

# Office space where creativity meets productivity

 By [Sindy Peters](#)

14 Apr 2016

Imagine an office environment that feeds both creativity and productivity - interior designer Anthony Manas did just that when he founded Cube Workspace.

“Having researched the needs of business owners and startups, we have identified the evolution of the office space from fixed to more modern, flexible, custom environments with the demand for immediate occupation spaces which provide the ingredients for excellence in creativity and productivity,” says Manas.



We interviewed Wayne Windell, MD of Cube Workspace, on the story behind Cube Workspace, the challenges facing the SA commercial property letting market, and some of their strategies to stay on trend.

## ■ **What is the origin story of Cube Workspace?**

Cube Workspace was founded in March 2013 by an interior designer with 23 years' industry experience. It started off with two branches: one in Kyalami, Gauteng; and one in Cape Town CBD (ICON building), with a total of only 14 staff members. Anthony Manas, founder of Cube Workspace, imagined office workspace with an advertising agency type of business environment. He ultimately thought of offering the serviced office space client a customised solution, like being in a five-star hotel.

## ■ **How does Cube Workspace stay on top of trends in the commercial property letting sector?**

By listening to the needs of our clients who often dictate future trends and by researching international trends to ensure we are ahead of the curve in South Africa. We also try to set our own trends (through our unique designs and creative workspaces) and have others follow.



■ ***Describe a typical Cube Workspace client?***

Our clients don't fit into a box, they range from large international corporates to one-man startups/entrepreneurs. We pride ourselves on the diversity of our clients and aim to ensure we are able to meet their specific demands.

■ ***What are some of the challenges in the South African commercial property letting market?***

The standard commercial letting market is different to what we provide at Cube Workspace. Whereas your standard commercial lessor provides an empty space at a set rate with little flexibility, we at Cube Workspace provide a holistic and flexible solution for our clients. We design the space and provide a fully furnished, fully serviced solution. Some of the challenges facing the serviced office provider in the South African market include:

- The market is getting more competitive, with a few players in the industry establishing a strong brand;
- Clients are becoming even more cost-focused and looking for good value at reduced rates;
- Potential clients are demanding more flexibility which often results in short-term leases (3-6 months) while they test the market;
- The market and potential clients are still learning about the benefits of a serviced office solution which means a slower turnaround in converting them into clients.



**▣ How does Cube Workspace differentiate itself from the competition?**

We have been successful in differentiating Cube Workspace from our competitors by building a strong brand. We have built a strong, trendy brand by ensuring we have the best locations, best interior designs and best staff (who offer the best services to our clients). We are also passionate about creating a collaborative environment and a community for all our clients where they can network and grow their own business. We believe that we assist our clients achieve their goals through the environment and support we provide.

**▣ How important is content marketing in Cube Workspace's communications strategy?**

It's crucial to building our brand and a brand that South Africans can associate with serviced office space. I want Cube Workspace to be a synonym for premium serviced office space and targeted content marketing is paramount to achieving this goal. We utilise a range of the best marketing service providers to assist us in achieving this goal and ensure that our communications strategy isn't stagnant but evolves with the market and stays ahead of our competitors.



**▣ Are there any expansion plans on the cards for Cube Workspace that you can share?**

Absolutely! We have recently completed our Cape Town (ICON building) workspace expansion. We now have five floors in the ICON building in the CBD (we had three floors before which was at 100% occupancy). We will be opening our V&A Waterfront workspace (situated at the old IMAX/BMW Pavilion building) in August 2016 and expect our first offshore workspace in Ebene, Mauritius to open its doors in June 2016. We are also negotiating a possible Ballito KZN workspace but this is only expected towards the end of 2017. We are a company of entrepreneurs who have a vision to not only grow our presence in South Africa but also take Cube Workspace global.

*Wayne Windell, MD of Cube Workspace, is a qualified chartered accountant with a postgraduate diploma in taxation law. Windell's career has spanned four continents, and his enquiring mind and innovative thinking enable him to bring the very best of local and international practices to his role at Cube Workspace. His previous positions include those of senior audit manager at a Big 4 audit firm as well as head of IT Governance and global finance controller for a global engineering and consulting company.*

## ABOUT SINDY PETERS

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