

Shoe Carnival's Arresting New Headquarters

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Shoe Carnival's new facility will not only accommodate its continuing growth—its headquarters building is a showcase

Shoe Carnival's new multi-story headquarters houses administrative employees for the rapidly growing company—a family footwear retailer with more than 300 stores in 28 states.

“EXPANSION, EXPANSION, EXPANSION.”

That's the mantra of Mark Lemond, CEO of Shoe Carnival Inc., a leading retailer of family footwear in the United States.

Founded in Evansville, Indiana, in 1978, the company has grown to more than 300 stores in 28 states and plans to keep expanding its footprint in the retail shoe business. “We had the necessity to expand both the corporate headquarters for administrative employees as well as the distribution center. We decided to build new ones since we were land-locked in our previous location,” Lemond explains.

Although talks were under way with a number of developers, including a few in other states, Woodward Development & Construction Inc., a Butler Builder® in Evansville, sought an opportunity to work with Shoe Carnival's relocation plans.

“We could make a strong case for working with us because our attention to portfolio management has earned us an excellent reputation,” says Evan Beck, Woodward's president. “We focused a lot on our relationship as the landlord. We take pride in the quality of every project we build because we are a long-term holder of properties. We build them, lease them and maintain them as investors, rather than just earning a development fee and flipping the property to different ownership. We also had the financial capacity needed to back the entire \$30-million development.”

Woodward principals also stressed the economic advantage of build-to-lease agreements. Large corporations now find that expensing lease costs and investing in their core business brings a higher return than owning real estate, according to Beck.

Staying in Evansville brought Shoe Carnival other rewards as well. The city is located in southern Indiana on the Ohio River, in the tri-state area that includes Kentucky and Illinois. For distribution purposes, it is conveniently located at the crossroads of I-64 and I-164, near the demographic center of the United States. Both local and state governments

BY MEV WILSON

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JERRY BUTTS

“We have MR-24® roof systems on buildings that are 30 to 40 years old and . . . there’s no deterioration”
STEVE KAHRE

provided a number of economic development incentives to seal the deal.

Ready to run

Shoe Carnival awarded both projects—a 410,000-square-foot distribution center and a 60,000-square-foot Class A headquarters building—to Woodward and immediately the race was on. “Shoe Carnival had limited windows of opportunity to convert from the old distribution center. They had a critical time line with certain dates to meet so they could tie into equipment deliveries,” Beck recalls.

Woodward owned 130 vacant acres that proved perfect for the distribution center—except that it had once been a mining operation. “It was extremely distressed, with a lot of old foundations, debris, parts of it grown over,” explains Steve Kahre, Woodward vice president of development. “We bought the property at auction, mostly to protect our investment in a building across the street. We played with laying the building out on the site and found we could do it on 42 acres. That enabled us to give Shoe Carnival a more aggressive lease rate. The local community was extremely excited that we were going to take care of this blighted piece of property.”

After an environmental study and mitigation plan received approvals from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, work started on the site in February. A short eight months later, the distribution center was online.

Woodward tapped American Structurepoint Inc., an architectural firm based in Indianapolis, for design assistance on both buildings. The 500- by 800-foot distribution center features 60 dock doors, 34-foot ceilings and 10,000 square feet of office space. Woodward and the architect chose the Shadowwall™ wall system to top an 8-foot perimeter wall of concrete block, qualifying the project for a lower interest rate on the loan. The Landmark™ 2000 structural system provided the large open bays to accommodate extensive automation capabilities and product storage.

Woodward used the MR-24® standing seam roof system on both the distribution center



and the headquarters offices. “The MR-24 system is just the only roof system to use. We have MR-24 roof systems on buildings that are 30 to 40 years old and you can’t tell they’re that old. There’s no deterioration. With any other roof, in 15 to 20 years, you’ve got to put a new one on,” Kahre explains.

