

DESIGNSOLUTIONS

Journal of the Architectural Woodwork Institute

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Inter Ocean Cabinet Company
920 N. Larch Avenue
Elmhurst, IL 60126
P: 630-930-5770
F: 630-930-5777
www.interoceancabinet.com



AWI

ARCHITECTURAL
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WALNUT SURROUNDS MAKE OFFICES A SOPHISTICATED SPACE.

▼ WALNUT PANELING ADDS WARMTH and elegance to the boardroom.



P fingsten Partners is an operationally focused private equity firm founded in 1989. From its Chicago headquarters and offices in Hong Kong and Shenzhen, China, the company helps build better businesses through operational improvements, professional management practices, global capabilities and profitable business growth rather than financial engineering.





▲ **THE RECEPTION AREA** is modernistic with traditional touches of wood paneling, doors and a custom Walnut reception desk.

Recently management selected space for a new office on the 54th floor in the bustling River North area of Chicago to raise the profile of the office and be more accessible to both clients and employees. They began looking in the summer of 2008 and settled on 300 North LaSalle, a new development that opened spring 2009, shortly before they needed to relocate.

The office is approximately 15,000 square feet with floor to ceiling glass throughout. The space was designed by the architectural firm Eastlake Studio, Chicago, with architectural woodwork fabricated and installed by Inter Ocean Cabinet, an AWI manufacturing firm located in Elmhurst, Illinois.

According to Pfungsten Partners' Norma Canales, the firm directed the design team to make the offices warm and sophisticated in order for clients

to feel welcome when they entered the space.

ACHIEVING OBJECTIVES

Primary design challenges, explains Tom Zurowski of Eastlake Studio, were to balance the requirement for perimeter offices with the desire to share panoramic views; create a public image of understated elegance; and support a wide range of meeting types and sizes.

Solutions to the design objectives, he continues, were arrived at through study and discussion. Clear

glass office fronts share the views with the entire office, while textured glass at the boardroom maintains privacy while allowing daylight to enliven the reception area. Clean detailing enables wood, stone and glass to quietly enrich the reception area and boardroom.

Plus a variety of internal meetings are supported by different size spaces as well as a movable partition. The boardroom is reserved for formal meetings required to manage multiple businesses.

To further achieve objectives quar-

AT A GLANCE:

AWI MANUFACTURING MEMBER: Inter Ocean Cabinet Company

LOCATION: Elmhurst, Illinois

ESTABLISHED: 1897

SERVICES: Architectural Woodwork, Finishing and Installation for Commercial and Retail

SPECIALTY: Charter member of AWI; AWI Quality Certified

"Much has changed throughout our 110-year history, but one guiding principle has remained the same: providing our clients outstanding service and the highest quality product at a competitive price."

- John Farrell, President

ter sliced Walnut was chosen as the primary wood species. The veneer was slipped matched. “We worked very closely with the partners to select Walnut,” says Canales. “The stained Walnut is the perfect balance, providing an updated look and sophisticated aura.”

WARM WALNUT

According to John Farrell, president of Inter Ocean Cabinet, his firm fabricated and installed quarter sliced Walnut wall panels, doors, trim work and reception desk, along with high pressure decorative laminate casework

and solid surface counter tops.

“Finding the right veneer to accommodate odd-sized panels was a challenge,” he notes. “Many panels were very long or very wide. We worked with our veneer partner to find the perfect veneer and then made sure it



was laid up properly to achieve the look the architect wanted.”

Walnut wall paneling accents the reception area, boardroom and main corridor areas. All the perimeter offices have clear glass fronts to allow for natural daylight, and so that visitors

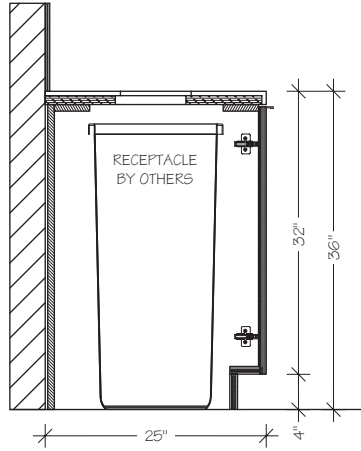
and employees can appreciate the natural beauty of the woodwork and other surrounding finishes, explains Zurowski. “We were working toward achieving a timeless space. Clean lines and simplicity of the details contribute to the minimalist design. Since

Pfingsten did not occupy the entire floor, we had to work within the context of the building’s design guidelines for multi-tenant floors.”

