



Members show their big ideas to reposition a travel agency

TO SHOW YOU THE BIG IDEAS

Shop! members can produce, *Retail Environments* recently challenged our members to provide conceptual solutions to the real-world needs of a fictitious retailer. Members were asked to provide either a broad-range solution or a solution focused on their firm's expertise based on the following brief, developed

by Shop! Creative Council members Tori Deetz of Visual Magnetics and David Milne of DMD Retail Design.

Entrants run the gamut from a design firm to a flooring-solutions provider. Together, their solutions provide a glimpse into the wealth of problem-solving capabilities of the Shop! membership. With an open budget

to encourage solutions of all types, members' big ideas range from budget-conscious promotions to high-end space concepts.

Members' solutions follow the brief on the facing page. Please review them and vote for your favorite at bit.ly/REchall18.

Retail Environments 2018 Challenge: Travel Agency Repositioning

Swidersky Travel, a legacy family business, is experiencing a downturn due to Internet travel sites. The second generation is committed to turning the business around and is open to forward-thinking solutions.

BACKGROUND

We have been in business for 35 years. It was started by our parents, and we have taken over the business since their retirement. I have a degree in business administration, and my brother is a professional construction manager. We feel that the business can be turned around into something that is current and relevant. However, we are both challenged to come up with a retail strategy and the tactics to apply that to our chain of 25 stores.

Located primarily in the upper eastern seaboard of the U.S., our stores are split between small-town high street and regional malls with an approximate footprint of 1,500 to 2,000 sq. ft. We also have one mall kiosk and satellite fixtures in our local town supermarkets and drugstores.

Our customer base is split between local business travel and personal vacation bookings. Both categories have seen a steady decline with the proliferation of Internet travel sites. We'd like to shift our

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offering to concentrate on vacation packages to all age groups, leveraging our supplier incentives to packages that are not readily available to regular Internet shoppers.

Our stores typically are staffed with two employees at work/consulting stations, with two additional employees on staff on weekends. Our stores typically are open from 10:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. weekdays, and 9:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. on weekends.

Our brand is a bit tired and tied to the family name, but we are open to repositioning this with a fresh approach to how we retail our services.

GOALS

- To reinvigorate and reinvent our brand at our three points of operation: retail stores, freestanding POP fixtures, and our online presence. We are looking to creative design firms and agencies to present a retail strategy and some renderings to support that strategy as the first steps.
- To bring our business into a more current gathering place to package flights, cars, lodging, and rentals in line with our clients' expectation of getting value and something different in a vacation or getaway than they could on their own.
- To shift our offering to concentrate on vacation packages for all age groups.

BUDGET

Our implementation budget is open at this point since we do not want to constrain the direction or opportunities.



Allegheny Store Fixtures

allstorefix.com

Custom store environments and interior millwork; products include loose fixtures, cashwraps, showcases, back islands, feature walls, custom displays, and perimeters; design services, prototyping, installation, warehouse, and delivery services also available

