Talking about...
How leisure grabs us with experience

The Mix: Reviving the Modern City
Retail: How to Engage Consumers
The Avenues: Shopping Redefined
Research: Brand Awareness Survey

A Gensler publication
Cities are actively investing in infrastructure and amenities. There's a return to urbanism. And it gains momentum as cities create more livable, walkable, civic environments.

Elva Rubio, design principal, Gensler Chicago

There’s an app for “walkability.” As our smartphones make us more aware of what’s around us, they’re changing how we see our cities. Unraveling the labyrinth of transit, our phones help get us to places we experience on foot. Once there, an urbane new mix grabs our attention—the standout destinations are complex and four-dimensional, an experiential armature of settings and activities. Even sports venues figure as engines of regeneration that anchor urban life. Tech and transit tether it all together, but today’s walkable cities unfold one great place at a time.

Features

2 The Reimagined City
Mixed use, closely linked to transit, is the way that cities put their destinations on the map now to spur growth.

10 Retail: A Design Dialogue
Retailers are on the front lines of consumer trends. We got under the hood to learn how design helps keep their edge.

22 Banking on Experience
As retail banking moves to the cloud, Chase’s new branch bank gives customers a place to anchor the relationship.

25 A Breakthrough Branch
PNC’s net-zero branch bank in Fort Lauderdale makes PNC the benchmark of sustainable high performance in retail banking.

26 Brands: Only Connect
Gensler’s new brand awareness survey reveals that every touch-point matters if the goal is to connect with consumers.

Departments

14 Case Study: The Avenues
Kuwait City’s newly expanded retail destination is redefining the shopping experience in the Gulf and internationally.

29 Leisure & Lifestyle Research
Our researchers are investigating how technology changes the leisure experience and leisure's growing impact on cities.

30 First Person: YUM!’s KFC
YUM!’s Dyke Shipp on the challenges that legacy brand KFC faces staying relevant to its customers in 120 countries.

32 News + Views
A velodrome in Japan trains champions. SFO brings light to Terminal 3. And Nokia helps spark innovation in London.

View related content on your smartphone or tablet! Follow these easy instructions.

1 Download the free Digimarc Discover app for your device at the iTunes App Store or Google Play.

2 Launch the app. Hold your device 4–7” above the page and focus on the icon. Your browser will open and the content appears. Icons appear on pages 7, 11, 12, and 36.
Cities large and small are turning to mixed use to renew or fuel growth and provide the urbaniy—supported by new infrastructure and amenities—on which their economic future depends.

BY VERNON MAYS

After suffering a black eye in the latter half of the 20th century, cities are back. A shift in demographics, the need for housing, demand for office space, and a clamor for retail and entertainment options all peaked well for urban districts that include a range of uses and mix them in close proximity.

“Cities are actively investing in infrastructure and amenities,” says Gensler's Elva Rubio. “There’s a return to urbanism. And it gives momentum as cities create more livable, walkable, civic environments.”

In Chicago, the wave of improvements began with major infrastructure investment, and then led to the creation of Millennium Park. Now the city is focusing its attention on the 50-acre Navy Pier. The Midwest’s most visited tourist destination—hosting 9 million+ visitors in 2011—Navy Pier is undergoing a huge transformation aimed at broadening its appeal and expanding its viability as a year-round attraction. “Gensler created the vision for the pier,” says Rubio. “From that, we developed a master plan comprised of several different projects. Now we oversee everything that is going on there—from landscape to special projects, collaborating with other architects.”

The firm has reimagined the mixed-use project as a gathering place for Chicago-area residents and tourists alike, with better connections to pedestrian and bike paths along Lake Michigan and to adjacent neighborhoods. The competition-winning opposition: Chicago’s Navy Pier builds on the success of nearby Millennium Park, adding an array of retail, cultural, and hospitality offerings.

Below: Proposed new uses for the 50-acre Navy Pier include a boutique hotel and venues for nighttime entertainment.

Opposite: Chicago’s Navy Pier builds on the success of nearby Millennium Park, adding an array of retail, cultural, and hospitality offerings.
Established US cities and emerging urban centers in Asia are banking on the rising importance of walkable urbanism to sustain new mixed-use developments.

