

NEWS FROM:



Communication and Marketing Department
Isebe loThungelwano neNtengiso
Kommunikasie en Bemakingsdepartement

Private Bag X3, Rondebosch 7701, South Africa
La Grotto House, Glendarrach Rd, Rondebosch, Cape Town
Tel: +27 (0) 21 650-3733/2, Fax: +27 (0) 21 650-5682
Internet: www.uct.ac.za

30 November 2011

UCT's new residence helps supply jobs as well as living space

Innovative bathroom design opens new niche for Cape Town company

One of the innovations of the new University of Cape Town residence, Obz Square, is en suite shower and toilet facilities in each of the 880 rooms. Each toilet/shower "pod" was assembled off-site, transported to the site on the corner of Main Road and Penzance in Observatory, and then installed fully fitted, tiled and plumbed, ready to be lifted and plastered into rooms like Lego blocks.

John Critien, the Executive Director: Properties & Services at UCT, said the university had invested R30 million in the manufacturing of the toilet pods. "We were aware of a company in Gauteng that could build the pods for us," said Mr Critien. "But transporting 880 prebuilt units that far would have been expensive and risky. We were happy we could work with a local company to produce the pods at a good price, and provide employment for 140 people along the way."

UCT appointed Aquapod in Cape Town, part of the Inside Group, to manufacture the pods. Aquapod Director Andrew Stewart said: "The primary benefits to these units are improved quality, through the quality assurance processes that can be introduced on a production line but not on a construction site, and the improved installation time, as the pods can be manufactured before the structure of the building is complete."

Mr Stewart confirmed that the company had recruited new staff in significant numbers for the UCT project. "We ended up contracting and training some 140 people at the peak of production at our plant in Atlantis," he said.

The company was now seeking new markets for this type of innovative design, Mr Stewart said. "We have made a number of other prototypes for the three-star hotel industry as well as for the affordable housing market," he said. "We are confident that UCT's bold approach to adopting new technologies to enhance the build process will be followed by others."

Caption to accompany photo: This promotional photo shows the type of prefabricated bathroom "pods" Aquapod manufactured for 880 rooms in the new UCT residence, Obz Square.

For reference: Aquapod's telephone number is 021 510 4224.

ENDS

Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department

Patricia Lucas

Tel: (021) 650 5428 Fax (021) 650 5628

Cell: 076 292 8047

E-mail: pat.lucas@uct.ac.za

University of Cape Town

Rondebosch

Website: www.uct.ac.za