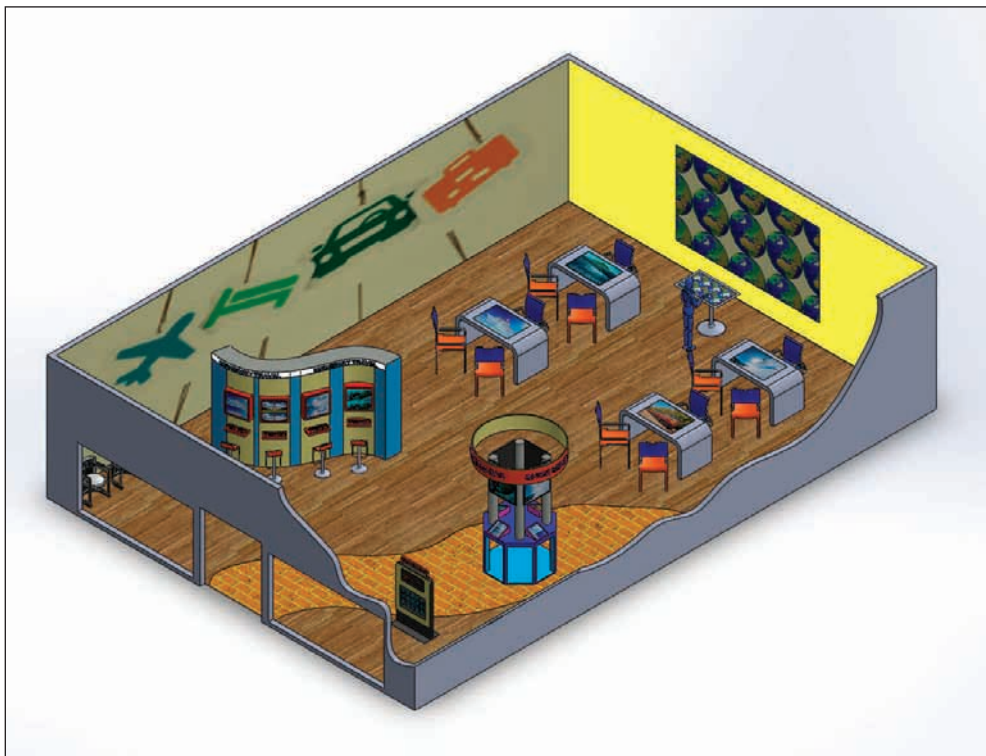
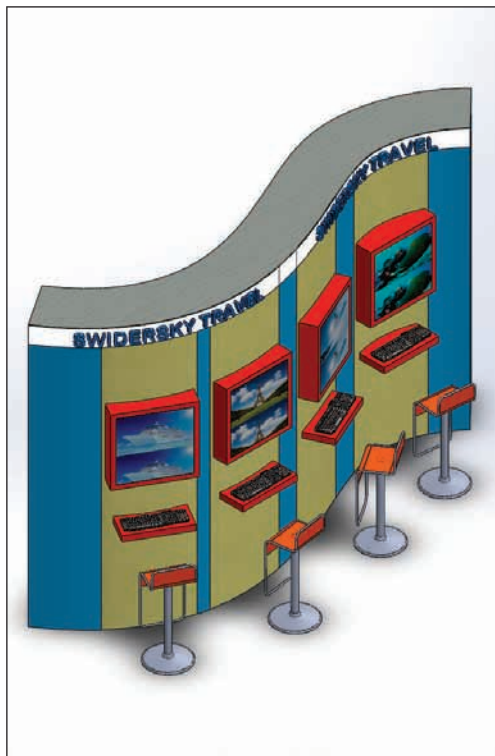
TEAM: Beth DiFazio, Lane Sulhan, John Haid, Jeff Burgess, Darcy DiFazio

Made to Order: A menu for easy, affordable travel

Gone are the days of dispersing stacks of travel brochures with limited information. Swidersky “Made-To-Order” travel will capture customers via a fun, engaging platform where they can build their own adventure using the latest technology.

Imagine building your sandwich at a quick-serve deli—this is travel of the future! Upon approaching the store, mall kiosk, or popup, customers will be greeted with a menu of options to whet their appetites. Using a Self-Serve kiosk, they can wind their way through a variety of travel choices to build the perfect trip. The “Espresso Bar” is perfect for the business traveler looking for a quick-serve solution to their travel needs. Or for the family or leisure traveler, TouchScreen Tables for one-on-one consultation with a knowledgeable travel agent feature a sit-down menu, including tasty side trips and add-ons.

Customers at the self-serve kiosks can book and pay for their trip using the agency’s newly designed website, coordinating all features and menu options found in the store. The new mobile app will be used to interface with agents, and will serve as a backup for important travel documents, reservations, and vouchers.



Exotic flavors

Travelers with an open mind for their next adventure will be presented with a short, engaging Travel Quiz. The quiz will help narrow down destinations, preferred level of adventure, type of vacation (family, romantic, business) and budget. Customers will then speak with an agent about options based on their quiz answers. Should the customer be looking for a beach destination for their honeymoon, the quiz would indicate their level of interest in add-on excursions (swimming with dolphins, parasailing, day hikes, zip-lining, etc.)—all of which can be added to their vacation package instantaneously. We're hoping to encourage travelers to think outside of their comfort zone, and learn about locations that weren't originally on their list.

To build loyalty, Swidersky Travel introduces the "Club" Sandwich, a program designed to retain travelers through a reward program.

Full menu

We've chosen to design a 1,750-sq.-ft. retail store that looks and feels more like a convenience store/restaurant featuring a "menu" of travel options. The fixtures include a Welcome Kiosk featuring "Today's Specials," a Self-Serve Kiosk for those who like to peruse on their own but know an associate is only steps away, an Espresso Bar (Quick-Serve, ideal for business travelers), TouchScreen Tables (Made-to-Order Travel guided by an associate), and a 14-ft.-by-7-ft. Interactive Wall highlighting travel around the globe. The environment is clean, image-laden, and interactive.

