Reinvesting in Hotel Design

MDP + Partners
Hotel Design Guide

Foreword

With renewed sources of capital, hotel owners, operators and brands are investing again – seizing the opportunity to keep properties fresh and to stay competitive. Cautious optimism reigns and budgets remain tight, so properties must prioritise spending to maximise ROI. These are some of the updates hotels are (or should be)spending money on.

Restored consumer confidence and business spending are bringing capital back to the hotel market sooner than many anticipated. Global and Irish hotel revenue per available room (RevPAR) is on the rise.



Invest in Real Estate Development

Lower real estate prices and higher levels of inventory, especially distressed properties, means global hotel acquisitions are predicted to increase 15% to 20% to about \$30 billion in 2011 as real estate investors react to rising occupancy and room rates. The volume of deals is expected to rise the fastest in Europe, Middle East and Africa – an increase of as much as 25%. Adaptive reuse of non-traditional properties such as vacant office space also poses opportunities in growth markets.

Align Brand Positioning

Influenced by the economy and inspired by what many call the Responsibility Revolution, consumers' priorities have shifted, and brands face the necessity of re-aligning with more current consumer trends: authenticity, value, community and connection. In fact, 62% of global consumers would switch brands if a different brand of similar quality supported a good cause, as serving a purpose becomes a more significant part of the marketing mix than ever before.

Renovate Property

Renovation is required for many properties – whether due to new ownership, re-flagging, property improvement plans (PIPs) or simply age – and can be implemented all at once or in phases. Public lobbies are renovated to offer a more flexible, comfortable, living room lounge, while upgraded spaces like meeting and conference rooms offer opportunities for increased event revenue. Back-of-house renovations improve operational efficiencies and maximise the use of real estate. And guest room renovations enhance customer comfort and loyalty.

Adaptive reuse of buildings for new hotels

Adaptive reuse – the art and design science of reinventing buildings – occupies a small but powerful niche within the larger world of hotel development. It's powerful because it gives hoteliers a way into otherwise impenetrable urban centres.

It also gives them a road less travelled. Let's face it, turning a former office building (or warehouse or theatre) from the 1930s into a hotel demands not only creativity but an open mind. It demands that hoteliers "restart" their engines. By that, I mean redefining their expectations and their set of "givens" in a way that ground-up construction and/or renovation of existing hotel stock does not require. And did I mention the need for (really) over-the-top design thinking?

For instance, in an adaptive reuse project, a brand's standard roster of room types may need to be tweaked and expanded to respond to the existing building's physical constraints, which include structural columns, beams, elevator cores, existing stairs, loading docks, exterior windows and floor-to-floor heights. Traditional hotel space planning may need to be tossed, as well. Spaces may need to be rethought/reconfigured to fit the program elements into the existing architectural shell while simultaneously providing superb guest experiences and

operational efficiency. Same with the usual formula for performance. It may need to be revised to account for these planning and construction adjustments.

Is it right for both of you? First and foremost, you've got to figure out the most appropriate use for the building in question, a new life that will best take advantage of its bones and character. Not all fatigued (or otherwise ill at ease) office buildings make viable hotels. Consider what's best for the building first – and then whether you belong in its future.

Change management. Adaptive reuse means you, too, have to adapt. The building's not doing all of the changing. Columns, beams and elevator cores don't move nicely. Your vision can. You need to be creative with your space planning and the addition of room types to accommodate the restrictions dictated by the building. Challenges can turn into opportunities for creating something special.

Brand management. Although the existing building drives much of an adaptive reuse development, your brand should do the critical steering. Ultimately, the project should be a beautiful melding of the two. In the end, though, the interior design is what weaves the brand into the depths of the building. It's done with colour, materials, furniture and fixtures that marry building and brand.

Boost Sustainability

95% of business travellers believe the hospitality industry should be undertaking green initiatives, and 52% indicate a willingness to pay more for rooms that enable guests to reduce their carbon footprint. So green hotels increasingly attract conscientious consumers as well as corporate meeting planners with social responsibility standards to meet. Enhancements such as efficient lighting, low-flow water fixtures and solar equipment can greatly reduce operational costs without cuts to customer service.

