

[ essential marbella ]

# MDCI

## The art of good development

Report: Michel Cruz  
Photography: Craig Stennett

An area that is as focused on property development and construction as this one produces a hive of related activities, from architects and investors to builders, chartered surveyors and estate agents. For the most part these varied players interact rather organically, their paths crossing as dictated by need, but in reality construction and development projects are huge undertakings that require careful planning, control and a sound coordination of all the parts that come together to produce them. As it matures, the industry is becoming increasingly aware that the challenges thrown in the way of developers can be best met by placing overall project management responsibility with specialist companies who, like the conductor of an orchestra, ensure that all the pieces play together to produce an efficient, effective whole.

As the founder of MDCI, Mark Lawson has been a pioneer in the field, promoting good development standards and practice in pursuit of his clients' objectives. These can vary in detail, but always include two elements that are central to MDCI's philosophy: completion of projects on time and within budget. Quality control, product development and marketing advice, right down to suggestions on small but important details, are the other important services provided by a company that can handle anything from feasibility studies and site selection at the conceptual stage to stepping in and salvaging existing projects that have run astray. "We do this and a lot in between," says Mark, emphasising the flexible, modular structure of his company's services. "We are neither property developers nor a construction company, but the people who can step in, take the brief from our clients, the developers, and ensure their

objectives and requirements are met." The degree of involvement varies according to the clients' wishes.

"We consult investors and developers at the conceptual stage, often helping them to find the land. Companies that are used to developing their own projects often call us in to control the Project Management for them, although it is also not unusual that we are asked to come in and 'save' a project that is falling behind and going over budget. In such cases we inherit the contractor and all his suppliers. We study the situation, provide the client with a report in which we identify the problems and mark out the measures required to get things back on track. As the point of contact for the client, it is our responsibility to ensure that the builders and suppliers meet their targets. The degree to which you can salvage a troubled project depends upon the damage already done, but in most cases such clients take us on as their project developers for subsequent ventures."

"The Project Development service is used especially by those investors who know where to buy land, what to develop and how to sell it, but have no existing infrastructure or expertise when it comes to the physical realisation of the project. This is where we come in, establishing the targets and objectives with them and then translating these into a project planning, costing and quality control programme that has a simple end result as its goal: delivering the project to the client on time, on budget and to the quality and specifications they

**As the founder of MDCI, Mark Lawson has been a pioneer in the field, promoting good development standards and practice in pursuit of his clients' objectives**



demand. Of course, if we can win on time and save them money, so much the better, but our time planning is not so much a race against the clock as a realistic framework with built-in cushions. Our initial costing and budgeting, likewise, already uses tried and tested methods to negotiate the best possible prices with builders and suppliers alike without sacrificing quality. We also provide ongoing inspection and control, as well as watertight contracts that tie contractors and suppliers to their duties and responsibilities, and include financial penalties when these are not met. It is our expertise in bringing all these components together and our ability to deliver the goods that proves our value to our clients."

On observing that it must be very challenging to get so many service-suppliers to do exactly what you want them to, Mark replies, "Not really. We work with those people who have proved to be professional in the past, but we are also continuously testing newcomers to the market." Then again, growing up in Spain and having a father who developed projects here must surely be a big advantage. "Yes, it's definitely in the blood," agrees Mark, explaining how his entire career, from selling real estate in England and helping clients build their villas, to managing big development projects for leading resort chains, has led him to his ultimate destiny: MDCI. ■

For more information contact MDCI,  
Tel: 952 903 190. [www.mdcispain.com](http://www.mdcispain.com)

