

# erga NEWS

wishes you a merry christmas

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## WORD OF ELIE & RANDA GEBRAYEL

Reading these words means that you belong to ERGA's family. Whether you are a client, a potential client, a subcontractor, an employee or a potential employee we want you to consider yourself part of what we like to call ERGAMANIA. Our Christmas greetings for you this year will be the newsletter you now hold in your hands. It aims to show you another perspective of ERGA which makes you proud to be one of us, the concept of ERGAMANIA, a concept that will be clearer while surfing the pages showing you ERGA's professionalism and commitment towards the society and the environment. On the one hand, it will be reflecting our know-how and expertise in our projects and on the other hand it will be focusing on our day-to-day impact on the environment and the society. We hope that you will enjoy reading our articles and that this first issue will bring you new insight and information. More importantly, it happens that soon ERGA will be celebrating its 30 years urging us to be seeking for more, especially to preserving you, you who stayed committed to us.

So, it is with deep gratitude that we want to thank you for all your contributions, help, support and cooperation. It is you who made ERGA what it is today.

To our clients and subcontractors, our friends, thank you for finding us, believing in us, trusting us and persevering working with us.

To our employees, thank you for your devotion, commitment, efforts and creativity which were the key elements for designing our success and building it on strong basis. Your time away from your families and your dedication is what made ERGA shine along all these years.

These attributes are worthy to be given to the brilliant minds that worked with ERGA from the very early stages as well as to those who will be working for ERGA's continuity.

Finally, we owe it to ourselves and to you, our future generations, to be ethically committed providing you sustainable designs not only because we have to but also because we want to.



Elie and Randa Gebrayel  
Chairman and Vice Chairman

*Elie & Randa*

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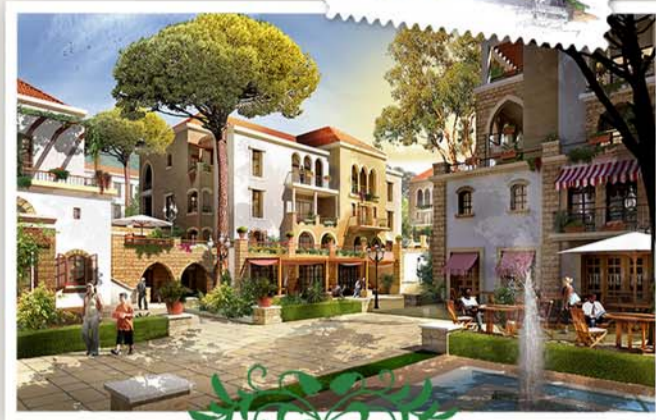
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Special thanks to all the persons who contributed in the success of this issue: Paul Abi Dergham, Fouad Abou Rjeily, Joseph Azar, Habib Bou Habib, Gaby Gebrayel, Mitri Harmouch, Raymond Kreidy, and Zina Majdalani

## erga projects

### \* beitmisk



BeitMisk is a residential community that spreads over approximately 655,000 m<sup>2</sup> in an exquisite mountainous location in Atchaneh and Sakiet-el-Misk town of the Metn district of Lebanon.

The project consists of a major residential development comprising 305 villas of different types, 243 condominiums in 92 townhouses and 1,347 apartments in 179 buildings situated in a splendid rural setting and revolving around a vast community center with retail and public squares.

The original idea of the conceptual master plan was to create a unique development capitalizing on the site's hilly topography which provides wide exposure to beautiful sceneries and views of the Mediterranean Sea and the capital city of Beirut. The objective is to create a village-like development and a sense of place where the resident would have a sense of belonging.

The high quality landscape strategy developed in accordance to international standards will not only reflect the traditional sense of Lebanese Village but also a sense of place, beauty and functionality while baring in mind the quality of adjoining environment.

ERGA proposed two architectural styles for the residential elements: the traditional Lebanese and the contemporary. Each unit will have its own architectural characteristic differentiating itself from the surrounding units. The architectural intention at BeitMisk is to create a unique development distinguished from others in Lebanon and around the world.

Although the project will comprise of different types of residential units and public open spaces, they will all combine to create a single cohesive and memorable development.

