

FashionMANUSCRIPT



DESIGN REPUBLIC

A WELL-CONCEIVED IDEA TURNED REALITY

INGA KRULIENE, GABE HERNANDEZ, VINCENT IACOBELLIS,
BARRY LUDLOW, STEVE SEGURE, NEIL TUCKER

fashionably timed

DESIGN REPUBLIC

This story focuses on the timed and calculated expansion of a dynamic boutique architectural design studio – Design Republic – and the growth of its retail practice group.

Design Republic's new home is located at 501 Madison Avenue. Since its expansion this past Spring, it has grown its retail client list to include top fashion brands such as Anya Hindmarch, Bebe, Bottega Veneta, David Yurman, Derek Lam, Faconable, Fendi, Furla, Hugo Boss, Kate Spade, Lacoste, Louis Vuitton, Moncler, Nirav Modi, Polo Ralph Lauren, Salvatore Ferragamo, TAG Heuer, Tom Ford, Valentino and Victorinox to name a few. The retail practice leaders are Inga Kruliene, LEED AP, Vincent Iacobellis, IIDA, Assoc. AIA and Steven Segure, LEED AP. Each of the firm's retail leadership has over 20 years experience working in collaboration with some of fashion's most

talented individuals. Design Republic also goes beyond fashion with specialty sectors that include workplace, media entertainment, hospitality, residential, commercial and cultural led by Gabriel Hernandez, Barry Ludlow, AIA and Neil Tucker, AIA.

Design Republic's deep rooted belief that "design drives business" is exemplified in the many project implementation stories acknowledged since the start of this well conceived idea turned reality. "We consider ourselves a collective of talented professionals each possessing skills that contribute to the strength of our overall studio. Our successes are marked by our shared experience collaborating with an array of design professionals," explains Vincent Iacobellis, one of the firm's three leaders dedicated to the art and science of retail design. It's not unusual to walk the studio on any given day and catch a glimpse of some of the most high profile upcoming worldwide

store projects in the form of two-dimensional drawings, 3D renderings and physical mock-ups on the desktops of this group of dedicated professionals that truly embody a "Republic" of design talent.

Each of the firm's practice leaders take on a vested interest in maintaining hands-on involvement from conception to completion of every project. Whether managing the design process, coordinating design into technical documentation or navigating projects through the construction period, the formula is pretty straightforward; maintain a high level of passion for each engagement, respect and acknowledge the team's input and contributions regularly and make friends along the way. Their creative work environment further fuels the high level of performance by establishing a distinct culture, infectious with music playing, espresso and cappuccinos brewing and clanking of cups and saucer noise in the background. Young talents interface with one another during impromptu pin-ups and Principal offices maintain an open door policy that encourages collective thinking and problem solving. It may sound utopic to some but this deliberate, transparent and refreshing culture truly exists within this creative shop. "We encourage team input and foster creative group thinking during the design process as we incubate ideas," explains Inga Kruliene, who manages many of their most creative design projects.



Photo Credit: Thaddeus Rombauer

Bebe
New Store Design Concept
Short Hills Mall, Short Hills, NJ



Inga Kruliene, Barry Ludlow, Neil Tucker, Vincent Iacobellis, Steve Segure, Gabe Hernandez

“WE CONSIDER OURSELVES A COLLECTIVE OF TALENTED PROFESSIONALS EACH POSSESSING SKILLS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE STRENGTH OF OUR OVERALL STUDIO.”

“The retail landscape is broad with opportunity and challenges for 2015,” explains Steven Segure, who co-manages the practice group. The outlook continues to appear bright for Property Owners as rents maintain a steady increase in some of the world’s sought after retail corridors, such as New York City’s famed 5th Avenue and Madison Avenue, London’s Bond Street, Paris’ Avenue des Champs-Elysees, Milan’s Via Montenapoleone and Hong Kong’s Queens Road as leaders among the most expensive retail real estate per square foot. The mall shopping venue is also turning around. Centers are experiencing positive foot traffic and higher tenant occupancy rates as mall owners are reinvesting in their properties by focusing on renovating and expanding their malls to offer a more customer engaged shopping experience adding restaurants, fitness clubs, spas and other customer driven amenities. By doing so, malls are becoming more experiential

rather than transactional. Outlet malls also remain strong as retailers continue to factor outlet store programs as a necessary part of their revenue generation.

Design Republic has focused its efforts addressing every aspect of their retail client’s strategy and offering dedicated teams executing flagship main street stores, mall based stores, outlet stores and shop in shop projects and even showrooms and office environments for their clients. “In order for us to be truly effective to our clients, we believe it’s important to partner and act as an extension of our client’s internal teams,” explains Vincent Iacobellis. Whether it’s assisting on reviewing leases and landlord negotiations, developing concepts, developing value engineered tiered concepts, coordinating the roll-out of established concepts or implementing a one-off store design, the goal is to provide value added efficiency to

the process. With the aforementioned in mind, Design Republic continues to partner with their clients as they implement projects throughout the United States, Central America, South America and Asia. In addition, they have been a “go to” for many foreign retailers entering the U.S. market for the first time.

As they continue to earn the trust, respect and loyalty of their clients, colleagues and friends, they plan to grow into a global practice. Each locale will be led and inspired by the same principles that began the journey. Reach out and get to know these inspired individuals. Their door is always open. [▶](#)

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