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# Shopping Malls are Looking Up

Facing intense competition, shopping malls spruce up with innovative ceiling designs.

**A**fter several years, a shopping mall can become routine to customers who see the same decor over and over. Therefore, many mall renovation and expansion projects are using innovative ceiling products and designs.

“The added versatility and broader options of metal ceiling systems can allow separate interest areas or visual reference points in an otherwise common area,” said Derwood Quade, a corporate architect for mall developers General Growth Management, Inc. “Retail areas are more pleasant and animated, and leave a lasting impression on consumers.”

Quade favors progressive ceiling designs incorporating a blend of specialty metal ceiling systems. Components come in varying colors, styles, sizes, and shapes—such as sleek linear strips, deep baffles and broad panels.

“In one recent renovation project,” says Quade, “open-cell grids, broad reflective panels and linear accent strips contributed a great deal of energy and flexibility to our design. These products can break up large mall concourses and other open areas into more comfortable spaces that welcome consumers, and encourage them to shop at their leisure.”

A growing number of retail architects and designers believe innovative metal ceiling products can have a positive impact on retail space usage and consumer appeal.

“Designers are becoming much more daring and aggressive in an effort to create distinctive visual identities for their malls,” says Darrell Pattison, director of design for Keava Kekst & Associates, a Cleveland-based mall designer.



*This photo shows MAGNAGRID specialty metal open-cell ceiling system from Alcan Building Products.*

## Innovative ceiling products can have a positive impact on consumer appeal.

“Metal ceiling systems offer greater flexibility of shape and form, along with a wide choice of colors, bright finishes and interesting textures. This translates to greater design freedom and increased options for the architect or designer,” Pattison said.

Thoughtfully planned consumer areas can greatly enhance the success of a retail facility. “Retail vitality is stimulated by a subtle blending of tangible and intangible design elements, such as light, color, texture and style,” says Roy Higgs, president of D.I. Design and Development Consultants, Inc., Baltimore, MD.

The newer approaches to retail ceiling design have led ceiling manufacturers to develop new and innovative products. “The tremendous response of retail developers and designers to specialty metal ceiling systems has fueled rapid product development and improvements in recent years,” says Bill Martin, sales and marketing manager for Alcan Ceiling Products, Warren, OH.

“Today’s designers have a multitude

*This photo shows the Linear Metal Ceiling System from Alcan Building Products in a unique sawtooth design.*



*New MAGNABEAM specialty metal open-cell ceiling system from Alcan Building Products.*

**Ceiling systems are not only beautiful, but also highly functional.**

of options for translating their design concepts into threedimensional ceiling systems which are not only beautiful, but also highly functional," Martin explains.

In addition, these metal ceiling products are lightweight and easy to install, facilitating quick and cost-efficient renovation work.

"Changeability is crucial in modern mall design," Pattison believes. "Designers are specifying products which can be removed and replaced quickly to stay current with changing styles."

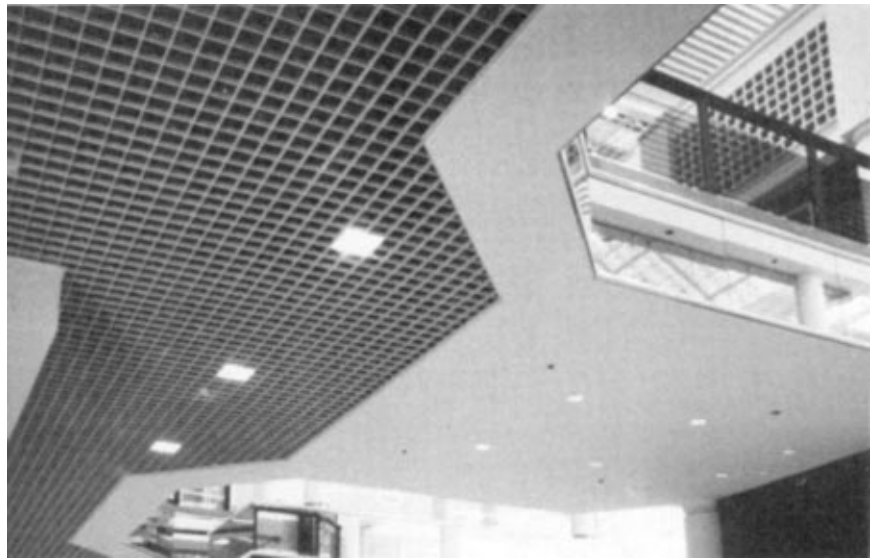
To ensure successful and profitable operation, today's mall owners and developers must stay current with retail design styles while planning for the future. Flexible metal ceiling systems can help unify present and future programs, while contributing to a memorable shopping environment attractive to customers and tenants alike.



**About the Author . . .** George Eckerd is marketing manager for building specialties, Alcan Building Products, Warren, OH.



*Alcan Planar Linear Metal ceiling system*



*Alcan Magnagrid open-cell ceiling system*



*Alcan Planar Linear Metal ceiling system*



*Alcan Magnagrid open-cell ceiling system and the Alcan Intaline Baffle ceiling system*