### \* sama beirut

When ERGA was first asked to design the highest tower in Lebanon, lots of questions came to mind, like the site and the architectural impact of this development within its context.

Sama Beirut is located in proximity to the Beirut Central District at an altitude of 74m, stretching at a grand height of 186m, the total altitude amounts to 260m. From this tower, you can enjoy 360 degree views, starting from Mount Lebanon, all the way to the bay of Jounieh, along the sea shore, to the port of Beirut and the rest of the Lebanese capital.

The fundamental design of the tower begins with four sheets, each folded over, enveloping and rising above the one before it, giving the illusion of stepping up towards the heavens. This unique bend in volume is what allows for the really breathtaking panoramic views.

When designing a statement so immense, the architect faces a huge responsibility towards the city and the environment, which is why Sama Beirut aims to be a green building with a lead certification.

Sama Beirut is a mixed use development with a wide array of commercial, residential and recreational facilities: the first six floors of the tower are occupied by offices, the rest of the tower is residential. The ground floor consists of boutique shops, cafés and restaurants. Six basements offer parking for all residents as well as storage and technical space and a top-of-the-line health club.

Redefining luxury living, Sama Beirut towers graciously over the city skyline, leaving an indelible and unforgettable presence that is noticeable from land, sea and air. It only finishes where the heavens begin...

### \* zenith tower



Zenith Tower is designed according to the owner's revolutionary conception of building giving ERGA the chance to break the "traditional" ways of designing copy-paste buildings.

It is not only a matter of horizontal and vertical lines, balconies and windows but rather a volumetric construction governed by the global shape, dealing equally with the interior and the exterior, ending up with a contemporary fine carved sculpture, overlapping volumes and manipulating shades. Hence, Zenith Tower stands as a three-dimensional masterpiece which interacts with its environment.

With the interior architecture we are not simply dealing in dividing the area, our aim is to define a living space, placing external lighting, ventilation and views as priorities in order to set for each apartment its privacy and its own view. Our goal was not to make aesthetical building as much as to realize the perfect integration of beauty with practicality, thus selecting robust and durable materials for resistance to time and cost of maintenance.

Zenith Tower is like a jewel carved in lines and sizes making it a vanguard building in volumetric design, quality of materials used, internal coordination and private housing services. All in accordance with a sustainable architecture to preserve the environment, reduce energy consumption and use of alternative energy.



## erga innovations

**PMC (Project Monitoring Control)** is a system developed using the latest development tools including dashboards and drill-down charts which will enable top management to be informed instantly preventing problems to occur from the first contact with the client to the project's delivery.

**DocGen** or Document Generator is a system designed and developed in ERGA to facilitate the creation of internal and external correspondence documents. The system will ensure using standard formats across all ERGA branches.



## to the team design leaders, and project design managers

*What is expected from you today is to be the generator that gives power to ERGA's core of business, delivering the project and exceeding all expectations.*

Since you have all the tools and resources to produce the right work and since all the sections in ERGA are complementing and supporting it, your responsibility is double towards your team and the other ones. Your work shall be systemized, your team organized. Furthermore, you have to plan your actions, you shall be proactive not reactive and the most important steps in management shall always be your working Bible.

Good managers apply a set of managerial actions characterized by planning, organizing, directing, coordinating and controlling. These five functional terms, first introduced in 1916 by French industrialist Henry Fayol, form basics of management.

H. Woods and J. King call to apply the six management functions in accordance with the procedures of the company:

- 1) **Plan:** Schedule the project to deliver on time and prepare the budget being cost-effective for the client and the company.
- 2) **Organize:** Respect the plan.
- 3) **Coordinate:** Harmonize the use of the tools and resources provided by ERGA.
- 4) **Staff:** Select the most qualified and adequate experts for your project.
- 5) **Lead:** Influence divisions, departments and individual staff members to target one thing: reaching your project's goals and objectives.
- 6) **Control:** Assess and monitor your performance and that of your team to reach your goals and take corrective actions when necessary.

By looking where one stands, and by applying the above actions PDLs, PDMs, and even ERGA managers participate individually and collectively in the success of the organization.

