

# Former Pace factory now a showcase

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In the design for Lucifer Lighting Co.'s new headquarters, the Houston office of Gensler, the international architecture firm, and Jackson & Ryan Architects of Houston rose nicely to multiple challenges.

The 60,000-square-foot facility, originally designed by Ford, Powell & Carson of San Antonio, previously had been used for making Pace Picante Sauce.

The bones were good, including very nice indoor-outdoor relationships in the office area along the front. The conversion left the exterior little changed.

Inside, the renovation aimed at several distinct goals and hit all of them squarely.

The interior had to function not just as corporate space, but also as a demonstration of Lucifer's product line. The design had to be subtle enough not to upstage the lighting, but sophisticated enough to gain the confidence of a crucial audience — the top-tier interior designers who specified Lucifer's fixtures in their own projects and who sometimes visited the facility for consultations.

Moreover, Lucifer founder and CEO Gilbert Mathews wanted the renovation to meet



PHOTOS BY MIKE GREENBERG/STAFF

A Lucifer light strip adds drama to the zebrawood veneer reception desk in the company's executive suite. Tiny downlights provide ambient illumination and highlight art.

the standards of the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design program of the U.S. Green Building Council.

To that end, new bright-white roofing significantly reduced energy consumption for air conditioning. Inside, the carpeting is LEED-certified and recyclable. Custom-built reception desks and some walls are clad in a veneer of zebrawood, an exotic West African hardwood that is abundant and available from sustainably managed sources. In the manufacturing area, ample skylight illumination reduces the need for arti-

cial lighting.

The project could not rely exclusively on Lucifer's own products to cut energy use to LEED standards. Linear fluorescent fixtures, from other manufacturers, shine upward and reflect off the ceiling to provide the main artificial illumination in offices.

But Lucifer is adapting all of its halogen fixtures to accept metal halide lamps, which are more energy-efficient — though not as stingy as fluorescents — and produce a warmer light. Metal halide spots, installed in a narrow slot be-

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More photos from Lucifer Lighting Co.'s new office building

way.

The break room, with an adjoining kitchen, doubles as a sort of training room where designers are introduced to Lucifer's products and their uses.

Subtle drama abounds. Pace's old office doors were reused but sheathed in glistening white automotive enamel. Restroom mirrors float on a rectangular glow from Lucifer's linear LED light strips, which are also placed in reveals in the front of reception desks. Door-height glass panels with beautiful woven silk between the panes carry diffused light from some offices into the central hallway.

Artwork includes a fine example from the abstract expressionist Sam Francis, one of Andy Warhol's encomia to Campbell's Soup cans, a Lowell Nesbitt flower painting, numerous Francisco Toledo prints and several large, lyrical canvases by Kikuo Saito.

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Natural light floods the floor where workers assemble Lucifer fixtures in the facility that last was used to make Pace Picante Sauce