Hospitality brands have made sustainable practices part of their brand and offering. Now health and wellness are in their sights. Wellness is more than access to a spa or fitness centre. It can mean guest rooms that encourage yoga, exercise, and meditation, for example, and design choices, toiletry selections, room-service menus, and mini-bar snacks that reflect a health consciousness.

Refresh Technology

Global consumers have become accustomed to instant – and constant – access to information everywhere they go, and hotel destinations are no different. Upgrading infrastructure in order to provide uninterrupted access has become imperative, with travellers indicating that wireless internet is the top "must have" amenity. Similarly, hotels are using tools like iPad concierge, room service apps, property management systems and social networking to improve communications both internally and externally.



Upgrade Food & Beverage

As chef-driven cuisine and cooking networks raise customer expectations, and as 71% of adults say they try to eat healthier when dining out, food trends such as locally sourced and sustainable ingredients, kids' nutrition, and gluten free diets resonate throughout the hospitality industry. Many diners increasingly choose unique establishments with local ties, and enhanced bar and lounge areas can increase foot traffic by their appeal to local residents as well as hotel guests.

Leisure as an Experience

Leisure today is all about experience. And while high-end hotels and resorts actively seek an affair of the heart with their clientele, brands at every price point have customer loyalty in mind. This has led a few of them to sell their hotels (often at record prices) and focus exclusively on delivering the quality of experience that their brands imply. Even as hospitality brands seek to differentiate themselves, their clientele is converging in interesting ways. The young influence their elders (think iPods and business casual), and the distinction between travel for business or pleasure is much less relevant. People increasingly want to combine the two.

Multitasking as a Lifestyle

Hotels are not just a place to sleep now, but also an integral part of a richer scene. This is why shopping and hotels are joined at the hip. Retail is often an element of new hotel development, while "lifestyle centres", street like outdoor malls are putting hotel rooms in with their existing mix of retail and restaurants. Add meeting venues and you have all the makings of a self-contained urban environment. The energy and activity it generates has become a key part of the hotel experience.

Letting people escape and unwind

Formality used to be the order of the day for business hotel dining and meeting spaces. No more. Business is conducted now in less formal settings, so hoteliers are shifting gears. "It's not just about making people comfortable they want to be able to escape. That means giving them places where they can really unwind. These are revenue generators, of course, but they're also redefining the hotel experience." In smaller hotels, the same idea might surface as a roof deck with a cool bar and a plunge pool, or a Zen garden terrace with a day spa attached. The bathtub is now a piece of furniture, Bathing is moving into the guest room proper, making the space feel larger and more interactive."

Bars and restaurants remain a hospitality mainstay, but with an emerging difference: trend-setting hoteliers are seeking out the unique. Wine bars and microbreweries are two ways that hotels are accentuating the local while providing a familiar service. There's a new emphasis on providing an ambience that speaks to "location, location, location, location" while still channelling elements – and benefits – of the parent brand. The strategy makes the hotel a draw for locals, and their presence helps give it a cosmopolitan sense of being part of the area and its scene.

Travellers want to feel plugged-in, but they also want privacy and comfort. This has led to the rise of the VIP area – whether it's a cabana, a private club or dining room, or a cordoned-off space in a bar. For operators, it can be lucrative. Frequent business travellers will often spend more for the ability to mix urbanity with exclusivity. It's less about celebrity, though, and more about relaxing in the company of the so-called "kinetic elite." It's also another way for hotels to keep their best customers coming back.

Behind all of this is the increasing agglomeration of entertainment and hospitality. Las Vegas has been phenomenally successful in this, blending leisure activities and then creating synergy among them. Others in the leisure sector are taking notice. This doesn't mean we'll see Vegas-like entertainment everywhere, but it reveals the increasing fluidity between different kinds of leisure – as well as between work and leisure. The vibrant mix of uses that results make for lively places, and economically healthy ones, too. The long-term return on investment of traditional hotel rooms can be balanced by Retail's more immediate cash flow.

Hotel Lobby Design

Walking into a hotel lobby is like shaking the hand of someone you just met. It's all about the first impression. Just like people, hotel lobbies embody distinct personalities. A lobby can be aloof, inviting, intimidating, or unbelievably cool. As an hotelier, you cannot stand by your front door greeting all the guests that make their way onto your property, but you can choreograph initial experiences by transforming your lobby into an oasis.