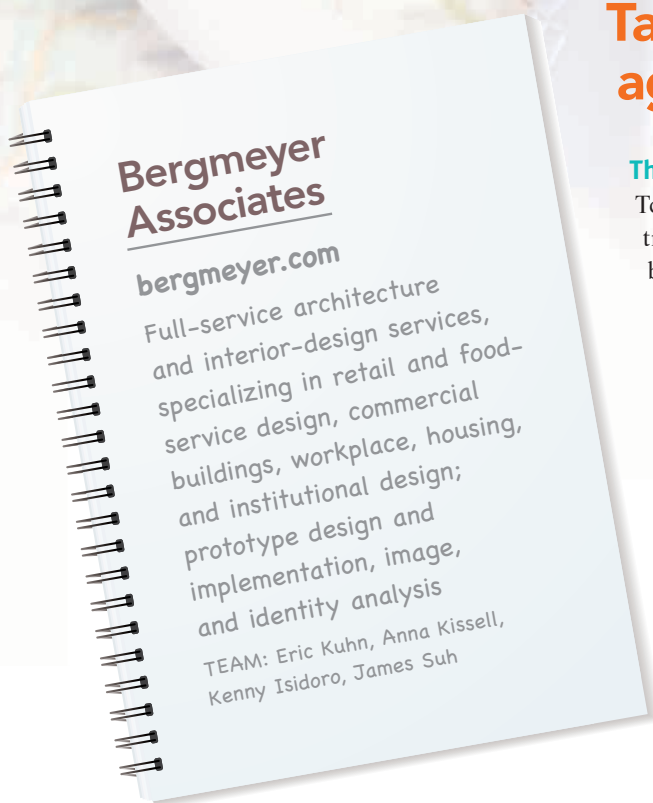
At every step of our interaction with customers, we are reinventing the old, tired travel agency feel. With

interactive kiosks, touchscreens, and attempts to learn about the customer's preferences, we anticipate a light, fun, cutting-edge way to book travel. This concept works well in a retail store, popup, grocery store location, or mall kiosk. With a technology-driven agency, all materials can be shared and sent electronically, building an email base of customers.

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Taste Passport: The travel agency of the future



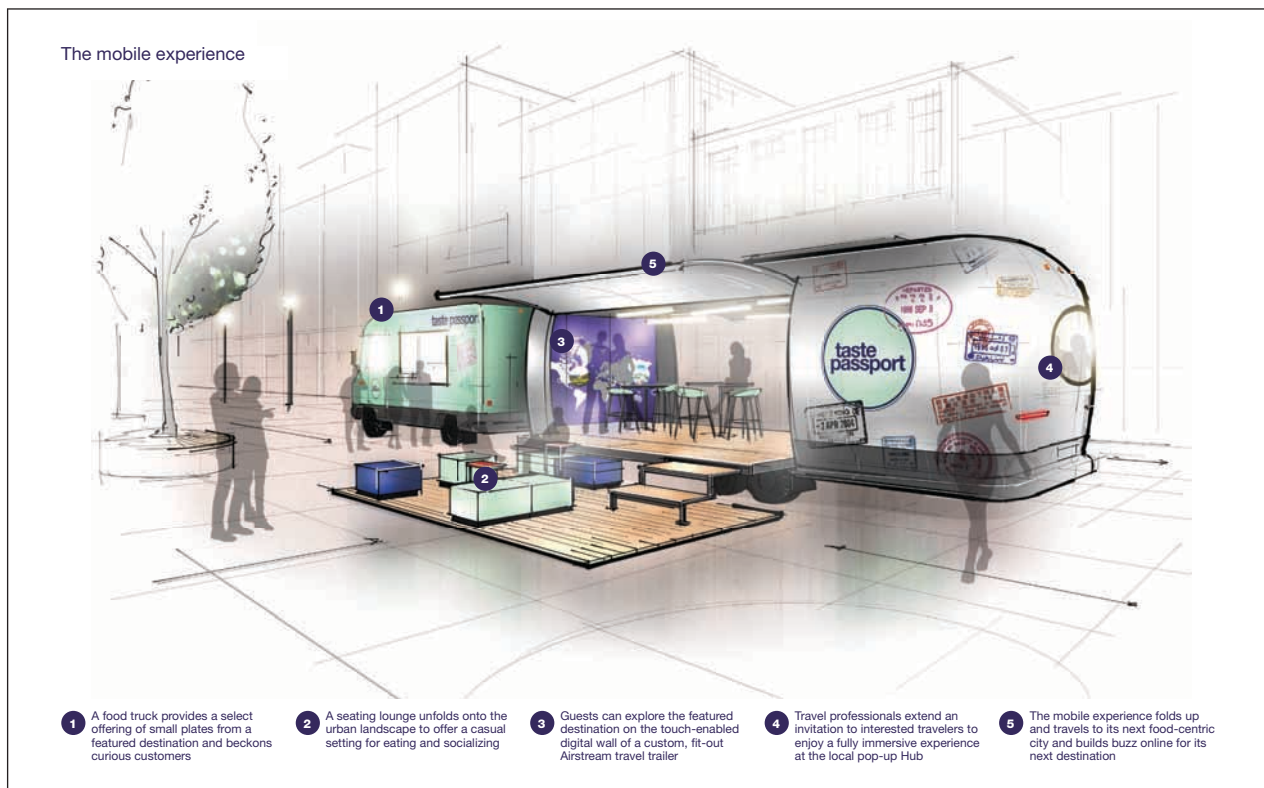
The objective: Enhanced relevancy

To reinvigorate and enhance relevancy of the business of professional travel planning. In order to accomplish this goal, three beliefs must be realized:

Belief 1—Broadening the sphere of awareness and engagement with today’s customer needs will lead to growth. To accomplish this, a significant shift in position and behavior is needed, moving from expectations of customers coming to them to a more assertive approach of meeting potential customers where they already are.

Belief 2—Travel and the engagement with new places and cultures is inherently an emotional experience; therefore, the engagement of the travel agency with the customer needs to be more emotionally driven. We must tap into key triggers that have the ability to transport customers to an entirely different place. To accomplish this, the experience must be more immersive and sensory.

Belief 3—There is the need to convey and demonstrate the value of working with an agency. Travel professionals have vast knowledge, they have connections to destination resources, they take on the risks associated with travel, and they save travelers time by taking on the logistical planning. The environment—along with the associates’ behaviors—must be intuitive, seamless, and entertaining.



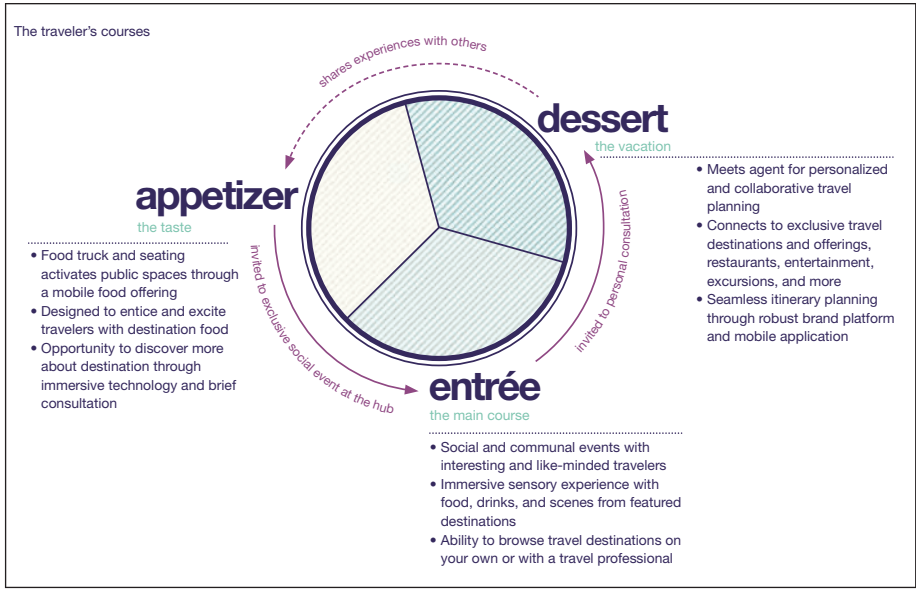
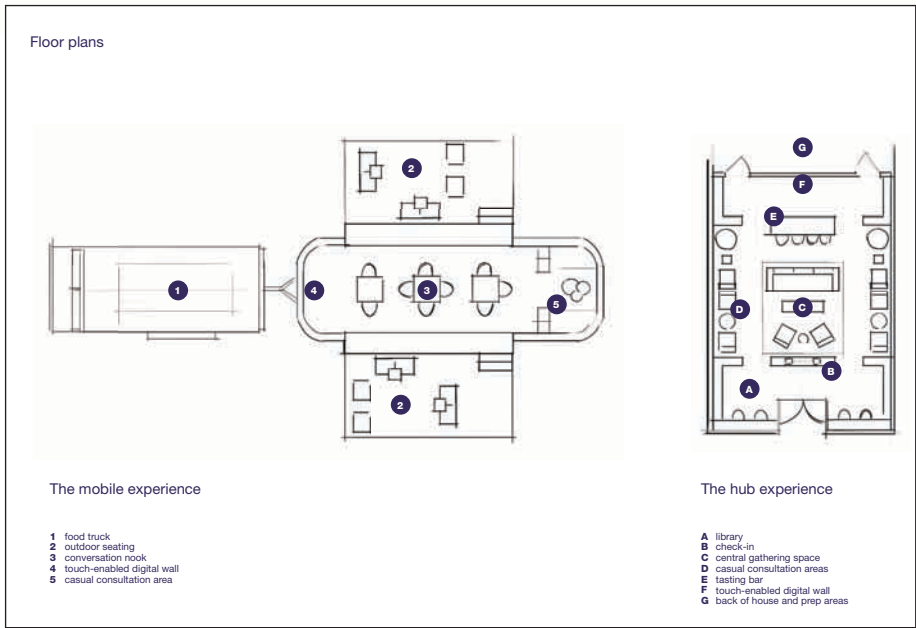
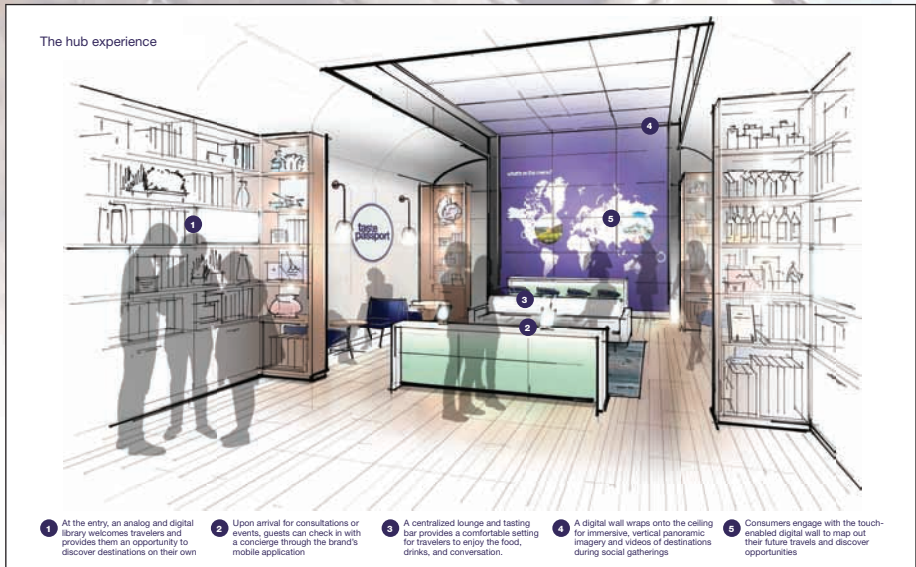
The agency is no longer the place where one comes solely to transact. It is a place to explore and expand upon the taste provided by the mobile experience.