In many Asian cities, particularly in China, explosive population growth and migration from rural areas continue to demand large-scale developments. "Mixed-use is the best strategy for creating them," notes Gensler's Shamir Afandieh. "You can't ignore the local context and community preferences. You need to provide the elements, including green space, that engage people and resonate with their tastes and needs." Cultural amenities are also becoming a requirement in these walkable mixed-use projects, especially as the Chinese government presses developers to provide appropriate settings for art and music. Gensler's proposed Hong Kong Transpor- tation Hub in Chongqing, for example, is both an important transit center for the city and a destination that moves cultural facilities and an elevated urban park with entertainment, retail, office, and residential uses.

A rising standard of living for large numbers of Chinese citizens also has generated a robust market for high-end retail and resorts, which is fueling rapid growth along the Cotai Strip in Macau. There, Gensler is at work on a 3.5-million-square-foot integrated resort for Las Vegas Sands Corporation called The Parisian. It's a mini-district in itself, with 1,200 hotel rooms, a casino, retail, restaurants, and theaters. "Sands' idea for mixed use is to make entertainment the anchor, combining a rich variety of experiences in a compelling, exciting environment," says Gensler's Andy Cohen. "These integrated resorts take people to a whole new realm. That's their appeal!"

Growing new communities

In many Asian cities, particularly in China, explosive population growth and migration from rural areas continue to demand large-scale developments. "Mixed-use is the best strategy for creating them," notes Gensler's Shamir Afandieh. "You can't ignore the local context and community preferences. You need to provide the elements, including green space, that engage people and resonate with their tastes and needs." Cultural amenities are also becoming a requirement in these walkable mixed-use projects, especially as the Chinese government presses developers to provide appropriate settings for art and music. Gensler's proposed Hong Kong Transportation Hub in Chongqing, for example, is both an important transit center for the city and a destination that moves cultural facilities and an elevated urban park with entertainment, retail, office, and residential uses.

A rising standard of living for large numbers of Chinese citizens also has generated a robust market for high-end retail and resorts, which is fueling rapid growth along the Cotai Strip in Macau. There, Gensler is at work on a 3.5-million-square-foot integrated resort for Las Vegas Sands Corporation called The Parisian. It's a mini-district in itself, with 1,200 hotel rooms, a casino, retail, restaurants, and theaters. "Sands' idea for mixed use is to make entertainment the anchor, combining a rich variety of experiences in a compelling, exciting environment," says Gensler's Andy Cohen. "These integrated resorts take people to a whole new realm. That's their appeal!"

Growing new communities

In many Asian cities, particularly in China, explosive population growth and migration from rural areas continue to demand large-scale developments. "Mixed-use is the best strategy for creating them," notes Gensler's Shamir Afandieh. "You can't ignore the local context and community preferences. You need to provide the elements, including green space, that engage people and resonate with their tastes and needs." Cultural amenities are also becoming a requirement in these walkable mixed-use projects, especially as the Chinese government presses developers to provide appropriate settings for art and music. Gensler's proposed Hong Kong Transportation Hub in Chongqing, for example, is both an important transit center for the city and a destination that moves cultural facilities and an elevated urban park with entertainment, retail, office, and residential uses.

A rising standard of living for large numbers of Chinese citizens also has generated a robust market for high-end retail and resorts, which is fueling rapid growth along the Cotai Strip in Macau. There, Gensler is at work on a 3.5-million-square-foot integrated resort for Las Vegas Sands Corporation called The Parisian. It's a mini-district in itself, with 1,200 hotel rooms, a casino, retail, restaurants, and theaters. "Sands' idea for mixed use is to make entertainment the anchor, combining a rich variety of experiences in a compelling, exciting environment," says Gensler's Andy Cohen. "These integrated resorts take people to a whole new realm. That's their appeal!"

Growing new communities

In many Asian cities, particularly in China, explosive population growth and migration from rural areas continue to demand large-scale developments. "Mixed-use is the best strategy for creating them," notes Gensler's Shamir Afandieh. "You can't ignore the local context and community preferences. You need to provide the elements, including green space, that engage people and resonate with their tastes and needs." Cultural amenities are also becoming a requirement in these walkable mixed-use projects, especially as the Chinese government presses developers to provide appropriate settings for art and music. Gensler's proposed Hong Kong Transportation Hub in Chongqing, for example, is both an important transit center for the city and a destination that moves cultural facilities and an elevated urban park with entertainment, retail, office, and residential uses.