The best lobbies create a refuge for the tourist, for the business traveller, for the couple enjoying a weekend getaway. Lobbies blend the best of form and function – they anticipate the needs of your guests and introduce your sense of style. Within moments of entering your hotel, guests brand your hotel as trendy, chic, cheap, or luxurious. They step into this public space immediately upon crossing the threshold – so, take this opportunity to make a powerful first impression on your guests.

In today's competitive hospitality industry, hoteliers constantly work to come up with elements that turn their next visitors into repeat guests. In especially tough economic times, travellers are tightening their budgets. In response, hoteliers need to identify smart solutions that keep guests booking stays.

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Analyse your potential guests: If you are going to create a lobby space that draws in new guests, it is essential to develop a good understanding of who your guests are. If your target demographic is a family on vacation, think about putting an ice cream stand or a play area in your lobby. If your target demographic is vacationing couples, consider a romantic lounge or fire within the space. Your goal is to delight your guest with a welcoming area they never knew they wanted - and can't imagine missing on their trip.

Focus on what pleases your guests – create a special oasis

Create a unique environment: You want your property to stand out, to offer something different. The lobby is the perfect area to establish your hotel's personality. Make a statement, develop a particular style, and set the scene for your guests. Make your lobby more than a passageway from the outside world to their rooms. Create an environment that makes your guests want to stop, see, and do things. Give them thought-provoking or inspirational art to look at, mood-appropriate and well-designed lighting, and an environment that invites them to linger and relax.

Tie experience with function: Not only must your lobby house the traditional check-in desk, waiting area, and concierge stand, but it should serve as a social gathering place with auxiliary seating and tables. Develop a space specifically for business travellers that houses laptop ports, printers, and phones. Offer kiosks to check-in to flights. If space permits, section off another area for guests looking for somewhere to socialise with others. If possible, tie this space in with the hotel bar, and place chairs and tables in a configuration that invites your guests to mingle. Think beyond the traditional lobby, and even the simplest enhancements create added ambience.

Incorporate revenue streams: Create a lobby that provides a variety of shops and services. When guests conveniently enjoy amenities they want right in your lobby, you get one more chance to increase the revenue as well. Even a boutique property can serve coffee, stock a snack bar, and sell gifts or toiletries. Guests appreciate the convenience of in-house offerings and unexpected retail experiences, eliminating the need to shop elsewhere. Give them one more reason to stay in the hotel and experience every aspect it has to offer.

Analyse the layout and architecture: Take a close look at the structure of your lobby. Something too large may seem uninviting, while a small, cramped space discourages guests from lingering. Because lobbies are typically wide-open spaces, take advantage of the area and create zones that seamlessly flow together to create a cohesive experience. Each zone can serve a purpose and fulfil specific guest needs. Also, focus on the architecture of the space. Work to match the era of the hotel with the lobby and play with the style as you introduce furniture and accessories. A luxurious hotel begs for a lavish lobby. A family resort destination might feature child-size tables, chairs, and activities in the lobby. Tie these elements into the architectural style of the space.





Catching the Flavour

Many hotels aim to stand out by celebrating their roots in the community. Providing a backstory is part of this, especially for established properties. New ones trade on their cachet, with amenities that draw locals as well as visitors. Knowledge of the terrain and a reflected sense of place are differentiators that add to the guest experience. Creativity and authenticity always win points.

Health Is the New Green

Hospitality brands have made sustainable practices part of their brand and offering. Now health and wellness are in their sights. Wellness is more than access to a spa or fitness centre. It can mean guest rooms that encourage yoga, exercise, and meditation, for example, and design choices, toiletry selections, room-service menus, and mini-bar snacks that reflect a health consciousness.

Innovation Desired

With more competition in this sophisticated and rapidly maturing market, choice is up and prices are coming down. That's driving experimentation: new brands, new lifestyles, and new designs. At the high end, the focus is on creating something special and memorable—the kinds of settings that lead to return visits.

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Meet the team



Philip Doyle Partner

Philip is co-founder and partner of the practice with over 12 years experience. He has always been interested in design and construction. His father is a builder and he and his brothers used to work Saturdays and any holidays on construction sites all through school and college. This gave him a great understanding, from a young age, how a building is constructed. It also showed him how tough a building site can be on an icy winters morning. It instilled in him a passion for design and a wish to build projects and not just watch them being built by someone else.

