

# DHAFIR

## DEVELOPMENT & CONTRACTING

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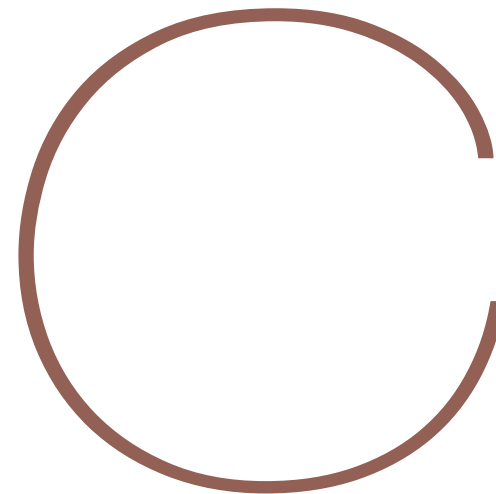
CORPORATE BROCHURE





# Going the extra mile

The last few years have seen an unprecedented increase in new development in Abu Dhabi, matched by a dramatic rise in competition within the industry. Elie Saikali, GMO of Dhafir Development and Contracting, explains to Gay Sutton how the company's management and operational principles have given it an edge in this challenging marketplace



linging to the edge of the desert, Abu Dhabi is a surprisingly green and verdant city. Located on an island jutting into the Arabian Gulf and connected to the mainland by three very busy bridges, the city boasts a skyline that's a glittering display of sophisticated high rise buildings arranged along a well designed grid of wide boulevards. One company that has played a major part in shaping the city of today is Dhafir Development and Contracting (DDC).



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Established in 1976, DDC's growth not only paralleled that of the city itself but extended beyond its bounds in 1998 with the opening of an office in Dubai. Ranked among the special category contractors in Abu Dhabi, the company has developed an enviable expertise in executing multi-disciplinary projects specialising in the high quality end of the market. Indeed, the products of DDC's endeavours can be seen across the island, ranging from hospitals and hotels through to office towers, residential buildings, shopping centres, palaces, industrial projects and villa compounds.

The secret of DDC's success is multi-faceted, but at its heart lies a management culture that personifies proactive and friendly collaboration based on forming strong relationships with the client. "We are a client satisfaction oriented company and always honour our contractual commitments," explains GMO, Elie Saikali. "We will always go the extra mile to fulfil the needs and requirements of our clients. By so doing, we have gained a long-standing good reputation in the market, and this has been built up over a period of 35 years."



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## KONE

"KONE has been proud to work with Dhafir for several years. We believe our earlier performance on the execution of delivered projects and the excellent feedback on our service during the maintenance period were the primary reasons for selecting KONE to supply 16 MiniSpace passenger elevators to the Amaya and Beach Towers that are being developed by Dhafir at Reem Island, Abu Dhabi. We take pride in being a reliable partner with honorable business ethics." Ghazi Khalek, Regional Director, KONE Middle East.

The catalogue of projects during that time is extensive and includes such iconic Abu Dhabi landmarks as the 21-storey Masood Office Tower, the Central Bank of the UAE and the 42-storey Liwa Heights apartment block in Dubai. But perhaps the most prestigious project to date was the construction of the American Hospital in Dubai. Worth some \$250 million overall, the contract came in two parts and began with the construction of a five-storey outpatient clinic and administration building. On its successful completion in 2007, the company was awarded the second part of the contract: to add a state-of-the-art, seven-floor inpatient block providing 250 bed spaces, eight operating theatres, physician rooms, laboratories and a range of other services.

Construction projects, of course, are never without their challenges. And in the case of the American Hospital, the company found itself liaising closely with architects and designers located a world away in the United States, and constructing to very demanding specifications and to an extremely tight time schedule. "The work was also carried out during a peak in construction when there was a scarcity of resources," Saikali says. "So we had to import workforce and staff at short notice, and ensure they worked to the high

# vision and precision in perfect harmony

**Dar Al Rokham L.L.C.** formerly known as Al Habtoor Marble was founded in 1975 and is headquartered in Jebel Ali Industrial Area II, Dubai, where our stockyard and office space is spread over 200,000 square feet.

Over the years we have managed to possess "The largest Marble and granite in the United Arab Emirates". We are sourcing from the best of quarries in different part of the world. The company has gone through tremendous expansion, to the stage that we can claim ourselves as a regional market leader and a global player.

Our aim is to cement our position as the leading professional in supplying and installing stones to bring our clients complete satisfaction in every project. This is being achieved through our commitment and compliance with international standards such as ISO. 9001:2008 continuing improvement quality procedures, client's support and increasing investment in personnel and technologically advanced machinery.

As we enter an exciting new decade of growth for our company, we expanded two independent companies in Abu Dhabi and Qatar. Dar has successfully completed many of prestigious projects in worldwide such as:  
Burj Al Arab (Dubai), Shangrila Hotel (Dubai), Sandyline Hotel (Barbidos), Emirates Tower (Dubai), Emirates Palace (Abu Dhabi), Dubai International Airport Phase II & III, Dubai Metro (Dubai), Grand Hyatt Hotel etc.



standard of quality we demanded, and to the satisfaction of our consultants and clients.

"We bring in subcontractors for highly specialised disciplines," he continues. "This means we have a much better control over the quality of our work. We invest a great deal in training our people and growing the skills of the workforce. In this way, we can be sure that our performance continuously improves from one project to another."

Performing to these standards requires a continuous focus on improvement, and DDC manages this by keeping abreast of the latest construction techniques and materials, ensuring that knowledge is exchanged across the company, and has developed a range of methods for meeting the region's unique construction challenges, such as under-water-table multi-storey construction with tanking systems, fast track projects, design and build projects, and hot weather construction methods.

"We strive for excellence," Saikali asserts, "as an ongoing process. Our clients want their project on time, on cost and at the best quality possible, and that is what we aim to do."

Of course, the last few years have not been easy for the global construction industry, and the recent economic difficulties in the UAE have compounded those problems, forcing local contractors to look elsewhere in the Emirates for work. "The market here is therefore becoming very competitive, and clients are becoming more price-sensitive. But still we see good prospects here in Abu Dhabi. We have a growing economy, oil prices are high, and the city has not yet gone through a boom in the way Dubai did. So there are good grounds for the construction industry."

The company's strategy, going forward, is to continue to target high quality projects, and to capitalise on its expertise in hospital construction. "There is a policy here to improve the healthcare system, so this is a good area to specialise in. We are also diversifying into development, and we currently have a luxurious project – Amaya Tower – underway on Reem Island, due to be completed by the end of 2011," he concludes.

In spite of the growing competition, DDC is expanding its horizons and reaping the benefits of its search for excellence, a process that it will no doubt be continuing in the future. [www.dhafirdc.com/](http://www.dhafirdc.com/) ■



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