

# Sustainability - the driving force of the future

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If you're considering building a new facility for your company's relocation or expansion project, the option of sustainable or "green" building has probably been a topic of discussion.



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In the past, it was thought that the cost of investing in a greener and more sustainable building outweighs the yield. However, the cost of not being sustainable is starting to exert pressure on business and is far outweighing the capital needed to go green.

## Stricter sustainability legislation

As an industry, construction will be greatly affected by the stricter sustainability legislation that is sweeping the globe. It is recommended that companies join this trend sooner rather than later, as green building is one of the greatest climate change mitigation strategies there is. According to World Green Building Trends, "Global green building continues to double every three years. Emerging economies like Brazil, India, Saudi Arabia and South Africa will be engines of green growth in the next three years, with development varying from twofold to sixfold over current green building levels." The percentage of firms expecting to have more than 60% of their projects certified green is anticipated to more than double from a current 18% to 37% by 2018.

The drought that South Africa and many other nations across the globe are experiencing will be a force that drives this change. Building technologies that require less or no water will become one of the best investments for developers, as will techniques for harvesting rain and wastewater on site.

## Investing in product innovation

As global warming trends force business to adapt and find sustainable solutions, companies that invest in product innovation will reap the rewards. Profit margins can be expanded with innovation, environmental impact minimised and time spent on construction reduced.

South Africa, and into Africa, we need to begin holding a deep regard for the clever use of space, which includes the re-generation of old buildings, the use of solar energy, and the design of small living and working spaces. This type of thinking will follow through the industry, with every element of the process becoming increasingly measured and streamlined.

In response to the universal problem of climate change, businesses have started to look for greener techniques and measures in order to meet legislative requirements. But it also goes beyond this, in the ability of companies to meet the ethical requirements of sustainable buildings.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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