



Impact of ADA regulations among topics outlined by attendees

Just how much of an impact new regulations stemming from the **American Disabilities Act (ADA)** will have was among the topics discussed during our second **Women in Commercial Construction & Facilities Retreat**.

From ADA guidelines, to aesthetics, and feasibility, some of the industry's leading women executives from the retail, restaurant and hospitality sectors discussed at what the new regulations mean to the industry overall. Attendees also discussed what lies ahead in 2013, as the commercial construction sector shows positive signs of growth amid the tough economic landscape.

Executives participated in the retreat, held in August at the **W Hotel** in downtown Atlanta in August. Attendees participated in

three days of discussions and networking opportunities, sponsored by *Commercial Construction & Renovation*.

Following is the final installment of our Friday morning open forum. For more information, visit us at www.ccr-mag.com.

CCR: How are the new ADA regulations impacting your renovation and new construction initiatives?

Jo-Ellen Askew, Starwood Hotels: It has really made a big impact from a hotel perspective, particularly for existing properties as far as the pool is concerned. A permanent lift is now required at all pools that are not an ADA compliant sloped entry. It's a real problem. I know the **American Lodging Association** is trying to fight it. I haven't heard any recent

updates on where they are with it. They received an extension, because it was all supposed to be implemented in March 2012.

The other area is fitness. There is a new ADA requirement for clear floor space at the fitness equipment. That has had an impact on us. We have hotels that may have to increase the size of their fitness areas or remove equipment, whatever it takes to meet this new requirement. Other areas impacted are spas, saunas, steam rooms and ATMs.

Cindy Rotton, Solutia, a Subsidiary of Eastman Chemical Co.: I have a brother who's handicapped, so I know how the lift helps the handicapped. It can lift them down into the pool, and then lift them back out. It's too bad that the hotel industry – or somebody – can't say, "Please try to design something that is more aesthetically pleasing."

Askew: The problem is existing hotels. Some of them don't even have pool deck space to be able to put a lift in. Aesthetically, it's going to be devastating. The whole idea behind it is equality for everyone. If you have a beautiful pool, why shouldn't everyone be able to use it. I think there are probably other ways. You could offer a removable lift at the guest's request. The problem is that the guest has to wait for the hotel staff to bring it.

CCR: What about the liability issues? Does your liability go up from an insurance standpoint?





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Askew: That's a good question. I wouldn't think so. I would imagine that having a handicapped person in your hotel carries the same liability as a regular guest.

Vickie Berry, AT&T: As a hotel owner, are you considering closing the pool?

Askew: It all depends on what the final outcome is with the requirements. That may be the only option.

Ann Terrill, TerCon

Construction: It has been my experience that several Architects working for a firm, i.e., retailer, hotel, etc., should work closely with the design team to come up with a solution that is aesthetically pleasing. By doing so, they are able to collabo-

rate and maintain what ADA considers compliant, while also appealing to their customers. So that might be an option for you. Get a group of your architectural firms together with your design team and let them hash out the opportunities in order to provide the most cost-effective solution. Consider an enclosure or an area that is not an eye sore to potential customers.

Julia Versteegh, Storefloors:

Usability is an issue, too. I was in a hotel with a group of handicapped people I volunteer with, some in wheelchairs. There was a lift to get to the pool area, but it was so big and complicated to use, an employee suggested we take the wheelchair ramp that was a bit out of our way because the lift was more trouble than it's

worth. So they have it, but it's not really even usable.

Askew: Many hotels have them and they don't get used. But you must have them to comply.

Amber Matas, Nest Environments:

It's a big issue in California for a lot of the local retailers we work with. They're known for certain groups that go out and look in all of the stores to make sure they comply. When I was on the retail construction side, it was a constant battle. Being on the vendor side, one of our biggest challenges is educating our clients in the areas they're not familiar with. What are the requirements? Can we make it aesthetically pleasing and still match their brand. That's one of our biggest design issues.



Growth has been tremendous over this last year, and we believe that trend will continue. We've implemented new processes and procedures, as well as increased staff and training to ensure our team is able to continue to deliver what we've promised to new/existing clients.

