

Hermitage Lighting Gallery Acquires Hardware Store, Expands Product Selection

Hermitage Lighting Gallery, an ALA member showroom located in Nashville, Tenn., recently acquired Lankford Hardware & Supply Company and incorporated the store's line of specialty hardware into its product mix. Hermitage Lighting Gallery now houses a Lankford division in its showroom, offering cabinet hardware and faucetry.

"We now offer door hardware, cabinet hardware, faucetry and plumbing products," says Jack D. Fleischer, CLC, president of Hermitage Lighting Gallery. "Lankford's lines of hardware complement Hermitage's high-quality products and provide an added convenience for our customers who can now shop for their bathroom and kitchen design needs in one place."

"Having a greater selection of products creates a synergy in our business that allows us to be able to supply the customer with a full accompaniment of products for their home," Fleischer continues. "This is an opportunity to access lines that are very high-end and have had a very successful track record."

Betty Lankford, the daughter-in-law of Lankford Hardware & Supply Company Founder Samuel Lankford, has served as a hardware specialist for more than 27 years and will oversee all hardware specialty operations and sales for the Lankford division at Hermitage Lighting Gallery.

Home Sweet Home

This is not the first time Hermitage has expanded its product selection. In addition to lighting products, the showroom has offered home décor products for years.

"We offer home décor products on our showroom floor to enhance the feel of all the other products and create a synergy for the customer," Fleischer says. "It creates more of a home atmosphere in our operation. We've been pleasantly surprised over the years on what we've been able to retail."

Fleischer believes offering a broader selection of products will help the showroom attract retail customers even more. "In this marketplace, the more options you have to show a customer, the greater the possibility of creating a larger-ticket sale," he says. "If we can offer that breadth of selection and be successful at merchandising it and selling it, then I think it's a real plus."

Astute Adjustments

The showroom's acquisition of the hardware store was one of the many adjustments Hermitage has made in response to the weak economy. "Construction was so strong before the recession that it really didn't require anything other than a location to get the business," Fleischer says. "Today's environment requires you to be astute at where your expenses are and where your opportunities exist."

In 2009, Hermitage acquired a 60,000-square-foot building that serves as a distribution warehouse and the headquarters for the showroom's national accounts division. "That has allowed us to be able to service our customers much more easily," Fleischer says. "Before we were in five buildings and pressed for space."

Additionally, Hermitage conducted a reorganization of its internal operations so the products displayed on its e-commerce website are now tied directly to the showroom's inventory system.

"We realized our website was not integrated with our internal computer operations systems," Fleischer says. "Inventory is now in real time, and we are concentrating on marketing our website to take advantage of our new synergies. I'm very excited about our future."

(Right) Hermitage Lighting Gallery reorganized and restructured its entire showroom in order to install new shelving and wooden panels to display the new Lankford Division product lines. The high-quality Rocky Mountain and Baldwin hardware lines are shown here.



Proactive Showrooms is a publication of the American Lighting Association. Have a story idea? Send an e-mail to bjglenn@americanlightingassoc.com.