



MEDIA RELEASE

GRAND DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABLE FOOTWEAR BRAND

Renowned sustainable footwear brand Birkenstock Australia partners with Melbourne Design Studios to unveil award-winning sustainable new headquarters in Melbourne

MELBOURNE Renowned global footwear brand Birkenstock Australia unveiled its new sustainable headquarters in Clifton Hill that have already won a number of awards, among them two Melbourne Design Awards, as a result of its partnership with award winning Melbourne based architectural firm, Melbourne Design Studios.

Boasting a sustainably designed “healthy” refurbished two-story heritage shop-front, office and workshop in Clifton Hill, Birkenstock’s new headquarters clearly identifies with its core values; honesty, integrity, sustainability and craftsmanship.

The new headquarters, in inner urban Melbourne, seamlessly integrates a variety of purposes while remaining loyal to the company values. The building incorporates a retail shopfront, e-tail, wholesale, offices and showrooms, workshop, courtyard and warehouse with Mezzanine.

Birkenstock’s new headquarters incorporates:

- A shopfront with living grass floor and deciduous tree
- Carefully selected and researched plants are positioned throughout the building as ‘air purifiers’
- Materials are low VOC. Remaining emissions are filtered and cleansed by the plants, improving overall air quality and providing a healthy work environment and customer experience.
- A central courtyard modelled as an Australian landscape with recycled timber sleepers and water tank
- A sustainably forested timber palette features sugar gum with linseed oil, EO plywood, bench tops from recycled paper with bamboo fibre. Most floors are recycled timbers, or natural rubber.
- Various Passive and active ESD systems and initiatives
- Carbon neutral target, collecting and comparing data on energy usage and energy creation
- North facing shopfront display is a double-façade with two layers of operable glazing, adapting to climate conditions the outer layer can be opened while the inner layer remains shaded, or both layers can be closed to work like a greenhouse
- Cleverly crafted timber slat screens maximise ventilation and shade and protect
- Periscope-like highlights operate upstairs maximising southern light reducing the need for artificial lighting. These highlight windows act as thermal chimneys in summer and rain and wind sensors close the windows when required. On their north-facing back they carry PV cells to generate electricity.

Melbourne Design Studios founding director Marc Bernstein-Hussmann says Melbourne Design Studios opted to integrate the different departments of Birkenstock in to a single company culture through the sustainable design.

“Some staff amenities are shared between the building levels so retail and wholesale staff can meet in the middle throughout the working day, avoiding isolation, he said.

“Creating a green environment within an existing, heritage building is much more challenging than a new build. Coincidentally over a hundred years ago the building was conceived for a boot manufacturer. We’ve reinvented an almost derelict building to live and breathe its owners’ values.



"Birkenstock is about healthy shoes and now its architecture and interior reflects this commitment. The building promotes healthy living and a healthy workplace. Nature is paramount and forms an integral part of the design."

Birkenstock staff enjoy the concept of team clusters, where traditional dividers have been removed between desks to encourage collaboration, innovation and communication.

Birkenstock Australia Managing Director Marcel Goerke says the new building and its layout encourage effortless interaction between staff with the open office layout a huge success for collaboration.

"Melbourne Design Studios capture the essence of what we stand for as a brand – quality, comfort and sustainability. They've taken our requirements and suggestions and shaken them up and poured out amazing new ideas, he said.

"We wanted a space to inspire our customers and encourage them to explore our store. Our new building does this. It draws you in and allows you to discover interesting aspects that reflect the Birkenstock brand. The customer feedback we've received is 100 per cent positive."

Melbourne Design Studios won a number of awards for the Birkenstock Australia HQ, among them an Interior Design Excellence Award (IDEA), 2 Melbourne Design Awards, the Australian BPN Sustainability Award, the BDAV Building Design of the Year 2014, Excellence in the Use of Timber, Best Nationwide Alterations & Additions (Commercial) as well as Best Nationwide Interior Design (Commercial) in the NABD Awards, a commendation in the 2014 Australian Interior Design Awards (AIDA) and more..

More information about Melbourne Design Studios is available at www.MelbourneDesignStudios.com.au and www.facebook.com/MelbourneDesignStudios

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About Melbourne Design Studios (MDS)

Melbourne Design Studios (MDS) is a young up-and-coming practice for contemporary and sustainable design throughout Australia and internationally. Founded in 2011 by Marc Bernstein-Hussmann and Felicity Bernstein, after almost 20 years in the architecture industry, MDS have already won a large array of awards for their beautiful work, and have gained international attention. Their work has been published in magazines throughout the world and they have started to raise the 'design bar' in many areas of the industry. Founder Marc Bernstein is an RIBA Chartered Architect with a German background, registered in Europe. Beside being a member of the Royal Institute of British Architects, the RIAI, the BDAV and the Australian Institute of Architects, he is also a Certified Passive House Designer and an accredited Thermal Performance Assessor, which means MDS have a lot of Sustainable Design Expertise in house - no wonder this is one of their favourite themes, together with the creation of contemporary architecture for residential, commercial and institutional users.