— Kerri Keingstein, Boss Facility Services

Retail, Hotel and Restaurant Executives



Courtenay James
Project Manager
International Store Development
Retail Design Institute



Vickie Berry
Assistant VP/
CRE Retail
AT&T



Sandy Severson
Director of
Corporate
Facilities
Brown Shoe Company



Kelly King
Construction
Project Manager
Dollar General



Save time. Save money. Every day!™



Tahereh Hedrick
Regional Design
Manager
FedEx Office



Vember Stuart-Lilley
Special Projects
Manager
Guess?



Diane Kelley
Capital Project
Manager
Facilities
Department
Multnomah Athletic Club



Jo-Ellen Askew
Senior Project
Manager
Starwood Hotels



Paula Manning
RDSM US
Real Estate
TD Bank



Janis Williams
Director of
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Tuesday Morning



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Kerri Keingstein
 President
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Kay Barrett
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Milissa Garrity
 National Accounts
Chain Store Maintenance



Cindy Rotton
 Dealer
 Development
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Amber Matas
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Gina Noda
 Director of
 Marketing
Sargenti Architects



Julia Versteegh
 Business
 Development
 Manager
Storefloors



Ann Terrill
 President
TerCon Construction



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Tahereh Hedrick, FedEx: Being from Texas, we may have the most stringent, behind California, ADA review requirements. You have to register with **TDLR (Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation)** and that sort of thing. So we're very aware of those requirements.

Honestly, I don't think it's affected our locations too much because we're very proactive.

CCR: How do you account for the retail stores that have a lot of clothes racks [etc.] in their aisles?

Courtenay James, Retail Design Institute: Before opening a store, we actually take a 36-inch long bar, hold it horizontally and plow through the store. If we bump into anything – clothes, racks, fixtures, etc., we modify the design by moving fixtures so all aisles have at least the minimum clearance.

Vember Stuart-Lilley, Guess?: It is also about educating and partnering with your store teams. One step we take to make sure that our store teams have knowledge on clearance in particular in the stock room, we paint yellow striping on the floor. This visually shows the ADA egress path needed.



By taking his measure and educating the store team on why these protocols are in place, it helps reiterate its importance.

Hedrick: The key definitely is to educate your people in the stores.

Stuart-Lilley: If you explain it to them, they understand.

Diane Kelley, The Multnomah Athletic Club: I'm just one facility, but I'm running into new rules as far as employers having to add lactation rooms. There's some other remodels that I've done where we had to make changes to accommodate other code requirements.

Paula Manning, TD Bank: Has anybody run into anything with children ADA compliance? We have. We have what we call a penny arcade – a coin counter. The design has a child's step. And we recently received a ruling from the State of Massachusetts saying it wasn't in compliance. There are new children rules that reference height and reach. It's up to the state whether to adopt it.

CCR: What about the new AT&T store in Chicago? How high on the to-do list are ADA requirements?

Berry: Extremely high – the top.

Askew: The fines are high.

Gina Noda, Sargenti Architects: This is nothing new. It has been like this for many years. When I



We have grown tremendously over the past two years as a company. On the architectural side our retail workload has picked up tremendously.

— Gina Noda, Sargenti Architects

was on the GC side, we did a huge restroom renovation program for Office Depot throughout all of their locations to make them ADA Compliant.

Kelly King, Dollar General: There are groups that do nothing but go around and check ADA compliance. When we remodel some of our older stores, ADA is almost always No. 1. Your design revolves around ADA.

Berry: This flagship store has multiple levels, so you have to have the right ramps and the

2011 was another successful year. Our Corporate Services division served over 28,000 client locations and completed over 6,000 transactions.

— Kay Barrett, Cassidy Turley

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We're trying to focus stronger than we have been with the real estate department. When they go in and lease a property, we need to understand what we're leasing.

— Janis Williams, Tuesday Morning



right slope as part of your design concept.

Terrill: The designers are licensed to make sure they comply with all building codes.

