



Achieving international recognition – and local loyalty

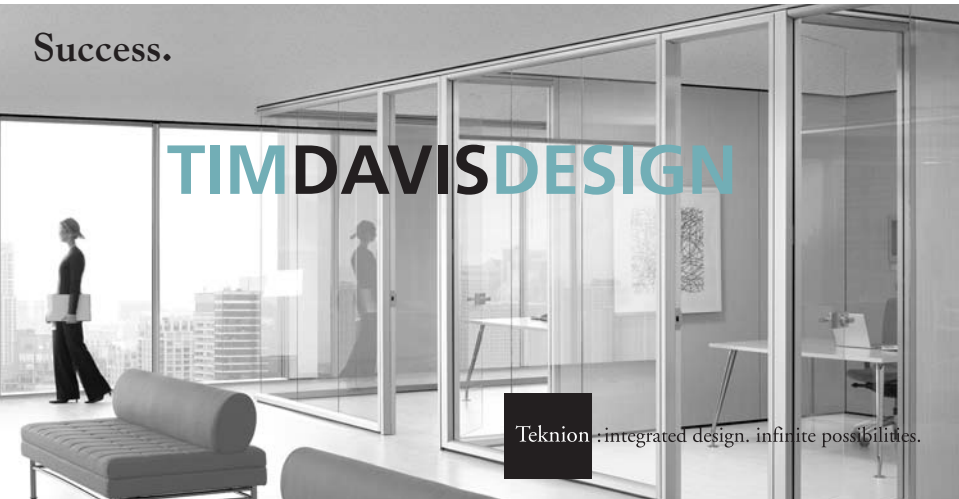
– for creative and practical designs for commercial interiors and architectural millwork



STAFF WRITER – The Ontario Construction Report Special Feature

You can see the results of Tim Davis’s passion for quality and attention to detail in the National Gallery of Canada, Chateau Laurier, courthouses, corporate boardrooms, and numerous National Capital Region YMCA-YWCA facilities. The bigger story, however, is how in the past decade Davis has built an internationally successful design business from scratch focusing on commercial interiors and millwork.

“He’s very careful to understand the use you are going after,” said Cathy Turnbull, a vice president of the National Capital Region YMCA-YWCA with responsibility for Employment, Enterprise and Newcoming Services. “The designs are unique and very beautiful. He finds a way to put small touches in that make an incredible difference.”



*Congratulations to Tim Davis Design.
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411 Leggett Drive lobby, Kanata, detailing consultancy to Griffiths Rankin Cook Architects, photo courtesy of GRC



Private residence, Ottawa, photo Taylor Photography

TimDavisDesign

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“Staff that work at these locations find their environments extremely functional but very special at the same time.”

On the other end of the spectrum, Davis’s success with Pacific Network Services Ltd, a financial services company, has led to assignments in Vancouver, B.C. Shannon (Ireland), Paris (France) and Oxford (England), in addition to Ottawa (where the company operates the Accu-Rate foreign exchange service). Here the designs need to comply with the highest standards for high-level international business organizations. “His work is very aesthetically pleasing,” says Maire Boivin, Managing Director of Accu-Rate Corporation. “He understands the feeling we want to portray, the

image he wants to portray, and at the same time his spaces are really functional.”

Davis’ three-person team will undertake residential work, but 85 per cent of his business is in the commercial and institutional sector. A significant part of the workload is providing consultancy services to other designers and architects, contractors and subcontractors working on larger projects, where his expertise and attention to detail is recognized as adding considerable value.

He got his start in the mid 1990s, after immigrating to Canada from Britain and working for Murray and Murray Architects who were then working on the Palladium project (home of the Ottawa Senators, now the Scotiabank Place) and various overseas projects. Qualified in the fields of both Architecture and Engineering in the United

Kingdom, Davis founded his own practice in Ottawa in 1995. He found a critical ally and early supporter – Claude Lavoie of Gaston Lavoie Cabinet Shop in Ottawa.

This millwork and cabinet business has a long-standing reputation within the Ottawa construction

community for integrity and quality. Claude Lavoie plays by the rules the way they are meant to be observed; avoiding bid shopping, honouring its terms of business, and always ensuring the client is satisfied.

“When I met Tim on a project maybe 10 or 12

years ago, I realized he had a high degree of integrity and was focusing on a very high quality workmanship and high quality products, which was a good fit for my philosophy on how we like to do our work,” Lavoie said. “His drawings

are exceptionally well detailed.”

This is vital for millwork, which combines extremely high visibility and extremely low tolerance for design errors. In

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*It's a pleasure working with
Tim, Sarah and Julia.*



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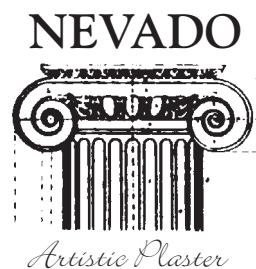
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fact, Lavoie says most of the time when his company receives drawings from outside designers; his team has to re-do them to "get the accuracy we need". Davis' designs, however, are flawless.

Design isn't the only issue, he said. "Like any other business, it is a human being to human being relationship," Lavoie said.

In turn, Davis says Claude Lavoie is "an amazing person."

"He introduced me to

the construction community in Ottawa," he said. "He knows everybody – he introduced me to numerous people, some of whom I have subsequently worked for independently."

Davis has taught on the Interior Design Program at Algonquin College and maintains close links with the department. He has found his team members among Algonquin graduates. They get a 'dream job' for young designers. "I don't know of many organizations where, nine months after they are hired, they are sent to Europe to help co-ordinate a major project," he said.



Epochs, Rideau Centre, Ottawa PHOTO FENN PHOTOGRAPHY



Trivium, Rideau Centre, Ottawa PHOTO FENN PHOTOGRAPHY

"Sarah Raymond and Julia Smith are core members of the design team," Davis says. "They really understand Canadian standards and appreciate the importance of detail and relationships in this business."

The international flavour of Davis's organization – reflecting his own passion for international travel and photography – adds value to the service he

provides within Ottawa, because it enlarges his perspective, and gives him a greater appreciation of cultural variations.

The overseas work includes complete project management. Some of the projects have included finding an appropriate property, undertaking the design work, hiring all the trades and managing the renovations. This creates its own unique challenges. "I suppose the most challenging experience I had was dealing with the plumbers and electricians in Paris," he said, perhaps reflecting the local trades' sensitivity in taking instruction from someone originally from Britain and now based in Ottawa.

However, while Davis certainly has a reputation and success in designing high-end international corporate environments, his work with the YMCA-YWCA in Ottawa shows



Accu-Rate Gold Room, Ottawa



Ottawa courthouse, millwork consultancy to Crain Limmert Architects

that he can also meet the needs of non-profits and smaller companies where budget issues are important and resources must be managed carefully.

"The customer service we've received from him is excellent – he responds quickly any time of the day – I can email him at 10 at night and get an answer," says Cathy Turnbull at the Y. "He listens to our needs."

Davis doesn't see his business growing to a much larger organization. "I like to remain involved in each

project, not just in managing the office; this is the only way to ensure a high level of client satisfaction," he said.

Instead, he finds himself accepted as part of the team of larger organizations. "We invite him to our Christmas parties," says Marie Boivin of Accu-Rate. "We obviously very much appreciate his work and have only good words to say about him."

For more information, visit <http://www.timdavis-design.com> or phone (613) 744 2352.



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