Pitfalls and Success Strategies of International Practice

[ SAT-A06 ]

learning objectives

1) Know the realities of international practice including language, jet-lag, currency, payment terms, taxation, delivery expectations, int’l dialing, and customs.
2) Learn how a new firm was created from a legacy company and redefined as a multi-disciplinary international design firm.
3) Learn the Do's and Don'ts of working in various cultures and regions of the world.
4) Understand proposal writing, payment schedules, fee negotiation, and taxation issues in other countries.

description

Many aspects of international business are confounding even for experienced professionals. In many cases the language barrier is the least difficult issue to overcome. Our panel of well-traveled designers will address the realities of foreign practice, unconventional business standards, and strategies for successful international practice.

presentation outline

a. The International Road Show
   • The multitude issues to be dealt with when practicing internationally
b. The Third Re-boot: DTJ Case Study
   • The multitude issues to be dealt with when practicing internationally
c. Lessons Learned – Pros and Cons
   • Lessons from various cultures and case studies; both positive and negative
d. dialogue
   • questions and answers

todd hill  moderator

Todd Hill, ASLA, LEED®AP; is a landscape architect and Director of DTJ Design’s Atlanta office who has built a career with EDAW Inc., and AECOM since 1986. His work covers a range of scales, from large land strategies to detailed site designs. He leads the creative process to combine high-design, with innovative sustainability strategies, to develop plans and designs for his global portfolio of landscape architecture, master planning and urban regeneration projects. Mr. Hill works extensively outside the U.S., from Canada to Mexico, The Bahamas, The Cayman Islands and the Caribbean islands, to Costa Rica, Panama, Venezuela, and Brazil; from Europe, Egypt and Senegal, to India, the Philippines, Korea, Hong Kong and China. He manages large interdisciplinary teams involving market economists, environmental and policy planners, designers, architects and engineers.

a. the int’l road show

Business Development
   • Collaboration and solidarity
   • Local teaming, sponsors and promoters
   • Go/No Go
   • Contingency and expected discounts (India up to 40%)
   • Taxes, duties, fees and grossing up
   • Mobilization, retainer, final payment – which is the last...?
   • Will the real FBO stand up?

Preparing to go
   • Health; medication and vaccines, prescriptions, EpiPen, sun screen,
   • Visas; long lead – Brazil, India, PRC...
   • Voltage transformers and adapters

Currency
   • Exchange rates, fees
   • Cash v credit

Cultural Considerations
   • Language – learn one! (Google translate)
   • Greetings, customs, traditions and respect
   • Standards of dress as; designer, manager, QS, engineer... leisure
Getting There
- Air travel (Y, B or M)

Customs and Immigration
- Business v Leisure – the truth
- Immigration in Montreal "no one in Canada can do this work"?

Mechanics of Int’l travel
- Taxis, coaches and transfers
- Local laws and legal issues; taxi wreck in Cairo is your fault!, get out on walk side
- Right hand drive, look left!
- Hotels – Durian buster sign!
- Exercise – defend your time
- Food... "try it"; but just because it's edible doesn't mean we should, "waiting for watermelon". Local water, salad, veggies, meat...

The Toll...
- Jet Lag voodoo; adjust your; sleep, diet and biorhythms...?

The Phone
- Conference calling and Country Codes
- Charges to communicate; data roaming
- Skype, Viber, FaceTime, Airplane Mode, cheap second phone w SIM card

Safety and security
- Helicopter, ATV, horseback, sewer pipe, crowds, climbing a rollercoaster...
- Separate room# from key (phone notes)
- Carry lodge address in local language

Int’l Standards
- Units of measure
  - Metric v Imperial
  - Decimal point v comma
- Time/Date standards
  - MM/DD/YY (US), DD/MM/YY (So Amer, EU), YY/MM/DD (Asia)
  - 24 hr clock
  - Relative to GMT? Boston = GMT-4
- Daylight savings, or Not!
- Terms
  - Quantity Survey, Schedule, Programme, Terms of Reference...

Business Norms - Expectations
- Work style, (hand v digital) people always appreciate creativity
- Quality and execution; completeness of documents
- Use if documents – how to control?
- Trusting the local team or LDI with design
- Enforcement of design at implementation

Productivity on the Road
- Don’t rely on connectivity – take tools
- Dropbox: access files from remote taxi jam

Professional Representation
- Integrity, ingenuity, honesty

Global Perspective
- The perspective makes me a better designer and world citizen
- Make a contribution and Have Fun!

bill campie

Bill Campie is President of DTJ DESIGN, a 45-year-old international design practice based in Boulder, Colorado. Bill is an accomplished designer with a wide range of experience in Planning, Architecture and Landscape Architecture. His portfolio of award-winning projects in land development and planning, as well as more detailed architecture and landscape architecture, is a testament to his diverse interests. Bill began his career at DTJ in 2006 and he has since seen the firm through the recession which has been instrumental in evolving DTJ DESIGN to the international practice it is today. As President of a reinvented and reenergized DTJ, practicing in five different continents, Bill brings a first hand perspective on the rewards and challenges of growing an international design practice.
fulfillment in the new economy and global market?

Growing an International Practice without Losing the DTJ Spirit

- How do we define an international practice for DTJ? What does it mean to a Boulder, Colorado company to work in Poland, China, Brazil, and Belize at the same time?

Creating Places for People - Understanding What That Means Throughout the World

- How do we define success? How much is our design process defined by the external vs. the internal? How are we valuable to our clients?

hitesh mehta

Hitesh Mehta, FASLA, President of HM Design (based in Florida) has over 25 years of work experience, consulted in over 57 countries in the world and is a multi-International award winning designer with awards in Landscape Architecture, Planning, Architecture, Urban Design, Creative Writing and Publishing, and Interior Design. Mr. Mehta’s firm (which began in Kenya in 1991) is currently working on environmentally and socially friendly projects in China, Turkey, Galapagos, Kenya, Dominica, Indonesia and Puerto Rico. Mr. Mehta has vast knowledge working in different geographic regions each with its own distinctive business regulations and cultural etiquettes. Hitesh Mehta, FASLA is considered by his peers as one of the world’s leading authorities, practitioners and researchers on sustainable tourism physical planning and both the landscape architectural and architectural aspects of ecolodges. A pioneer in eco-resort planning and design, National Geographic Adventure magazine, in 2007, identified Hitesh as one of five Sustainable Tourism Pioneers in the world. He is/was a judge for most of the Sustainable Tourism Award programmes in the world. He is also an Adjunct Professor and the author of three ecolodge books, including the recently published, award winning, “Authentic Ecolodges” by renowned publisher - Harper Collins.

Mr. Mehta has over 26 years of experience, consulted in 57 countries (six continents) in the world and is a multi-International award winning designer with awards in Landscape Architecture, Planning, Architecture, Urban Design, Creative Writing & Publishing, Interior Design and Photography. Mr. Mehta’s firm HM Design (which began in Kenya in 1991) is currently working on environmentally and socially friendly projects in multiple countries.

c. lessons learned – pros + cons

- Lessons learned in various cultural regions of the world each with its own business style and procedures
- Case studies will address both the positive and negative aspects of International work.
- China, Kenya, Australia, Saudi Arabia, and Indonesia

Participants will receive tips on the following aspects of International work:

- Fee Proposal writing and negotiation
- Payment terms and schedules
- Research on cultural etiquettes
- Tax procedures with sub-consultants
- Effectively leading International Consortiums