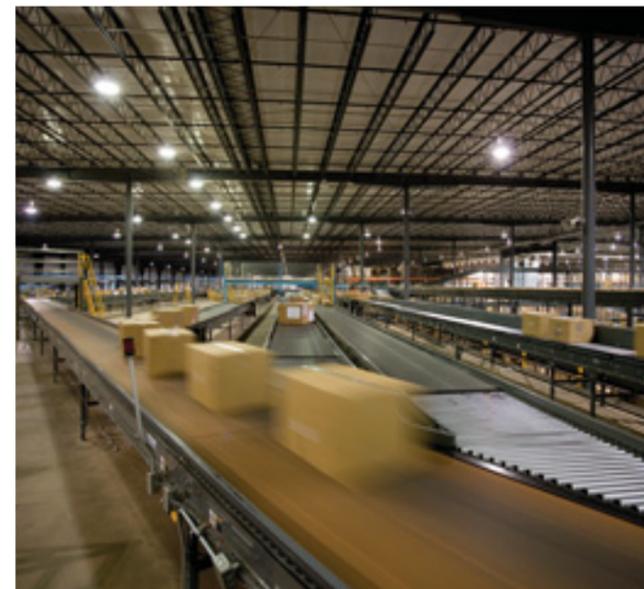
Fit and style

“Shoe Carnival wanted a high-end-looking building for its headquarters,” says Rob Creviston, AIA, project manager for American Structurepoint. “We went through several iterations before hitting the right combination.”

Situated in an upscale, mixed-use commerce center, the two-story building took on a boomerang shape, dictated in part by a 1.4-acre retention pond and a curve in the road. “The shape surrounded the pond and

The builder/developer redeemed a formerly blighted piece of property for the project and was able to clear the site and complete the 410,000-square-foot distribution center so that it was up and running in just eight months.

The huge building has a weathertight MR-24® standing seam roof system—a great asset when storing merchandise—and can expand 50 percent by simply moving an endwall.



"We're not only able to expand into the current footprint, but we'll be able to expand the building itself"
MARK LEMOND



Shoe Carnival wanted its administrative offices to have a high-end look. The architect consulted Butler engineers for detailing assistance to provide an economical, as well as distinctive, multi-story structure.

provided more parking on two ends. It looks great from the interstate (I-164)," Creviston adds.

The challenge came in the details, according to the architect. "We were trying to be economical as well as distinctive, so we conversed with the Butler engineers to see if they could handle a particular approach or if it would add too much cost to the building," Creviston says. In addition to its MR-24 roof system, the atypically

SHOE CARNIVAL

Butler Builder®: Woodward Development & Construction Inc., Evansville, Indiana

Architect: Rob Creviston, AIA, American Structurepoint, Inc.; Indianapolis, Indiana

Size: 410,000 square feet [distribution center] 60,000 square feet [offices]

Butler® Systems:

Landmark™ 2000 structural system [distribution center]

Multi-Story structural system [offices]

Shadowall™ wall system [warehouses]

MR-24® standing seam roof system [both buildings]

shaped two-story building has a Multi-Story structural system, and its walls feature plenty of blue-tinted glass to achieve stunning reflections.

The open office plan includes a two-level atrium, offices and meeting rooms. A large employee break room opens onto a 6,000-square-foot patio and overlooks the pond, which is stocked for fishing and is encircled by a walking path. A high-efficiency heating, air-conditioning and

ROOM FOR A
GROWING BUSINESS

*"It was exactly the look I was
looking for"*

MARK LEMOND



The administrative building will serve Shoe Carnival for many years to come, and its stunning design continues to draw many positive comments.

variable-air-volume air distribution system handles the inside environment.

Room to grow

Both buildings were designed with growth in mind. The distribution center can expand by as much as 50 percent with the simple movement of an endwall. "We built the headquarters with the capability of housing 250 to 300 people and we currently employ 180 to 200," Lemond says. "So we're not only able to expand into the current footprint, but

we'll be able to expand the building itself by adding about 20,000 square feet to the wings. That should satisfy our expansion needs for many years to come."

The headquarters building in particular has drawn rave reviews. "It's a showcase, without a doubt," says Kahre. "We're very proud of it."

"When I first described it to our developers at Woodward, it was exactly the look I was looking for, and they carried it out to a T," Lemond concurs. ■