

# NMC's Interiors

**EXPERTS KNOW  
THEIR CRAFT**



Norwegian Marine Construction delivers turnkey installations for the public areas and cabins of cruise ships. Its solutions improve passenger comfort and safety as well as enhancing a ship's appeal in a crowded marketplace. Report by David Porteous.

“NO snags and so smooth, we forgot you were onboard.” That’s what one cruise line said of Norwegian Marine Construction (NMC) during the refurbishment of one of its vessels. No job is too small or too big for NMC. Past projects have ranged from assigning single technicians to work on board luxury liners at sea to assembling a 330-strong workforce to rebuild a vessel’s interior while in dry dock.

NMC performs installations worldwide on cruise vessels, passenger ferries and the living areas of offshore platforms. These projects cover the multidisciplinary services involved in all phases of the construction, rebuilding and refurbishment of vessels. As well as shopping malls, cafes and restaurants, NMC also installs more exotic facilities such as art galleries, saunas and observation lounges.

**Flexible and Responsive**

“Another key advantage we can offer is our flat organisational structure, which makes us very flexible and responsive to changes

to the specification or schedule. We also appoint supervisors who are experts in the relevant disciplines to ensure the smooth running of each installation.”

At the completion of each project, NMC provides a complete set of documentation and fire rating certificates for all materials used. Ms Kjøs added: “It is naturally of the utmost importance for us that all materials and installations comply with the prevailing technical and safety rules and regulations.

“Our technical experts will make certain that our work meets the demanding safety requirements from the respective classification societies such as DNV and Lloyds. Our technical installations also comply with SOLAS and other regulatory bodies’ rules and directions.”

NMC’s chairman, Åge Kjøs, founded the company in the 1960s as a shop outfitting business. It later diversified into installing gift shops on-board cruise ships. This side of the business became so big that the business was relaunched in 1989 as a dedicated service provider for the marine industry. Today the company’s head office is situated at Sofiemyr, just outside Oslo. To serve the lucrative US cruise market, a satellite office was opened in Miami in 1999.

**Core Management Team**

A typical project will see NMC’s core management team of three or four persons managing a team of 70 to 80 subcontractors. Major customers include Carnival, Seabourn and Holland America.

Ship designers NMC has worked with include among others Yran & Storbraaten Architects (Norway), VFD (The Netherlands) and Tillberg Design (US).

“The biggest multi-ship contract we have ever worked on was an eight-ship contract for Holland America Line,” said Ms Kjøs. The program was named Signature of Excellence and NMC did the prestigious Crow’s Nest designed by Yran and Storbraaten and the Explorations Café where a new library-style coffee shop was established with an internet café and music stations. Following this program NMC was also appointed to an extensive refurbishment of passenger bathrooms and crew cabins for four ships. “For the last vessel we refurbished 209 passenger bathrooms and, at the same time, 250 crew cabins.”

“We stripped out everything in the passenger bathrooms, repaired steel where necessary, fitted new Ker-Lite tiles (light weight) on walls and floors and installed new furniture, sinks, lights and accessories. In addition we repainted all crew cabins, installed new flooring, new TVs and installed new curtains. On top of this all the crew corridors were refurbished as well. All the work was completed in just 12 days by 130 contractors. It’s a project we are extremely proud of.

“We have proven more than once that we can perform such demanding installations in a very short space of time. This is obviously very important on vessel refurbishments because if you overrun you will have passengers waiting on the quay.

“This makes it extremely important to have suppliers that can deliver in a timely manner. One of our strengths is being able to bring in the right subcontractors for each project. Some of the suppliers we use are big, well-known companies and others consist of just one person.

“We have a conscious strategy not to go for the lowest price but to use people you can rely on to provide a quality product and meet the deadline. When we find the right suppliers, we build them into a single team.”

**Material Know-how**

NMC, which has also refurbished the Royal Yacht of Norway, says its material know-how is an essential factor in the successful completion of projects. “We are proactive in gaining information about products and materials and we use this to create innovative solutions,” said Ms Kjøs. NMC is the Scandinavian representative for Formglas, the world’s leading manufacturer of lightweight, glass-reinforced gypsum and cement-cast architectural products. The company also offers a range of consultancy services, both for new builds and existing vessels.

The cruise industry is booming and many new luxury liners are under construction. All this is good news for NMC. “After a few years these vessels will come onto the refurbishment market,” said Ms Kjøs. “The cruise companies need to renew their ships on a regular basis to keep up with the competition from their rivals.

“It is therefore important that they have professional decorating and refurbishment companies to turn to - NMC is an obvious option, given our flexibility, experience and quality at all stages of such projects. We will continue to evolve with the industry in order to maintain our position as one of the world’s leading specialists in this field.” ■