As an interactive studio for contemporary architecture and design, MDS's tagline "we love architecture and we love our clients", underlies the team's core philosophy which merges the sensitive personal needs of future occupants with exceptional design prowess and extensive technical know-how.

Melbourne Design Studios (MDS) have won 'Building Design of the Year 2014' and have recently received two NABD Awards from Kevin McCloud at the Grand Designs Live Show. Melbourne Design Studios (MDS) recent awards also include :

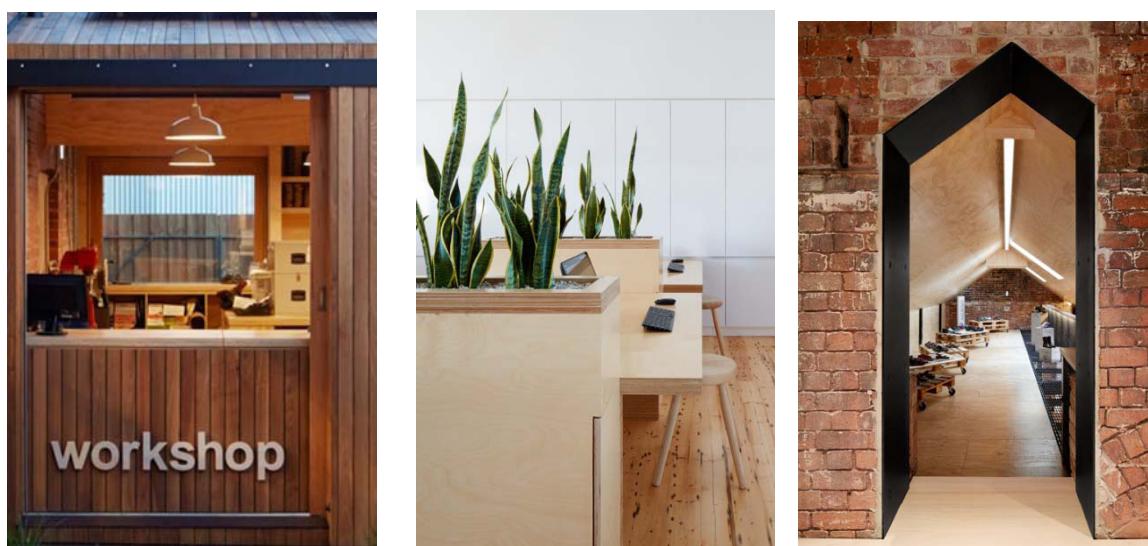
- 2014 Building Design of the Year (BDAV)
- 2014 Winner Alterations & Additions + Winner Interior Design (Commercial) NABD Awards
- 2014 BDAV's Excellence in Use of Timber Award,
- 2014 IDEA Interior Design Excellence Awards
- 2014 Winner Alterations & Additions + Winner Interior Design (Commercial) BDAV Awards
- 2014 Commendation at the Australian Interior Design Awards AIDA
- 2013 Winner of the BPN Sustainability Award
- 2013 Winner Alterations & Additions + Winner Interior Design (Commercial), BDAV Awards
- 2013 Winner of Melbourne Design Award
- 2013 Winner of the 10 Star Challenge (Multi-Residential)
- 2012 Winner of two Melbourne Design Awards
- 2012 Winner of the 10 Star Challenge (Single Residential)
- and many more.

www.MelbourneDesignStudios.com.au - www.facebook.com/MelbourneDesignStudios (News Feed)

About Birkenstock

Birkenstock has more than 230 years of experience in the high art of the shoemaking craft. The traditional know-how, which has been developed and expanded from generation to generation, guarantees the utmost in quality and the best workmanship in Birkenstock shoes. For more information, please visit: www.birkenstock.com.au

**Example images available in high res attached and can be downloaded via link provided separately.
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Architecture, Design, Fitout, Project Management : Melbourne Design Studios (MDS)

Photography: Peter Clarke Photography

Construction & Fitout (builder): emac constructions

Shop Fitout ; CIBI (Furniture Design) in collaboration with Melbourne Design Studios (MDS)

Structural Engineer: Hive Engineering

Energy & Lighting Model: The Green Factory

Owner, client & driver: Birkenstock Australia