

Project Profile



CELEBRATION™ Metal Ceiling Panels

Application/Building Type:

Retail Store Environments

Project Name:

Gene's Jewelers

Location:

Youngstown, Ohio

Architect:

Phillips/Sekanick Architects, Inc.

Subcontractor:

Roger Kreps Drywall & Plastering, Inc.

Supplier:

Wholesale Builders Supply

Featured Product:

CELEBRATION™ Metal Ceiling Panels



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Gene's Jewelers

Patricia Crowley's father, Gene, opened the original Gene's Jewelers after World War II in a small building on the town square. In 1970, he moved the store into a much larger 2,500-square-foot space down the street. Over time, the family had modernized the exterior facade, but had made only minor renovations to the inside of the store. After 35 years, the tired interior needed an overdue revitalization.

With the help of their architect, Kim Phillips, president of Phillips/Sekanick Architects, Inc., Warren, Ohio, the Crowleys formed a game plan. The goal was to create a bright, contemporary setting that would complement their jewelry display cases, but not overshadow them. Aesthetically, they desired that the walls, floor and ceiling offer a contemporary appeal, but still wanted customers' immediate visual focus to be drawn to the clocks, crystal and jewelry they sell.

Practically speaking, they had three concerns. "First, we were on a limited budget," said Crowley. "Second, we wanted to renovate without having to remove heavy furniture and jewelry cases from the store. Third, and most importantly, we planned to complete the project with minimal disruption during working hours at the store." They hoped to close the store for only one weekend to paint the walls, replace the carpeting and lighting, and install a new ceiling.

While the Crowleys could envision painting and carpeting the store in one weekend, they knew that installing a new 12-foot ceiling in such a short time period would be a next-to-impossible feat. "To tear down the existing ceiling tiles, heat diffusers and light fixtures could take at least a week," said Carter Lewis, president of Lewis Construction, Warren, Ohio, the general contractor for the project. "Moreover, for protection, the resulting dust and debris from demolishing the ceiling would require removal of everything from the interior of the space."

Fortunately, the architect was able to solve the Crowleys' ceiling dilemma by a coincidental turn of events. On a recent architectural tour of next-generation specialty and acoustical ceilings, Phillips had just been introduced to a new ceiling renovation solution that uses [CELEBRATION™ metal ceiling panels](#) from USG Interiors Inc. The system not only provides superior acoustical performance over standard traditional acoustical ceilings, but can also be installed without removing the existing ceiling.

Phillips recommended [CELEBRATION panels](#) as a perfect solution to the Crowleys' aesthetic and practical considerations. The product was obtained from Wholesale Builders Supply's facility in Youngstown, Ohio. Without removing the furniture from the store, three workers from Roger Kreps Drywall & Plastering Inc., Youngstown, Ohio, installed more than 1,200 square feet of the 2-foot-by-2-foot white ceiling panels over the existing ceiling in only one weekend.

First, the installers needed to square the existing ceiling suspension system. Although squaring is not normally necessary, the grid measurements were not perfectly true in this case because the more than 100-year-old building had settled. Then, using USG Interiors' uniquely engineered injection-molded, flame-resistant CELEBRATION renovation clip, they simply snapped one clip to each intersection of the existing suspension grid system and then snapped in the new [CELEBRATION ceiling panels](#). Only one clip is needed for each panel.

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“Installing the CELEBRATION ceiling without removing the former ceiling not only saved on initial material and labor costs to demolish and remove the former ceiling’s debris, but it will continue to result in savings if individual panels need to be replaced in the future,” said Lewis. “In addition, because there was almost no mess and minimal clean-up, we could begin to install the lighting, paint the walls and carpet the floors more quickly.”

The resulting smooth, sleek pattern of solid white and perforated panels brightened the room. “At a cost that was less than we were expecting, the understated ceiling gave the room a classy, clean look, but didn’t detract from the jewelry cases,” said Crowley.

They next replaced the outdated florescent lighting, which had never been well suited to displaying retail jewelry. Instead, they opted for pendant lighting, similar to the type used in museums. Various-shaped low-voltage halogen lights were suspended from free-form metal tracks attached to the ceiling.

“The varied sizes were chosen to help showcase particular types of merchandise,” said Phillips. “In addition, a suspended 3-by-20-foot, indirect high-output fluorescent lighting tube was installed down the center of the store for general lighting.”

Finally, mirrors on arches were installed near the ceiling to create the illusion of greater depth and more size. Fresh paint and a new, stylish carpet completed the look.

“Although we all loved the makeover, the true testament would be from our customers. We didn’t want them to experience a cold, hospital-like feel when they walked in,” said Crowley. “Their responses have been overwhelmingly positive. We couldn’t be more pleased with our new showcase shop as we begin the next 50 years.”