A rising standard of living for large numbers of Chinese citizens also has generated a robust market for high-end retail and resorts, which is fueling rapid growth along the Cotai Strip in Macau. There, Gensler is at work on a 3.5-million-square-foot integrated resort for Las Vegas Sands Corporation called The Parisian. It's a mini-district in itself, with 1,200 hotel rooms, a casino, retail, restaurants, and theaters. "Sands' idea for mixed use is to make entertainment the anchor, combining a rich variety of experiences in a compelling, exciting environment," says Gensler's Andy Cohen. "These integrated resorts take people to a whole new realm. That's their appeal!"
The resurgence of urban centers and an understanding of the synergy they require are leading many cities to plan new developments in the transit-served, amenity-rich downtown core.

Headed downtown

The resurgence of urban centers and a better understanding of the synergy they require are leading many cities to locate large new developments in the transit-served, amenity-rich downtown core. “A vital connection to transit helps integrate them with their communities,” says Gensler’s Tom Ito, citing Gensler projects in China, India, and Latin America. “As with US cities, it’s a sustainable move that helps alleviate traffic congestion and pollution.”

One such project is Parque Arauco in Santiago, Chile—redeveloping an aging mall as a mixed-use district with office towers and hotels to complement expanded retail offerings. Elsewhere in Latin America, security concerns mean that customers arrive and depart by car in a protected setting, says Gensler’s Michael Gatti. “Personal safety is paramount.”

The renewed popularity of urban living is bringing new categories, like professional sports, downtown. “Long gone are the days of putting a sports facility at the edge, in a sea of parking,” says Gensler’s Ron Turner. “Even older European cities now find ways to make room for new arenas at close-in locations.” Each of Gensler’s current sports venues is a major part of a larger mixed-use project, he notes. In China, the new 18,000-seat Shenbei Arena in Shenyang will be a catalyst for future growth of the Shenbei City area that the arena anchors. On a similar note, creating a central gathering place for downtown Seoul is a key intention.
of Gensler’s work on Coex, an existing 900,000-square-foot retail center that is Asia’s largest below-grade mall. Despite its size, Coex was largely hidden within an enormous mixed-use complex that includes a convention center, hotels, office towers, and a large subway station. “This is a major cross-road,” says Paterson. “Our view is that this isn’t a free-standing mall; it’s virtually a district of the city. Coex is the connective tissue.” Gensler is reworking visitor circulation, improving entry points, creating new gathering spaces, and opening the primary focal points to daylight and views, to remake Coex as a highly visible civic space on the order of Rockefeller Plaza.

Building stronger economies

With its strong economy, Turkey is investing heavily in urban infrastructure befitting its new standing. “Istanbul is a world destination,” says Borko. “Mixed-use development is preferred there, because it fits into the city and its visitors mix business with pleasure.” After doing the concept master plan for the 170-acre Istanbul Financial Center, Gensler is now planning the 370-acre Istanbul Seven Gardens development. It mixes office, retail, and hospitality with 4,000 residential units and 150 acres of recreational open space, including Istanbul’s first theme park.

Establishing a strong sense of place is intrinsic to Gensler’s approach. “Placemaking is the heart of great mixed use,” says Gensler’s David Glover. “Taking commerce, entertainment, and events as the raw materials, we orchestrate an array of physical elements and programmatic sequences to create a compelling experience. It’s a complex alchemy. Once well, it produces real places—identifiable, vibrantly successful, and truly valued by the community. ‘People want to be there,’ he adds. ‘For mixed-use, that’s always the most important thing.’

Vernon Mays is a Gensler senior editor and a contributing editor at Architect magazine.
 Kate Russell: Retailers address the whole experience of the customer’s life. That has many implications. For example, the categories of specialty retail used to be much more defined, but that’s not true now. You have to understand the products that are typically chosen together, but also suggest how they might merge and what happens when there’s a bit of everything in a space.