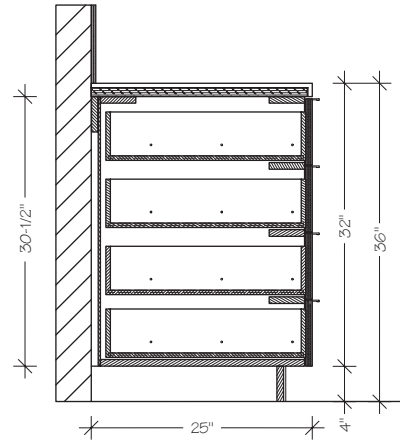
“While there is a significant amount of wood paneling in the public spaces, the boardroom portal is a focal point,



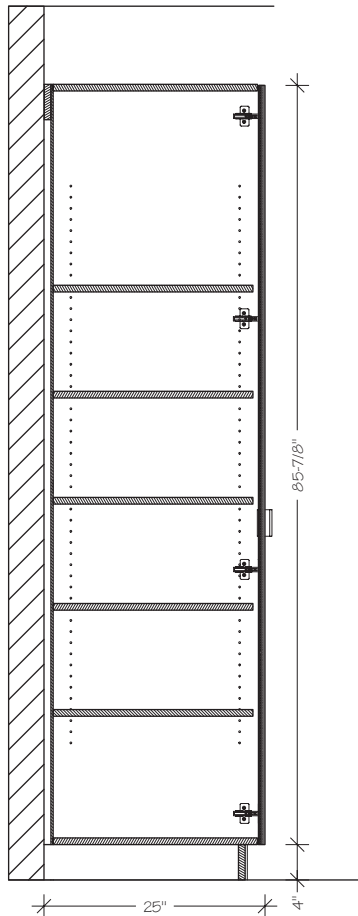
BEAUTIFUL BUILT-IN WALNUT CASEWORK is a stately accent to the offices’ panoramic views.



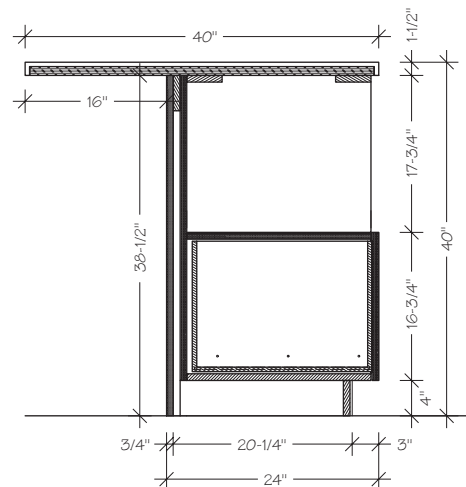
SECTION @ WASTE RECEPTACLE CABINET



SECTION @ DRAWER BANK CABINET



SECTION @ TALL STORAGE CABINET



SECTION @ BREAK ROOM ISLAND

SECTIONS
Cabinets

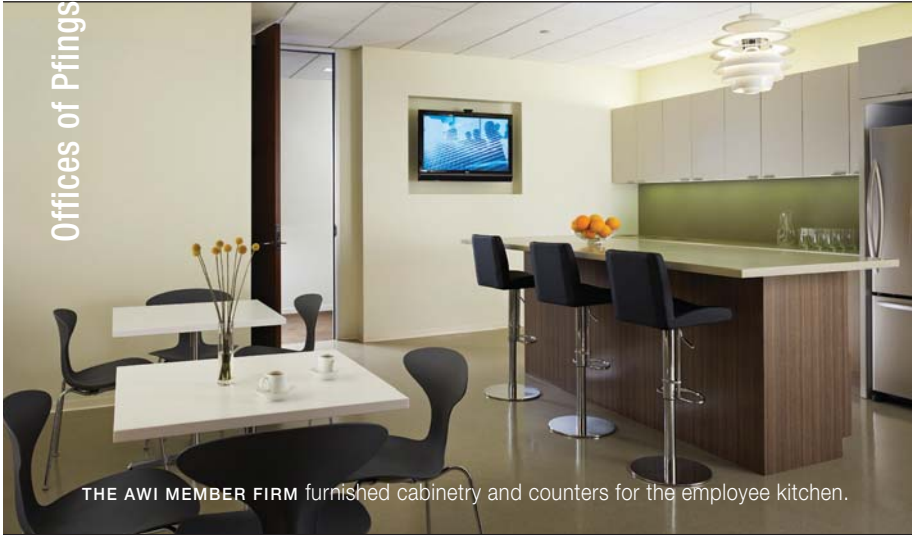
especially as you enter the office,” points out designer Ann Chin. “Working with the woodworker, we came up with a clean but impressive framing solution that allows natural daylight to flow into the space while achieving privacy with textured glass.”

