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# Rising HIGH

The Elzain family has construction in its blood, and the five siblings who run Maxcon Constructions have continued their father's legacy by building his company into the empire it is today.

Images by Estelle Judah Photography



If the Australian construction world had a royal family, it would be the Elzains. The five brothers and sisters who run emerging construction giant Maxcon Constructions are all intelligent and successful, and have built the company their father started into the colossus it is today. Siblings Edman, Anthony, David, Carol, and Joanne Elzain, the five managing board members of Maxcon Constructions, sat down with *The CEO Magazine* to reveal how the family has succeeded in the competitive industry of construction.

Maxcon Constructions began when Raymond Elzain, the founder and driver behind the company, entered the construction

industry more than four decades ago. "Our father was the founder of this business," Carol says. "He started 40-odd years ago in domestic building and slowly moved into boutique properties and luxury homes, then into small multi-unit developments. Being the dedicated family man that he has always been, my father set his goals early in his thirties to build an empire with his children. Family is always first for my father, and he maintained a relentless vision that the individual strengths and unity of his children would be the greatest fuel in building a business empire."

It is clear that each of the Elzain siblings is extremely talented in their own fields, and together their various skills and experiences have

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unified to complement the seamless operation of Maxcon.

Director Anthony Elzain serves on the company board with his two brothers and two sisters. Prior to the founding of Maxcon Constructions, Anthony had several years of experience in the construction sector, which equipped him with the skills to manage and direct the multimillion-dollar construction company that Maxcon Constructions has become. With exposure to both construction management and project management roles, Anthony gained diverse experience prior to taking on his current role. Today, as director of the company, Anthony exemplifies what it means to be a diverse and highly skilled construction and business >



tactician. “From the outset, Anthony’s main role is to warrant that projects, even the most difficult, are managed with caution and extensive planning so as to not present any risk to Maxcon Constructions and its clients,” Edman says.

Alongside Anthony works David, who has been fascinated with construction from a young age, according to Carol. “David has been a construction foreman for as long as I can remember. His attention to detail is far superior to others in his profession, and this is well evidenced by the buildings he delivers. He is a perfectionist by nature, and that’s very pleasing to our clients. David is very hands on and acts as the general construction manager at Maxcon Constructions, overseeing all project detailing and strictly monitoring quality management.”

Edman, the third brother, is the people person and works very closely with all employees, subcontractors, and consultants to ensure they perform as expected. He has extensive experience in

business negotiation and mediation, having successfully executed many international business deals, making him strategically equipped with the skills required to successfully pre-empt any issues before they arise.

Fourth is Joanne, head of finance. “Joanne, as the chief financial officer and HR manager, has an insurance and accounting background,” David says. “She meticulously oversees all the financial incomings and outgoings of the business, and is intimately involved in the financial flow and forecasting of the costing of each of the projects in order to maximise profitability and maintain healthy cashflow.”

Last but not least is Carol, who has a background in architecture and law. Carol acts as the managing project manager and contracts manager, coordinating all legal aspects of the business and overseeing the entire project management team. With an extensive educational background, Carol is well equipped to manage each project’s



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execution from both a project management perspective and a legal discipline. This guarantees projects are precisely managed, ensuring the elimination of any possible risk to the business and its clients.

The Elzain siblings make the perfect team, complementing each other and overseeing all areas of the business. Gradually, over several years, each of the siblings began working at Maxcon Constructions, bringing their skills and experiences with them. As a result, together they grew the business beyond what their father could have imagined 40 years ago.

“Together the siblings grew this business into a multimillion-dollar business and now specialise in commercial, residential, and hotel developments. We currently look at projects that range in value anywhere between \$40 million and \$250 million,” Carol says.

Maxcon Constructions has seen its most significant growth in the past

10 years. Today, it is considered as a threatening competitor to Australia’s largest construction companies. Not only is Maxcon Constructions doing well on a purely financial basis; it is establishing a reputation for being one of the go-to builders for particularly difficult projects. “We tend to be approached by clients who find it difficult to get builders to commit to the projects they want to develop due to the difficulty in the constructability of the project,” Joanne says. “The Maxcon Constructions team is powered with the will to build projects that our competitors walk away from.”

The company takes pride in working on projects other companies wouldn’t accept. It enjoys the challenge of working with clients to get outstanding results in demanding circumstances. “The greater the complexity, the more we want to get involved because that gives us more of a reputation that we’re able to solve problems as they come and that no problem is too big for us to resolve. In doing that, we also factor in very heavily our clients’ budgets, so we always try to meet the brief, keeping our clients very happy,” Carol says.

Some of the most notable projects Maxcon Constructions has worked on include the 26-storey Metro Park West apartments in central Melbourne, which were completed in 2014 and had a contract value of \$37 million. The stunning Infinity 8 & 88 in Franklin Street, Melbourne, was also a Maxcon Constructions project. Completed in two stages, it had a contract value of \$44 million and was 30 storeys high.

A number of the projects the siblings are most proud of are the ones that were considered to be difficult builds. With Carol’s background in architecture, and now in construction, she can appreciate the difficulties that sometimes arise out of building an architect’s vision. One such project that is particularly memorable for Carol is a site in Southbank, Melbourne.



“58 Clarke Street in Southbank was a relatively tricky project. It was a 36-storey building, boundary to boundary, with a very small floor plate compared to the height of the building. The difficulties associated with wind velocity were very challenging for the engineers involved, notably the wind and structural engineer. The logistical arrangement was not conventional—the floor plate could not accommodate the required trades and materials at any one given time on a floor. With extensive programming, trades were closely monitored on a very micro level.