Eddie Phelan Architect/Partner MRIAI

Eddie is co-founder and partner of the practice.
He graduated from Dublin School of Architecture
DIT Bolton Street in 2006. Prior to setting up
practice, Eddie worked for a design driven practice
in Waterford City working on complex new build
and conservation projects that were acclaimed
both at a national and international level. Eddie has
experience of delivering a wide range of high-quality
projects from inception to completion, managing all
aspects of the project process.

David Merrigan Architect/Partner

David is co-founder and partner of the practice and a graduate of Dublin School of Architecture, DIT Bolton Street. He has extensive experience in Civic, Local government, Commercial and large scale residential projects. David was the project architect for the recently completed French Embassy and Consulate on Merrion Square, Dublin. This particular project involved a number of high specification elements, high levels of confidentiality, a large and complex design team based in Ireland and France and a 14 month time period from inception to completion.

Anne Marie Coade

After graduating from WIT, Anne Marie worked for several practices of varying scales, gaining experience on large scale mixed use developments, conservation projects and high end one off houses. Anne Marie has also worked in the Health Care Sector at management level and brings a diverse range of skills to the office.

Shane Walsh Senior Architectural Technologist

Shane Walsh is an Architectural Technologist with over 10 years experience. Since graduating he has gained valuable experience in a wide range of sectors – residential, commercial, educational, health, and pharma. Shane also brings international experience to the company having worked on major projects in Canada, Belgium and the U.K. Shane is a certified Revit user and BIM enthusiast who sees the benefit of collaboration between the entire design team.

Eoin Bennett Architect

Eoin joined the firm after moving back to Ireland from Italy where he graduated from the Politecnico di Milano after completing his MSc. Architecture, having previously completed both; BSc. Arch. & BSc. Arch Tech at Waterford Institute of Technology. He is a very talented designer with a keen eye for detail and unique understanding of spatial design. Having worked on various retail, commercial, equestrian and residential projects, he's quickly built up a diverse understanding and background in architectural design.

Matthew Keating Part 2 Architect

Matthew graduated from the Waterford School of Architecture in 2015. He has worked for a large range of industrial commercial and residential projects from inception to completion. Matthew has specialist skills in Revit and BIM and is responsible for developing feasibility studies for large scale residential projects using this skill set. Matthew is an exceptionally talented designer with a keen eye for detail.

John Lynch Product Designer

John is a graduate of IT Carlow's Product
Design Innovation honours degree course.
He has spent the last 4 years developing and
refining his design skills, this allows him to
communicate intangible designs or ideas to
tangible fully functional elegant products ready
for manufacture. During his time in IT Carlow
he developed skills in various areas of design
including product, industrial, human centred,
CAD, manufacturing and graphic design.

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Project Sector Expertise

Services we offer

Fitout

We specialise in office fit-out design. This allows us to review how your staff use your current space, develop an inspiring new office design. and deliver a fit out on time and on budget, with minimal business interruption. We'll design your office to be a destination where your staff will love to go to work every day, helping you attract and retain your industry's best talent. Define, We take time to understand your people and your business, creating a workplace strategy that focuses on what provides the best return for your business. Design, We'll translate your requirements into an inspirational office design for your business that reflects your brand and enables staff to be happier and more productive. Deliver, Your dedicated architect and interior designer will take care of every little detail along the way, ensuring your new office fit out is delivered without a hitch.

Retail

While the shape of retail has changed over the centuries, its importance as a centre of community life remains as vital as ever. In this age of technology, shoppers still crave authentic experiences. As global culture expands, consumers seek out places that have the familiarity of home. These factors converge in retail design that values the importance of place and the primacy of the customer experience. In this context, our versatility and Integrated Design Service experience make MDP + Partners a valued strategic advisor.

Retail Building Types: Boutiques Cafés – Department Stores – Retail Stores – Restaurants – Car Showrooms – Beauty Salons

Office

This is more than a change to your physical environment – workplace transformation is an opportunity.

Our workplace expertise makes us the strategy/ design partner of choice for the sector, In today's ultra-competitive business climate, we stand out for our ability to leverage mobility and technology while helping our clients foster culture, teamwork, client service, and innovation.