It’s not just that categories that don’t seem to go together are converging, but that the experience components of art, food, and fashion are also starting to come together.

I see a lot of department stores that abandoned food 40 years ago and are now thinking of how to incorporate it. They’ve seen the success of many different purveyors of experience in food, such as Eataly in New York and the Mercado in Spain, that have large gourmet departments of kitchen things and fresh food—quick, chic food on the go. American department stores are starting to look at food in a new way because they see successful examples in Japan and South Korea of how to incorporate fresh food and make it part of the experience. In London, they saw Harrods—the classic example of a department store with a gourmet food hall. But they also see smaller US retail establishments that make the cafe and fresh, organic food an integral part of the design—distinguishing them from other stores that just put a coffee shop inside and call it a day.

Uniqlo’s new San Francisco store has what it calls a “magic mirror”—while looking in it, you put on a jacket, for example, and you use gestures to change the color. And that jacket, in all those colors, is just a few steps away. In a sense, it’s replicating what you could do without a “magic mirror,” but by engaging something newer and better that you could find elsewhere.

It positions Uniqlo as the technology leader. That mirror was all over the media when the store opened—it was so out of the ordinary.

Aaron Birney: Retailers often want to localize their stores, which can be prohibitively costly. Technology can help with that, providing a way to create a place-specific or personalized message. Microsoft is a good example: the digital ribbon in its stores creates synergy with the online experience. It tells stories about the products, and by incorporating local scenery and landmarks—helps tie each store to its community with locally relevant messages.

For high-ticket items, you really need to see a bigger picture or greater detail, and technology is seamlessly integrated, enhancing the experience without people noticing: that’s there. If there’s an interactive component, it needs to be unique—something you can’t experience anywhere else. That’s when it becomes interesting.

Andrew Bournand: The thing about technology is it becomes obsolete quickly, so the cost of creating an experience that depends on it has to pay for itself in a very short time. That’s why most retailers would rather have large gourmet departments of kitchen things and fresh, organic food an integral part of the design—distinguishing them from other stores that just put a coffee shop inside and call it a day.

What’s the place of technology in today’s retail experience? Alan Robles: The realignment between online and in the store is the most significant change I’m seeing in retail right now. Can customers check themselves out? What’s their online experience in the store? Some retailers limit what you can buy with soft checkout, using your smartphone, but others let you buy anything you want, you can wait and it will be there in an hour.

Uniqlo’s San Francisco store creates something similar, personalized and unique—a real digital ribbon. It positions Uniqlo as the technology leader. That mirror was all over the media when the store opened—it was so out of the ordinary.

What’s the place of technology in today’s retail experience? Alan Robles: The realignment between online and in the store is the most significant change I’m seeing in retail right now. Can customers check themselves out? What’s their online experience in the store? Some retailers limit what you can buy with soft checkout, using your smartphone, but others let you buy anything you want, you can wait and it will be there in an hour.

Uniqlo’s San Francisco store creates something similar, personalized and unique—a real digital ribbon. It positions Uniqlo as the technology leader. That mirror was all over the media when the store opened—it was so out of the ordinary.

What’s the place of technology in today’s retail experience? Alan Robles: The realignment between online and in the store is the most significant change I’m seeing in retail right now. Can customers check themselves out? What’s their online experience in the store? Some retailers limit what you can buy with soft checkout, using your smartphone, but others let you buy anything you want, you can wait and it will be there in an hour.

Uniqlo’s San Francisco store creates something similar, personalized and unique—a real digital ribbon. It positions Uniqlo as the technology leader. That mirror was all over the media when the store opened—it was so out of the ordinary.

What’s the place of technology in today’s retail experience? Alan Robles: The realignment between online and in the store is the most significant change I’m seeing in retail right now. Can customers check themselves out? What’s their online experience in the store? Some retailers limit what you can buy with soft checkout, using your smartphone, but others let you buy anything you want, you can wait and it will be there in an hour.

Uniqlo’s San Francisco store creates something similar, personalized and unique—a real digital ribbon. It positions Uniqlo as the technology leader. That mirror was all over the media when the store opened—it was so out of the ordinary.
What’s causing people’s service expectations to change?

