

July 2012

EES project manages intelligent infrastructure for new Alexander Forbes head office

Electrical Engineering Solutions (EES) is project managing the provision of intelligent infrastructure to Alexander Forbes' impressive new R840 million 36 950 m² head office being constructed in Sandton, Gauteng, and is working in a consulting capacity to the Alexander Forbes Group Information Technology (AFGIT) division.

An ISO 9000 certified and ISO 20000 compliant professional services company, EES is a leader in project managing the provision of IT solutions to the built environment.

EES commenced work on the head office in June last year and will continue to project manage the intelligent infrastructure until the end of October this year, when the entire building will be complete.

"We are involved with a number of sub projects, these being the data center, patch rooms, structured cabling, uninterruptible power supply (UPS) and generators, access control and CCTV, and the Building Management System (BMS)," says Bradley Hemphill, Managing Director of EES.

"We are also providing input to tenant managed projects, which are networks, telecommunications, internet protocol (IP) telephony, and the contact center."

Green Star and Building Management System (BMS)

The building has been submitted for a Green Star rating and is confident of achieving a 4 star rating. A combined BMS is being installed by both the developers and the tenant's nominated subcontractor to help the new head office to achieve this rating.

"The BMS is fundamental to making the building more energy and resource efficient, as well as environmentally responsible," explains Hemphill. "You can't measure what you aren't monitoring."

The meters are networked into the BMS from where the energy dashboard enables peak demand control and various business decisions to be taken with near real-time information.

“The most exciting part of the BMS are the dashboards that are delivered via the share-point server, which allows scalability across the enterprise and the ability to obtain greater visibility to the various businesses.”

Data Center

The pride of AFGIT will surely be the new data center. The design was owner driven in accordance with the uptime guidelines and then engineered within TIA 942 and BICSI 002 standards. The result is that the IT infrastructure being the power, cooling and control networks, will provide the owner with a concurrently maintainable facility.

“By combining and integrating with the base building power plant, we have been able to optimize the system to satisfy the data center requirements and the building occupants,” Hemphill says. “This has in turn reduced the first cost considerably.”

IT infrastructure must be considered upfront

On being appointed a consultant to AFGIT, EES was able to advise on certain issues requiring attention in the implementation of the building’s intelligent infrastructure, one of these being the necessity to plan IT upfront.

“It is vital that IT infrastructure is considered and included right from the early conceptual, planning and design stages of a property development, and there needs to be a paradigm shift away from retrofitting,” Hemphill explains. “This is because there are architectural requirements for an intelligent IT-based building design. Planning IT right from the start makes the construction process streamlined, quicker and more cost-effective.”

Commenting on the project and working relationship between the two companies, Brad Eliot, Alexander Forbes Group IT Director, says: “AFGIT is impressed with the high level of professionalism that EES have brought to this project, and we have derived significant value add from engaging with them.”

Hemphill concludes: “Having worked in many IT project management enterprises, it is a privilege to be working in an organization with highly defined, yet functional project management processes.”

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Electrical Engineering Solutions (EES) company profile:

Electrical Engineering Solutions (EES) is an ISO 9000, professional services company, offering engineering, project management and business management services in all sectors of industry throughout Africa and other emerging markets.

It is a leader in project managing the provision of Information Technology (IT) solutions to the built environment. Integral to its business is intelligent infrastructure, the implementation of which entails the convergence of IT and Building Automation Systems (BAS).

A benefit of intelligent infrastructure is that it facilitates energy management, thus contributing to the urgent global objective to establish a green environment. EES is a member company of the Green Building Council of South Africa.

The firm is proud to have played a significant role in the 2010 World Cup in the special systems design of five infrastructure projects: Cape Town Stadium, Nelson Mandela Bay Stadium in Port Elizabeth, Cape Town International Airport, King Shaka International Airport (KSIA) north of Durban and the Gautrain Sandton Station.

Based in Cape Town since 2001, the firm also has specialist experience in communication networks and related IT, security systems and 11kV and 400V electrical systems that support intelligent infrastructure.

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Issued on behalf of Electrical Engineering Solutions (EES)
by ***Corporate Communication Services (CCS)***

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