Kay Barrett, Cassidy Turley: We just did a flagship in Beverly Hills, Calif., and the entire design was around where the lift would go and what it would look like. In this particular location, the lift was a very expensive piece to put in. There's nothing you can do. We put the lift into the design and rotated everything else around it.

Sandy Severson, Brown Shoe Company: You'll have inspectors that will make you tear stuff out if it's not perfect. You use to have ranges. But they've tightened those, so that's better.

Askew: In many cases, they might have to forgo a lifecycle renovation because they need to spend the

dollars on complying with the new ADA. It has been an interesting balance of doing what's right and keeping the brand vision for the property, but also complying with ADA.

Barrett: I think it's the timing and the bubble of the generation. It's the age they're approaching. You're going to find a mass of people who did not have a disability, but as they age, will have a disability or a family member with a disability. So I think it's critical that we're looking at it now rather than 10 years from now when we have a massive problem on our hands with the aging population. People are living longer, too. Recession or not, this is the time when you have to do that.

CCR: What is your strategy on balancing store maintenance and protecting the bottom line during these time periods?

Barrett: We work with a lot of vendors and suppliers on a number of different maintenance programs. Let's take LED lighting. We talk about the maintenance and replacement costs of those, and the lifecycle of your lease versus the upfront specs. Look at the operational spend through the life. Then

look at the educational spend, because you have to educate our managers. What does it take if we relamp all of them at once instead of going back three, four or five times to do replacements? It is a continuous evaluation.

Stuart-Lilley: We changed many of our existing lights to LED lights. We now have templates where it actually shows the lights' placement in the store. Our store managers aren't there to do maintenance. We want them to sell. So we supply them with as many tools as we can.

Noda: With the economy over the last few years, a lot of the retailers were negotiating their rents on their lease agreements. Some of the clients were able to save a great deal of rent money over the course of two years that they are able to allocate more funds to design, remodel and renovation of their stores now. The past few years all they were doing was upkeep and maintenance. This past year we have had the opportunity to bid on several new designs for various retailers because of the rent costs they saved over the last couple of years.

Berry: The biggest expense in our retail stores continues to be person-



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— Kelly King, Dollar General

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— Vember Stuart-Lilley, Guess?



nel. There has been a focus on trying to reduce turnover, because it is such a significantly higher cost than the rent, maintenance and utilities. It becomes very expensive. So while I don't own my capital or expense budget associated with the retail stores, I still act like I do. That's one of the things I try to stress to my team. Just because you don't own the money, you're still a shareholder. It's in everyone's best interest to minimize the cost that we can control.

So while we can't control the personnel, we can control some of the other bricks-and-mortar elements in the store's operation, including reexamining service provider contracts, and evaluating the scope of work. We also evaluate materials used in the stores to minimize ongoing maintenance expense. This is one way we can continue to show the value we're bringing to the business and the bottom line.

CCR: Who is handling your projects these days – the construction or facilities departments?

Berry: I think scope has a lot to do with it. For some of our smaller replacement or repair jobs, the facility managers handle the projects. They are all very capable and qualified to handle projects of this size and even larger ones where needed.

Kerri Keingstein, Boss Facility Services:

With temp spaces, I have clients where the construction department handles it, and then I have clients where facilities handle it. Same holds

true for some of the rollouts and special projects we handle.

Berry: Sometimes, it's just the relationships you have, and nothing more than that.

Noda: Construction and maintenance should be run completely different. When I was on the GC side, I dealt with facility people on maintenance issues or special projects but construction people for full remodels or new stores. It is typically based on the projects size of which department the retailers decides to assign it.

Berry: Something else I found is that we have acquired a lot of companies, retail stores and smaller companies. As a smaller company, they often did everything, because they didn't have scale. The division between facilities and construction responsibilities works well at our scale.

Askew: Is it cheaper to have facilities do it than construction?

Berry: In the aspect when it was the smaller one, yes, because you didn't have the duplication of people. They wore two hats.

Terrill: It's been my experience that the team that handles the project is based on whether or not the team handling the job is qualified. The maintenance team may not be qualified to handle construction, construction may not be qualified to handle design, design may not be qualified to handle real estate. By streamlining the

departments to handle specific roles, your able to insure efficiency, accountability as well as the bottom line.

