



CBX completes new store layout for Sunoco's APlus convenience store; retained to better position Sunoco's upgraded foodservice

July 13, 2009 - Shopping Centers

CBX, the strategic branding, design, and consultancy agency based here, has completed a new store layout for Sunoco's APlus-branded convenience store operation. Sunoco Inc. (NYSE:SUN), the Philadelphia-based oil refiner and marketer, has approximately 4,700 branded retail outlets located along the east coast from Massachusetts to Florida, as well as upstate New York and Ohio. Under the project, CBX was retained to better position Sunoco's recently upgraded foodservice areas, including coffee and ready-to-go foods. Additionally, the firm executed an audit and rationalized APlus's in-store communication materials.

Averaging 2,850 s/f, APlus stores, located in select Sunoco stations, offer on-the-go snacks; a wide range of beverages along with packaged foods for lunches or quick pick-me-ups. A grocery area stocks basic necessities such as bread, milk and eggs.

"Sunoco's significant investment in its current look and feel carries major equity with customers," said Joseph Bona, president of CBX's retail division. The bright and inviting primary color palette found on Sunoco's architecture and gas canopy signage makes its way inside the stores by way of counters, fixtures and floors, as well as departmental graphics and promotional messaging.

"Our challenge was to take those existing assets and package them in a much more consistent way," Bona said. "We looked at what graphic elements could be modified or refined and identified what new graphic elements were needed in order for the stores to be more productive, and to transmit the idea of cleanliness and quality to customers."

Specifically, CBX assisted Sunoco in redeveloping existing perimeter department signage as well as wall graphics and menu boards. Additionally, the firm helped reorganize the checkout counter to improve transaction efficiency and to increase impulse purchases.

As competition in the convenience store sector heats up, Bona said, Sunoco is increasingly going head-to-head with other national and regional players who have raised the bar in terms of freshly prepared foods and beverages such as premium coffees. "Sunoco wanted to put more focus on its coffee and packaged foods offer in order to generate higher sales and increase margins," he explained. To that end, CBX's design upgrade included reworking the left-hand side of the layout to position coffee and fresh on-the-go foods in a way that would create greater awareness of Sunoco's newly expanded offer and facilitate sales. This represents a departure from the prior layout under which customers entering APlus stores first encounter typical c-store fare such as bagged candy and snacks.

Sunoco currently is evaluating the revamped layout and graphics in its Wyomissing, Pa. location for the purpose of testing before rolling out the design to its company-owned portfolio of stores. "This store design delivers our new grab-and-go sandwich and prepared beverage programs in a

cost-effective, easy to operate format. We believe the end result will be a higher return on capital," said Jim Farrow, franchise manager and manager of store design and layout.

A leading independent oil refiner and marketer, Sunoco operates five refineries, which have a combined processing capacity of 910,000 barrels of crude oil a day, and has 5,450 miles of oil and refined products pipelines and 38 product terminals. It markets its Sunoco gasoline through more than 4,680 retail outlets (including Ultra Service Centers and APlus convenience stores), primarily along the East Coast, upstate New York and the upper Midwest. Sunoco also produces lubricants and mines coal for coke processing and operates a chemicals business. In 2004, APlus became a sponsor of NASCAR and is the "Official Pitstop of NASCAR" and the "Official Convenience Store of NASCAR." NASCAR merchandise and products are available at participating APlus locations.

CBX is a fully integrated creative agency specializing in retail design and operations, brand and corporate identity development, packaging, research, and motion branding. The company maintains offices in New York City, Minneapolis, San Francisco, and Los Angeles.

New York Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540