that have a sustainable/recycle approach in their manufacture and delivery process.

Continuing Professional Education

We are proud of our in-house educational program. Sustainable Design is the focus this year with emphasis on Energy Services, Water, Material and Waste.

Visioning Workshops

At the beginning of a project all key stakeholders – architect, client, and consultants – meet to “brainstorm” all critical issues including ESD criteria. This early stage is the time to explore sustainable solutions and analyse financial implications, environmental impacts, and particular specifications and methods of construction. Our clients can thus make informed choices, because all avenues have been explored at the very early stages of the project.

**Steve Costi**

Steve Costi is Group Practice Director for ThomsonAdsett. He is responsible for Quality Management Systems, IT & Group Systems, Continuing Education Programmes, PI matters and all Practice Management Systems within the Group Practices.



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