Hotel

Working only in the Leisure sector—hospitality and Retail — MDP + Partners have tapped into this new reality and found that the clientele is supercharging its preferences in a way that affects leisure's real and virtual contexts. "The customer is king," says Philip Doyle. "Whether you're buying a car, shopping for glasses, or booking a hotel, you do your research first. Informed individuals drive the market—they're not 'consumers' in the old sense, responding passively to market cues."

Leisure

Leisure is part of the flow—or the blur, some might say—of our lives, as we improvise and navigate amid online prompts and the push and pull of real places and experiences. While leisure is increasingly about flow, it's also about experience—both in physical places and virtual experiences, which often coincide simultaneously.

We design a range of leisure projects including restaurants, food halls and sports facilities Our understanding of what adds value to customer experience is essential in creating high-quality, functional and exciting environments for people to enjoy and spend time in.

Architecture

MDP + Partners design solutions result from a collaborative process that encourages our multidisciplinary teams to research alternatives, share knowledge and imagine new ways to solve the challenges of our built environment. Our architecture responds to the needs and aspirations of our clients and communities. We give form and meaning to rooms, buildings and landscapes – always balancing internal functions with external demands of site, climate and culture.

Interior Design

We design interior spaces that improve collaboration, inspire occupants and attract the best employees. The interior design teams study a client's business drivers and culture and create space that helps them flourish. Great interior space has extraordinary effects on our wellness and productivity. MDP + Partners design solutions use space, colour, materials, energy and light as tools to create healthy environments that enhance performance.

Branded Environments

Great brands connect. It takes a thoughtfully designed strategy to develop communication programs and branded environments that define, inspire and engage consumers. Brand Design Service Areas: Strategic Brand Development, Visual Identity & Communications Design, Environmental & Experiential Design

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LEED, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is the most widely used green building rating system in the world. Available for virtually all building, community and home project types, LEED provides a framework to create healthy, highly efficient and cost-saving green buildings. LEED certification is a globally recognized symbol of sustainability achievement.

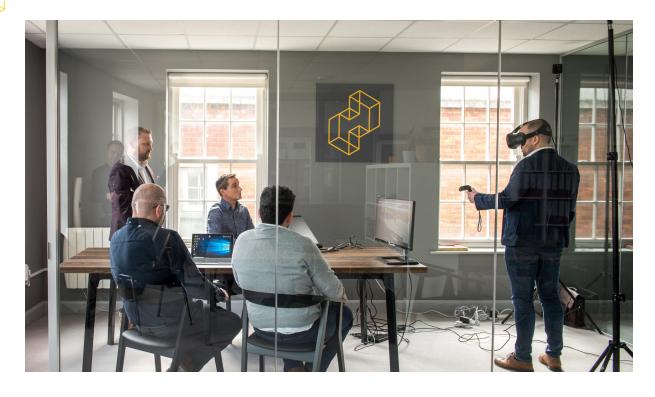
Product/Furniture Design

Every product solution we create is aimed at meeting an unmet need in the marketplace, from a office fitout project to Retail projects. That need may be functional, but more often it's emotional. If the right product doesn't exist, we work to create it

Our studio has an integrated approach to design that draws on expertise from different specialist design member, from architects, graphics, to interiors, and now product /furniture design, is an important part of this. Products can be designed in response to a particular building element on a project, like a piece of furniture, office pod, workstation desk, to a door handle, where new solutions are required to meet demanding specifications.

Our architecture responds to the needs and aspirations of our clients and communities.

Virtual Reality (VR)



INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY

Technology is an integral part of our design process. We're incredibly excited about virtual reality and are investing in it for our future.

Our in-house HTC VIVE VR headsets bring our designs to life, allowing us and our clients to fully experience these new places and spaces and make informed decisions early on.

At MDP, we believe Virtual Reality is almost a translation of what's in the designer's head and allows them to put their ideas in front of clients and any project stakeholder without any ambiguity – MDP is all about new tools and been innovative, and exploring ways to increase our abilities to design. – It's literally adding another dimension to our design. VR is a new tool that adds the idea of scale that we haven't had before. It's another exciting tool that increases our power to conceptualize and iterate ahead of actually having to build something in the real world.

