



TWO-TONE HPL INLAYS LIVEN UP THIS NURSE'S STATION.

Full Commercial Interiors FROM A SINGLE SOURCE

BY KENN BUSCH

One of the biggest challenges architects and construction managers have with large commercial projects is getting all the pieces to come together when they need them, with the quality they expect. The Stryker Center at Borgess Medical Center in Kalamazoo, Michigan was no exception. One solution – find a single source for all of the of solid surface, cabinet and millwork needs that construction would require.

The general contractor ultimately settled on Stevens Industries for the job. Stevens specializes in offering the “entire package,” creating full-scale interiors, including casework, components, countertops and architectural millwork. Its 450,000 square-foot plant, located in Teutopolis, Ill., is highly automated and geared toward the “mass customization” production required to handle large jobs with many components.

According to Todd Wegman, Stevens’ vice president of sales and marketing, vertical integration is the key.

“We are vertically integrated from the laminated panel through installation. Particleboard and MDF is received into the plant, and laminated, machined and assembled into finished casework and components,” Wegman explains. “We’ve done a lot of our own engineering to streamline the production of parts to very precise tolerances. We have a digital measuring station right on the plant floor where we check dimension and machining tolerances.”

A project this large, including eight stories of patient rooms, nursing stations, and lobby areas, required more than panel processing capacities. Stevens’ called upon its architectural millwork expertise to take on tasks such as the creation of reception desks and other unique fixtures.

The nurses’ stations and reception desks were especially complicated to build. Radiused along their length and tapered from counter to floor, with inlays of two HPL woodgrains that curve and weave around each other, and solid surface tops, the stations and desks were very challenging. The inlay work was designed on computer, and the HPL sheets were machined on Stevens’ CNC routers for a precise fit. The substrate for the front panel was created by scoring sheets of standard MDF on one side to make them flexible enough to create compound curves.

One of the most unique services Stevens offers is on-site laminating of saturated décor papers used to create thermally fused melamine (TFM) panels, often used as a value-engineered alternative to HPL and veneered panels.

Senior project manager Bob Lopez says he believes the final results are exceptionally attractive, especially in light of the difficulties of the installation involving the curved patterns that were essential to the design. **s&p**

THE STORY: Stevens Industries fabricated and delivered all of the solid surface, cabinet and millwork for a 150,000 square-foot medical center, on time, and on budget.

THE SPEC:

- MDF
- HPL, machined into inlays
- TFM panels
- Solid Surface

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