KR: It used to be that if you were shopping at the high end, you expected a certain level of service because you were spending a zillion dollars. Today people shopping at much lower levels of retail expect service to be part of the experience. Because of the shift in the economy and the way people look at parting with their money, it’s no longer a binary system. Instead of thinking, “I’m shopping here because this is all I can afford,” the attitude is, “If I’m going to give you my money, you’re going to give me something nice in return.”

For lower-end brands, that expectation of service—providing a really fine tailoring, for example, or a personal shopping service—is now. Whatever that really is, the smart brands at that price point are separating themselves from their competitors by figuring out what’s right for them and how to offer it to their customers.

As retail designers, how do you approach luxury and authenticity?

Aaron B: Luxury is always in the eye of the beholder, so defining it in a broader sense hinges on a shared sense of the difference between luxury and something less. Take leather versus vinyl: you can’t fake real leather, because it has a completely different message than vinyl, down to the scent.

KR: It used to be that if you were shopping at the high end, you expected a certain level of service because you were spending a zillion dollars. Today people shopping at much lower levels of retail expect service to be part of the experience. Because of the shift in the economy and the way people look at parting with their money, it’s no longer a binary system. Instead of thinking, “I’m shopping here because this is all I can afford,” the attitude is, “If I’m going to give you my money, you’re going to give me something nice in return.”

For lower-end brands, that expectation of service—providing a really fine tailoring, for example, or a personal shopping service—is now. Whatever that really is, the smart brands at that price point are separating themselves from their competitors by figuring out what’s right for them and how to offer it to their customers.

As retail designers, how do you approach luxury and authenticity?

Aaron B: Luxury is always in the eye of the beholder, so defining it in a broader sense hinges on a shared sense of the difference between luxury and something less. Take leather versus vinyl: you can’t fake real leather, because it has a completely different message than vinyl, down to the scent.

KR: It used to be that if you were shopping at the high end, you expected a certain level of service because you were spending a zillion dollars. Today people shopping at much lower levels of retail expect service to be part of the experience. Because of the shift in the economy and the way people look at parting with their money, it’s no longer a binary system. Instead of thinking, “I’m shopping here because this is all I can afford,” the attitude is, “If I’m going to give you my money, you’re going to give me something nice in return.”

For lower-end brands, that expectation of service—providing a really fine tailoring, for example, or a personal shopping service—is now. Whatever that really is, the smart brands at that price point are separating themselves from their competitors by figuring out what’s right for them and how to offer it to their customers.

As retail designers, how do you approach luxury and authenticity?

Aaron B: Luxury is always in the eye of the beholder, so defining it in a broader sense hinges on a shared sense of the difference between luxury and something less. Take leather versus vinyl: you can’t fake real leather, because it has a completely different message than vinyl, down to the scent.

KR: It used to be that if you were shopping at the high end, you expected a certain level of service because you were spending a zillion dollars. Today people shopping at much lower levels of retail expect service to be part of the experience. Because of the shift in the economy and the way people look at parting with their money, it’s no longer a binary system. Instead of thinking, “I’m shopping here because this is all I can afford,” the attitude is, “If I’m going to give you my money, you’re going to give me something nice in return.”

For lower-end brands, that expectation of service—providing a really fine tailoring, for example, or a personal shopping service—is now. Whatever that really is, the smart brands at that price point are separating themselves from their competitors by figuring out what’s right for them and how to offer it to their customers.

As retail designers, how do you approach luxury and authenticity?

Aaron B: Luxury is always in the eye of the beholder, so defining it in a broader sense hinges on a shared sense of the difference between luxury and something less. Take leather versus vinyl: you can’t fake real leather, because it has a completely different message than vinyl, down to the scent.

KR: It used to be that if you were shopping at the high end, you expected a certain level of service because you were spending a zillion dollars. Today people shopping at much lower levels of retail expect service to be part of the experience. Because of the shift in the economy and the way people look at parting with their money, it’s no longer a binary system. Instead of thinking, “I’m shopping here because this is all I can afford,” the attitude is, “If I’m going to give you my money, you’re going to give me something nice in return.”

