



**Pollack
Architecture
channels
the security
of family
for
APX Alarm
in Provo,
Utah**

safe and sound

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edie cohen
photography:
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Does “hip” exist in Utah, bastion of the Mormons? In a word, yes. The Provo headquarters of APX Alarm boasts the usual qualifying attributes: 16-foot exposed ceilings, polished-concrete floors, punchy colors, furniture classics. And a witty graphics program, built on black-and-white photomurals, seals the deal. Check out the family in front of a red-sauce Italian restaurant in Brooklyn, New York. Or the cougar napping on a rug in a *Leave It to Beaver*-type rec-room setting. The last time you saw anything this droll, it was either in Los Angeles or Berlin, not Utah.

Mormons are actually key to this project. The company’s au courant CEO, Todd Pedersen, is not only a Mormon, a skier, and a hunter but also a frequent L.A. visitor and a Sundance Film Festival attendee. He based his unusual business plan for APX Alarm on the Mormons’ obligatory two-year mission: Why not recruit students from Brigham Young University, arrange housing for them across the U.S., and let them use their door-to-door skills to sell alarms? Every year, he hires 3,500 students as his national sales force. It’s the quintessential low-tech model for selling high-tech home-security systems.

“They sell 150,000 systems over a four-month vacation period,” Pollack Architecture principal David Galullo reports admiringly. The admiration seems to be mutual. Hired during the construction phase of the building, designed by Curtis Miner Architecture, Galullo was delighted by his client’s receptiveness to contemporary design.

With the student sales force out on the road, who are the 850 employees in the three-story, 125,000-square-foot headquarters? The majority function as an organizational arm for the students. Others offer customer service and tech support. Their work, Galullo explains, virtually eliminates the need for private offices. Semiprivate spaces come in the form of conference rooms and smaller meeting or “huddle” rooms.

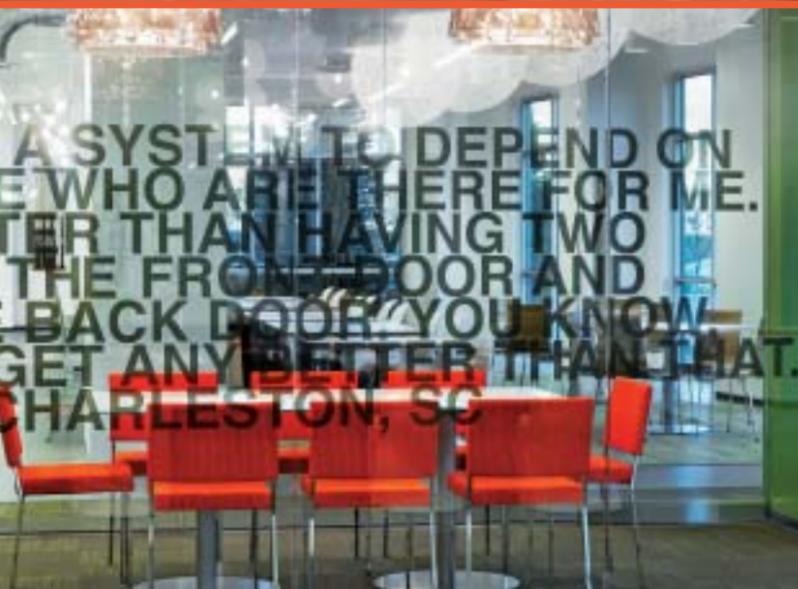
The café is another major asset. At 15,000 square feet, it occupies the entire ground level of one of the building’s two wings—and emphasizes the family-mindedness so important to Pedersen. “The café offers free hot meals and a place for people to gather,” Galullo says. He served up all kinds of design options here, too. In addition to bentplywood armchairs set around tables, out in the open, he enclosed two private dining rooms behind glass. ➤

