

## Facts & Figures

**Owner:** Fields Realty LLC

**Tenant:** AKDO Intertrade

**Type of Project:** A new warehouse/showroom

**Size:** 110,000 square feet

**Construction Time:** March 2006 - November 2006

**The Need:** Larger, more efficient space to house inventory and quicken order turnaround time

**The Challenge:** Completing a successful project on time, within budget and on a small site



NETWORK  
TEAM MEMBERS

**Partners for Architecture**  
Architect

**Borghesi Building & Engineering Co.**  
Design-build General Contractor

**Airway Electric Company**  
Electrical Contractors

**KONE Inc.**  
Elevators/Escalators

**Mack Fire Protection, LLC**  
Fire Protection

**Topper & Griggs Group**  
Structural Steel  
Fabricators & Erectors

**Twin Fork Enterprises LLC**  
Metal Building Constructors



Photos courtesy of AKDO

Bridgeport, Connecticut

# AKDO Intertrade

AKDO Intertrade, an industry leader in the distribution of high-quality natural stone tiles, slabs, mosaics and specialty stone, recently moved into a new warehouse/showroom to accommodate an ever-growing inventory necessary for its leadership presence in both its home state of Connecticut and in the national marketplace.

The old space AKDO had been leasing had become too crowded and was ill designed to meet the company's needs. "Employees were scattered on three different levels of a building also occupied by other companies," said Rainer Schrom of Partners for Architecture, the project's architect. This layout slowed productivity and order turnaround time.

AKDO's reputation for selling a luxury product was also hindered by the old space, which didn't adequately reflect the quality and style inherent in the company's products. The vast array of products it sells needed a space better suited to showcase them to potential buyers.

AKDO's employees were involved in the new facility's conceptualization and construction from the

very beginning. "Being involved in the design and construction of the new building allowed AKDO to customize the space to suit multiple needs: safety, space, ambiance and productivity," Schrom explained. Notable features of the new building include a unique racking system and rail carriage designed to allow architects, retailers and other potential buyers an easy way to view AKDO's extensive selection of slabs, as well as special lighting to better showcase the inventory.

Since the new building was constructed on a former brown-field site, a vapor extraction system was installed to remove toxins from the site, improving environmental safety standards for both workers and visitors.

One of the major challenges the construction team encountered in the development of the facility was the need to "clearly understand the goals of the owner and tenants and mesh those together for a successful project in terms of cost and delivery," said Gary Capitanio, owner and vice president of Borghesi Building & Engineering Co., the

project's design-build general contractor. "Another challenge was the site engineering and being able to fit the [approximately] 100,000-square-foot building footprint on the site, which is only four and a half acres."

In order to overcome these obstacles, Capitanio said, numerous meetings were held between everyone involved in the building process to maintain a level of trust. The size and space obstacles were overcome by closing two city streets to allow more room for truck maneuvering, interior loading docks, corporate offices and a design center.

Schrom added, "Close coordination of the architect and design-build general contractor, including budget feedback and value engineering, [was utilized] to achieve the most custom look with a minimal budget."

In the end, the construction team was able to successfully create a new facility better suited to AKDO's needs as well as those of the surrounding community. Schrom said, "Locals are excited to see the city growing in a positive way." ■

— Sara Teller