By **Raymond Kreidy**, Chief Design Officer

## new offices

This year, new ERGA companies opened in 3 countries:

**ERGA ALGERIE s.a.r.l**, Algeria; **ERGA-PRO LTD**, Nigeria; and **ERGA EGYPT s.a.r.l**, Egypt

Also, another company is under establishment in Abu Dabhi.



*"The tower begins with four sheets, each folded over, enveloping and rising above the one before it, giving the illusion of stepping up towards the heavens."*

## business events: batimat

Batimat, one of the world's leading construction exhibitions with exhibitors from over 48 countries took place from the 2nd till the 7th of November at Porte de Versailles, Paris. It adopted a keynote theme of **"Sustainable Building Renovation and Energy Efficiency"** displaying the fruits of a year of commitment and projects undertaken by professionals to create the building of tomorrow in response to the recommendations of the French national environment forum. From these recommendations we state: energy losses reduction, renewables development, sound insulation, access for persons with reduced mobility as well as other functions such as safety and security, health and comfort.

With a new visual identity and original set design, the Finishing and Decoration Space became a show within a show devoted to three major themes: color, material and light. As a mirror of the construction market, the 27th BATIMAT was, once again, the place where the major international trends became apparent and sustainable innovations were launched.



## sustainable architecture the human environment



Although the built environment is rationally intrusive to the natural realm, invasive to its environment and most often destructive to its features, no one argues that well integrated vernacular architecture represents an additional dimension of beauty and charm to the natural landscape as our Lebanese villages, the Moroccan earth architecture, or the white Greek villages facing the Mediterranean Sea...

In the course of its evolution, Humanity succeeded in the creation of place. Marvelous cities competed with the beauty of natural scenery. It succeeded in achieving architectural marvels and captivating monuments whose mystery is still intriguing our modern-day scientists.

The twentieth century fast developing industry and technology allowed humanity to expand exponentially its activities, especially in the construction sector. We witnessed the explosion of cities, the emergence of "tower forests"... and the invasion of the deserts by imported inadequate and non-integrated architecture. To achieve this, quarries devastated mountains, forests were razed and above all, the actual main source of energy for humanity, the fossil oil was nearly depleted.

Sustainable design, green architecture, LEED certified buildings, energy efficient buildings, green development... are revolutionary concepts that materialize the "learnt lesson" of the twentieth century economy, development, and construction insanity.

ERGA, as a leading design firm in the field of architecture, engineering and urban design in the region, along with every architect and engineer, faces the responsibility of initiating the change, and the challenge of promulgating sustainability awareness and environmental consciousness throughout the company's fields of action and influence, and amongst its clients. As a commitment to this conscious approach to design and construction, and to "lead by example", ERGA will design and construct sustainably its new green headquarter, the corner stone of a new generation of buildings in Lebanon.

Although Man should be extremely environmentally conscious, ancient wisdom considers that Nature, the "Soul of the Earth", will always "heal" itself through a chain of visible and invisible interactions to reinstate equilibrium, and ensure continuity of life on earth, because Humanity and planet earth are main contributors to the achievement of the goal of creation and existence.

Despite the gloomy perspective of the future of humanity and planet earth, and in contrast with the apocalyptic woven stories of year 2012, experts in human consciousness and evolution draw a bright vision of this future, not only in terms of environment and ecology, but also in terms of the introduction of new dimensions to the way the world is conceived, something like the "fifth dimension", which relates to more subtle realms than the known four dimensions...

The bright future of mankind will surely instigate a brilliant future for the design in general, and for the architecture and planning, a future that will surpass even the most magnificent and mysterious masterpieces of the ancient and present time.

The future is shaped in the present, and the collective awareness starts individually. Consequently, each one of us should play a constructive role and lend a hand in the implementation of the "Master Plan" on the verge of a new era in human development.

By Paul Abi Dergham, Head of Conceptual Design Department



## our subcontractor: zina majdalani

Company Name: **ZMK Landscape**

1. How did you know ERGA? How was your first contact with the company? Which year?

**Zina:** I first met Randa after a recommendation from a common client that we both have. This was in 2004.

2. How many projects did you have with ERGA so far?

**Zina:** 14 projects.

3. Describe ERGA in a sentence

**Zina:** A dynamic design firm with a lot of credibility and most of all creativity....

4. Describe in 1 word each of Elie and Randa Gebrayel

**Zina:** Elie: dynamic and creative; Randa: sensational and witty

5. What makes dealing with ERGA special?

**Zina:** The whole setup is special to start from Elie and Randa all the way to the staff, passing through Marie... The management is based on simplicity and integrity, and I think this is the ingredient for a successful career.

