

Introducing Re-Creations

Custom Manufacturing Resource Helps Dealers Stand Out from the Crowd and Boosts Their Bottom Line

“No project of any size comes without at least one or two unique items that the client wants but doesn’t know where to find, and that translates either into another opportunity for the dealer or a gateway into the client for the dealer’s competition.”

With that very basic point about the contract furniture business, Carlene Wilson, a VP of WPF dealer member BKM Total Office of Texas, makes a compelling argument for Re-Creations, the latest addition to the WPF portfolio of business partners and a proven resource for custom manufacturing and recycled product for nearly 30 years.

In the interests of full disclosure, it’s only fair to point out that Carlene is not a wholly unbiased observer. A woman-owned business—Carlene and president Carol Roehrig are co-owners—BKM has operated its Re-Creations division since 1983, but that’s nothing but good news for WPF and its members.

“As part of BKM, Re-Creations functions as a dealer first and a manufacturer second,” Carlene points out. “We understand the pricing pressures all dealers are facing today and our goal is to design the most functional and highly aesthetic products at the lowest possible cost.”

When dealers think of custom manufacturing, it often conjures up a “two guys and a truck” type image, a small mom-and-pop operation that’s just a notch or two above a workshop in a garage.

That’s not what Re-Creations brings to the table. The company operates out of a 74,000 sq. ft. facility in Dallas that houses an extensive array of custom manufacturing equipment and \$8 million in inventory of remanufactured Series 9000, Avenir, Montage and Answer workstations from Steelcase.

Heading up the operation is Jon Genzer, a 30-year veteran of the industry who manages an expert team that’s cross-trained on a broad range of furniture manufacturing equipment and processes and further supported by access to highly skilled labor forces to accommodate scheduling requirements.

And what does a typical Re-Creations project look like?

“There’s really no such thing,” Carlene says. “One week might see us cutting down 2,500 panels from 65” to 45”, the next we’re working on custom conference room tables or reception stations and the next, we’re building custom banquettes for a restaurant chain or a casino.”

Re-Creations’ work spans a spectrum that is limited only by the client’s needs and the designer’s imagination and from their Dallas headquarters they ship nationwide, with delivery on custom solutions typically running some 4-6 weeks.

For their clients, Carlene points out, Re-Creations provides solutions to unique needs that would otherwise be hard if not impossible to fulfill.

For dealers, she says, the benefits are even more appealing.

“With the market as competitive as it is today, we’re all looking for a way to differentiate our dealership from the rest of the crowd,” she observes. “Re-Creations gives the dealer that unique point of differentiation and it does so in a way that brings significant benefits to the bottom line—with gross margins that are typically at least double what dealers might expect from standard contract margins.”

“Given today’s economic challenges, all companies, no matter what business they’re in, are looking for ways to reduce costs,” she continues. “Re-Creations’ custom solutions makes it possible for dealers to provide cost breakthroughs for their customers while still generating a more than healthy margin.”

Re-Creations’ custom solutions not only provide a point of differentiation with the customer. They also generate an enthusiastic response from the A&D community.

“Architects and designers don’t always want to use standard off-the-shelf product,” Carlene points out. “As the principal at one of Dallas’s major design firms told me recently, ‘We always want to have some aspect of a project that’s totally unique so that we can put our own autograph on it. That’s what Re-Creations enables us to do and to do at a price our customers can afford.’”

Adding still further to the Re-Creations value proposition is its strong “Green” positioning. “As a remanufacturer, we’re all about sustainability and offering ways to keep product out of the landfill and extend its useful life,” Carlene explains.

That culture drives the custom manufacturing side of the operation as well, making it possible to help clients earn LEED credits and similar recognition.

Put all these elements together and it’s not too surprising to learn that at BKM Total Office of Texas, over 90% of the dealer’s projects have a Re-Creations component of some kind.

“There are just too many benefits for everyone concerned—dealer, designer and end user—for us not to draw on Re-Creations resources as often as we do,” Carlene reports. “It’s not only a major point of differentiation for us as dealers, but also an increasingly important source of profitable revenue as well.”

If you’d like to find out more about how Re-Creations can bring an extra dimension to your dealership and its value proposition, make plans now to attend WPF’s 2011 Annual Conference in Dallas, April 4-6.

In addition to several special breakout sessions during the program, attendees will tour the Re-Creations facility and have the opportunity to see for themselves the manufacturing operation up close.