

KDI Elements

Evolution of a Brand

BY ELLEN PARIS

As one of the Coachella Valley's largest companies, KDI Elements is recognized as the premier company for granite, stone, and tile from fabrication to installation.

Established in 1990 by Paul and Annie Klein, KDI will realize revenues will of more than \$45 million this year. Today KDI's customers include The Ritz-Carlton, Kapalua: Andalusia at Coral Mountain, the luxury golf community in La Quinta, Toscana Country Club in Indian Wells, and major national homebuilders like Del Webb/Pulte and Shea, as well as local custom and regional builders.

KDI's evolution from a three-person tile installation business to its current customer base and capabilities required Paul and Annie to recently reflect on the future of the KDI brand. "We realized that a number of our customers didn't realize the wide scope of our business and how else we could work with them," Annie explains.

The Kleins decided it was time to "rebrand" KDI. After consulting with a local marketing and image firm, they knew more than just a logo change was necessary to move forward. On Sept. 1st KDI Stoneworks officially became KDI Elements: Beautifying where you live, work & relax. "We're rebranding and expanding our name for better brand recognition and to totally encompass the various aspects of our business," says Paul, who regularly travels to job sites. "We really feel KDI Elements says it all," Annie adds.

KDI Elements designs, makes, and installs everything from Italian marble floors, custom ceramic tile, and black diamond granite countertops to limestone showers and carpet, wood flooring, specialty stone and tile accessories, exterior living elements (barbecues, arches, pillars, columns, facades, and exteriors).

The company's recent work at Andalusia — including custom exterior brickwork at the Racquet and Fitness Center, the residences, and the gatehouse — is a prime example of why KDI has enjoyed such well-earned success. "KDI has been an exceptional company," exclaims Blake Haddock vice president / sales and marketing for T.D. Desert Development, L.P. Drummond Real Estate. Their products and services, along with delivery staff, installers, and customer service department have all been first rate for years and years. The owners are wonderful as well as intelligent, service-minded individuals with a heart for their customers, employees, and suppliers, which is one reason they have built one of the largest companies in their industry. They are the perfect role model for American entrepreneurialism.

In addition to its growing custom home business, KDI made major inroads into the hospitality and commercial markets in 2007. Recently

licensed in Hawaii, KDI Elements is extensively involved in the \$125 million transformation of the 445-room Ritz-Carlton, Kapalua, including guest rooms, spa, public spaces, and condominiums.

KDI Kares, the nonprofit arm of KDI Elements was started by Annie last year to give back to the community. KDI Kares holds Annie's heart and is where she hopes to focus much of her time in the future. The organization's mission statement says it all: "KDI Kares is dedicated to helping others put the heart back into caring for our community, striving to offer hope to those who have lost theirs, reaching out to those in need, showing compassion to everyone, and treating others with the utmost respect." In addition to KDI Kares, Annie is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Children's Discovery Museum of the Desert.

At KDI Kares, Annie has gathered a group of passionate individuals, creating a community of people who enrich the lives of others. "It's very inspirational to see a company, its employees as well as the community, resource together to help," says Suzanne Zens, a member of KDI Kares Executive Committee and a KDI Elements design consultant and project manager.

Between August and December, KDI Kares will reach out to the community with nine scheduled events benefiting Jordan Ministries, American Heart Association, the Coachella Valley Rescue Mission and other nonprofits. KDI Kares' inaugural Bob Jones Memorial Golf Tournament honors a long-time KDI employee's father and benefits the Salvation Army. In all its fundraising efforts, whatever amount KDI Kares raises, KDI Elements matches.

KDI Kares is a natural extension of KDI Elements taking care of its families. The company has a benevolence fund, which quietly helps employees in need minus the usual red tape. For the families of the 60 employees working on Maui on The Ritz-Carlton, Kapalua project, there is a company resource center available to help out.

It's this true dedication to employees and their families that have made KDI Elements a company where work ethics, loyalty, and lending a helping hand count. The KDI family, with more than 350 employees, is so solid that Annie and Paul recently traveled to Alaska for two weeks. "We felt so comfortable leaving, because we knew KDI was in good hands. I only checked e-mails once," exclaims Annie. Now how many company presidents can say that?

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Paul and Annie Klein

TAYLOR SHERRILL



Top and bottom left: Gateway and entry to the Andalusia at Coral Mountain Racquet & Fitness Club. Right: Reception desk and showroom at KDI Elements.

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