6. What advice do you feel you can give ERGA?

**Zina:** I don't know if I would be in a position to give advice, I am still learning from ERGA.

7. What are the added values given to you by ERGA? And the ones you feel you've given ERGA?

**Zina:** ERGA has promoted my way of perceiving projects from concept all the way to delivery point. It has introduced me to upper level clients and most of all the mega projects. In return, I have worked with all my faith and have always protected ERGA's interest at all levels. I have proven my skills to meet all expectations and I continue to do so.

8. Anything else you would like to add?

**Zina:** Big part of ZMK's success is owed to Elie for showing me the way and Randa for letting it happen!



## trainings and seminars

**What is REVIT?**

Autodesk's REVIT Building is a program incorporating both 3D modeling and 2D drafting in one. It has many features that allow users the flexibility and freedom to design. BIM (Building Information Modeling) technology and the parametric change engine are the two components which make REVIT an incredible force in the architectural world. However, overcoming the resistance to change and getting users to understand the potential of REVIT are two issues firms must deal with. The utilization and functionality of REVIT requires an investment and a commitment to take on a new program. Furthermore, ERGA is providing its architects and engineers with intensive training sessions.

By Habib Bou Habib, Interior Designer

**Contribution in the "Wheeling caps" campaign:** "Bouchons Roulants" or "Wheeling Caps" is a project launched by ArcEnCiel that aims to create a smile by providing 100 wheelchairs to 100 disabled people. The outcome of recycling 500 000 caps of any plastic bottle, will allow ArcEnCiel to buy 1 wheelchair. ERGA decided to be a part of this social and environmental project and is having the cooperation of all its members. Through their commitment, ERGA was able to collect a quantity equivalent to 22.5% of a wheelchair in a six-month period.

## in the press

\* "Real" Magazine, October 2009: "ELIE GEBRAYEL - FROM A BIRD ON A GREEN BOARD TO A PHOENIX IN ARCHITECTURE" (page 64)

\* In August, *Sama Beirut* and *Beit Misk* were mentioned by all newspapers and magazines in the Middle East.



## quality history

"Quality" is usually defined as being the totality of features and characteristics of product or service that impact on its ability to satisfy a given need or requirement.

In the primitive societies, the management of "quality" was carried out of primitive methods handed out from generation to generation.

Cavemen had to focus on the quality of the stones they used to cut meat and leather with as well as the quality of their habitats to be able to survive and defend themselves. The improvement of their ideas with time was accompanied by a better quality in the implementation of these methods. The growth of commerce and technology then intensified in quality, making the traditional methods obsolete and demanding a world revolution in managing for quality. The revolution accelerated during the twentieth century, with Japan as the leader in the World War II during the scientific management period since the quality control was not efficient enough thus causing the death of many of their soldiers due to their non-conform bullets.

Overall, the modern history of quality can then be divided into seven distinct stages:

- \* craftsmen (since the primitive years)
- \* industrial revolution (1770 - early 1800)
- \* scientific management (1911 - 1960)
- \* human relations (1930 - 1970)
- \* quality revolution (1970 - 1980)
- \* service revolution (1990 - 2000)
- \* six-sigma quality (2000 - present)

This is why ERGA is working on having a "Quality Management System" implemented which is a very powerful concept which integrates rigorous engineering with concepts of value, human and customer satisfaction and continuous improvement, in the struggle for excellence, in all kinds of work.

By Quality Team

## erga social events

**Beirut Marathon 2009:** 50 members from ERGA participated in Beirut marathon 2009 sponsoring the "Kunhadi" foundation who's goal is to lower the road car accidents toll in Lebanon especially due to drinking and driving.

**Vide Grenier:** ERGA's staff was asked to bring any kind of item they do not need anymore. It would be clothes, toys for children, shoes, accessories, books... These will be given to underprivileged people to whom it would be a blessing.

