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转型期的中国设计市场

The China Design Market in Transformation Period

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摘要 ……

AECOM是一家提供专业技术和管理服务的全球咨询集团, 其规划+设计|经济部门提供的服务包括: 城市设计、城市总体规划、景观建筑设计、环境生态规划、经济规划、战略规划, 以及旅游度假区规划设计。此次访谈中, AECOM景观设计总监保罗·文森特·布拉泽克介绍了AECOM在中国的景观设计实践, 总结了AECOM在中国市场取得成功的因素, 对中国设计市场的特点进行了分析, 最后对中国设计行业的前景提出了见解。

关键词 ……

中国; AECOM; 机遇; 国际化; 挑战性; 雄心

Abstract ……

AECOM is a global consulting group which provides professional technical and management services. The services provided by Planning + Design | Economics include urban design, master planning, landscape design, environmental planning, economic planning, strategic planning, leisure and cultural planning. In this interview, Paul Vincent Blazek, the landscape design director, introduced the landscape design practices of AECOM in China; summarized the key factors to success in China market; analyzed the characteristics of design market in China; and provided insights to the development prospect of China design industry.

Key words ……

China; AECOM; Opportunity; International; Challenge; Ambition

请问对于AECOM来说, 中国设计市场意味着什么?

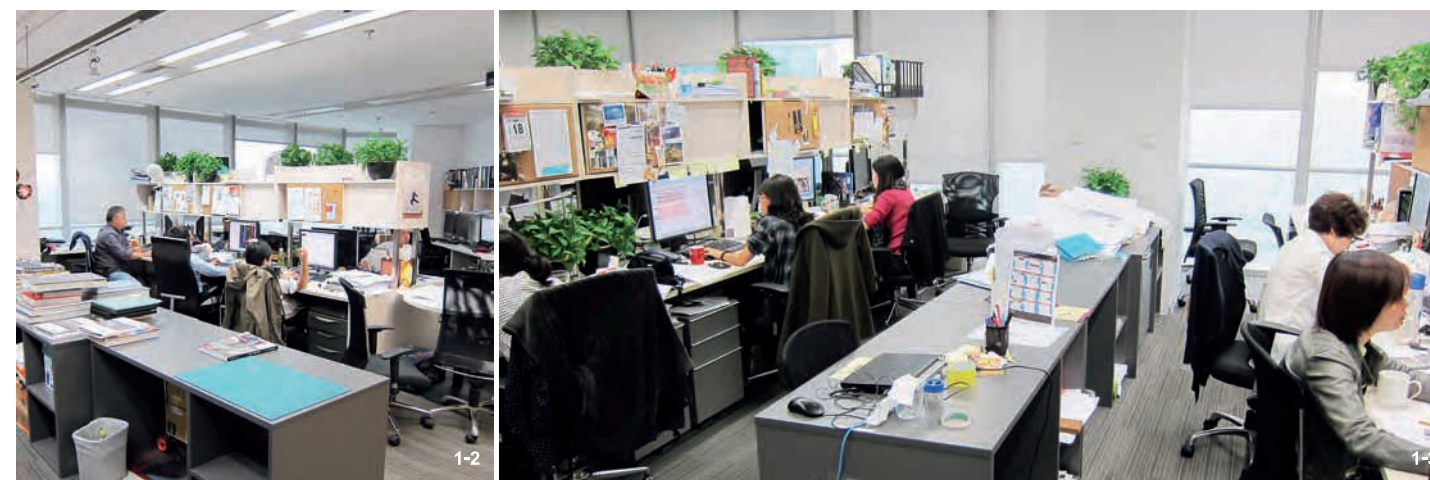
保罗·文森特·布拉泽克(以下简称布拉泽克): 我认为, 目前中国市场在全球范围内对于AECOM而言都非常重要。AECOM是一个规模庞大的国际公司, 在世界各地拥有超过45 000名员工, 其中在中国大陆有近2 000名。AECOM在北京、上海、深圳、广州和重庆建立了5个主要的办公室, 并在过去的5年间取得了飞速的发展。但是, 由于全世界的设计和建筑行业发展缓慢, 大多数其他工作室(如位于美国、澳大利亚、欧洲等地的工作室)都受到了很大的挑战。实际上, 中国市场对于AECOM在世界其他各地的办公室也非常重要, 为它们带来了很多的工作机会。

您能否简要地介绍一下您所参与的印象最深刻的AECOM在中国的项目?

