

Dual focus enables Big Ben to 'ride out the recession'

Cape Business News reports that a niche operator based at Cape Town's Century City appear to be thriving at a time when many construction companies are struggling and downsizing. Big Ben Construction has more than tripled its turnover, says Managing Director Colin Ridley, adding that the company is working to full capacity, with around R280m in committed contracts in the pipeline.



15 years ago the company serviced one major client - the developer of Century City. It had since grown its turnover substantially by diversifying into commercial construction. Initially, Ridley says, Big Ben was "completely focused on the residential market, particularly in the Century View precinct where we developed around 350 free standing homes over a four year period." Gradually, Big Ben secured commercial projects at Century City - such as the FNB and Philip Morris offices.

With a staff complement of just over 40 people, Ridley says, Big Ben's diversification into commercial construction had enabled it to ride out the recession. "Fortunately the two markets tend to follow different economic cycles," he tells *Cape Business News*, "it is easier to keep a more consistent flow of work which is critical to our industry."

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