

SPEAKING THE CORPORATE LANGUAGE

LOCKWOOD 2 CREATIONS BRINGS A UNIQUE SET OF SKILLS AND PASSION TO OFFICE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

BY **HALEY BRADFORD BATEMAN**



Photo By: Ashley Thompson

Lisa and Steve Lockwood speak the corporate language — they speak it well. Just like the intricacies of conjugation and the nuances of meaning have to be learned as one studies a new language, communication in the corporate world has its own complexities, and the Lockwoods of Lockwood 2 Creations understand this.

While Lisa is a native of Springdale, the Lockwoods moved to Northwest Arkansas together nine years ago from Minneapolis, Minn. They each have an extensive background in retail, Lisa with Target and Steve with Meijer, as well as experience with project management of corporate campuses. In fact, before the Lockwoods moved to Northwest Arkansas, they primarily worked on complex, multi-million-square-foot projects that often took two to three years to complete.

When they arrived in the area, they wanted to continue their business, but were not sure if they could sustain it here in Arkansas. They loved the region and planned to establish a home here, but thought that they would have to fly out to do business in other major metropolitan regions.

“We were pleasantly surprised,” Lisa says. “Today, we do approximately 85–90 percent of our business right here in Northwest Arkansas. There’s no place we’d rather be.”

The Lockwoods are experts in project management, interior design and owner representation. They are the boots on the ground who help some of the largest companies in the world plan and develop local office space. The Lockwoods have proven time and again that their business, Lockwood 2 Creations, has what it takes to not only act as the corporation’s

local representation throughout the process, but to also save companies time and money by managing the construction, avoiding costly change orders and making good decisions quickly to keep the project moving from design to move-in.

Many of these companies have their own large corporate campuses out of state where they may have thousands of employees. But here in Northwest Arkansas, many of them have built a Walmart team that works in a local office that is small yet vitally important to the overall success and growth of the company. In fact, for many of these consumer packaged goods companies, as much as one third of their annual revenue is generated by the work their local team does. The Lockwoods understand how to deliver workspace that supports these teams to do their



best business.

They bring an extensive knowledge of the local community and can be a fountain of resources for these companies, many of whom do not have the luxury nor the time to hire one of their own team members to complete a new office space. With everything from selecting an architect to working with a landlord, the Lockwoods bring it all to the table. They can get the right people in for cabling, security, flooring, lighting, A/V, furnishings and so much more — and they'll do it in a timely fashion and within budget.

“Our job is to understand a company’s business,” Steve says. “And we’ve got to also understand what it is their client, Walmart, is asking for. Our job is to be a resource to these companies to be able to deliver work space that supports them in doing business.”

The Lockwoods have also built Lockwood 2 Creations into a renowned authority on innovation and collaboration spaces, shopper insight centers and presentation kitchens, all cutting edge spaces that more companies are beginning to use. As retailers like Walmart demand greater expertise and innovation from their suppliers, these companies are turning to someone like Lockwood 2 Creations to help build the space they need to accomplish these goals.

For instance, Lockwood 2 Creations is currently completing a project with CROSSMARK for a new collaboration center near the Walmart Home Office. The finished space will be state of the art and cutting edge, including virtual reality rooms and five joint business planning centers where Walmart buyers and suppliers can meet, and a presentation kitchen. “The Lockwoods and



Photo By: Kate Burris

our construction company, Baldwin & Shell, are talented people all focused on building the best facility they can to meet the needs of what we are trying to do,” says Mike Graen, vice president of collaboration at CROSSMARK.

Larry Perkins of Hight-Jackson Architects, the firm that designed the CROSSMARK Center for Collaboration, adds, “Corporate work is a different language that requires a different set of players at the table ... Lisa represents the client and makes

the project go so much smoother in a situation where there is an out-of-town headquarters trying to complete a project.”

