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Switching Gears

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Hilton Branson Convention Center Hotel

CONCEPT: When locally-based HCW Development Co. was planning what would become the 294-room Hilton Branson Convention Center Hotel in Branson, MO, CEO Richard Huffman and his partners knew they wanted a design that would be authentic to its rustic, heavily-wooded Ozark Mountain location.

"We knew we wanted a lot of large windows that would let in the natural beauty of the setting and that many of the guestrooms ideally would have views of Lake Taneycomo," Huffman said. "At the same time, this was going to be a major convention center hotel—the hotel and convention facility are nearly seamless—so the design would also have to be contemporary and even stylish, if the hotel, which opened in September, was going to attract the kinds of associations and corporate groups we were targeting."

EXECUTION: The designs created by the Dallas-based firm of Duncan & Miller Design make abundant use of wood and stone. "The stone, in particular, is fitting, given the rockiness of the local terrain," said director of sales and marketing William Tirone, who added the soaring, 40-foot high atrium lobby shows off these features to their best advantage.

"We used natural redwood to create a shutter-like effect on the top part of the lobby windows, and prominently positioned a stone fireplace to serve as a back drop for a sitting area," explained Duncan & Miller chairman Turner Duncan. "But the lobby is also intended to be friendly and welcoming, a feeling we wanted to reinforce in the color palette in the guestrooms and the choice of fabrics and finishes."

OWNER'S OUTLOOK: HCW Development's Huffman agreed that the lobby and guestrooms had to be welcoming for both corporate and leisure guests.

"While many of our guests will be here to attend meetings and conventions, other guests, particularly on weekends, are leisure travelers visiting Branson to enjoy its traditional entertainment options and family ambiance," he said. "We're very pleased that the design works effectively on all these different levels."

—Bruce Serwin



Design Details:

Project Owner: HCW Development Co. Designer: Duncan & Miller Design Project Cost: \$420 million for entire hotel/convention center complex Theme/Influence: Rustic Ozark Mountain location Signature Feature: Soaring 40-foot high atrium lobby, natural materials Purchasing Agent: N/A Major Vendors: Kimball, Precision Casework & Trim, Graniti Fiandre, Dell-Tile, LG, Serta