Noda: In some instances, retailers don't take that into consideration. They have to deal with people on the facilities side who have no construction knowledge.

Terrill: Take for instance remodeling a store. We are responsible for providing temporary space for merchandise, typically called a swing space. First and foremost is the necessity to plan expansions or remodels around non-peak performance, i.e., holiday season. Second would be to go in and do a full reduction of inventory in specific areas not impacted as much by the down time in order to provide a swing space. Facilities should never get involved, other than maintaining scopes that are not part of the project, i.e. maintenance of existing facilities.

Keingstein: With smaller scale projects, I can understand the facilities department handling; for example, if they want to swap out sensormatics in 20 stores or perform a simple refresh. The facilities department's overall objective is to maintain its portfolio of stores, so when it has large amounts of temp spaces or larger scale projects rolling out, I'm sure it can be a lot to handle, on top of the everyday reactive calls. You really need that attention to detail. Our job is to always provide that attention to detail and help educate them on

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It is about accomplishment. I do several projects every year. Moving forward, I'd like to streamline the process. There are so many projects on tap, and we have a limited amount of time to get them done.

— Diane Kelley, Multnomah Athletic Club



field processes they may be unfamiliar with.

CCR: So you have a facility maintenance team and a new store team?

Keingstein: No. They have the maintenance team and the construction team.

CCR: No remodel department?

Keingstein: The remodels with all of our clients fall under the construction department.

Barrett: Sometimes, decisions are made at levels because of where the money is coming from. So it depends if you have capital for new locations or if you're talking operational capital that you have. The best decisions are those which are not made in the vacuum of P&L only, but in the discussions of all teams at the table – finance, real estate, development –and

facilities. I've seen why it's absolutely critical that you have good partners, good vendors and good suppliers.

Berry: But if those facility people don't have the right skill sets to be managing those kinds of projects, they shouldn't be.

Keingstein: If they don't have that skill set, educating them is key so that they have a better understanding of why and how things are being done. From start to finish of any project we handle, there's so much communications with the client; we leave no stone unturned.

Terrill: One of the biggest opportunities I've had in my career working with other internal teams is the lack of communication between the teams to help establish understanding so that all parties can be successful.

Barrett: When I started, we actually outsourced construction management. After a few months, we brought it in house. Today, most of our teams are

completely integrated. If our clients are demanding a completed integrated team, the project manager is almost always set up to fail.

Noda: It's the same thing with design and construction departments, majority of the time they don't speak to each other. Some retailers have the two departments integrated but most are not.

Barrett: We used to call it a "bucket brigade." I'm going to lease it, and then, I'm going to hand it to you, and then, you've got to figure it all out. If you miss your deadline, it fails.

Terrill: I've heard it referred to as the "silo effect." Everybody worked in a silo, only concerned about their own responsibilities. I worked hard with my team. That's one of the reasons I've been so successful. It was the communication. I knew my entire team, including architects/engineers, design managers, store planners, maintenance, mechanical, cabling, store managers. We held a conference call, progress meeting weekly to



These are some of the most challenging times in our industry. So it's wonderful to see things starting to evolve. It has been a phenomenal experience. I couldn't have done this without the hard work of our entire team.

— Ann Terrill, TerCon Construction

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A lot of this year brought the redeveloping of relationships. That will be the overall push for me going into 2013.

— Paula Manning, TD Bank

insure that all parties were on the same page. We handled and addressed issues with everyone on the call so that we could save time and effectively continue to progress through the project.

Barrett: You have to know everything that comes before and after you. That's critical. There's only so much you can tweak out of the very end. When you are a part of the team, you can then become a part of the solution.

Terrill: I attended council meetings. There were plenty of conversations about the various hoops and things we had to overcome just to get the real estate property bought. And there were guidelines and stipulations on what was required in order to actually build the store. It helped being a part of it.

Barrett: We morphed into who we are today because we said, "If we don't integrate, we're done. If we don't integrate, we're going to have to outsource or we will never be successful."

