



BACKGROUND

A Siniat Facelift for FNB

Dating back to the 1800s, First National Bank is the oldest bank in South Africa with its roots tracing back to Grahamstown. Being the oldest bank, FNB has survived some of the greatest challenges our country has faced while remaining firmly committed to serving the needs of its clients. Over the years FNB has evolved as a brand ranging from logo changes all the way through to revamps of their physical branches. During the past two years, FNB has partnered with the technical expertise at Siniat and Bonanza Projects, and the architectural skill at Zutari Architects, to embark on a complete revamp and refurbishment of all FNB branches across South Africa.

Our Role

Siniat, a global brand, underpinned by 'Inspiring Ways of Living', is well-positioned in the building industry for the manufacture and supply of sustainable building solutions. We meet the needs of an ever-changing world while remaining environmentally friendly. Partnering with our client, Bonanza Projects, the team at Siniat developed a bespoke specification document to address the refurbishing and revamping needs required by FNB. The proposal was presented to the team at Zutari Architects and FNB, who accepted, and the national rollout began for the refurbishment and revamp of all FNB branches in South Africa.

Partnering with Siniat

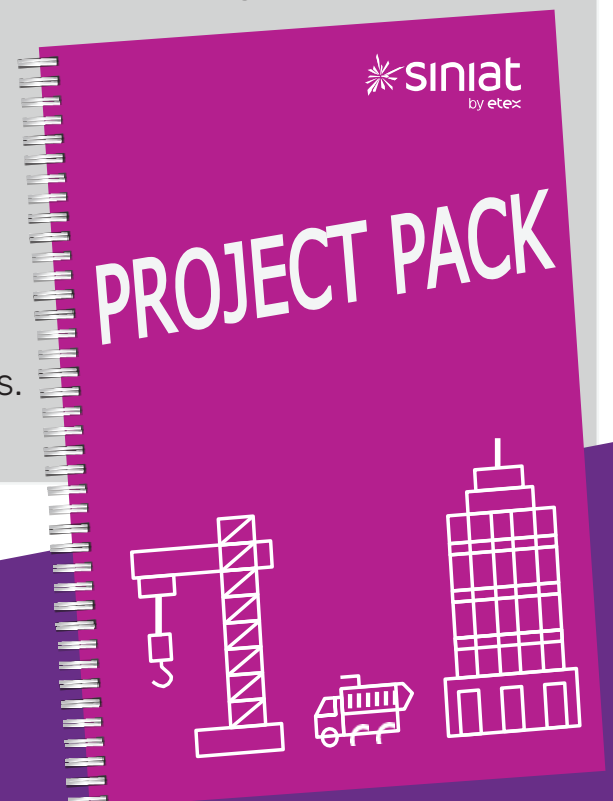
According to Bonanza Projects' Stuart Humphrey, the partnership between Siniat and Bonanza can be described as "simply awesome".

"The team brings to the table a wealth of technical expertise, that not only speaks to our specification requirements but also provides a holistic technical solution that can be easily implemented while ticking all the necessary legal and qualitative boxes. The proactivity displayed by the Siniat team ensures we are never placed in a predicament where we have no solution, and this is essential to achieving our goals and keeping our clients happy. Looking specifically at the customer service aspect, we source our products from a Siniat stockist, and we are incredibly satisfied with the service levels. If there are any issues regarding stock or product availability, it is managed seamlessly with no effect on us, the consumer".

Our Specification

The requirements from FNB were to revamp and refurbish, considering some key factors such as:

- Optimal safety for staff and clients
- The aesthetic of the brand
- Creating smaller office spaces
- The inclusion of bathroom facilities in some branches.





Our Solution

The aesthetic of the brand:

Over the years FNB has moved to a minimalistic brand with a significant focus on sustainability and implementing environmentally friendly practices. In light of this, the Siniat range of products within the Siniat portfolio proved to be a seamless match.

The following solutions were specified:

- Siniat FireCheck Drywall Systems
- Siniat EasyBoard Drywall Systems
- Siniat MoistureCheck Drywall Systems

Optimal fire safety for staff and clients:

The nature of the bank places it at a substantial fire risk, and the revamp required a product offering to address this hazard. The specification of the Siniat FireCheck drywall system addressed the concern for additional fire resistance. Tested in accordance with SANS 10177:2, this plasterboard system offers minimal wall thickness with optimal fire resistance, which also accommodates services within the drywall cavity.

These plasterboard products are manufactured to SANS 266 and carries the SABS mark of approval. This product is developed for use in commercial buildings such as schools, hospitals, and office blocks.

Creating Smaller Office Spaces:

One of the prerequisites of the revamp was the creation of smaller office spaces that would accommodate one-on-one meetings. To achieve this, the Siniat EasyBoard drywall system was specified.

Designed for use in commercial buildings Siniat EasyBoard systems can be used for ceilings as well as wall applications. The use of the 12mm Siniat EasyBoard system complied with the application needs for drywalling with a 30-minute fire rating.

Aesthetically the 12mm boards have tapered edges which are used for jointing but can also be fully skimmed to achieve a monolithic finish.

The inclusion of bathroom facilities:

The revamp and refurbishment included bathroom facilities in some branches, and this needed a solution that would provide maximum moisture protection. Siniat MoistureCheck Drywall Systems addressed this requirement with its moisture-resistant additives provides protection in humid areas such as bathrooms.

Technical Challenges:

A project of this magnitude and nature poses significant challenges which must be navigated with clear and concise technical interventions to ensure the quality and standard of the work is not compromised.

During the revamp two key challenges were present:



• *Heights*

Some of the branches are based in open spaces with no coffer slabs available, thus posing a challenge for the revamp. We proposed the development of a steel structure to address this issue.

• *Enhanced Security*

Maximum security is an integral part of any refurbishment related to a banking organisation. The use of mesh sheeting in between the gypsum sheeting presents a security risk as it can be easily hooked and removed during a robbery. To overcome this challenge a solid galvanized sheet was proposed, which would increase the security barrier offered by the gypsum sheeting.



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