

Timberland Brings The Outside In

Pull on your boots and make a difference. That's the message conveyed literally and figuratively in The Timberland Co.'s new prototype. The 1,500-sq.-ft. store, in Raceway Mall, Freehold, N.J., is designed to inspire, engage and inform shoppers. It has an authentic feel and a simple, natural look that underscores the brand's three defining attributes: social justice, love of the outdoors and craftsmanship.

"Our challenge was to bring Timberland's brand essence to life in a powerful, flexible and cost-effective manner," says Beth Harlor, VP, design, creative director, FRCH Design Worldwide, Cincinnati.

The message starts at the baseline. A textural glass facade helps to visually transport customers from the indoors to the outdoors.

"We used floor-to-ceiling glass so there are no barriers at the storefront. In exposing shoppers to the entire environment all at once, the facade makes an honest statement that reflects back on who we are as a brand," says Bevin Bloemendaal, senior director, global creative services, The Timberland Co., Stratham, N.H.

A projector casts a documentary video on customers as they enter the space ("The shopper actually walks through the video," Bloemendaal explains.) The film reinforces Timberland's call to action and immediately puts customers in touch with the brand's

essence. Photos showing store employees helping out at a local teen shelter are integrated into the storefront.

The layout is simple and focused, with footwear integrated throughout, supported by surrounding apparel and gear.

"We are telling a tighter story with apparel with this format," Bloemendaal says. "We're focused on footwear and making it more relevant within the space."

Rather than dominate the merchandise, the fixtures work to make the product the hero. The system, custom designed, is intended to give the store maximum merchandising flexibility. An up-front table can accommodate apparel and footwear or stand on its own with footwear only.



A glass facade, left, opens up the store's interior to mall shoppers.

authentic," Bloemendaal says. "In that, they are very much reflective of who we are as a company."

The flooring is made of bamboo, a highly replenishable material.

Benches have storage space below.

Materials: The mix of materials—bamboo, copper and textured woods—speak to the key attributes of the Timberland brand.

"The materials are all natural, real and



A ceiling treatment with seeded glass, left, floats above the naturally finished, earth-toned selling space.

status are stamped in the surface."

The fixturing is made of such materials as reclaimed barn wood, metal and glass. Environmentally friendly bio-fiberboard panels make up the wall shelving. The cashwrap, with a base made of reclaimed wood and a stone top, is accented with an amber-tinted seeded glass backdrop. A Roman copper logo is pin-mounted on the glass.

Timberland's signature orange leather—the same glove leather used inside their boots—is a featured material in some fixtures and also frames graphic banners. Tree stumps and logs serve as merchandise risers.

"The stump risers play back to Timberland's heritage," Harlor says. "It brings a little bit of the company's past into the present."

Stone is another prominent material. The fitting-room doors are made of frosted glass with interior walls of stacked stone. A stacked-stone wall in the rear of the store references Timberland's quality and outdoors themes.

"We also used stone on the storefront," Harlor adds. "The idea is that individual locations will customize it, using a material indicative of the region."

In a nod to the changing seasons, the store is designed to be transformed on a quarterly basis. Using color, props and photography, the space will reflect each of the four seasons.

"The walls, for example, are meant to be repainted each season," Harlor explains. "We made it as easy as we could, with a wall display system that can be easily brought out from the wall."

A ceiling treatment with seeded glass helps drive customers through the space. Resembling a suspended trellis, it serves as a focal feature to

Project Resources

Design: FRCH Design Worldwide, Cincinnati
Contractor: Turner Busch, Paramus, N.J.
Lighting: Lighting Management, New City, N.Y.
Flooring: TimberGrass, Bainbridge Island, Wash.
Fixturing: Fleetwood, Reading, Pa.
Perimeter wall system: Marlite, Dover, Ohio
Storefront signage: Barlo, Hudson, N.H.
Video system: Norcom Ltd., Cincinnati
Specialty glass: Archetype Frameless Glass, Harrisburg, Pa.
Reclaimed wood: Dismanded Barns, Lancaster, Pa.

display seasonal elements, such as pine cones and twigs in fall and simulated ice crystals in winter.

Timberland plans to use the new prototype as a model for new stores, both here and abroad. Early signs are encouraging, Bloemendaal says.

"Customers are responding positively to the overall environment, ambience and ease of shopping," he adds.

—Marianne Wilson

(mwilson@chainstoreage.com)



Bio-fiberboard panels and bamboo flooring are made from eco-friendly materials.

Photos by Mark Steinhilber Photography, Columbus, Ohio