Terrill: A pod meeting is a space where all the members of the team meet to review the status of the projects. Pods can be a very effective way to communicate internally, discuss opportunities and to get advice on how to address certain opportunities with other members who may have experienced similar situations. It's a helpful way to communicate internally without disturbing everyone's time on a continuous bases.

Severson: One of the things Brown did was bring our construction and

designers into an open space together. Now we have the facilities people in there. If you're not together, collaboration won't happen.

Terrill: Wal-mart was set up to where they had pods for the associates to sit in. They had the design manager, a real estate manager and a construction manager on the same team.

Barrett: Some of the best project managers in our company were designers. The mentalities are very different if you designed it or if you maintain it. It's very different. You have to teach more than design to these design associates. You have to teach the constructability of their design. It is absolutely critical. You will have a much more well-rounded design team.

Noda: When I first started with Sargenti, I'd sit in design meetings and think; This is not cost-effective, that's not feasible, you can't roll that out. I'd get very frustrated because I didn't think they understood what it took to get something built but now I started to understand that if they worried about all of that it would take away from the design element. That is kind of where I stand today, I now know why design & construction are kept separate.

Terrill: If you let the designers continue to design based on new concepts and you never have a cut off, you'd never get anything built. There's always something more grandiose. Not to mention the fact that every time you change the design it costs more money. Such as



having a bathroom redone because the specific ceramic tile that the majority of the customers approve is only a shade lighter than the other, is it realistic to go in and change every existing bathroom to the tune of \$80k per bathroom. These are bathrooms that have already been finished being considered for new updates. There's got to be a cutoff point or your losing more of your return on investment than your gaining on customer satisfaction.

Severson: It's always one more thing.

Terrill: It shrinks the timeline.

Barrett: There are a lot of good design firms out there. So it's great to have the two ends. You have to combine cost and constructability with features of design.

Manning: I think it's about accountability Model. Where the struggle comes in is that the construction manager is held accountable to the schedule, quality and budget. And the design folks are held accountable to the aesthetic. You have to deliver quality in all areas. The reality is that a lot of time can get eaten up on the front end of a project if the process is not defined and agreed to. Many times approvals and multiply designs can impact the project schedule. But the end date does not change.

Barrett: I have watched so many retailers go out to these design firms, and allow them to create and allow

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— Tahereh Hedrick, FedEx Office



the design to happen. And then it goes to pricing, where they say it's too expensive.

CCR: Does it depend on the delivery method?

Barrett: You have to set everybody's expectations up front. If you're going to build a flagship, and you're going to have an endless budget, you're going to allow that concept to roll.

Matas: I think that's really important. That was one of the things we strived to do in house. We'd come up with a refresh package – A, B, C, D designs that were based on location and budget. And we'd pull all of the elements together, give them to the architects and say, "Here's what you can work with." If you let them

dream big, you're going to get amazing things, but you might not get things you can build within your budget.

Noda: There's a difference between design firms and production firms; a huge difference. Some specialize in design elements only, while others just do production and roll out. We specialize in production and roll-out but sometimes we have to tweak the design from the design firm to make it cost effective and feasible to roll out.

Matas: What I've incorporated is that everybody is accountable. If you say it's going to take two hours to put something into a rendering, then you are accountable to that time. It affects everything else. When I was a project manager, I would categorize the change orders. I'd show everybody that this was the design; this was the construction; this was the city. Everybody knew. I think that is so critical. If you do it properly, it's time well spent.

Barrett: There is also accountability of the stakeholder. You have to put them in a box and tell them there is a timeframe for what is critical. And we're going to hit it once. You can't keep going back again and again. So even if they're not intimately involved, you have to hold them accountable, too.

Hedrick: Things are going to happen. That's just the reality of it. Being upfront and honest in projects like that is key.

CCR: Give us a snapshot of what you expect moving into 2013.

Berry: This was a down year construction wise for us relative to the last three years. What we're going to focus on this year are all of the things that we just don't have time to do. We've looked at a lot of our processes, found the ones that we wanted to improve, and started chipping away and working on those initiatives we thought we could add value to, drive costs out or just cre-



As a personal goal, I want to grow my territory. Last year it was 20 percent. This year it is 25. I think things are going to be all right.

