

Your architect, your investment

 By [Yashaen Luckan](#)

24 Jun 2016

Property development is a major investment, more so as the property market becomes increasingly vulnerable to socio-economic and environmental dynamics. This situation is becoming more complex as new "players" enter the arena, as developers and as consumers. Furthermore, the gradual growth of the middle class has created a more informed, quality conscious and value-demanding target market. The property sector has responded with various quality offerings, usually in estate developments, be they residential, commercial or industrial. Potential buyers or tenants are no longer attracted by price alone; the need for individual or corporate identity is rapidly increasing and the quality of architecture - spatial quality, building, finishes and aesthetic - is becoming increasingly desirable.



© Cathy Yeulet – [123RF.com](#)

Design flaws

Within this context, the value of appointing the correct architectural professional for investment projects is absolutely vital to the potential return on investment. However, the South African architectural public is, generally, unaware of the services of architectural professionals and often suffer the consequences of appointing the incorrect person, which has dire consequences on the investment value of the project. An incorrect appointment will lead to design flaws, which will manifest during construction and / or habitation of the building; delays in design / municipal approvals; delays in construction due to the lack of, or incorrectness of information; latent defects and public risk, which will incur consequential damages. In simple language, the architectural professional has the ability to enhance your dream or to crush it!

Checks prior to appointment

It is therefore incumbent upon the developer or owner to take time to determine the credentials of the architectural professional, prior to appointment. The following are some of the checks that must occur prior to appointment of the architectural professional: level of qualification / training; category of registration with the South African Council for the Architectural Profession (SACAP) – note that not all architectural professionals have the same level of training / registration; experience / portfolio; professional indemnity insurance; a contractual agreement in accordance with the SACAP Code of Conduct; and a schedule of the fee charged, benchmarked against a guideline fee schedule. Note, importantly, that gross-undercharging or discounting of fees is the primary reason for sub-standard services, thereby incurring consequential loss of revenue and time, which negatively impact the investment value of projects.

Challenges and consequential costs

Architecture has a great value in enhancing return on investment, however, the rush to build and inhabit often results in the lack of proper project planning, which often happens on appointment of professionals at the inception of the project design stage. The unfortunate reality is that this is indeed the most critical stage of the project as every process thereafter is directly influenced by it. While budgets may be tight and time-frames ever shrinking, it is worth a little investment in time to appoint the appropriately qualified and experienced professional, at the correct fee, or face the harsh reality of a project fraught with challenges, and consequential costs. The value of good quality architecture cannot be undermined...

Hence, your architect is your investment.

ABOUT YASHAEN LUCKAN

Yashaen Luckan is the president of the South African Council for the Architectural Profession (SACAP). A registered practising architect himself, he is also an academic at the School of Architecture, Planning and Housing at University of Kwazulu-Natal (UKZN). As an academic and professional in the field, he continuously studies the profession in order to evaluate the role and impact of architectural studies and practice to the broader society.

- SACAP catapults transformation through RPL programme - 12 Apr 2017
- #BizTrends2017: Sustainable architectural practice in the space of engagement - 11 Jan 2017
- Is architecture still a manifestation of place, time and people? - 13 Jul 2016
- Your architect, your investment - 24 Jun 2016
- #DesignMonth: Design industry in a critical place of opportunity - 16 Feb 2016

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>