

up close + personal with

# credentia construction

DIRECTORS: RON MCDERMOTT, WILLIE BOYLAN AND SHAUN DONOHOE

// interviewed by rhonda malkin



## How did you start your company?

We all worked for Multiplex for many years and saw a real gap in the market when working for clients who sometimes had smaller projects that did not fit into the Multiplex model. We were very keen to start our own business so we knew there was a niche in the market that would be easy to fill with our years of experience and industry contacts. Clients would always want Multiplex to build their projects because of their excellent reputation but commercial scale would restrict this. People always prefer to have the hands on experience that Credentia Directors provide to each of their projects. That's how we sell ourselves now, we tend not to enter the tender market we pick and choose the work we do and operate by word of mouth and reputation.

## How have you managed so much success in just 12 months of operation?

We only take on a set amount of jobs, enough for us to handle personally. The client gets a Credentia Director involved on the job every day and that's being realised as a real plus for delivery of the project. Willie, Shaun and Ron have managed

the construction of some of Perth's most iconic developments, so now the client who has a smaller type development is going to have some of the most senior project managers in Western Australia delivering it to the end.

Our overheads are low compared to the bigger companies and we use only sub-contractors that have an excellent track record for project completion and safety standards and also contractors who can demonstrate a real can-do attitude. We operate in a transparent manner, we make sure that our clients feel comfortable with every aspect of their project and treat them as part of the team. About 80 per cent of our work so far has been repeat business or by word of mouth.

## What is the focus of your company as you continue to grow?

Credentia will continue to focus on its main areas of expertise, being new commercial construction, and office interiors/refurbishments, having completed many diverse projects in our inaugural year from our Salvation Army basement car park project in

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Northbridge, incorporating in ground services, piling and concrete works, to our 3000sqm office fit out for BHP Billiton.

It is important to us to build on and create new, strong partnerships in the market place. We really are driven to ensure that the partnering experience for all parties in any given project is enjoyable and successful. It is our aim to break the traditional form of contracting.

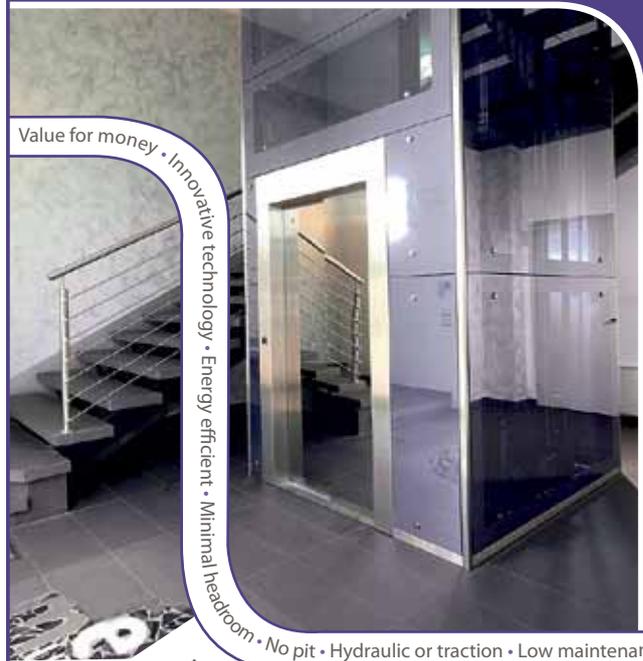
**How do you think your 70 years of combined building experience will impact on the success of your company?**

Shaun has been building for 40 years in the UK, Africa and about 20 years in Western Australia, Willie for 18 years and Ron for over 30 years. Between us we have extensive experience in all aspects of general construction and civil works, right from the first spade in the ground to switching the lights on at the end of the job. We have got broad experience right through the spectrum of the building industry instead of just a narrow field. But what we are offering now is focusing on ensuring we have complete control of jobs personally. Our intention is to always have direct hands on contact with each job and each client, which is certainly not common place in Perth at the minute.

**How is the GFC impacting on the building industry and on your business?**

The tender market appears more of a cut throat environment due to the GFC, which fortunately we do not compete in. We are slowly starting to find that clients, even in this tough market understand that the cheapest price is not always the best option, and that the contractor that properly plans and resources the project in a professional manner generally delivers a better result. **BC**

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# BHP training room set to extend mining boom

// words rhonda malkin

Designing and refurbishing Perth's largest single commercial floor plate in 12 weeks is a feat that would send shivers down the spine of many experienced building companies.

But local building company Credentia Constructions has taken the opportunity to resolve time constraints, noise issues, limited accessibility and working within an existing building to create a modern and functional training centre. The BHP Billiton Training Centre (BHPB) is located on level three of an existing retail development, above City Central shopping mall, which includes Woolworths and several other specialty stores.

