

Polished and precast concrete transforms factory into a showroom

SA prime example of how modern concrete technology can be effectively used to blend cost-effective functionality with aesthetically pleasing finishes can be seen at PMSA's (Pan Mixers South Africa) new showroom in Jet Park, Gauteng.

Created from the gutted steel-framed shell of an old factory, the revamped 720m² building makes extensive use of precast and polished concrete.

It comprises 400m² of showroom, 280m² of ground floor and first-floor office space strategically located at either end of the showroom as well as a 38m² reception area and a first floor wooden deck with a stainless steel balustrade which is used as a recreation and visitors meeting area.

"Our customers' products and natural lighting were essential drivers in preliminary design discussions", said Quintin Booyesen,

sales and marketing manager at PMSA. "As Africa's largest suppliers of brick and block making machinery and other concrete-related equipment we sought to

use concrete wherever possible."

"Another objective was to be the first building in South Africa to use polished precast concrete

load-bearing walls and we wanted to demonstrate different types of finishes on these walls. Brick walls, by contrast, would have been much thicker. We not only installed

precast load-bearing walls between the ground-floor offices, but we also incorporated other precast concrete elements in the building such as polished portal

columns which frame the main entrance, kerbing (both wet and dry cast), entrance stair slabs, bollards, numerous examples of concrete block paving, and of course high quality concrete bricks."

PMSA's new showroom was jointly designed by Elite Architects and Booyesen. "We involved ourselves in the design because we were very specific about what we wanted, especially in concrete usage. The polished load-bearing office walling was key to our overall objective of displaying the beauty and functionality of precast concrete in various colours."

"Another goal was to demonstrate concrete's elegance and versatility and we achieved this by introducing a lightweight tapered finish on two cantilevered walkways at either end of the showroom."

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The completed PMSA showroom highlights the beauty and functionality of polished precast concrete