

# Virtual Design to Reality... a new approach to interior design

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It is still dark outside as I climb the stairs to my loft office overlooking Morro Bay estuary on the Central California coast. I need to prepare for my first meeting of the day starting at 5 am with clients and their contractor... in Chicago, Illinois. Yes, it is a site visit. The difference is that I will be attending via a web meeting.

My firm, studio b., has developed the conceptual architectural design, drawing plans and specified the materials for this kitchen renovation project. Now, as the project is in the construction phase, I will oversee and consult during this final phase with the clients and general contractor. Any problems will be discussed, options will be formulated, and since I am at my computer with the rest of the team in Chicago viewing my computer screen, they can see how each discussed option will work. The clients can even see the changes in a 3D video walkthrough. When the final decisions are made, I will make changes to drawings and the revisions will be e.mailed to the client, contractor, and any other trade involved with the issue at hand. Voila! Practical Magic.

Why is this type of service needed? It is time, cost, and energy efficient. How many times have we, as professional designers, been called out to the site due to an unforeseen issue that took 20 minutes to resolve once we were on the property? The project was on hold until we could make it out to the site and then our client was charged not only the 20 minutes, but also the drive time to and from the site. In addition, further research was needed and drawing revisions had to be made and sent back to the general contractor, more waiting. With a few photos e.mailed to our design office, we can immediately research and discuss with our clients and general contractor the options then e.mail back any drawing revisions. This is just one case scenario, but is a prime example of the efficiency of this virtual process for today's busy clients. I specify materials, shop online with clients, and have samples sent directly to my clients home for review in a web meeting. Clients can also be at different locations and not at the site; they just need access to a phone and a computer. Moreover, think of less carbon monoxide not emitted into the atmosphere from fewer cars on the road.

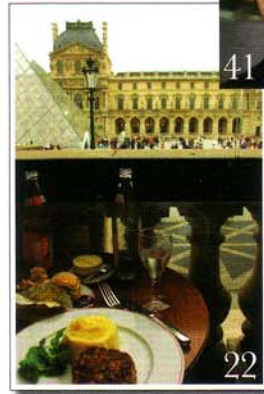
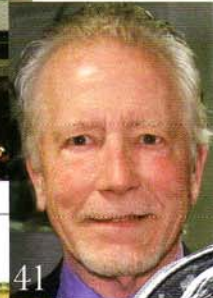
Technology and our market quickly changes and will continue to change our industry. In the last year, I have started working with developers and other design firms. This allows firms that do not have the technical experience with digital presentations, CAD, etc to use us a liaison between their company and their clients or to produce digital products for them. In this changing world, we must adjust to the times and our digital savvy clients, but always remember that exceptional design and great service will always be in style. ■



# LA DESIGN

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