The 3,000sqm training centre located at 166 Murray Street, Perth now accommodates about 70 full time staff and has the facility to train 300 people on a daily basis. The fit-out has established a four-person reception desk, a myriad of training rooms like; two risk-based training rooms, three computer

training rooms, three mining simulator training rooms, seven large induction training rooms and four six-person meeting rooms.

Along with the meeting rooms are three kitchen zones, new toilets and showers, two atrium break-out zones and 67 workstations for permanent staff. Given the 3,000sqm floor plate was handed to Credentia Construction as an empty shell makes the extent of the works even more incredible.

The company recognised from tender time that the existing building presented some major acoustic challenges. This coupled with BHP Billiton's stringent acoustic separation requirements for meeting rooms meant the company had to come up with specific design solutions.

In particular the leased space was on the top floor of the building and the roof had a Colorbond metal deck with little insulation and a 2.5m ceiling void. The roof also had large areas devoted to heavy duty plant serving the shopping centre.

To overcome this potentially enormous problem the company wrapped existing metal ductwork runs in the ceiling void, which serves equipment like the kitchen exhaust systems for Woolworths, with an acoustic material. About 75 per cent of the existing ceiling tiles were replaced with top grade acoustically rated ceiling tiles.

In addition, all the existing plant equipment was serviced to replace any noisy bearings and the entire ceiling space was insulated.

The existing floor plate included two large atriums, which were hot, noisy and very industrial. These unusable areas were incorporated into the design and now function as a relaxing





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break out zone with furnishings, floor finishes, fully automatic fabric blinds and an air conditioning system that makes the space not only serviceable but a popular go-to space for staff.

As a final attack on the acoustic problems new walls were extended up through the existing ceilings to ensure acoustic separation between all the rooms. This was essential in the training centre to minimise any noise distraction.

With deliveries occurring about 18 hours a day for Woolworths and other tenancies in the building, the conditions for access to the floor plate were very stringent. As the existing tenants always had priority, this required logistical planning on an hourly basis.

But this was another criterion that Credentia Constructions handled effortlessly by co-ordinating very closely with the centre managers and major tenancies on a daily basis. Credentia Construction director, Shaun Donohoe said the ability to work closely with its clients was a major point of difference for the company.

"Our clients have direct access to three hands on directors during all phases of any project. This offers peace of mind that the project is under the steady eye of people with years of experience," Mr Donohoe said.

Working within an existing structure also proved more difficult than usual as there were no built drawings available. To rectify this problem, Credentia Constructions used ground penetrating radar on the existing slab as well as post detail the original reinforcing to allow an independent engineer to certify the loads.

This allowed BHPB to utilise heavy industrial training equipment that had intensive point loads. The existing services above the ceiling and on the roof also had limited built information as the building had functioned as a retail premises for the past 15 years.

In addition, the unusually high ceiling void and myriad of services prevented use of a traditional structure for Dorna

operable walls and other acoustic treatments, which led to major structural steel work design and fabrication. Internally, the training centre was completed in a range of finishes and materials like recycled Jarrah, Regupol rubber floor finishes, and bespoke pendant lighting.

In fact two of the bespoke pendants that feature in the atrium areas reflect an art deco feel and with dimensions reaching 1.8m in height and about 1.4m in diameter certainly dominate the space but are in keeping with the high ceilings.

The ambience in the hub areas and break out zones was created using bright soft furnishings and dark coloured wall finishes. The four-person reception desk was created with recycled Western Australian jarrah that was rescued from piers and jetties throughout the state and measures about 5m by 4m.

The use of recycled timbers in the main reception areas contributes to the sense of warmth, style and functionality that has been achieved throughout the space.

InterfaceFlor carpeting has been used for the flooring in most areas while recycled rubber has been utilised with effect to reduce noise and antistatic vinyl makes up the remaining floor treatments.

Despite the fact that the project did not have to meet any green star ratings, the client was still committed to installing a significant number of sustainability products like the recycled jarrah and rubber flooring as well as low emission formaldehyde timbers for the workstation cabinetry.

Credentia also as part of their contract with BHPB carried out the actual office relocation of the 70 staff members from three other buildings in Perth, this was carried out as part of the 12 week programme. **BC**

Credentia Construction: 0417 985 436, [www.credentia.com.au](http://www.credentia.com.au)



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## CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

Credentia Construction is a dynamic and progressive construction company, managed by 3 West Australian builders with a wealth of global construction experience.

Credentia specialises in new commercial construction, refurbishments and office interiors.

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