

STORE PRESENTATION & DESIGN



The Editors of RETAIL DESIGN & VISUAL PRESENTATION

LILLIE RUBIN

North Star Mall, San Antonio, TX



DESIGN/ARCHITECT: Michael Malone Architects, Dallas, TX
 PRINCIPAL IN CHARGE OF DESIGN: Michael Malone, AIA
 PROJECT MANAGER: Rob Romero
 PROJECT ARCHITECT: Taimedgo Smith
 PHOTOGRAPHY: Jud Haggard Photography, Bellare, TX

For over 50 years the name Lillie Rubin has been associated with the place sophisticated, upscale women went for special occasion/evening dresses. Recently the chain was taken over by Cache who felt that there was still a market—though aging—for the Lillie Rubin type of merchandise. Michael Malone Architects of Dallas was called upon to create the new prototype for a new, larger market. "The design was to provide a bridge and welcome new customers by being brighter, more open and fun." Also, to appeal to the younger market, without losing the established clientele, management decided to bring in more business attire and sportswear and thus the new design would need to support such a merchandise mix.

The design solution, shown here in the 2,100 sq. ft. space in the North Star Mall in San Antonio, features a more open and inviting facade design with floor-to-ceiling glass that serves as "the window into the store." The design is "classic" so a variety of merchandise can be shown in a setting that is not quickly dated. The desire was to "romance" the client but not with literal visual clues such as marble and crystal chandeliers. The two-toned interior is creme and black. The up front platforms hold classic matching mannequins and simple lifestyle photos. Simple floor fixtures in stainless steel and black show off the featured outfits

while the stock is displayed in flexible wall bars on hang bars and face-outs that are supported by the recessed standards in the perimeter walls.

It was important that the new design not "scare off the existing customers" but make them feel comfortable in the new environment. The soft, sweeping line of the cashwrap, which also serves as the jewelry and fragrance display case, suggests the sensuous lines of a grand piano—"the perfect accessory for any special event." That shape is also picked up and reiterated in the tiered ceiling "clouds" that provide the ambient lighting as it washes across the ceilings. The merchandise and the displays are accented by fixed halogen down lights and the light is reflected off the large, creme colored, porcelain tiles on the floor. "The wall and ceiling color is used throughout the store and was selected, in part, because of its softening glow when reflected onto the skin."

The design was created to be rolled out, easily built and maintained in other locations yet still maintain the Lillie Rubin reputation for service and quality that it has always had.

