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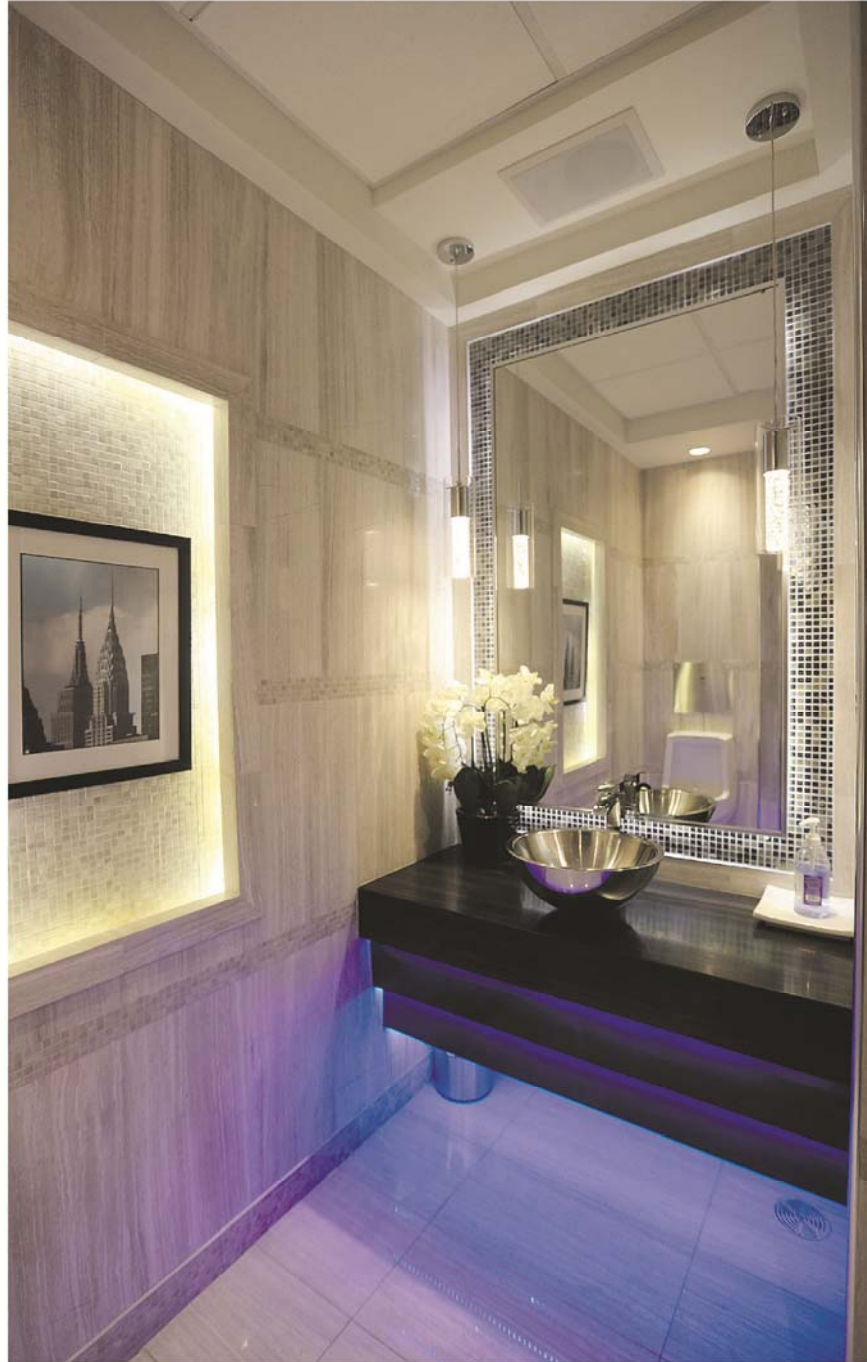
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SPACES PG. 4



A look inside the Nexus Building, the swanky new corporate headquarters for the Mid-West Group.
BRIDGES PHOTO BY MICHELLE BERG

SPACES

Spaces celebrates beauty both indoors and out. If you have a living space we should highlight email bridges@thestarphoenix.com

SASKATCHEWAN'S BEST SPACES

Art deco with a side of Sin City

By Sean Trembath

WHO? Colleen Wilson, director of design for Mid-West Group and Meridian Development.

WHAT/WHERE? The Nexus Building in Saskatoon, which houses the new corporate headquarters for both companies as well as several tenants.

WHEN? The grand opening was Aug. 12, but Mid-West and Meridian have been working there since March and some tenants have been there more than two years. The design process started about four years ago, when they decided on the lot at 450 Second Avenue North.

WHY? Wilson and husband Ken Achs, the president and CEO of Mid-West and Meridian, knew five years ago they needed to start looking for a new, permanent corporate headquarters. Wilson was excited at the idea of designing the entire space from the ground up.

HOW? "It's a little New York, a little Chicago and a little Las Vegas," says Wilson of her design inspirations.

The overarching design philosophy of the building is art deco, inspired by the classic architecture Wilson grew to love on trips to New York.

"I don't have to be convinced very hard to do art deco. It's my favourite. I've always loved art deco buildings," she says.

From Chicago, she took the elements of high-polished stainless steel seen in many of the building's features, from the sign out front to the meticulously-designed bases on the building's desks and conference tables.

Wilson also wanted to add a little over-the-top flair, or "bling," and for that she looked to Sin City.

The bathrooms — including some hidden behind doors that look like part of a regular wall in certain offices — are luxurious, with high ceilings and custom fixtures.



BRIDGES PHOTOS BY
MICHELLE BERG

SPACES

Almost everything in the building was built to Wilson's specifications. "A lot of the things in here couldn't be done locally. What we could do locally we did," Wilson says.

The chandelier in the main foyer is made of hundreds of unique pieces of glass, each individually-blown by an artist. These pieces were hand-wired to a frame by Wilson and an employee. It took more than a week.

Wilson says their design conversations went as far as the type of stitching you see on the corner of the padding that runs the length of their massive boardroom table.

"It's really hard when you're designing for yourself. You think you know what you want, but you're second guessing yourself continually," she says.

Although she seems happy to have the whole process done with, Wilson gets a lot of satisfaction from the finished product.

"It was certainly exciting, or interesting, but there were times when I just didn't know if we were going to get the amount of detail we wanted in. To the guys' credit, they did," she says.

"When I look around, and see what it look like, it's like (what) I had it in my mind."