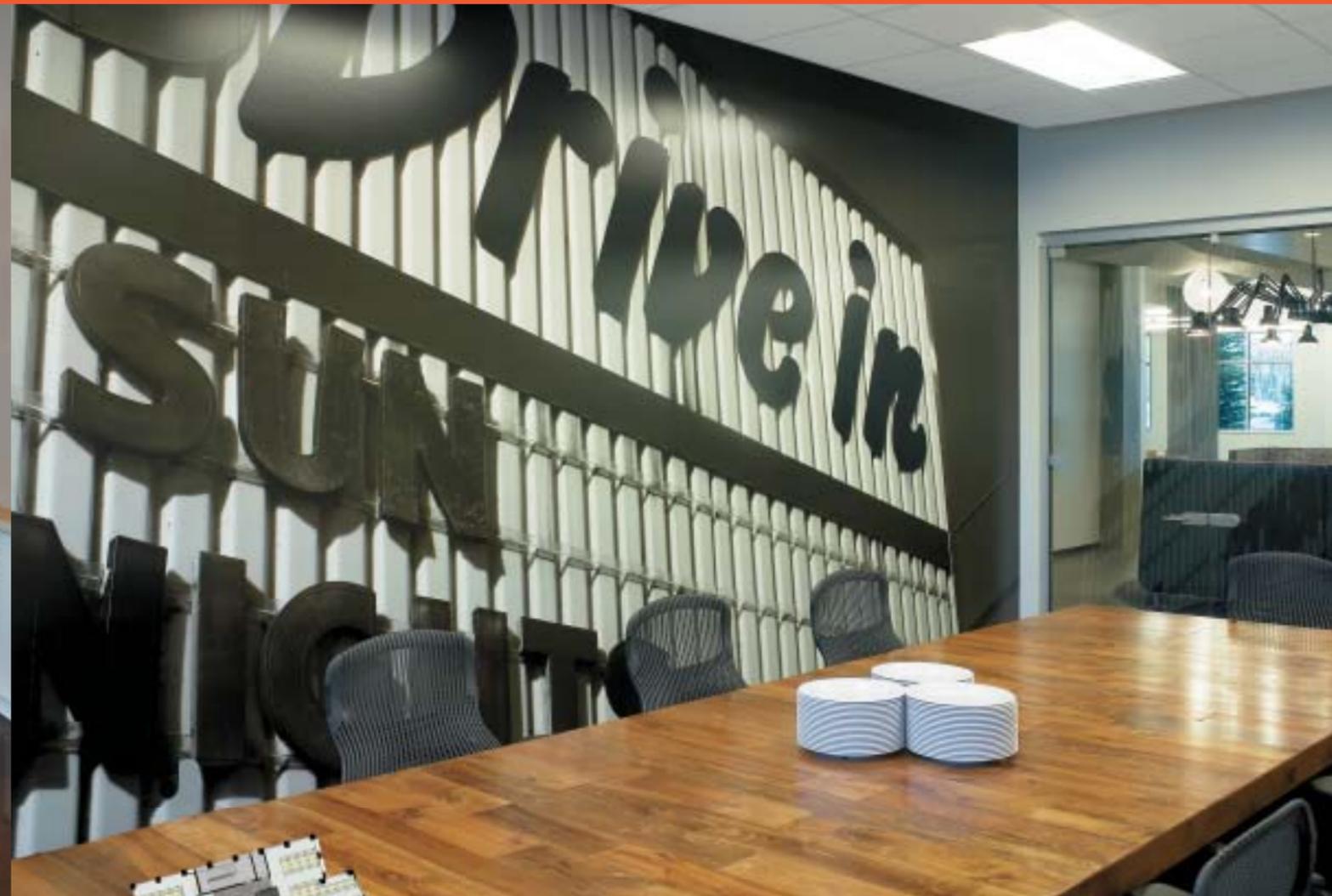
Previous spread: At Pollack Architecture’s APX Alarm headquarters in Provo, Utah, a photomural by Robert W. Madden serves as the backdrop for the sales support center.

Top: Bertjan Pot’s pendant fixtures line a hallway. **Bottom:** Satisfied customers are quoted in vinyl letters glued to the glass enclosure of one of the café’s private dining rooms.

Opposite top, from left: A photomural by David Sherman and a chair by Charles and Ray Eames occupy a meeting room. Canopies, one painted and the other veneered in oak, interlock in a corridor.

Opposite bottom, from left: Maple veneer and plastic laminate surface the reception desk. A corridor’s banquette, veneered in maple, is built into the wall above a backlit acrylic panel.





Running across one of these clear partitions, vinyl block letters quote satisfied customers. APX's product, Galullo points out, is "for protecting families." So he took family life as his theme for the photomurals, which appear everywhere from the café and a private dining room to a handful of meeting rooms and the support center, where the youthful salespeople call in to obtain information about housing or transportation.

The support center and the meeting and conference rooms, most glass-fronted, hug both sides of the concrete-floored central corridors or "Main Streets" that serve as organizing elements for the office areas, which adhere to an almost identical plan on each level. To enliven the 90-foot-long corridors, Galullo looked up. Angled canopies mark entrances to the conference and meeting rooms, and lengthwise splits in the dropped ceiling make way for workday linear fixtures and ethereal pendant globes. Along the window walls are seas of workstations.

For the workstations, Galullo opted for standard benching units with customized storage. There are no panels to obstruct the views, either among staff members or between them and the Cascade Mountains out the window. Anchoring almost everything are 27 patterns of carpet tile. Other furnishings, whether custom or production pieces, tend toward the pedigreed ➤



- 1 RECEPTION
- 2 LOUNGE
- 3 CAFÉ
- 4 PRIVATE DINING
- 5 CONFERENCE ROOM
- 6 OFFICES



Opposite top: The COO's office features Pearson Lloyd guest chairs and Brent Comber occasional tables. **Opposite bottom:** Aside from eight executive offices, most of the 850-person staff works out in the open.