In-Depth Visualisation: Clients, buyers, tenants, and other stakeholders can see the designer's vision in a much more immediate way with VR. It is

hard, naturally, for other people to clearly picture a designer's vision from drawings or on-screen models – even from 3D models. Experiencing the design from within, in the level of detail that the cutting edge of VR technology allows, can, by contrast, provoke a visceral engagement with the design. It is not unknown for clients to feel emotional when first seeing their scheme in this way. It also allows them to engage with the designer in greater detail, and to guide the design process more closely towards their desired result.

Accelerates the process: For reasons already mentioned, massive time and cost savings are available as a result of the availability of muchimproved visualisation at an early stage. This potentially offers the client the opportunity for increased profits or the ability to sell/rent more competitively. The detailed design efficiencies achieved can also lead to savings, such as in operating costs and in avoiding later correction work. The benefits of a speedier delivery also spread to tenants, buyers, consumers and others.

Transforms the sale of off-plan property: The

availability of immersive virtual walk-throughs for building projects means that developers who sell off-plan can showcase their products in an unprecedented way, making it easier to instil confidence in potential customers. Potential buyers now have the ability to virtually envisage how buildings will come to look and feel in reality, giving them more information when choosing whether to go ahead. Multiple design, colour and furniture options can all be experienced interactively within the virtual world, leading to more decisive choices, saving time and providing greater certainty for all.

Massive savings: The use of immersive technology saves time – the ability to build the project virtually means that design glitches and unforeseen problems are seen and caught earlier, long before the project reaches building stage, thus preventing needless delays. This also leads to substantial financial savings in reduced labour, capital and material costs, as well as saving on the environmental waste caused by having to correct problems, spend longer on site, etc.

MDP + Partners has invested in state-of-the-art
Desktop Virtual Reality (VR) technology to add
to its existing VR capabilities. Our HTC Vive
VR technology gives our designers and clients
the opportunity to experience the projects
in a completely immersive way, even before
construction has begun. Clients who have used
our technology to explore our BIM models virtually
have spoken about how it made the design easily
accessible to them, allowing them to perceive
their projects in a new light. We are already using
Mobile VR technology, and we are also exploring
Augmented/Mixed Reality technology to assess its
benefits for our design teams and clients.

Potential buyers now have the ability to virtually envisage how buildings will come to look and feel in reality...



Award Winning Architects

2019

Fit Out Awards - Winner - Fit Out Project of the year Residential - Glass House

Fit Out Awards - Shortlisted - Fit Out Project of the year New Office Build - Fannagans Head Office & Funeral Home

Fit Out Awards - Shortlisted - Fit Out Practice of the year

Fit Out Awards - Shortlisted - Excellence in Collaboration

2018

The Building and Architect of the year Awards – Shortlisted -Commercial project of The Year

Egan's Opticians – Retail Fit-out - Winners of the 2018 Cork Better Buildings Awards - Best in Retail – Overall Winner – Egan's Opticians

Fit Out Awards - Shortlisted young designer of the year finalist

Fit Out Awards – Shortlisted - Fit Out project of the year – Retail

9017

Fit Out Awards – Jaguar & Landrover Showroom (Shortlisted of the Fit-Out Project of the Year Award Retail and Project of the Year)

2016

Irish Construction Industry awards – Winner – Retail project of the year

At MDP + Partners our client list includes:

FANAGANS





Colourtrend











Nolan Transport







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MDP + Partners are a leading design and architecture firm specializing in small to medium retail, corporate and hospitality sectors. Our expertise is based on regular independent research into the retail, corporate and hospitality marketplace.

We are a young design company, characterized by an entrepreneurial spirit, true teamwork across a number of areas of expertise and new ways of approaching conventional tasks. We have an informal work environment where camaraderie and collegial support are highly valued, where ambition, very high morale and dedication to being the innovators of our field unify the staff.

Our firm is characterized by creativity, high energy and a unifying team spirit. Additionally, we are dedicated to creating and maintaining a work-place where we want to be. We continuously work at becoming better and better at what we do. We are a company in growth and over the last three years, we have worked intensely on the professionalization of our business.

Our client list includes: Volvo, Colourtrend, BMW, Audi, Nolan Transport, NVD, Jaguar, Wright Group, AutoBolandand Fanagans.

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