

## COMPANY

**AK Design**

## LOCATION

**Dubai, UAE**

## SOFTWARE

Autodesk® AutoCAD® Design Suite  
Autodesk® 3ds Max®

# Winning collaboration

## AK Design optimizes collaboration and quality with AutoCAD® Design Suite for its award-winning Autodesk office in Dubai

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— **Agata Kurzela**  
Head of Interiors  
AK Design



Rendering of open workstations and meeting areas. Image courtesy of AK Design.

### About AK Design

AK Design (an Adel Al Mojl Consulting Engineers company) is a young award-winning Architectural and Interior Design practice that has been headquartered in Dubai since 1995.

The multi-national team brings together leading design professionals, technicians and business support who combine individual strengths to collectively realize the firm's philosophy of innovation and excellence from planning to execution. The projects of AK Design encompass commercial, residential, institutional, public, hospitality and retail sectors, showcasing their extensive expertise in architecture, interior design and master-planning through the delivery of award-winning, contemporary designs.

### Project summary

Having been named the Sustainable Interior Design Initiative of the Year at the Commercial Interior Design Awards 2014, the Autodesk office in Dubai underlines AK Design's forte in successfully translating ideas into reality through a comprehensive understanding of the project brief.

The 750-sqm workplace presents a concept

that supports collaboration fluidly; allowing for increased visibility and accessibility between teams and key decision makers besides providing an environment that would positively impact attraction and retention of employees.

"Innovation was brought in with the idea of providing more spaces for meetings rather than only workstations, thus allowing people a choice in how and where they want to work. This approach helps create a sense of pride and ownership in their workspace by providing a healthy environment where they would willingly spend time and work productively. This is how you get happier employees and thus additional value out of projects," elaborates Agata Kurzela, Head of Interiors at AK Design.

"The commitment to collaboration was integrated into the scheme through a high proportion of impromptu meeting areas so that the office becomes a much more informal atmosphere to work in. Even largely functional spaces like the pantry were designed to generate opportunities for people to meet, encouraging interaction not only between project teams working together but also amongst people who may not necessarily join forces on the same project," she adds.

# AutoCAD® Design Suite software enabled efficient collaboration and coordination within and between all teams

## The challenge

The design goal for the new premise required it to embody Autodesk in its entirety, particularly to its global guidelines and own standards for sustainability within an office environment, while remaining within the cultural context of Dubai and the Middle East. "Autodesk's strong identity acted as the main driver in the way the spaces were designed, while keeping in mind the local context. As a leading design solutions provider, their brand is globally recognizable and thus we had to give this local office the feeling that it is part of something bigger, something extraordinary," explains Agata.

As a global company driving sustainable design practices, achieving LEED certification for the Autodesk office was factored into the design, influencing the scrutiny and selection of each product, finish and material as appropriate for both cause and concept. The main challenges of the project were maximizing natural light, meeting all the requirements for LEED certification within a building that is not certified itself, and coordination with various project stakeholders that are located internationally.

## The solution

Giving design professionals like AK Design the scope to efficiently capture, connect, create and showcase their ideas, AutoCAD® Design Suite's visualization and design tools connect and streamline their entire CAD workflows

from concept to completion.

## Detailed Documentation for Exploring Ideas and Design Variations

In the course of designing the project, the team at AK Design ran parallel iteration processes between manual and digital ideation as they went about conceptualizing and detailing different aspects through hand and 3D Studio Max sketches. "While our manual processes include small studies of combining various materials and finishes together to get a feel for the overall mood in a space, when it comes to the subsequent level of visualizing it, that's all done through AutoCAD® Design Suite.

AutoCAD® defines how materials are used in detail and finally translates into the finished product. It would have been really difficult if we didn't have 3D Studio Max, as the software is a great visualization tool to exchange ideas during discussions and then in refining our choices further until it reaches the point where it is exactly what we need," mentions Agata. "Also, as different layers contain different information, it's very easy for us to whisk out exactly what we need in terms of relevance. That's of great help because we can have access to the essential information very quickly."

## The result

Using AutoCAD® Design Suite software enabled efficient collaboration and coordination not only within the AK Design team but also between all consultants involved

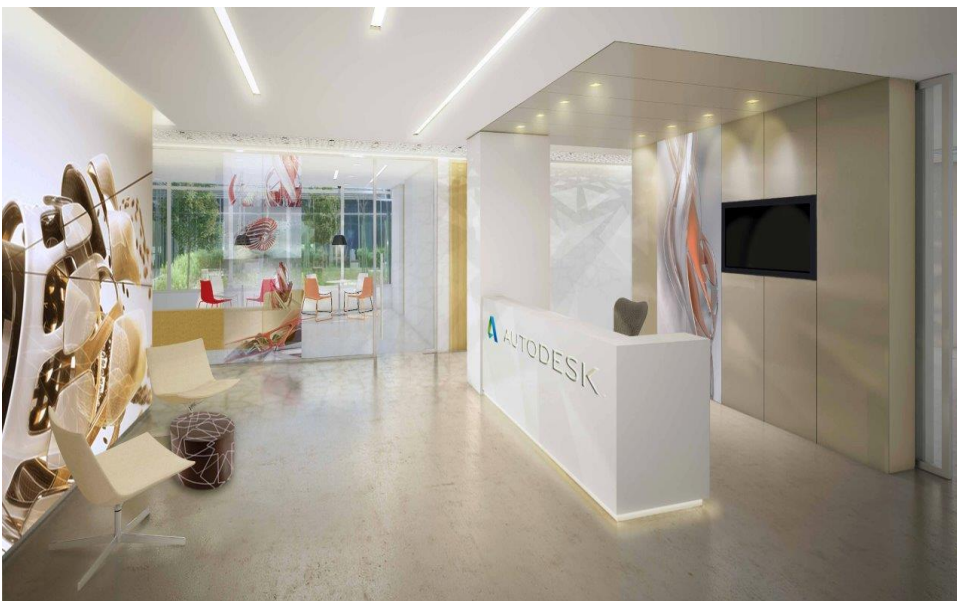
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in the design, starting with the project inception and the visualization of initial ideas in 3D Studio Max and ending with the production of final detailed documentation. Factoring in real-time data allowed the team to predict issues such as MEP conflicts, joinery and ceiling detailing during space planning exercises, so that they could be addressed early on to save time substantially. "Real-time data exchange between the design and production teams has been invaluable. The ability to direct external references means that the project documentation is broken down into manageable modules which can be developed independently and/or collaboratively. As an additional benefit, our shared design libraries managed through the program further aided in improving the workflow," points out Agata.

This has enabled the Autodesk office to be acknowledged as one of the greenest initiatives in the Middle East, with AK Design managing to target a LEED Silver Certification. The project was also named the Sustainable Interior Design Initiative of the Year at the Commercial Interior Design Awards, which took place in Dubai to recognize the Middle East's most prestigious projects.

Agata concludes, "As we have been using the software for other projects, we know that AutoCAD® Design Suite is such an efficient tool and appreciate how much better it is than anything else currently in the market. We wouldn't even consider using any other design software because AutoCAD® Design Suite optimizes our workflow so much."



Rendering of reception area. Image courtesy of AK Design.