## the true spirit of christmas

Ho! Ho! Ho! Is that what the holiday feels like to you? Or are you stressed with so much to do? The holiday is a celebration of love and peace. Hence, being stressed and spending more than you can afford defeats the purpose.

Inviting loved ones to dinner can be so much fun since they are coming to share in the spirit of the holiday, which comes from your love and peace consciousness and not from material things or food.

A priceless gift can be the forgiveness of someone you are angry at, or saying you are sorry from your heart to another. What a wonderful way to celebrate this glorious holiday.

If you can, offer your services as a volunteer to those who are less fortunate than you. Reach out to others, sincerely wishing them a joyful holiday, and your heart will sing. It is the little things that can make a big difference.

The spirit of Christmas is bonding with others; spending quality time, showing others you care, sharing fun times, and sending love and peace to the world. No matter how you choose to spend this holiday season, remember the true spirit of Christmas.



"I started working with ERGA in 1984..."



"I was born in 1984..."

## testimonial: joseph azar vs. mitri harmouche

### 1. Tell us about your background and your career.

**JOA:** I started working with ERGA in 1984 before finishing my studies (TS Accounting). We started 5 in the office (A1 now, entrance only) with around 10 architects (AO now). I was responsible of the entire administrative work and at the same time a foreman on site. Back then, ERGA was a small company which faced a lot of problems due to the Lebanese War.

**MANH:** Born on the 25th of June 1984, I majored in both landscape design and eco-management at AUB. During my studies, I was appointed as minister of environment in the Youth Shadow Government and as vice-president and representative in the faculty of agriculture at AUB. I had 4 student jobs one of which was FPDU that introduced me to ERGA.

### 2. What do you do in ERGA?

**JOA:** At the early stages, I was responsible of all the administrative work. However, ERGA's expansion in 2000 led to the division of all these duties among the other administrative staff members. So I became more focused on the employees' documentation in the HR department (social security, work certificates, etc...)

**MANH:** I am a landscape designer since July 2008 working on many projects like Houara, Beit Misk, Clemenceau, Debbas Rmeil, Achrafieh and Residential Towers...

### 3. What do you like best about ERGA?

**JOA:** I've always felt that the team and family spirit in ERGA makes it a special place to work in surrounded by caring staff members, feeling like home. I always felt deep inside me that ERGA is me and when someone says anything good about it I feel flattered.

**MANH:** ERGA is known for its team and family spirit making it a special place to work in, in addition to the flexibility of the Top management especially Mrs. Randa G. I also like the diversity and the large scale of the projects which are interesting and enriching to work on.

### 4. What is the best advice you can give our new members?

**JOA:** Don't lose time; always try to learn the best from others without being affected in case some behave badly. And always try to have initiatives.

**MANH:** Be calm and patient while working on projects since both clients and managers change their minds frequently. Give the best you can and accept other people's comments.

### 5. Define in one word each of Elie and Randa Gebrayel.

**JOA:** I cannot separate them nor define them in just a word. But I can say they are my family and they complete each other.

**MANH:** Both are leaders. Mr. Elie Gebrayel is charismatic and Mrs. Randa Gebrayel is caring.

### 6. Who or what inspires you?

**JOA:** Mainly Mr. Elie Gebrayel's parents who were like parents to me. Mr. Roufael Gebrayel was a very wise man always giving me valuable advice and Mrs. Georgette Gebrayel who compensates my mother's absence. I also appreciate Mr. Elie's courage and bravery that always inspired me and forced me to do the best I can to achieve my goals.

**MANH:** Nature and its surrounding.

### 7. If you were a crayon, what color would you be?

**JOA:** Any pastel color

**MANH:** Green

### 8. Anything else you'd like to say?

**JOA:** You did not ask me if I like or hate working at ERGA. (After everything you said is it possible that you hate it?) Of course not, I DEFINITELY LOVE IT.

**MANH:** We didn't talk about Lebanon. Hope one day we'll have a dream country for every Lebanese where we can live peacefully as every human expects and deserves.