The idea: A taste for travel

Create a new vehicle for outreach and engagement—one that inserts itself in the path where potential customers thrive and, when done correctly, is intensely emotional and sensory. Drawing upon our beliefs, we see a wholly unexpected and innovative approach to reinvigorating through the creation of a travel and food partnership expressed in two distinctive channels.

The mobile experience—Food trucks are not a fad. They are a new service model that encourage exploratory customer behavior. They exist to accommodate. They exist to expand the public’s awareness of possibilities. They exist to be part of a bigger community of shared interests and values. And lastly, they exist to migrate customers from truck to restaurant—the more robust, permanent and immersive physical expression of the brand.

The hub experience—The agency is no longer the place where one comes solely to transact. It is a place to explore and expand upon the taste provided by the mobile experience. It is a social experience, allowing not just the agent to facilitate the sharing and dreaming but also fostering inspirational and affirmational interactions with fellow travelers. It is a place where you can enjoy food and drink from around the world as a taste of what is soon to come. It is a place of communal experience that captivates the senses and encourages the visitor to willingly immerse themselves in the possibilities the world around us holds.



Canada's Best Store Fixtures

canadasbeststorefixtures.com

Store design and planning services; fixture supply and manufacturing—shelving and accessories; showcases and custom wood products—solid wood and veneer millwork, laminated or melamine displays; custom metal products—tubing and wire products, laser-cut components, large-volume stamping; custom plastics manufacturing; installation and merchandising services

