

Creative Signage

The surge in creativity among new retail projects filters down to the smallest detail, including signage. The new Coastal Grand-Myrtle Beach, which opened in mid-March, is one project that has incorporated some unique elements into its architectural details. The 1 million- square-foot regional mall was designed to reflect the heritage, coastal lifestyle and natural beauty of the Myrtle Beach area.

Green Bay, Wisconsin-based Jones Sign Nationwide provided most of the specialty products that hang from the mall ceiling, and also designed and fabricated the mall's exterior signs. For example, the company created a 300-foot canopy designed to look like a giant shrimp net. The shrimp net serves as a giant exterior awning, and it is such a striking design element that it can even be seen from an airplane flying above the mall, notes **Mark Mueller, mall image specialist for the design firm. Founded in 1910, Jones Sign designs, manufactures and installs signage nationwide.**

New trends in signage also take advantage of emerging technologies. In the past, electronic message centers have utilized white lightbulbs. But the more efficient LED message centers are emerging as a top choice at retail centers. "The big plus with LED is power consumption, which reduces power by up to one-fourth," Mueller notes. Another trend in message centers is moving away from traditional red or amber colored messaging to full-color systems, he adds.

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