## in the next issue

- \* Awards 2009
- \* ERGA in Beirut Marathon 2009
- \* Santa Barbara and Christmas Events



## green christmas

You can limit the impact you have on the environment still have a great holiday. Having a green Christmas doesn't mean being a Scrooge! Just follow these simple action points to cut down on wastes:

- \* Wrap presents in fabric which is reusable and less likely to be tossed.
- \* Buy durable gifts which don't rely on disposable parts like batteries.

### \* Food and Drink Preparation:

- avoid buying goods with unnecessary packaging
- SNUB: say no to unwanted bags!
- buy drinks in large containers rather than in several small ones
- avoid using paper plates, cups and napkins

### \* Decoration

- use artificial trees to avoid cutting down millions of trees yearly
- use LED Christmas lights since they are eco-friendly and have a long life span and are composed of electronic components
- turn off Christmas lights before sleeping or going out to prevent a fire and to save energy
- choose reusable decoration rather than delicate ones
- gift tags can be made from old greetings cards
- save envelopes without labels and reuse them
- use string, ribbon or wool for wrapping gifts, rather than sticky tape

Have a happy green Christmas! Why not make it a green new year too? Make a resolution to reduce, reuse and recycle in 2010. Start by contributing in ERGA's recycling campaign.

## Leadership



Leaders do not command excellence, they build excellence. Excellence is "being all you can be" in doing what is right for your organization. To reach excellence you must first be a leader of good and honorable character, in order to get the job done. Excellence starts with leaders who are engaged in the entire process of leadership.

The character develops over time; it does not change quickly. A person's observable behavior is an indication of its character. This behavior can be strong or weak, good or bad. A person with strong character shows drive, energy, determination, nerve, self-discipline, and willpower.

Leaders should have ethics, a strong vision, and deep beliefs. They should also be competent, creative, forward-looking, inspiring, confident, intelligent, fair-minded, broad-minded, courageous, and straightforward.

Attributes define leaders, and to be a leader is to be:

- \* **A standard-bearer:** creates trust and openness in his employees to fulfill his visions.
- \* **A developer:** helps others learn through teaching, training, and coaching.
- \* **An integrator:** reaches success only through a unity of effort.

Character and skills determine the way problems are solved and tasks are accomplished in the organization which consists of 3 steps:

- 1- Structure gives the organization its form and dictates the way it will interact.
- 2- Leaders determine organization effectiveness, guiding the way problems are solved and tasks are accomplished.
- 3- Followers respond to the structure and the leaders.

Managers and Chiefs need to be leaders; their workers need vision and guidance. On the other hand, leaders need to be good managers of the resources entrusted to them.

What kind of leader are you going to be - The kind who thinks he is the best? Or the one of the very few greatest who attribute success to the rest?

By Gaby Gebrayel, Advisor to Chairman

## strategic planning for consulting firms



With increasing competition and fluctuating market conditions, strategic planning is an important practice that differentiates the successful companies from others. The strategies characterize the decisions that enable a company to allocate and exploit its resources to gain supremacy over the competing companies. However, many are still doubtful about the best strategic planning practices that can be realistically adopted. There may be doubt about the phases of the strategic planning process, its formality, the amount and intensity of planning involved, the tools and techniques used, the time horizons of the plans, and the possible pathways of growth.

A company starts off with a mission and vision which are linked to a strategy that serves as a guiding path. This strategy will define the decisions that enable a company to allocate and exploit its resources in order to achieve market superiority over its competitors.

A key factor that truly differentiates companies that survive from those that do not is the proper adoption of a strategic planning process. It is a process that "emphasizes the use of goals, resource allocation(s) and plans; so as to "develop financial and strategic performance". The principal aim of strategic planning is not to design strategies but rather to alter the mental models that decision-makers hold as well as to integrate and control its different units.

Looking at history, it is fair to say that the business environment has major implications on the managerial style to strategic planning. Once designed and formulated, the strategies need to be implemented throughout the organization. Strategy implementation is the development of the appropriate plans (programs and procedures). A successful strategic planning process is one that has a feedback mechanism that enables the organization to make the appropriate changes to better realize its expected outcomes. Actual outcomes of the strategies need to be compared to or evaluated against the expected and agreed upon ones, and accordingly changes need to be made within the company.

By Elie Abou Ghazale, Chief Operating Officer