

Contractor's Corner



By Mark Hutto

## Adaptability Plays a Key Role in Today's Business Growth

Business in our core market of Atlanta has been robust for the last several years, and the pipeline of projects continue to look strong well into 2016.

Like many companies we had rapid growth in our business over the last three years. Rapid growth, though, shouldn't mean that a business forego strategy and creativity. In fact, it's more important than ever that during these times you should implement initiatives that will support rapid growth.

More than ever, we have found adaptability to be the key to our business approach. Construction process timeframes continue to grow shorter, which has become one of the major challenges within our scope of work. For instance, we are focused on reprogramming our entire organization to adjust to the present pace of construction, including estimators, project managers and even our field management personnel.

Having an adaptable business strategy means we can modify our approach to

each project and help our customers to find effective solutions not just for their specific jobs but also to meet their deadlines. This approach adds value to our worth in the marketplace. Our motto is simple: Doing Business with Certified Finishes is Easy.

In order to adapt to the curve balls that come with aggressive construction schedules also means our team needs to be flexible. There are a variety of challenges that come with different project types. Plus, as anyone in this business

knows, there are a variety of subcontractors and personalities that come with every project.

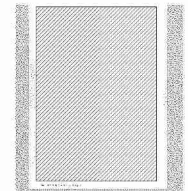
That's why we pride ourselves on developing strong relationships with other subcontractors and keeping the communication channels flowing with clarity. Staying connected to other subcontractors means we can anticipate challenges that may arise or take the time to understand the obstacles that may be in the way of aggressive construction schedules.

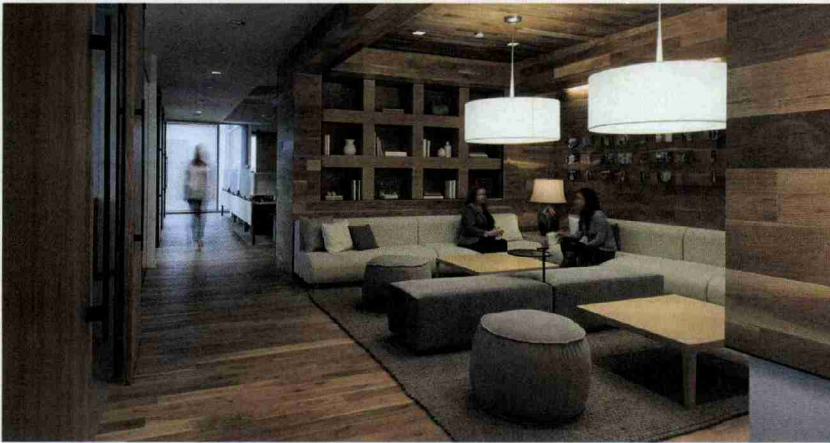
Adaptability and flexibility is key to successful projects, meeting deadlines and ultimately satisfying our customers.

### More Ways to Adapt

Adaptability doesn't just apply to our strategic business approach. We've also adapted to a new economy physically. Recently, we moved our offices from the suburbs of Atlanta to the city's central business district. We had completely outgrown our previous location and resorted to renting trailers and spend-

The Certified Finishes team at the company's new location in the heart of Atlanta, which has helped the contractor be in a more centralized location for its customers, suppliers and employees.





Certified Finishes' adaptability approach earned it the opportunity to do the corporate headquarters of Carter's, one of the largest marketers in the U.S. of apparel and related products for babies and young children.



At Certified Finishes' new downtown location the company was able to build a library and resource center that both customers and vendors are finding "very useful."

ing time constantly re-organizing our warehouse in order to keep the business functioning.

Moving to the center of the city has created excitement and a new energy for our business—especially our people. And it's not just our employees, vendors and customers have embraced the move as well.

The metro Atlanta population has surpassed 6 million, which continues to make traffic and travel times challenging. By moving to a more centralized location we are closer to a large percentage of our projects and our customers.

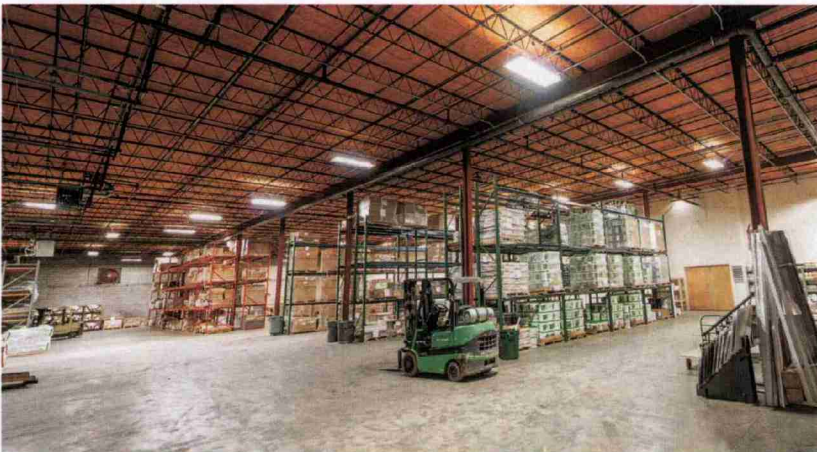
Conversely, our customers have easier access to us. We built a unique library and resource center that our customers and vendors are finding very useful. Customers can stop by during their lunch hour, pick up samples and return to the office in a reasonable time-frame. We also developed a mock-up room that allows designers and facility owners to view flooring and furniture together.

Creating a space that is adaptable for our team and our customers is another value add for Certified Finishes in the marketplace. It has allowed us to think out of the box with regard to the products and services we offer. What's more, we now have a comfort level of being able to support our business' growth into the future.

Creating a business that is adaptable doesn't just happen. It is the collective experience of our leadership team, our associates and our laborers. It is collaborative as well. One of



The new lobby at Certified Finishes is both stylish and welcoming allowing the company to immediately showcase its professionalism toward quality workmanship.



Re-organizing the warehouse in order to keep the business functioning was an ongoing process at Certified Finishes' old location. That's not the case anymore as its new space offers ample room for the company to keep things organized.



Certified Finishes recently moved its offices from the suburbs of Atlanta to the city's central business district, allowing the company to be closer to a large percentage of its customers.

the key benefits of being part of the Fuse Alliance network is having access to the other members and their respective viewpoints. From this, we can share advice on projects, business and new technologies.

Understanding and learning about the many different paths to success can be key influencers to helping us adapt our business to present and future economic conditions. For example, through our Fuse membership we developed a relationship with Tim McLellan of [B2B CEO](#). Having his outside perspective gives our team a fair appraisal of the business without the influence of day-to-day activities. His experience in the industry has helped us through challenging growth periods, tax planning and the purchasing of our building. Tim's knowledge and business management expertise has empowered our ability to be adaptable in today's economic climate. [ft](#)

Mark Hutto is the owner of Certified Finishes in Atlanta. Certified Finishes was established in 2004. His business partner, David Dendy is also one of the original owners and has a long history in the flooring business. Prior to Certified Finishes, Hutto gained experience in the commercial flooring industry as a sales representative and national sales manager for domestic carpet mills. Currently, Certified Finishes has 20 full-time employees in two locations—Atlanta and Charleston, S.C. Although carpet tile is a majority of the company's business, porcelain, LVT and higher end wood are gaining market share for Certified Finishes. To contact Hutto, call (404) 355-2151 ext 26 or email [mhutto@certifiedfinishes.com](mailto:mhutto@certifiedfinishes.com).