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Heated Glass Remedy for All Seasons

CHALLENGE: Dryden Abernathy Architecture Design (DA/AD) in Nashville, specializes in designing innovative solutions to unique architectural challenges. Located in a converted auto shop, the design firm's headquarters has a hip, modern flavor that appeals to its clientele. However, the structure itself is little more than a cavernous, two-story concrete box. Apart from a few offices on the north side of the building, the employees are located in a vast, open workspace in the middle of what was previously the auto shop's garage. In warmer months, employees were happy to work in an open area without interior walls. In the winter, however, the garage area filled with chilly drafts. The building's heating system, where vents were mounted to the ceiling at least 12 ft. above anyone's head,

could not solve the problem. "There was no good way to heat certain parts of the building," said John Abernathy, a partner at the firm. "When the weather turned cold, it was just uncomfortable."

CRITERIA: Find a solution to improve the thermal comfort of the space without detracting from its hip flavor.

INFLUENCES: Besides finding a solution to its own heating problems, the design firm wanted to explore a new technology for its architectural designs. As experts in architecture and design, Dryden and Abernathy immediately identified the source of the cold air and discomfort: What had been a two-story opening for cars to enter the

garage was now a stylish wall of windows. The cold glass in the windows was stealing heat from the workspace, generating cold air, and creating drafts throughout the entire garage area.

SOLUTION: Abernathy and Dryden decided to replace these two units with new windows featuring Thermique heated glass. The garage door opening at DA/AD had been filled in with seven large window units arranged into three rows. Two windows, approximately 4-ft. x 4-ft. and 4-ft. x 7-ft. formed the bottom row. "Typically, it is unnecessary to heat windows that are positioned above the height of an average person," explained George Usinowicz, architectural representative for Thermique Technologies. "You'll

receive the full benefits of Thermique technology from one row of heated windows no matter how tall the room is."

In the DA/AD installation, the heated window units were constructed with one pane of Thermique heated glass for the interior lite and one pane of frosted privacy glass for the exterior lite. Adjusting the glass temperature is as simple as twisting a knob on the wall.

Thermique Technologies is the only company to earn UL approval to provide heated glass technology for architectural use in the United States. The results at DA/AD have been "amazing," according to Abernathy. "We have a lot of tall open space, which was a major challenge," he said. "Our Thermique heated glass keeps us consistently warm throughout the year. No other technology could have solved our problem. Now, the drafts and chills are gone.

Everyone at DA/AD has been thrilled with the windows."

The design firm's clients have been impressed as well, previously, the coldest part of the building was the conference area for client meetings.

DA/AD is the first design firm in the southern U.S. to adopt the technology, giving the company not only a more comfortable work environment, but also a differentiating edge over the competition. "We're introducing our clients to something entirely new, which is something few architects have the privilege to do," said Abernathy. "We used to worry about inviting clients and potential clients to come sit down in our conference area during the winter months," he added. "Now, we can't wait to bring them into the conference area so that we can show off the heated glass." Visit www.thermique.com or Circle 397.

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