

Communicating The Corporate Message Through Design



Linda Patten

The term “corporate branding” is usually thought of as carefully placed advertisements, flashy logos or the occasional celebrity endorsement. Linda Patten, director of interior design at The Biber Partnership, understands there is more than what meets the eye on this philosophy and recognizes branding involves far more than a vibrant symbol or a hip commercial. For 25 years, she has been pioneering the usage of interior design as an important component to a company’s overall branding message.

Patten’s career in architecture and design began in 1985. Prior to that she had several years experience as a teacher. While teaching, she obtained a masters degree at Pratt, where she changed careers to her newfound calling, interior design. However, the educator in her has never left, and coming full circle she married her two skills and teaches interior design as an adjunct professor at Kean University. In addition, she is a principal at The Biber Partnership, a Summit, NJ-based architecture firm, where her ideas regarding corporate interiors and branding are evident in projects for Fortune 500 companies, including Ethicon, a division of Johnson and Johnson; NY Life Investment Management, a division of NY Life; Prudential; Chase Bank; and Merck, to name a few. Whether she is designing for a large, national corporation or a smaller law firm, she believes interior design helps craft the workplace space that not only reflects the company’s vision, but also its fundamental identity.

When Reeves International, a company best known for making detailed collectible model horses, wildlife and farm animals, came to The Biber Partnership to fully renovate their office interiors, Patten was more than ready to hit the floor running. What was once a 22,000-square-foot warehouse and 8,000 square feet of outdated office space is now a unique corporate headquarters including offices, four conference rooms, a vast archival room, research and development room, graphics studio and a cafeteria complete with outdoor picnic area. Architectural components feature a large barn

door that divides the new space from the old, stone walls and a wide plank floor in the reception area that has custom glass shelving and accent lighting to accent Breyer model horses.

Taking full advantage of the space, Patten and her team created the ultimate in flexibility and function-

ality, while at the same time reflecting the company’s brand. She utilized as many earth and natural tones as she could with splashes of terra cotta and green for emphasis. In the main corridor lies a focal point to the space in the form of a mammoth, breathtaking mural depicting some of the very horses the company has built their name on. One of the conference rooms has the ability to be divided, as needed, keeping displayed products in full view. This display space is flexible and can be stocked appropriately depending upon the needs for the meeting. The huge planning and R&D room, which has special lighting for product inspection and teleconferencing capabilities, is flexible as well and can be broken down for small group discussions or assembled differently with ease for larger gatherings. Natural light played a large role in the space. As a result, workstations were built with lower panels, and the dining facility was placed on an outside wall.

Patten believes the design philosophy of incorporating commercial branding into office design is vital for all modern day corporations. As more companies understand the value of calculated interior design as a key to branding strategy, they will continue to redesign office spaces that reflect the evolution of the corporate image, and in turn, foster creative environments for its staff and clients.

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