Top: A photomural by Stephen St. John accompanies a custom table of reclaimed wood and Formway Design's chairs in a private dining room. **Bottom:** Aluminum-framed glass fronts the support center.



Top: East-facing windows take in the Cascade Mountains. **Bottom:** A meeting room's ottomans by Georgina Moss gather near a photomural by Siri Stafford.

Opposite top, from left: The café's lodge-themed lounge features the head of an elk shot by the CEO. In a meeting room, a banquette upholstered in a wool blend backs up to a photomural by George Marks. **Opposite bottom, from left:** A vintage locksmith's sign dominates a conference room's photomural by Ernst Haas. In the open part of the café, Wolfgang C.R. Mezger's chairs surround tables topped in plastic laminate.



and perennially popular. Each meeting room features different seating, such as the namesake lounge chairs by Charles and Ray Eames or Tom Vac armchairs by Ron Arad. Identical, on the other hand, are tables in the conference and private dining rooms—the result of pure happenstance. “We were at a Park City restaurant, and our waiter heard us talking,” Galullo recounts. “He said he also made tables from reclaimed wood.” Which he did: six of them.

Even with the eye-candy furniture and the wacky photomurals, Galullo was keen to layer on more interest. Paint would do the trick nicely—and inexpensively, since the budget came to about \$45 per square foot. Simultaneously, the colors function as a subtle way-finding device. Office areas and everything nearby are either an orangey yellow or chartreuse; executive offices are steel blue.

In a corner of the café, an oxblood-painted wall and canopy draw all eyes to a rustic lounge dubbed the “lodge.” And we can’t help but mention Pedersen’s personal contribution here. Yep, that mounted elk-head trophy represents his best shot to date.

Talk about alarming. ▀

PROJECT TEAM

JOELLE ROSANDER (PROJECT MANAGER); **NATHANIEL HAYNES** (PROJECT ARCHITECT); **TUAN LOUV**: POLLACK ARCHITECTURE. **DLXE**: GRAPHICS CONSULTANT. **PVE**: MEP. **L&T CONSTRUCTION**: GENERAL CONTRACTOR.

PRODUCT SOURCES

FROM FRONT TEKNION: DESKS (SUPPORT CENTER, OFFICE, OFFICE AREA), CUSTOM FILE CABINETS. **LITHONIA LIGHTING**: CEILING FIXTURES (MEETING ROOMS, PRIVATE

DINING). **DELRAY LIGHTING**: LINEAR FIXTURES (HALLS). **DELTALIGHT**: SCONCES. **MOOOI**: PENDANT FIXTURES (HALLS, RECEPTION, CAFÉ). **HARTER**: WHITE TABLES (PRIVATE DINING, HALLS, MEETING ROOM, LOUNGE, CAFÉ). **LOUIS POULSEN**: PENDANT FIXTURES (PRIVATE DINING, LOUNGE). **SANDLER SEATING**: RED CHAIRS (PRIVATE DINING), BANQUETTE, TABLE (MEETING ROOM). **HERMAN MILLER**: LOUNGE CHAIRS (MEETING ROOM). **BLU DOT**: TABLE (MEETING ROOM), CHAIRS (HALLS). **GILFORD**: CEILING VENEER (HALL), WALL COVERING (RECEPTION). **PANOLAM INDUSTRIES INTERNATIONAL**: DESK LAMINATE (RECEPTION). **SIERRA FOREST PRODUCTS**: DESK VENEER (RECEPTION), BENCH VENEER (HALLS). **3FORM**: PANEL MATERIAL (RECEPTION, HALLS). **LUNA TEXTILES**: BENCH FABRIC (HALLS). **ALLERMIUR**: GUEST CHAIRS (OFFICE), OTTOMANS (MEETING ROOM). **COALESSE**: SOFAS (OFFICE, LOUNGE). **FINE-LITE**: LINEAR FIXTURES (OFFICE AREA). **THROUGH TRESTLEWOOD**: TABLE WOOD (PRIVATE DINING, CONFERENCE ROOM). **ISA INTERNATIONAL**: DINING CHAIRS (LOUNGE). **HIGHTOWER GROUP**: SIDE CHAIRS. **DAVID EDWARD**: ARMCHAIRS. **DAVIS FURNITURE**: CHAIRS (CAFÉ). **THROUGHOUT KNOLL**: TASK CHAIRS. **PERMASTEELISA**: STOREFRONT SYSTEM. **USA ILLUMINATION**: RECESSED CEILING FIXTURES. **SHAW**: CARPET TILE. **JOHNSONITE**: BASE MATERIAL. **ULTIMATE IMAGE PRINTING**: CUSTOM LETTERING. **FUSION IMAGING**: PHOTOMURAL PRINTING, INSTALLATION. **BENJAMIN MOORE & CO.**: PAINT.