布拉泽克: 我所参与的中国项目中, 令我印象最为深刻的是现在仍在进行中的太原晋阳湖总体规划项目。晋阳湖是一个面积非常大的湖泊, 曾经是工厂和发电厂的水库。太原政府希望在未来的两年之内将它

改造成一个休闲娱乐公园。这座公园将成为城市未来发展的新引擎。该项目快速的建设周期以及将工业水库改造成为新的公共公园的雄心都给我留下了深刻的印象。

参与这个项目是一个有趣的经历, 它



1. AECOM北京办公室 © AECOM

1. AECOM Beijing office © AECOM

让我们体会到作为一家咨询公司, 该如何与太原政府共同合作, 来帮助他们实现这一愿景。由于AECOM与太原政府已有长期的合作历史, 并且太原过去一直是一座污染严重的工业城市, 因此能够参与到这一转型过程并为太原的发展贡献一份力量, 是一件很有成就感的事情。

您认为与其他同类型的外国设计公司相比, AECOM立足于中国市场的优势有哪些?

布拉泽克: 我认为AECOM在中国市场具有非常特殊的地位。我们的景观设计团队在中国拥有悠久的历史、强大的品牌形象和优秀的业绩。我们的公司非常国际化, 遵循国际标准和惯例; 但在很多方面, 我们又是一个非常中国化的公司, 这使得我们与中国市场建立了密切的联系, 而这对于其他外国公司来说是具有难度的。正如你们所知, “人脉网络”在中国是如此重要, 很多外国公司都在竭力建立各种“关系”。对于像我这样的诸多外国设计师而言, 这无疑是一项挑战。因为我们不是中国人, 也不会说中文。

与此同时, 在AECOM, 外国设计师和中国设计师之间并没有界限, 人人平等且相互合作。因此我认为, 与中国之间特有的紧密联系、强大的国际品牌以及遍布全

球的实践是AECOM获得成功的重要因素。

在中国的实践过程中, 您在与中国甲方的合作过程中最深刻的体会是什么?

布拉泽克: 非常有趣的是, 中国的南方和北方之间的商业文化差异竟如此之大。在北方, 我们更多的是与政府合作, 而在南方则以与私人开发商的合作为主。相对而言, 我认为南方的开发商经验更加丰富, 而且要求更加严苛。他们通常要求我们在非常短的时间内达到严格的标准, 这督促我们不得不尽全力工作。曾经有一个真实的项目, 要求我们在45天的时间内完成设计和扩初图纸。这需要良好的管理、规划以及与开发商之间真正有效的设计沟通才能实现。

您认为中国市场不同于其他设计市场的特点包括哪些?

布拉泽克: 从专业实践的角度而言, 最大的差异可能在于甲方和设计者之间的关系。在中国, 通常来说最重要的一步是建立紧密的关系, 这样才能形成一个团队, 进行顺利的合作。甲方有时可能不能够明确地告诉我们他们想要的是什么, 但他们更加严苛并且可能会要求我们提供更多的方案以供选择, 这使得我们需要完成相比

在美国更多的工作。在中国市场, 我们与甲方之间的合作关系更具挑战性, 但好处是如果你犯了一个错误, 甲方的宽容度和接受度也更高, 因为我们“站在同一条战线上”。然而在美国, 甲方和设计者之间的关系更加合同化, 双方之间具有明确的界限。因此一般来说, 提交给甲方的成果以及客户对我们的要求都是基于合同的。

可以说在美国, 人们更倾向于通过法律诉讼来解决商业纠纷; 而在中国, 此类纠纷更多的是通过面对面的交涉来解决。这是一个很大的差异, 对我们的专业实践产生了影响。我认为大部分的外国设计公司都很难适应这一点。

您对于中国是设计师的“Playground”这一观点持怎样的看法?

布拉泽克: 也许在很多年以前, 中国曾经是设计师的“Playground”。但是现在, 我认为开发商变得越来越成熟, 他们会脚踏实地地做研究, 他们对世界各地正在发生的事情一清二楚; 大部分开发商拥有极高的标准和远大的抱负, 他们想要完成比欧洲或美国更好的, 甚至是前所未有的项目。对于设计师而言, 中国正逐渐转变为一个要求严格且具有挑战性的工作场所, 同时也是一个学习和积累经验的好地方。我认为每一个来到中国的人都收获颇丰——不



仅包括作为设计师所获得的经验和机会，而且作为个人也能从外国文化的经验中受益。我为美国的年轻设计师感到担忧。由于经济增长缓慢，他们毕业后通常无法获得太多的项目机会。

