

Green Building Highlight:

Interface, Inc.'s Platinum-Certified Showroom

Holley Henderson

Interface, Inc., an Atlanta-based fabric manufacturer, has reinvented its pollution-intensive, petroleum-dependent manufacturing operation into a business that uses and promotes environmentally sustainable practices. The company manifested its greening with its first showroom and retail space in its headquarters city. Opened to the public in 2004, the showroom was designed and built with the goal of being designated a Platinum Project under the U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC's) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Commercial Interiors (LEED-CI) pilot program. There were rigorous criteria for achieving a LEED-CI designation in the pilot project. The showroom was the first project to achieve LEED-CI Platinum status.

The showroom, located within an urban renewal district in Midtown Atlanta, includes commercial and retail display space as well as offices and meeting rooms. This location, with both street-front and interior-building access, further maximizes the showroom's visibility and walk-in retail traffic. Since the showroom is a tenant improvement project, the direct impact on the site location was not the focus; however, selection of a building that was designed with good urban planning was a key factor. In selecting the appropriate building, the following considerations were taken into account using the LEED New Construction (LEED-NC) Rating System Site Category as a guideline: 1) Site Selection (e.g., location near a parking deck), 2) Development Density and Community Connectivity, and 3) Alternative Transportation (i.e., proximity to public transportation).

This Fall, the showroom will be a focal point during USGBC's annual Greenbuild Conference. For showroom details, visit www.interfacesustainability.com



The space utilizes florescent and metal halide lighting which significantly reduces the watts per square foot energy usage. *Photo by Brian Gassel, TVS.*



More than 30 percent of the furniture is re-used from local Atlanta furniture showrooms. This reduces the need for new materials to be manufactured and minimizes the use of fossil fuels in transporting goods to the project site. *Photo by Brian Gassel, TVS.*

Holley Henderson is principal of H2 Ecodesign, a sustainable design consulting firm that is a catalyst for eco-positive design in the built environment and global business strategy. For further information about the author, visit the web site: www.h2ecodesign.com.