

Roundtable on Exterior Doors

By Stefan Schumacher

1. How can exterior doors enhance a building aesthetically? What might architects consider when evaluating the importance of doors on a given project?

Schweiss: We truly custom manufacture each door as a custom door. We design around the customers' needs and how they envision their door to blend in with the rest of the building structure, making the door and building seamless, adding beauty to the building structure, yet making the doors very functional.

Burnham: High-performance doors, specifically, can aesthetically enhance a building. The new generation of high-performance security doors with aluminum slats and/or the galvanized steel slats are available in many color choices, as well as with varying amounts of vision area, that easily coordinates with any building color scheme and safety requirement. Architects will look at the appearance of the door, along with its speed and potential operating/maintenance cost. Using high-performance security doors will allow for energy savings, security and longevity.

Parker: When a door is chosen for a structure it is a mixture of form versus function, and for many years there has been conflict in this ratio. [Architects have now been enabled] to have form where they used to have to compromise function and they can now have function where they used to compromise form. It has been incredible to unleash the architectural minds upon our product, seeing our doors' increasing size, trading out wall space for moveable door real estate, seeing doors completely disguised so no one even knows a door exists. Not to mention the ability to lift huge expanses of glass, and what once would have been wall, at the touch of a button.

Landgraff: The exterior doors on a building act as the first point of entry for visitors, employees, vehicles or machinery, and are often where the first impression of the company is formed. It's important the doors reflect the company and complement the building and its surroundings aesthetically. Architects should consider where these doors are located on the building and who/what will be using the doors. With today's technology, doors can be glazed, clad with many materials and powder coated a variety of custom and standard colors. An architect's desired look can always be accomplished by working with the manufacturer and its designers.



Peter Burnham
Vice President of Sales
Hörmann Flexon LLC
Leetsdale, Pa.,
www.hormann-flexon.com



Kevin Landgraff
Technical Sales Manager
Door Engineering and Manufacturing LLC
Kasota, Minn.
www.doorengineering.com



Marshal Parker
President, Hydroswing Inc.
Cottonwood, Minn.
www.hydroswing.com



Mike Schweiss
Owner, Schweiss Doors
Fairfax, Minn.
www.bifold.com