TEAM: Richard Lewke, Carm McCormick, Bud Morris

Travel planning over dinner and a movie

The intent

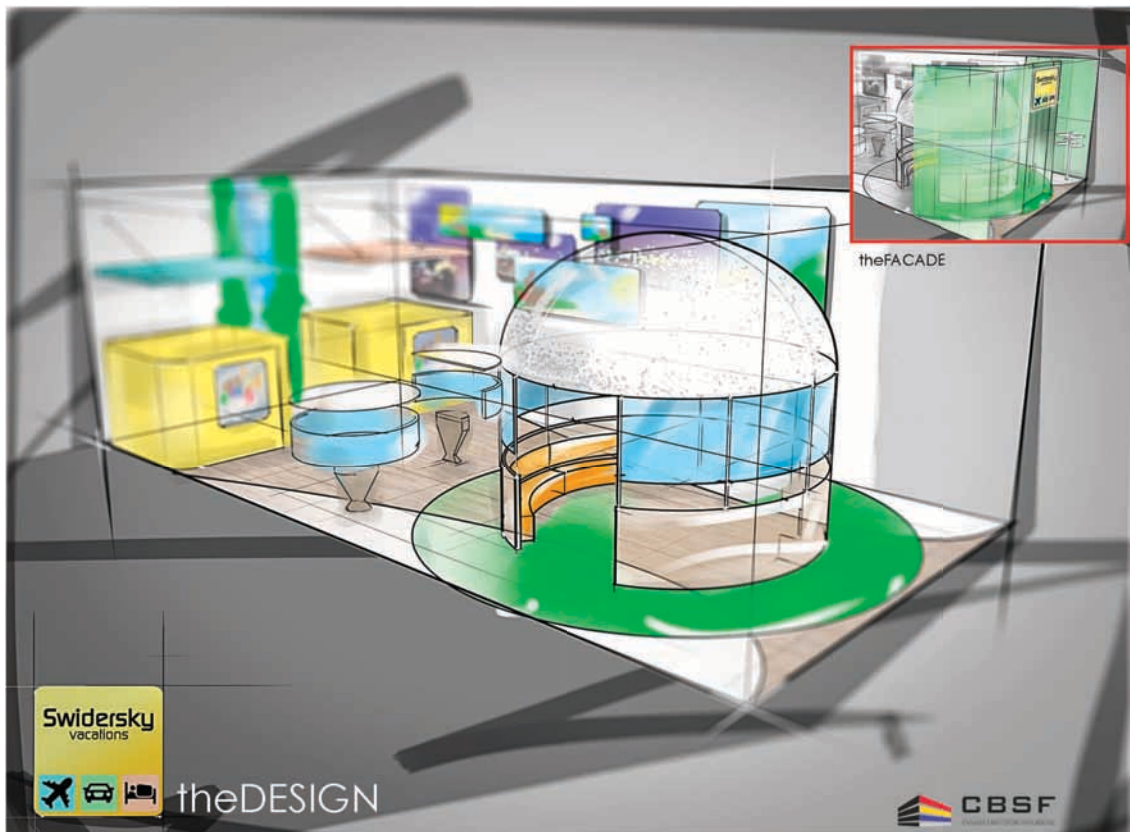
Our solution to provide an innovative, forward-thinking retail environment to compete against Internet travel sites focuses on creating an exciting and tangible “try before you buy” experience.

Unlike websites that sell you a dream based on images and words pulled from the ether, our shop delivers a physical environment to see, touch, hear, taste, and smell the holiday you have searched for. Another great differentiator against online competition is our space's ability to engage whole families and large groups in a holiday sampling.

This also plays to the strength that Swidersky is a trusted family-owned and -operated company with history, vs. an inhuman patch of software with no lineage.

The brand

The new Swidersky experience begins with an updated logo and brand position. Designed as an indicator of the modern tech integrated into the new shop, the logo is icons within an icon—geared to attract the main attention queue of the app/online-conditioned generation that Swidersky will need for growth.



The design

The facade—The store’s facade is a modern arch of glass, transparently showcasing the big draw of the immersive theater while providing separation from neighboring retail. The inset corners accentuate the entrance, teasing traffic to cross into the space.

The Theater—The theater itself projects an immersive and interactive environment of travel destinations onto both a sky dome and translucent exterior walls (allowing outside sightseers a no obligation peek). Seating is plush, and guests can enjoy a snack catered to the virtual locale while a personal tour guide directs the experience. A partnership with worldwide resorts would allow connected tour sampling in real time.

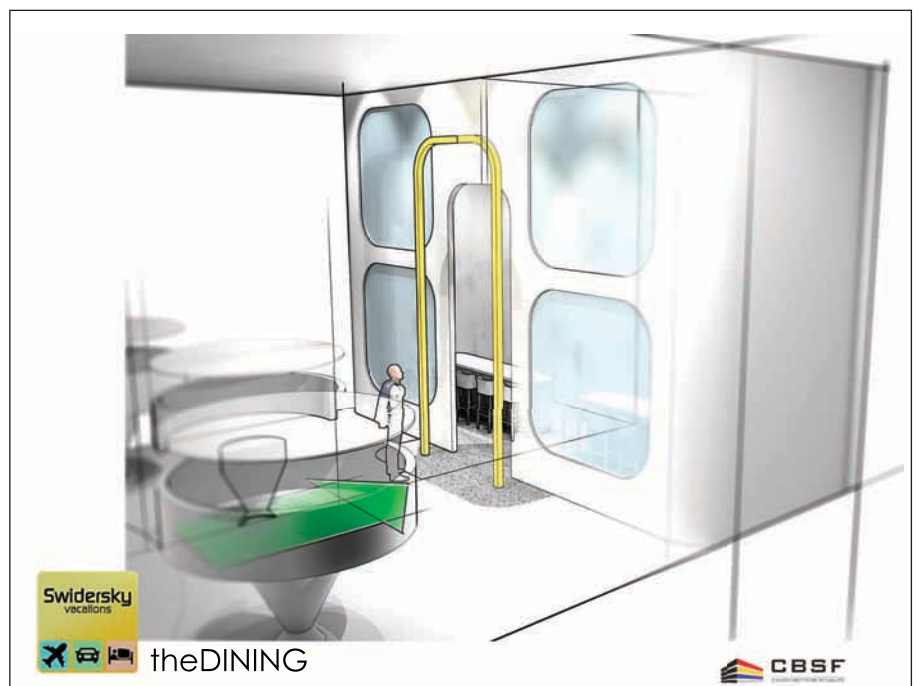
The Consult—Directly behind the main theater are three immersive consultation areas where individuals and small groups can plan vacation packages while exploring 360 degrees of interaction. Floating above the floor, these areas provide a more open and impromptu option vs. the more elaborate and choreographed theater.