— Cindy Rotton, Solutia, a Subsidiary of Eastman Chemical Co.

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We've seen an amazing increase in productivity and profitability. It has been like a 30 percent increase just by making sure everyone knew what everyone else was doing.

— Amber Matas, Nest Environments



ate a better work environment for our employees.

So we're well over halfway through the year, and we've actually checked several off the list. The team has a real sense of accomplishment because they developed the prioritized list.

One of the processes that has been very effective is our proactive approach to lease renewals. My organization doesn't complete the real estate transaction. When renewals would come up the Retail Transactions team would handle negotiations with the landlord without our input.

We instituted a process that's automatic, so that as a lease is coming up for a renewal. It triggers a document that goes out to my facilities managers. That document asks about the issues at this site. It is automatically transmitted back to the transaction manager. So now, they have a list of items they can take to the negotiating table with

the landlord and, hopefully, if we're going to stay there, get it resolved or get it in the deal before anything is signed. It sounds simple, but it wasn't being done. We're seeing some positive benefits from it.

King: With **Dollar General**, it's pretty much the same thing next year. Hopefully, we'll eliminate the pipeline compression we've had so that we can have a little bit more time to build these buildings. The real estate department really has stepped up and is working closely with the construction department. We're continuing that relationship and moving it into merchandising so that everybody has a smooth transition. With the amount of stores we do, it has to be a well-oiled machine. You have to make it happen.

Dollar General is up this year. We see that happening again. When the recession hit, our demographics changed significantly. We grew fast. And the construction department felt it a lot. This upcoming year should be smoother.

Matas: This year, I've worked really hard to implement a process that

has been clearly defined. We had a number of people who were amazingly talented, and for many years had been wearing a lot of hats. Some of those hats didn't make sense. So getting everything realigned and breaking up where things need to happen, and just getting the process refined and nailed down has been key. We are getting some people into the right training. People have talent. We're getting everyone working together and getting things where they need to go.

We've seen an amazing increase in productivity and profitability. It has been like a 30 percent increase just by making sure everyone knew what everyone else was doing. We are delivering things oftentimes in a short timeframe. I would love to see that continue into next year. It's all about organization.

Severson: We had a fun project, whereas we had an operation cleanup. We asked our people to go through all of their paperwork and extraneous stuff – either recycle or get rid of it. We gave them each two days to do it. About 425 recycle bins went out of our office. We re-car-



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— Julia Versteegh, Storefloors

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peted all of the hallways, so the building just felt better. The feedback was amazing.

Manning: A lot of this year brought the redeveloping of relationships. A lot of it will be the relationship with the line of businesses that support my initiatives. That will be the overall push for me going into 2013. I've been at the bank 20 years, but there's always something new or changing that's going on. It is always exciting and sort of a rebirth.

Versteegh: As our customers grow and renovate, our business is growing. Things have been booming this year. We have been fine-tuning our processes and becoming more efficient. When we're shipping so many products, we don't want to miss anything.

Part of what we do is logistics management. We solve problems that come up with changing construction schedules. We have to be on top of every little detail.

Kelley: It is about accomplishment. I do several projects every year. This year, I finished an expansion project, which is a trend into the future. There is a change in the way people work out. There is new equipment and how people want to work out. Moving forward, I'd like

to streamline the process. There are so many projects on tap, and we have a limited amount of time to get them done.

And there are a bunch of new ordinances in Portland.

Stuart-Lilley: The Guess? Brand Integrity program was first implemented four years ago. Our immediate brand integrity team consists of myself and a store designer, however it takes the collaboration of our entire retail development team to execute these projects. This year our team experienced a 50 percent increase in projects.

