



StreetDance 3D: *Two worlds, one dream*

POWER SERGE

Up Close & Personal
with XDC's Mr Plasch

GENDER MOVIE-GOING

How can exhibs best target
their male and female patrons?

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Building the PERFECT LOBBY

Cinema lobbies, foyers, vestibules – call them what you will – are often taken for granted; but to make them work properly requires three distinct ingredients, as **Paul Georges** and **Robert McCall** of JKR Partners explain.

As guests enter the building, the movie-going experience truly begins in the lobby that serves as the centerpiece of the theater, instantly influencing patrons' overall perception and visit experience. For this reason, the focus of any lobby design must address three primary concerns: code requirements, exhibitor operational needs and ambience.

At its simplest level, theater lobby design must satisfy building code requirements which are typically based on overall theater seatcounts; the emphasis being on appropriately-sizing the lobby to accommodate the necessary waiting area while complying with building egress stipulations. Once code requirements are defined, the exhibitor's operational needs may then be addressed.

The ability to serve operational needs is paramount for any theater lobby. Amenities such as concession stands, box office and guest services; also toilets, gaming areas – and any other elements the exhibitor requests – are developed and located with the focus on the suitable size, visibility and operational flows. The goal, of course, is to create a coherent lobby that satisfies movie-goers' needs while providing exhibitor operational efficiency.

AMBIENCE

In addition to satisfying code and operational needs, lobby design should also reflect the appropriate atmosphere for the target audience and movie showings. Whether the desire is to create spaces exuding grandeur, or perhaps an environment



Whether the desire is to create spaces that exude grandeur or intimacy, lobbies should be spacious and exciting.

for intimacy, lobbies should be spacious and exciting. Finish materials, color and lighting should be carefully selected to create environments that reinforce the desired guest experience. Signage also contributes to the character of the lobby. In addition to clearly identifying focal points, when designed and integrated correctly, signage should also serve as a design element, reinforcing the desired lobby atmosphere.

However, for most exhibitors the principal challenge is that the target audience constantly changes – typically dictated by the variety of movie showings and time of day. For this reason, designers are presented with the added difficulty of having to create dynamic lobby spaces but with the flexibility to alter character to reflect the changing audience. Incorporating programmable light fixtures into the design – with their ability to

change color, vary the lighting level and provide light movement – can be used to establish different moods for the space. The materials selected can play a role in changing the character of a space too. Depending on the lighting source and time of day, certain materials are able to take on an entirely different look and texture.

The importance of well-designed theater lobbies cannot be overstated. Thoughtful planning to address customer and operator needs should always be considered, the end result being a lobby that reinforces the memorable movie-going experience while keeping your audience planning there next visit. **S**

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BEST PICTURE
AVATAR