The Lockwoods have also become experts in helping companies tap into the benefits of virtual reality technology through customer experience labs and shopper insights centers. Just as companies have previously turned to in-store visioning in their offices, these companies can now do mock-ups virtually. Companies can conduct research

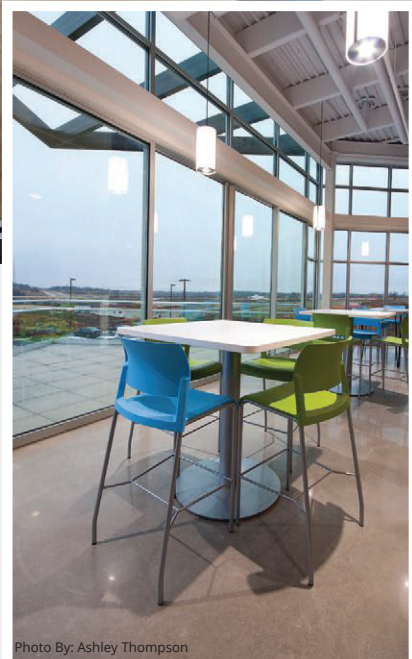


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a new logo or a new packaging virtually to test it with consumer research before going to the expense of changing an entire product line. But the innovation goes even further. Once a company and its buyer reach an agreement, the retailer can use a downloaded virtual representation to instantly send store managers to show them what a display or shelf should look like in stores.

Lockwood 2 Creations can also aid companies by helping them to incorporate and build presentation kitchens, which are quickly becoming a vital tool to help retailers and suppliers stay innovative. These presentation kitchens are outfitted to allow chefs to present products and allow merchants to test and sample.

All of this technology can be seen in a 9,000-square customer insights project that Lockwood 2 Creations completed in Nashville, Tenn., for Mars Petcare. The facility is dedicated entirely to shopper and consumer testing and research and includes



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simulated retailer environments, including large mass, small, flex and grocery formats, as well as a full home environment, focus group space, virtual reality “Smart Walls,” separate work and meeting spaces, and a fully-functional prep kitchen.

But even beyond managing these projects and helping companies tap into state-of-the-art technology, the Lockwoods also represent the owner through every step of the process. They work tirelessly to see that their clients’ needs are successfully

translated into efficient, effective and client-friendly transition plans.

They recently completed a breathtaking new office space in Bentonville for COTY, a global beauty products manufacturer that needed a new space to accommodate growth. The Lockwoods helped Paul Pritchard, vice president and team leader for the COTY Beauty Walmart & Sam’s Club team, see the vision to completely transform and reuse a former manufacturing plant into a beautiful, high fashion space with a

focus on sustainability — ranging from all the flooring being made from 100 percent recycled material to LED lighting throughout the entire space.

“The benefit of having a company like Lockwood 2 Creations is that 100 percent of my time needs to be focused on leading my team here and growing our business with Walmart,” says Pritchard. “So, if I didn’t have someone like Lisa, I would have been tremendously distracted during the process.” Throughout the project, the Lockwoods gave status updates to inform the COTY team about the progress of the project, and they conducted meetings over coffee or lunch to accommodate Pritchard’s hectic schedule.

Dave Burris of Mangold Burris Architecture, the firm that designed the COTY project, adds, “Lisa serves her clients as if she were the client herself.”

Another one of the Lockwoods most recent projects was the completion of a new office space for Unilever in Rogers. Jim Breach, vice president of customer development at Unilever, had a vision that the new office would showcase the company’s mission and brands.

To accomplish this purpose, the Lockwoods delved into Unilever’s corporate mission and brand identity to create a unique space that suits the company. “They took our thoughts and feelings and turned them into walls, carpeting and spacing,” says Breach. The new office incorporates an open work environment, complete with plenty of natural light from large windows. It also features other practical considerations like showers in the bathrooms for employees who want to take advantage of the office’s close proximity to the Razorback Greenway trail system at lunch.

The Lockwoods truly speak the corporate language and understand what these companies need. “This is such a fun area to work in,” Steve says. “People here are just fantastic, and we see our work as more than just a project. We are about building relationships and getting to know these businesses to help them truly succeed.”



Photo By: Ashley Thompson



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