



JT Magen and Gensler complete 180,000 s/f fit-out office space at 3 World Trade Center

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Manhattan, NY JT Magen, a national construction firm specializing in preconstruction, construction management, design-build, and general contracting across a variety of industries; and global architecture and design firm, Gensler, have completed the fit-out of a new 180,000 s/f office space for Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer across four floors at Port Authority's 3 World Trade Center. The law firm relocated to Lower Manhattan from 601 Lexington Ave.

JT Magen served as construction manager for the project, overseeing all aspects of the project from budgeting, scheduling, logistics, procurement of materials, and management of subcontractors through the final handover. Gensler served as the designer for the interior space, including the environmental graphics and branding. The MEP engineer was Robert Derector Associates.

Freshfields was looking for a new space with an enhanced function and aesthetic that would better reflect the way the firm operates and be more welcoming to new talent. The firm chose lower Manhattan for its dynamic community and proximity to several major transit hubs.

Freshfields' new office features poured Laticrete NXT concrete cementitious finish flooring, acoustical wall fabric panels in meeting and conference rooms, and varieties of stone and ceramic tile for flooring areas and kitchen/restrooms. A multitude of amenity areas were implemented, including a kitchen and cafeteria with food service, a dedicated barista and Grab & Go, as well as several breakout and meeting spaces that encourage collaborative interactions. The new space also features hub areas centered around the pantries on each floor, which serve to promote further interaction and collaboration among Freshfields' attorneys and business professionals.

JT Magen and Gensler carried out a design-assist with M. Cohen & Sons to develop three sets of interconnecting stairs within Freshfields' new office, connecting the main reception space on the 52nd floor to the café and additional meeting spaces on the 53rd floor. A second staircase connects employees from the well-appointed Hub Pantry adjacent to the office space on the 51st floor with the 52nd floor, and a third staircase that bridges from the 53rd floor to another Hub Pantry on the 54th floor. The interconnecting staircases required the creation of structural openings through the floor slabs in order to expose connection points of the new stair structure to tie back to the base build structural steel system.

To allow natural light to fill the space, private offices on the perimeter and interior feature glass office fronts and doors, allowing light to permeate while still maintaining discretion and a sense of personal space. JT Magen worked with Longman Lindsey to add an extra layer of privacy and stillness to the office space by using a combination of single- and double-glazed office front wall systems, produced by IOC.

“Over the last few years, law firms have been seeking more free flowing layouts and amenity areas. The next generation of office space for the legal field is not decked out with private offices, leather chairs and heavy wood accents,” said Jay Rimatzki, a senior project manager at JT Magen who oversaw the construction management of the project. “Because of confidentiality concerns, law firms tend to be heavily private office-driven, which blocks out the natural light in the inner areas of the workplace. Today, there’s more attention paid to how we can make this aspect of privacy more transparent, to bring in natural light and provide an aesthetically pleasing and positive experiential environment for users.”

Gensler coordinated with JT Magen and M. Cohen & Sons to imagine the stairs and surrounding areas as “architectural focal points,” featuring stairs clad in decorative pre-cast concrete with wood handrails, surrounded by glass guardrails. These design elements work in conjunction to create an impressive larger atrium and reception space. The reception area was specifically positioned within the building’s footprint to allow for views that overlook the Brooklyn Bridge and the Eastern New York skyline.

Photos by Tom Sibley

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