Next year with all of our new concept initiatives and the brand integrity program directives I wouldn't be surprised if we double the number of retrofits completed. We will also continue to work on our "Lessons Learned Initiatives." This is part of our philosophy of "know your audience." Lessons Learned is a visual tool we use for all of our retrofits or roll-outs to help communicate visually between the corporate team, GC and our store teams, so that they have a step by step tutorial of what construction work will be taking place in their store. They have a visual of what Day 1, Day 2, Day 3 etc., will look like. We also benefit from this by including our field team as part of the projects, it creates a sense of ownership and mitigates errors and inconsistency. I feel that the more you empower and educate people on the project and expected results, the more successful they will ultimately be. We will continue working with



We've looked at a lot of our processes, found the ones that were broken the most, and started chipping away and working on those initiatives we thought we could add value to.

— Vickie Berry, AT&T

and improving on this directive next year.

Terrill: We are working on honing in on our marketing strategy and niche market. We have found that we are able to present our company with over 30 years of experience, (both private and public works) while also keeping our prices low due to our low overhead. We spent



You'll have inspectors that will make you tear stuff out if it's not perfect. You use to have ranges. But they've tightened those, so that's better.

— Sandy Severson, Brown Shoe Company

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the first part of the year budgeting and improving our procedures to make us more efficient for our customer and as a team, then we went after our marketing strategy and community service in Northwest Arkansas through involvement in CASA, Junior Achievement, Washington Regional Hospice as well as the Bella Vista POA Dazzling Holiday Lights. I'm also serving on the Board for Rebuilding Together as well as running for the board for the Bella Vista Business Association. We are also now WBE/DBE certified.

It has been a very challenging, but also very exciting time. I've learned so much about running a business and what works and what doesn't. These are some of the most challenging times in our industry. So it's wonderful to see things starting to evolve. It has been a phenomenal experience. I couldn't have done this without the hard work of our entire team.

Janis Williams, Tuesday

Morning: We're trying to focus stronger than we have been with the real estate department. When they go in and lease a property, we need to understand what we're leasing. Over the last several years, we have maintained a much stronger focus and forward presence with the real estate department. They're asking our advice on what to do. Is this a good location? Could you send someone in and let's look at this before we sign the lease? So we have evolved a tremendous amount, and we're moving in a stronger direction.

Also, we're working with landlords. Our focus is on making sure everybody can work together. We sometimes share expenses, sometimes it's on our end; sometimes, it's on their end. I'm finding that working at that level has increased our ability to manage the

property and develop a stronger relationship with the landlords for future business.

Barrett: 2011 was another successful year. Our Corporate Services division served over 28,000 client locations and completed over 6,000 transactions. We plan to continue to grow steadily for the next five years, so I need to double my staff under me. That's a significant endeavor for five years. We need to grow our existing accounts, while looking for new opportunities and yet maintaining the culture we've always had. That will probably be our biggest challenge next year.

I think we need to try and understand how to use technology in the right way to better what we do, especially as more and more advancements come into play. It's really going to be critical in the next couple of years.

Rotton: As a personal goal, I want to grow my territory. Last year it was 20 percent. This year it is 25. I think things are going to be all right. The recession was a challenge. I had to pull back on working with the design construction industry. This year, our company has invested new tools for the reps to have better view of construction projects, and opportunities. As a result, our commercial business is growing, especially in the Southeast. We are trying to focus on those dealers who can best utilize our tools and services.

Noda: We have grown tremendously over the past two years as a company. We have hired a lot of people who were out of work due to the economy, it is a great thing. We are relocating into the other half of the building we are in, that's how much we have grown. On the architectural side our retail workload has picked up tremendously.



It has been an interesting balance of doing what's right and keeping the brand vision for the property, but also complying with ADA.

**— Jo-Ellen Askew
Starwood Hotels**

Keingstein: Growth has been tremendous over this last year and we believe that trend will continue. We've implemented new processes and procedures, as well as increased staff and training to ensure our team is able to continue to deliver what we've promised to new/existing clients. The success and growth of our company is no surprise. Our entire team has spent many days and nights planning for this success; something I am very proud to be a part of. Our goal for the coming years is to continue to maintain our current client base and growth of the company. As clients' needs change, we will adapt to those changes and strive to be their preferred vendor of choice. **CCR**