您认为外国设计师的涌入为中国的设计行业带来了怎样的影响？

布拉泽克：很多美国顾问公司和设计师往往未能给予中国足够的重视，认为中国仍处于发展阶段，建造不出什么有质量的项目。但从我个人的角度来说，基于在亚洲长年的职业经历，我认为中国的设计行业拥有乐观的前景。十年前外国设计师可能在观念和技术上还具有优势——当然，部分原因在于我们拥有“国际面孔”，目前在中国的确还存在着这种现象：尽管我没有参与某一项目，但仍然时常被要求为客户进行项目汇报，仅仅因为我是外国人——但现在我必须承认，中国设计师的潜力、技能、知识、能力，以及时下高品质的在建项目都给我留下了深刻的印象。我的确相信在很短的时间内，中国的设计公司将开始向其他国家“出口”设计，因为我认为中国设计师拥有巨大的野心以及努力工作和学习的能力。他们现在做得非常好，也有能力达到，甚至超越西方国家的项目水平。我认为中国甲方的严格要求极大地促进了中国设计行业的发展。**LAF**

2. 太原晋阳湖总体规划——漂浮在广阔的湿地栖息区上方的木平台和曲折栈道 © AECOM
3. 太原晋阳湖总体规划——现有钓鱼码头被改造为一种伸入水中的艺术体验场地。© AECOM
4. 太原晋阳湖总体规划——现有滨水区被改造为一个浪漫的港湾。© AECOM
5. 太原晋阳湖总体规划——现有鱼塘被改造成为一个水景雕塑园。© AECOM
2. Taiyuan Jinyang Lake master plan — Platforms and meandering boardwalks float above an extensive wetland habitat zone © AECOM
3. Taiyuan Jinyang Lake master plan — An existing fishing jetty is recreated as a place with submerged land-art experience. © AECOM
4. Taiyuan Jinyang Lake master plan — An existing utilitarian waterfront is transformed into a romantic bay. © AECOM
5. Taiyuan Jinyang Lake master plan — Existing fish ponds are transformed into a water sculpture park. © AECOM

We would like to know how much China means to AECOM?

Paul Vincent BLAZEK (BLAZEK hereafter): I think, globally, China is very important for AECOM right now. AECOM is a really big international firm with more than 45,000 employees around the world, and 2,000 employees in Chinese Mainland. AECOM has founded five main offices in Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Guangzhou and Chongqing, and has grown a great deal in China over the last five years. However, most other offices (in America, Australia, Europe, and etc.) have been quite challenged because of the slow growth in the design and construction industries all around the world. Actually China has also been important for helping bring work to many of our other offices around the world.

Could you please briefly introduce the

most impressive project in China?

BLAZEK: For me, the most impressive project is the on-going master plan project of Taiyuan Jinyang Lake. It is a very large lake which was a reservoir used for factories and power plants. Taiyuan government intended to change it into a park in a recreational way in the next two years. I am both impressive by the fast schedule, and the ambition of transforming an industrial reservoir into a new public park which will be seen as a new catalytic center for the city's further growth.

The opportunity we get involved with this project was an interesting story that tells how us, as a consultant firm, have worked with the Taiyuan government as a partner in helping them to realize their vision for this transformation. Because AECOM has a long history of working with the Taiyuan government, and Taiyuan had a reputation as a heavily polluted industrial city in the

past. It feels very satisfying to be part of that process of transformation and to help the city.

What advantages do you think AECOM has over the other foreign design firms for China's projects?

BLAZEK: I would say, AECOM has a unique position in China's market. Our landscape team has a long history, a very strong identity and an outstanding record in China. We are a very international company, following international standards and practices, but in many ways we are also a very Chinese company this has helped us to connect with the China market in ways that are difficult to some of other foreign firms. Because, as you know, in China the connections and the relationships are so important that a lot of overseas firms struggle to make, that is a challenge for many foreign designers like me, because I am not Chinese,



and I do not speak the language.

At the same time, in AECOM, there is not a line between foreign designers and Chinese designers, everyone is equal and collaborates with each other. So I would say, the unique Chinese connection, and the strong international brand and global practice are key factors to our success.

What is the most impressive experience you ever have during the cooperation with Chinese clients?

BLAZEK: It is quite interesting that the business culture is so different between South China and North China. We seem to work with a lot more government clients in the North, and more private developers in the South. By comparison, I found the developers in the South to be very experienced and very demanding, with very strict requirements

of very short timelines that really pushes us so much. There was an actual example that we had 45 days to design and do the Design Development drawings for one project that required good management, planning and really efficient design communication with them.

What is the significant difference between China and other practice bases?

BLAZEK: In terms of professional practice, maybe the biggest difference is the relationship between the client and the consultant. In China, generally, the most important thing is to establish a close relationship so that you can collaborate comfortably as a team. Sometimes the clients may not be able to guide you clearly enough, they are more demanding and may ask us for more options so we have to do more work

than we would ordinarily do in the US. This relationship is more challenging, but the good part is the clients are more forgiving and accepting when you make a mistake, because “you are one team”. While in America, the relationship between the client and the consultant is more contractual, there is a clear line between us. So generally, what you give to the clients and what they ask from us is all based on contracts.