The Dining—The back of the space is a dining experience where customers can enjoy the taste and smells of foods specific to their holiday choice. With modular décor to match the destination, this area can also help acclimatize visitors to local customs and cultural guidelines in the places they hope to visit. Specific resort dining rooms can also be duplicated for a more exact preview.

The Décor—Throughout the space, the majority of wall décor is digital (monitors/projections/panoramic pixel boards) so that real-time destinations can be broadcasted and the entire shop can be dressed in a single destination or theme. In addition, a modular inventory of adventure equipment and simulators would give visitors a physical appreciation of what a Swidersky vacation package can provide.

The new Swidersky is about experiencing adventures through the five senses even before you board a plane, train, ship, bus, or automobile.

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ZIP off to vacation destinations

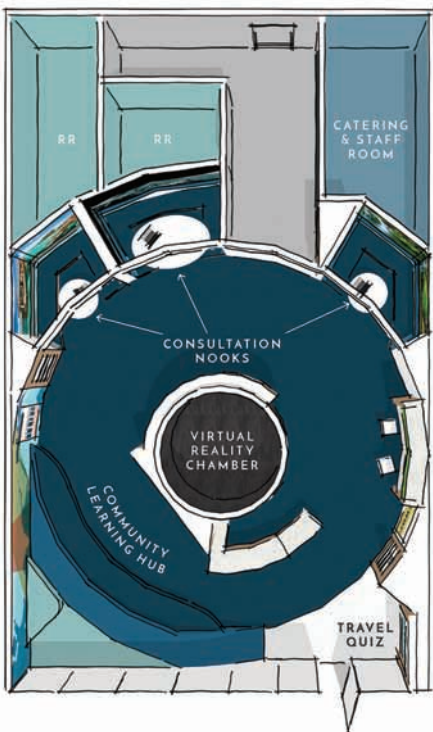
Planning travel online is an impersonal, daunting experience. The Internet is crowded with too many travel sites, opinions, and outdated information; you're left wondering if you're really getting the most out of your travel experience. KRS wants to bring the joy back into travel with our branding and design concept for Swidersky Travel: ZIP—Travel Hub.

ZIP Travel Hub brings the expertise, ease, and trust of a good travel agent under one roof with an immersive one-stop hub for all things travel. The name ZIP promises you a travel experience tailored just for you. It's easy, efficient, and convenient, all in one simple, recognizable syllable. ZIP will ensure that you "zip" off to your desired destination fully prepared to immerse yourself and get the most out of your trip.

Zip up interests

ZIP aims to connect with travelers as early in your trip planning, or inspiration phase, as possible. It all starts with a short but detailed Travel Quiz, which travelers can encounter on social media, at ZIP kiosks, or as an interactive display at a ZIP retail space. The quiz discovers your ideal travel style, dream destinations, interests (i.e. adventure, cultural, culinary, etc.), and even your budget. This quiz then identifies each customer, matches them to their personal travel expert, and follows them through to their appointments.

Let ZIP's travel agents save you the time of researching and finding deals, so you can focus on the fun things to prepare for your trip!



ZIP offers short seminars to inspire and inform you. Open to 10 to 15 participants, the seminars will cover a broad range of topics such as “Best Secret Snorkel Spots in Hawaii,” “Important Customs and Manners for Travel in Japan,” and “How to Make Air Travel Fun with Babies and Toddlers.”

Zip on extras

ZIP is also a community hub for all things travel, offering third-party travel support, such as housesitting, pet-sitting, and supplemental classes like scuba, sailing, or dance. Activities such as regional wine, beer, and coffee tasting nights, and language clubs are meant to get customers off the couch and into the store. Language barriers are addressed by ZIP with interactive Duolingo stations inside the stores, allowing customers to learn phrases essential to their travel destination.

