



GOING GLOBAL: Natasha Di Ciano hopes the EPD certification will pave the way for an international rollout of the company's building technology.
Photo: Zilia Korpas

NXT Tec raises bar for sustainable builds

A WA-based construction industry disruptor has delivered a world-first in environmentally sustainable building.

Dan Wilkie

dan.wilkie@businessnews.com.au

BUILDING technology group NXT Tec has set a benchmark for environmentally sustainable building in the tourism sector, becoming the first group worldwide to achieve an Environmental Product Declaration for a hotel.

The EPD certification is an independently verified document that measures the environmental impact over the life cycle of a product, and is most typically used to assess individual building materials such as wall panels or windows.

NXT Tec achieved the certification for its 10-level, 120-room Rivervale Wyndham Lux, where works are scheduled to begin next year.

Amenities at the five-star hotel will include a rooftop pool, bar and restaurant, a gym and a business centre.

Internationally, only three buildings have achieved an EPD, none of which is a hotel, NXT Tec managing director Natasha Di Ciano told *Business News*.

"Achieving an EPD for the hotel and NXT Tec was the most logical way to be transparent about the environmental impact of our technologies and products," Ms Di Ciano, a *Business News* 40under40 winner in 2011, said.

"We were looking at the environmental impact of not just building the hotel, but right down to the intensive operational efficiency of the hotel.

"It's not just important for NXT, it's important because we are also setting a benchmark for sustainable building globally.

"We're not just focused on faster, more efficient construction; there is a very strong environmental focus in what we are doing.

"This is a way to demonstrate it and bring credibility to it."

NXT Tec's building system involves on-site assembly of pre-fabricated components, greatly reducing the time it takes to construct a building and reducing reliance on conventional construction trades.

Ms Di Ciano said every impact of NXT Tec's construction

techniques, down to the sourcing of raw materials, was assessed to achieve the EPD.

"The biggest challenge was the sheer amount of data that had to be collected and analysed for each building component to assess the life cycle of the whole hotel," she said.

"The life cycle of each part of the building had to be included – the extraction of the raw materials, processing, manufacturing, transport, installation, use and disposal at the end of the component's life.

"This is why it has never previously been done for a building of this magnitude.

"Because (the EPD) is so rigorous it also sets a template for everyone to say 'these are some of the methods that we can employ in our construction to reduce environmental impacts'."

Ms Di Ciano said the certification would create additional opportunities globally for NXT Tec, which was targeting the affordable housing sector as well as the hotels market.

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collaborative relationship, Ms Di Ciano said NXT Tec had been in discussions with governments and developers seeking less costly construction methods for large-scale affordable housing projects.

"It's a market where traditional construction methods aren't able to find a solution," she said.

"If you can achieve faster construction, high-quality finishes, efficiencies in timelines and you can also improve the environmental impact of a building, then you pretty much have a holistic way of solving the problems of construction today.

"From a sustainability perspective, there is a real focus internationally on driving innovation in that area.

"It's not just a talking point, it's something that funds are investing in and governments are focusing on."

Wyndham Destinations Asia Pacific senior vice-president of acquisitions, procurement, project management and technical services, David Wray, said he expected the Rivervale hotel to change the nature of hotel development by placing a greater emphasis on minimising environmental impacts.

"Our company is committed to sustainability and it resonates strongly with our guests," Mr Wray told *Business News*.

"We are pleased to partner NXT Tec and this announcement will give our guests confidence that a stay at Wyndham Lux Perth is an environmentally responsible one."