TIMELESS TEAMWORK

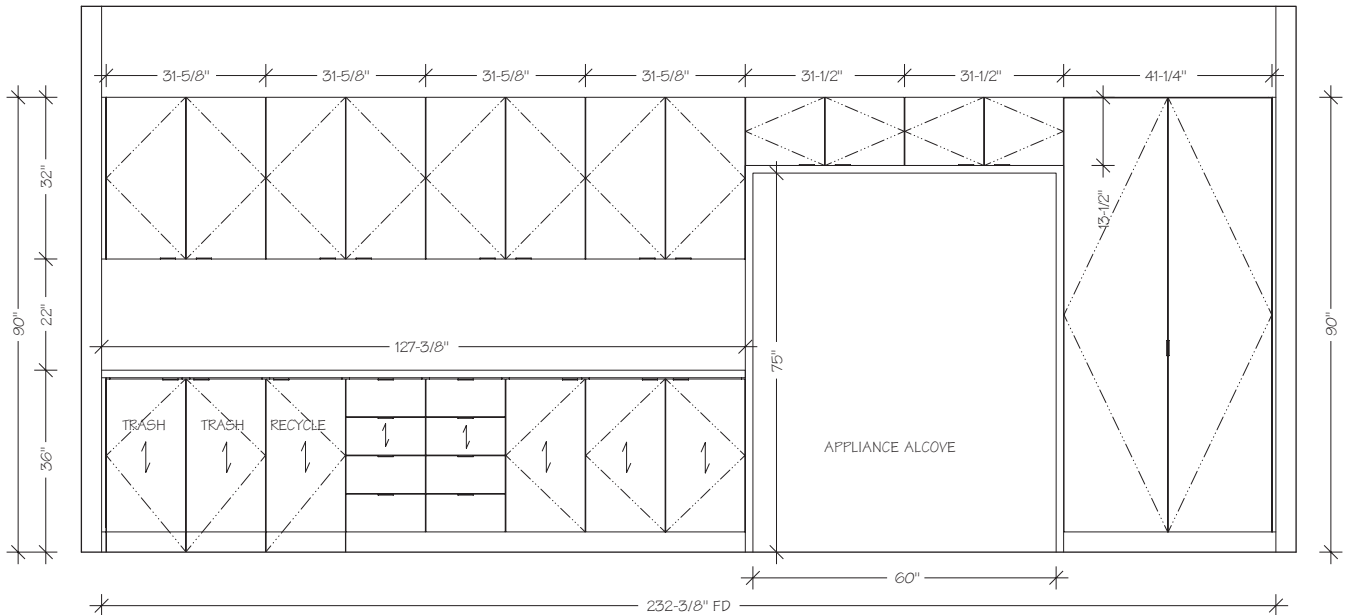
Farrell reports that Inter Ocean helped the owner and general contractor develop a budget from concept drawings. “We went through iterations of value engineering and schedule planning before we were awarded the project. Everyone was on the same page in terms of cost and timing before we started. In addition, our solid modeling software helped show how elements would come together and ultimately look.”

“We have a strong working relationship with Inter Ocean Cabinet Company,” says Zurowski. “We always lean on their expertise to help us solve challenging problems with detailing. When construction issues arose, they were taken care of quickly and painlessly. All in all, the project went very smoothly.”

“We had a strong relationship with the entire design and construction team, including the woodworking firm” agrees Canales. “If we ever needed to look at samples or go over any details, Inter Ocean was eager to assist us.”



THE AWI MEMBER FIRM furnished cabinetry and counters for the employee kitchen.



 ELEVATION
Break Room

Project:	Offices of Pfingsten Partners	Chicago, IL
Project Owner:	Pfingsten Partners	Chicago, IL
Woodworker:	Inter Ocean Cabinet Company	Elmhurst, IL
Architect:	Eastlake Studio	Chicago, IL
General Contractor:	Interior Construction Group	Chicago, IL
Photographer:	Steve Hall, Hedrich Blessing	Chicago, IL