

RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION

Builders and contractors creating homes
with style, function, and sustainability

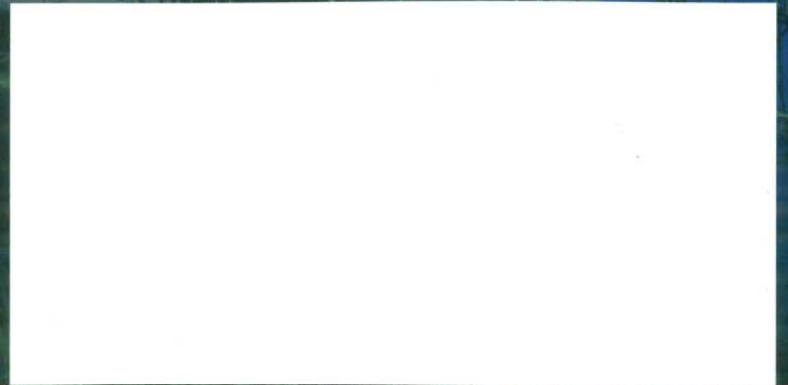
ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

Six successful firms planning for the
future of the environment

GREEN BUSINESS QUARTERLY

VALERIO DEWALT TRAIN ASSOCIATES

Nationally acclaimed architecture firm strives to meet the 2030 challenge





The Citigroup Paragon Office Park, in Urbandale, IA is a mixed-use development, featuring a park-like campus environment with walking paths, bike trails, and plaza areas.

R&R REALTY GROUP

The premier source for commercial real estate incorporates sustainability into properties

BY CHRISTOPHER CUSSAT

FOR 25 YEARS, R&R REALTY GROUP has been diligently and dedicatedly carrying on two traditions: running a highly successful family business and providing commercial real estate services and development to the greater Des Moines region.

Today, R&R's president, Mark Rupprecht, is not only continuing the legacy that his father, Dan, began in 1985, but he is determined to constantly expand and diversify the company's offerings. He explains, "R&R started out as a developer, and over the years, we have progressed our business and operation from just development to a number of different services in commercial real estate—from property management and brokerage to construction and development."

R&R's emphasis on sustainability is evident in the company's construction

practices, as well as its management of existing properties. In construction, examples of R&R's green consciousness can be seen in its renovation work in anything, from re-ballasting old light fixtures and replacing them with more energy-efficient ones to retrofitting older buildings' roofs.

Rupprecht explains that in new construction, sustainability often involves looking at ways to be more energy efficient, such as determining the best ventilation and HVAC systems. "It could also be as simple as having a more sophisticated recycling program within buildings for a company's employees," he says. "Much of it is driven based directly on our customers and their specific needs."

He notes that environmental consciousness is important to R&R because it offers its customers intrinsic benefits.

"People are looking for cost savings, and they are always analyzing and asking, 'If we do this, what is our payback?'" Rupprecht feels that more and more companies just want to do the right thing. "I think they are trying to implement more practices that are safer for the environment, and they want to be good stewards of the resources that we have."

This emphasis on green practices definitely gives R&R a competitive advantage. Rupprecht explains, "If everything else is equal [such as location, price, etc.], and a company sees the benefits of sustainability, we have an obvious advantage as a provider of office or warehouse space that is environmentally conscious."

He also believes that R&R's specialization adds another important layer of competitiveness. "Part of what we try

AT A GLANCE

LOCATION:
DES MOINES, IA

AREAS OF SPECIALTY:
PROPERTY
MANAGEMENT,
BROKERAGE,
DEVELOPMENT,
CONSTRUCTION,
AND INVESTMENT

EMPLOYEES:
105

“It is important to know how to grow your business without getting into different areas that may not be core to your own.”

Mark Rupprecht, President

to do in our business is focus on developments that are located in large-scale, park-like settings where we take bigger parcels of land, master plan them, and build multiple buildings as office or industrial parks. I think this also gives us a competitive advantage because there are specialized amenities that we can offer like retail services, as well as childcare, conference, and wellness centers.”

In addition, R&R has a number of subsidiaries that provide many different services, including brokerage, real-estate investment, property and construction management, as well as an arm that deals with real-estate technologies—like fiber optics and redundant power systems. R&R can also help coordinate company relocations. Rupprecht explains, “We have a design studio where we can bring in not only architectural design but also interior design to help companies. Most of our competitors do not have such a complete offering of services—this gives us an edge because we can cover all of these bases for our clients’ projects.”

Rupprecht attributes R&R’s success to doing what it does best in Des Moines. “Because real estate is very market-driven and sometimes a very local, knowledge-based business, we understand the real-estate market extremely well in Des Moines—that is why we have maintained our focus here. I think one of the keys to our success is that we continue to focus on our core business.” According to Rupprecht, this has also led to strategic growth. “What we have tried to do

is prepare ourselves for the future. I think maintaining this focus over time has really helped our company grow.”

R&R is poised to continue this growth, but Rupprecht is adamant that it is best to only expand within one’s natural boundaries. “It is important to know how to grow your business without getting into different areas that may not be core to your own. We see many companies get into other areas and try to grow in a lot of different sectors where they might not have experience. Then when economic factors change, it

can negatively affect their business.”

R&R was recently named Best Developer and Best Real Estate Management Company in the Des Moines metropolitan area by the *Des Moines Business Record*. Rupprecht is quick to thank his employees for these public recognitions. “We have a talented team of people and great leaders in our organization—that has certainly been part of our success. I know everyone at R&R feels very privileged for that honor, and I know our employees are a big part of that accomplishment as well.” GRQ

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LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING, & URBAN DESIGN

CONFLUENCE brings the skills of landscape architecture, land planning, and urban design to each project, giving us the tools to merge our client’s needs with environment. CONFLUENCE employs 11 LEED accredited professionals.



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