Arguably, in America, people are more likely to solve business disputes by suing each other; in China such disputes are more often resolved with face-to-face negotiation. That is a big difference and affects our professional practice. I think a lot of foreign consultants have a very hard time of adjusting to that.

Do you agree that China is a “Playground” for designers?

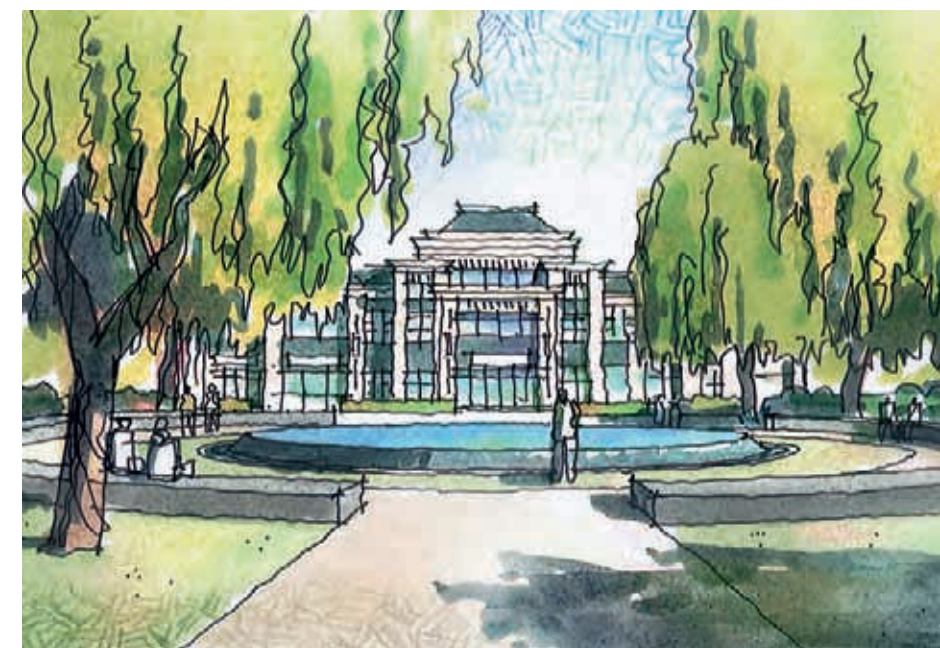


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BLAZEK: Maybe many years ago it was a “Playground” for designers. But now I think the developers are becoming very sophisticated and they really do the research, they know what is happening around the world; most of them have extremely high standard and great ambitions, they want to do something better than Europe or America, even something never been seen before. China is becoming a very demanding and challenging place to work for designers, and a great place to learn and get experience. I think everybody who comes to China is so rewarding — not only getting experience or opportunities as a designer, but, as a person, you can learn a lot from the experience of foreign cultures. I feel so bad for like young designers in America right now. They graduate from school and not have very much opportunity doing projects because of the slow economy.

What influence do you think has the surge of engagement of foreign designers brought to China?

BLAZEK: A lot of American consultants and designers tend to look down on China, thinking China cannot build anything of quality because they are still developing. However, from my own perspective based on a long career in Asia, I think the Chinese design profession is optimistic. Ten years ago foreign designers might have had an advantage on concepts and techniques — and, of course, partly for the reason of keeping up an “international appearance”, it is true that there is still a perception: I still often get asked to do presentations to clients just because I am a foreigner, even though I am not part of the project — but now I have to say I am really impressed by the potential, skills, knowledge and capacities of Chinese designers, and the high quality of work being



built nowadays. And I really believe that in a very short time Chinese design firms will start exporting design to other countries, because I think the Chinese designers have tremendous ambition and ability to work hard and to learn. They are doing fantastic things now and are able to match and even surpass the work being produced in the West. I think the demanding nature of Chinese clients has hugely developed the design industry in China. **LAF**

6. 赣州国际广场——一个欧式风格的轴向框架将广场周围的建筑相连，并创造出一种强烈的地域感。© AECOM
7. 赣州国际广场——建筑被中心轴线和纯几何造型所强化。© AECOM
8. 赣州国际广场——玫瑰园和古典凉亭丰富了住宅区的开放空间。© AECOM
6. Ganzhou International Plaza — A strong axial framework with European influences unites the surrounding architecture and creates a strong sense of place. © AECOM
7. Ganzhou International Plaza — The architecture is reinforced with a strong central axis and pure geometry. © AECOM
8. Ganzhou International Community — A rose garden and classical pavilion enrich the residential open space. © AECOM