

MARK CASE STUDY

Clean, Uncluttered, Detailed Design Meets Project's Unpretentious Goal

555 Mission Street, a soaring all-glass office tower, sits at the heart of a rapidly expanding corridor in a dynamic area of San Francisco. The design goal for the top floor of this impressive new office building was not to create an atmosphere of opulence but rather to provide a quiet, unpretentious image for the business that would be occupying the approximately 15,000 square feet of space.

Global design firm Gensler, with architect Chris Brown heading the project, was engaged to develop and implement a design that would fulfill that goal. "The project was for a confidential client," Brown explains. "The location and the eventual completion of the space was an evolution of providing an

appropriate image to their new client base without speaking volumes of money spent on high design."

The top floor of the tower provides stunning views of the city, and the design team was able to take advantage of those views "by keeping layers transparent, open and inviting—something very indicative of the culture for our client," according to Brown.

The project, which had a conservative budget, he says, placed strong emphasis on "cohesive design, highly detailed and well-layered construction, and a desire to create a more residential feel."

PROJECT

34th Floor

555 Mission Street

San Francisco

MARK PRODUCT

Slot 4

LIGHTING DESIGNER

[Alfred Scholze & Associates](#)

ARCHITECT

[Gensler, San Francisco](#)

[Project Architect: Chris Brown](#)

[Design Director: Terry Walker](#)

[Designer: Batya Aloush](#)



In developing a design identity for the space, the primary focus was on the central zone that includes the elevator lobby, main reception area, board room and an open-pantry lounge. "The private work zones of offices and open offices maintain the flavor of the design palette but were dealt with on an economic scale with no loss for detail," Brown points out. "The simplicity of our client's working environment is reflected in the clean, uncluttered design of the offices and ancillary support spaces," he adds.

Maintaining that same minimal feel was an important factor when planning the lighting. The goal was to achieve "simplicity not only in the lighting design overall, but also in keeping the fixture types to a minimum," according to Brown. Selecting lighting that would "physically fit with the vernacular of the interior architecture" was important as well.

"Going with a less-is-more approach can many times provide some added challenges," Brown says. "No element of this project was put on the backburner as having less importance than the next, and the challenge was layering all the elements together to discern the subtle, well-thought-out relationships of all, including lighting. Light fixtures were a challenge to place to relate with architectural elements and still provide the proper lighting distribution."







While the design emphasized a clean, simple, uncluttered look, it was also very detailed. "I worked closely with our internal designers Terry Walker and Batya Aloush to implement highly detailed and unique elements to create a strong but subtle language," Brown explains.

The Slot 4 from Mark Architectural Lighting was chosen because it met multiple requirements. "The simplicity of the fixtures, in their housing and trim features, allowed us to achieve the detailed look that we incorporated throughout the project, so the lighting didn't feel like an afterthought," he says. In addition, choosing efficient, cost-effective fixtures was important.

"Energy—as well as all other green elements of design—is standard to the Gensler thought process," according to Brown. For this project "an effort was made to provide a visible comfort level to the lighting, while maintaining an energy- and budget-conscious design." Mark's Slot 4 provided a fitting solution "with

its effective lighting abilities and its simplicity. The less-is-more approach made it the right choice," he says.

The 555 Mission Street building itself, developed by Tishman Speyer, was constructed with measures that have made it San Francisco's first LEED-certified speculative development. It has been awarded LEED® Core and Shell Gold-level certification by the U.S. Green Building Council.

As for the top floor, it has received some important kudos too. "Our client was extremely happy and impressed with the final product. It exceeded their expectations," Brown says, adding that it was a joy to work with such a "passionate, visionary client who appreciated every aspect of the project." In addition, this distinguished project has become a showcase within Gensler for many of its features, design elements and overall feel.

