



INTERVIEW: BCI AUSTRALIA

Matthias Krups PHD, Founder & CEO

No matter how large or small your business, maintaining a constant source of work can be a major challenge. We spoke to Matthias Krups, founder and CEO of BCI Australia about how they are making a difference to the way the industry sources new business leads and how the future is shaping up.

-Interview by Lyndall Arnold

LA: Can you give us an overview of your background?

MK: I was born in Germany, have an MBA and PhD in Economics, spent 3 years with a US hotel/real estate development company then 10 years in the construction information division of the, then, largest media consortium in Europe before coming to Australia.

LA: What motivated you to start BCI Australia?

MK: We have been pioneering project leads services in Southeast Asia since 1998. Living in Australia it struck me that the Australian market was under-served especially in relation to the depth of information provided, customer service and technology. So we founded BCI Australia in 2002.

LA: In a nutshell, how does BCI Australia work?

MK: We are today the leading provider of market intelligence and project leads to the construction industry in Australia. In a nutshell, we research upcoming construction projects from early concept to construction, and provide this information online for a fee to clients who use it to source new business. Our approach is that we subscribe to every printed and online publication in Australia and pick up initial leads, everything

from large scale projects to council buildings being renovated. This information is then handed over to our researchers, who talk to the architects, developers, councils, whatever parties are involved, following through on every detail of the project before it is entered into our database and made available to our clients.

LA: What response do you receive when you start contacting architects, developers and councils for information?

MK: Happily, a very positive response. Most appreciate that if their project is listed with BCI, they will have technologically advanced companies contacting them which can add new concepts and dimensions to their projects from the very early planning stages.

We don't place a time limit on how far ahead we research projects so there is the opportunity for our clients to get in at the concept or planning stages. Especially with projects that focus on environmental sustainability it is very important for everyone to be at the table in the early days. Architects and developers appreciate this and most are happy to cooperate with our researchers

LA: What is the range of projects you cover?

MK: We focus on projects over \$100,000, covering multiple-dwelling residential, commercial, industrial, infrastructure and mining and in the future we plan to also include the smaller single residential market.

LA: How does the service work from the client point of view?

MK: Clients sign up on an annual subscription basis. We then provide them with on-site, face to face training in how to use the system. They log on and check their part of the database which is continually updated. There are no special computer skills required, it's just like using Microsoft Office systems. We offer cutting edge technology but it is easy for customers to use.

LA: What assurances do you provide in relation to the quality of BCI information?

MK: Our quality promise is foremost. We won't report on a project which has not been verified, in person, by a key decision maker. In addition, the project must still have work coming out of it for it to be included.

LA: What's your outlook on the current financial crisis?

MK: We are taking the global financial crisis very seriously, keeping a keen eye on micro-and macroeconomic data as well as the overall market development. And of course we have the real-time information coming from our research team. Our analysis reveals an alarming increase in the rate of abandoned or deferred projects which could translate to over \$20 billion value lost over the next 2 years. On top of that you have projects not entering the market. I wouldn't be surprised when the dust settles, if we have an overall 40-45% drop in construction value compared with the high cycle in 2007.

LA: How will this affect BCI?

MK: This is a time when clients need our services more than ever as many have had to reduce their sales force and/or their usual sources of new business have diminished. To meet our customers' increasing needs we will be expanding both our research and our service teams. We will also be taking Omni-Quant, our NSW-based tender and procurement service, into the national market to give our clients every opportunity to win whatever hard dollar tenders there are. Over time we will be looking at the integration of our South East Asian and Australian operations to service those clients looking for opportunities in countries such as Indonesia and Vietnam.

LA: What new initiatives are you planning for BCI?

MK: Analytics is a key area of development for us. Taking the huge volume of project information we have, slicing and dicing it, seeing how the respective market segments have performed over time and supporting our clients with this information.

BCI AUSTRALIA

BCI AUSTRALIA

52 – 56 Atchison Street,
St. Leonards NSW 2065

t. 02 9432 4100

f. 02 9432 4111

Contact: Matthias Krups

e. m.krups@bciaustralia.com

www.bciaustralia.com