A small selection of curated travel-centric retail items will be available in the “ZIP Shop.” You can fall in love with the items in the store, and order from an interactive digital display where you can customize your purchase.

ZIP also allows clients to fully immerse themselves in their desired destination with a Virtual Reality room. “Place” yourself at your destination to help with the decision process.

ZIP understands that anticipation is one of the most enjoyable stages of your vacation and takes it to a whole new level.

ZIP will ensure that you “zip” off to your desired destination fully prepared to immerse yourself and get the most out of your trip.



Promotions that will floor you

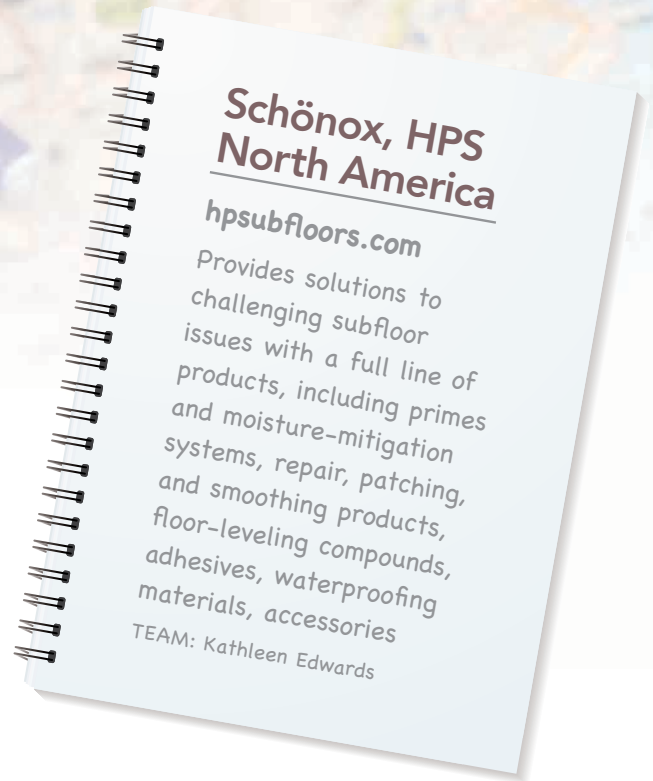
HPS Schönox is familiar with innovative, forward-thinking solutions and would welcome the opportunity to assist Swidersky Travel with updating their retail strategy. We understand the importance of sending a clear message of who you are and what you stand for.

Swidersky Travel wants to build new awareness for your ability to leverage the in-store experience. To drive traffic to the stores, you need to offer something that can't be found online. Swidersky Travel could run an ongoing promotion which would include giving away trips to those who come in the store and participate in a drawing.

Stepping up the game

HPS Schönox would lay vinyl cutouts of the continents on the floor, and participants would choose a continent to stand on. They would draw from a bowl of locations. If the location drawn matched the continent they were standing on, they would win that trip for free. We would lay the floor inserts in different areas of the store so that the customer would move around the store to explore the options. Each continent station could include themed visuals, cultural props, and video presentations. Swidersky would be able to change which locations you are offering on a regular basis to keep the promotion fresh. Even if a customer's drawing does not match, they could still receive a discount on any trip booked just for coming in and participating. This could be promoted online and in the store.

HPS Schönox would use a superior product with both strength and style to lay down the cutouts on the floor. Schönox AP Deco is designed as a decorative topping system that can be integrally dyed, stained, and sealed with an appropriate wear surface coating or sealant. Schönox AP Deco would add design elements to spaces looking for a concrete or abstract look where traditional cement-based systems cannot be applied.



Grounded in strength

Schönox AP Deco can be used to renovate subfloors, making this renewal project faster and environmentally responsible. It provides an extremely dense and durable surface to be stained, sealed, or polished in interior and exterior areas. It delivers an incredible compressive strength, allowing it to withstand tough retail traffic. Many retailers are staining, polishing, and sealing this innovative floor leveling compound with appealing, fashion-forward results.

With regional business managers across the entire nation, HPS Schönox would be available to serve all Swidersky Travel's 25 locations in the upper eastern seaboard of the U.S. With most of Swidersky Travel's locations ranging from 1,500 to 2,000 sq. ft., project costs would be kept to a minimum. At 1/8-in. application, each store would only need 25 to 34 units. Schönox AP Deco would need only 24 hours to cure before sealing, saving project time.

HPS Schönox presents a creative design for this retail strategy and is including a rendering to support that strategy. Schönox AP Deco hits all the aesthetic, performance, and environmental marks needed for Swidersky Travel's retail applications.

