

## Revitalizing the Urban Landscape

Whether to appeal to tourists, to lure consumers back to the urban core or simply to restore pride of place, we may be verging on a new age of civic heraldry. A decade ago, the cities with significant graphic and signage programs could probably be counted on one hand. Today, they can fill a book.

In Philadelphia, the design office of Cloud and Gehshan Assoc. was involved in the restoration and preservation of the city's historic Reading Terminal train shed.

Part of the designers' assignment called for developing a sign system to thread together old and new construction for a new \$591 million convention center complex, the region's most expensive redevelopment project ever. They needed to tread lightly: To respect the structure's historic designation, they suspended signs from cables and attached them to elements of the new structure that were essentially inserted into the old. Their design vocabulary took its cues from the building itself.

Then there was the bigger issue: How to weave the project's identity into the greater image of the city? And that brought Cloud and Gehshan, inevitably, to the Liberty Bell.

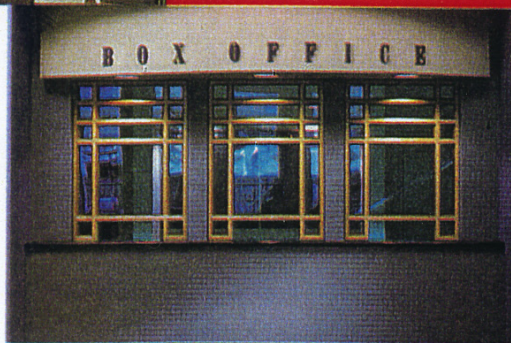
"At first, the Liberty Bell was the icon being used to market or talk about the convention center," explains design partner Jerome Cloud. "Then we showed a dozen examples of how the Liberty Bell is used, to signify everything from the airport to Absolut vodka. We argued that the city had an architectural jewel, something that was special and interesting, and we convinced them to develop an identity around that architectural image."

The center's new logo is a stylized view of the terminal, complete with tracks, and with it, Philadelphia gains a new civic icon. **HOW**



Reading Terminal, Philadelphia

"There are a lot of towns, communities, developments and campuses that are interested in the idea of identity," Jerome Cloud says. Cloud and Gehshan Assoc. preserved the integrity of Philadelphia's historic Reading Terminal train shed and enhanced a civic icon through a sign system that ties the old structure in with the city's new multimillion dollar convention center complex.



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