“There were some major transfer beams in that building. With the 45-degree rake of the building, three levels were required to be constructed before we could install the perimeter precast panels at the 45-degree raked wall. The execution of this detail was a little unnerving for some of the contractors on site. Notably, we

still managed to pull through earlier than we had anticipated in terms of the program.”

One of the current projects the family believes is notable is Vue on King William Street in Adelaide. With a contract value of \$70 million and considered to be Adelaide’s tallest building, it’s a mixed commercial and residential building that will have more than 200 apartments when completed. Its distinctive design, which features an all-glass facade, has been praised and called the ‘new landmark’ of the city. “This is classified as a major project by the state government and is characterised with over 200 apartments, five double-storey penthouses, two retail spaces, and an outdoor podium on level seven that accommodates designer landscaping around a 15-metre lap pool,” Anthony says.

Carol believes that although most clients they work with are >



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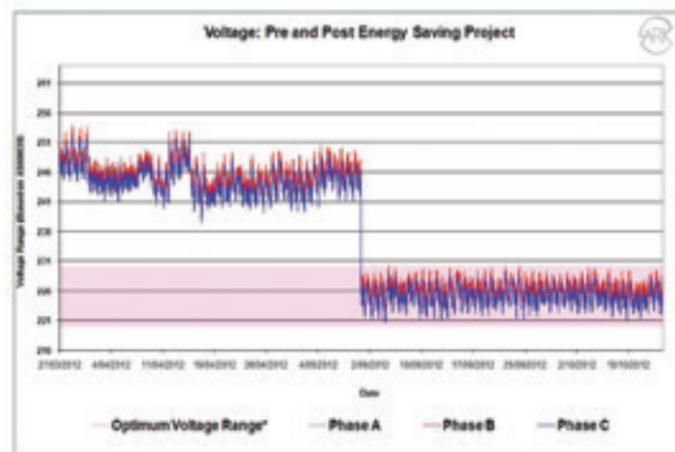
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financially secure, in the building industry this isn't always a consistent scenario throughout the construction of project and, as such, can cause problems. "We carry out comprehensive due diligence with the aim of being aware of who could become a risk to the project and our business.

The fear lies with other people's business decision-making in the aftermath of signing contracts, which may in turn affect the project. The hardest part is entrusting others to run their business successfully. We're always prepared, in any case, for that failure. That is the hardest

part in this industry that we have to manage."

One thing that sets Maxcon Constructions apart from other companies in the industry is the importance it places on recognising and appreciating its staff for their 'above-standard' commitment to performing their roles. The team behind the Elzain family and Maxcon Constructions is a highly committed and loyal group of individuals. "The fastidiousness of each individual at Maxcon Constructions exemplifies a team that exhibits unparalleled skill, unwavering efficiency, and pure dedication," says Carol.

"Armed with a team of very strong and proficient professionals that range from various backgrounds such as civil engineering, structural engineering, architecture, and so forth, no challenge is too difficult," David says. "Maxcon staff operate like an engine in a high-performance vehicle—they drive a project with speed and precision. Any consultancy firm or subcontractor will, of course, verify the point that no-one waits for Maxcon to make a decision or resolve a problem."

Carol believes that honesty and trust are key to ensuring successful partnerships and successful projects. "We only work with companies that are transparent in their dealings with Maxcon Constructions," she says. "We respect that everyone has a business to operate, with profits to attain.

"Maxcon Constructions doesn't just talk the talk on this front; it walks the walk. Many of the businesses that we deal with are Australian and family owned and operated. This commonality is a point of favour and, as such, the team at Maxcon Constructions extend above and beyond to assist those companies when they encounter difficulties. At times, such difficulties are financial, and Maxcon Constructions has assisted in preserving and re-igniting stability in their businesses."

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While success is in Maxcon Constructions' sights, this is not at the expense of other businesses. "We're not a conventional builder in the sense that we are purely money driven; there are several values that we extend in all our relationships," Edman emphasises. "This is more often than not extended in return. Our father has groomed each of us with the saying that people can take everything away from you except your good name—never compromise your good name."

When selecting its supplying and manufacturing partners, Maxcon Constructions is determined to extend these partnership opportunities exclusively to Australian businesses. By working solely with Australian suppliers and manufacturers, Maxcon Constructions can guarantee the delivery of a fine product.

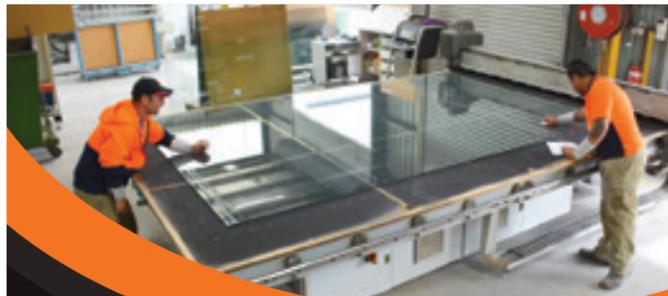
As for the future, all five siblings are unanimous in their vision for the company. They are aiming high and are determined to continue



building the company and their family's legacy. "Just like our buildings, Maxcon Constructions is continuing to rise higher and higher. Our goals are consistently evolving and we're never complacent," Carol says.

"In the current climate, Maxcon Constructions has projects totalling

more than \$500 million over the next three years. Our legacy will be afforded to our children, and the Elzain business tradition will continue to take Maxcon Constructions to ever-evolving heights." Whatever happens, and wherever Maxcon Constructions goes, it is clear that the sky is the limit for this talented family. •



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