For lower-end brands, that expectation of service—providing a really fine tailoring, for example, or a personal shopping service—is now. Whatever that really is, the smart brands at that price point are separating themselves from their competitors by figuring out what’s right for them and how to offer it to their customers.
Kuwait City’s The Avenues was envisioned as an urbane, walkable shopping experience that its towering Grand Avenue expresses perfectly.
Shopping in Kuwait looks different than it does in the West. It’s more social. In Kuwait, groups of people arrange to meet at shopping centers and stroll through together—almost like spending a leisurely day at the park. With alcoholic drinks off the menu, entertainment consists mostly of shopping and dining out. Keeping that experience fresh and new is a huge challenge.

So when Gensler was asked by Kuwait-based developer Mabanee to embark on a massive expansion of The Avenues, creating what has become the main retail area of Kuwait City, these cultural facts of life demanded a new design approach. The 900,000-square-foot addition, which opened in late 2012, feels more like a city than a retail center. Its rich variety of urban spaces and architectural forms creates an engaging, multilayered setting that attracts a wide range of shoppers, holds their attention, and keeps them coming back for more. There’s nothing else quite like it.

Located in the city’s Al Rai district, The Avenues opened in 2007 with 230 retail units in its first phase. Phase II was completed a year later, providing 200 more luxury shops and outdoor dining spots. As Mabanee Chairman Mohammed A. Alshaya explains, The Avenues is a key project in a national plan “to transform Kuwait into a business center and trade region.” The Gensler-designed Phase III expansion adds more than 400 shops and 40 cafés and restaurants. After Alshaya reached the world for a design partner, he concluded that Gensler had both the design sensibility and expertise to create the largest shopping destination in Kuwait,” says Gensler’s Andy Cohen. “It was a great relationship from the very start.”

Alshaya was a key collaborator in generating the idea for a walkable, urban shopping experience. “He had a clear vision of what he wanted—a major thoroughfare similar to the Champs-Élysées or Rodeo Drive, where people can walk along a promenade and enjoy the sense that they’re outdoors,” says Gensler’s Chris Johnson. The Avenues’ retail façades along Grand Avenue reflect a mix of styles, like a city streetscape that has evolved over many years.

Shopping is a social activity in Kuwait and Grand Avenue provides numerous stopping points where people can easily meet up.
最新的规划策略为零售中心的全球发展开启了新篇章。应用城规划工具的项目类型使它能够实现规模上的飞跃，Gensler的Tariq Shaikh指出。“今天仅仅把大量的品牌集合在一个地点已不再足够，这就是为什么我们为The Avenues设计了城市性，建立在营造场所的原则之上。”

**Finding precedents**

在规划扩张之前，Gensler的设计团队进行了一次广泛的研究，以了解世界上最具标志性的零售环境。许多知名购物地点——包括巴黎、伦敦、纽约、伊斯坦布尔、米兰和东京——都被绘制，拍摄，并分析，旨在为新项目重定义现代零售业。他们“观察了性格、氛围和地点，然后我们关注比例、材料性、以及完成度。”Gensler景观建筑师Peter Sheard回忆道。

在研究阶段，他们发现巴塞罗那的弯曲兰布拉大道和哥本哈根的可可大道等历史先例。他们的目标是创建一个具有纪念意义的购物目的地，一个看来是逐步发展的。“如果我们设计了The Avenues，那么它就有一种自己的性格。这与娱乐的方面有关——在相同的零售中心内体验不同的氛围，而不是有一种公式化的设计理念。”Gensler的George Miller-Ramos指出。The Avenues的Prestige区域，以中央穹顶的高耸，是高端品牌的家园。小企业则在Souk地区茁壮成长，这个具有古老风格的建筑和狭窄街道的社区迎合了年轻、时尚的消费者。Bazaar区域，有34个零售单位，位于拱形走道和拱廊商店，汲取了伊斯坦布尔的Grand Bazaar的灵感，旨在为品牌创造一个框架，让它们脱颖而出。

**Grand Avenue**

Grand Avenue是最宽的步行道，在The Avenues中的22米，旨在为自己塑造一个独特的性格，这正是The Avenues娱乐性的一部分——在相同的零售中心内体验不同的氛围，而不是有一种公式化的设计理念。”

**The Mall**

The Mall将新扩建部分与现有部分连接，提供丰富的时尚和珠宝选择。South of Kuwait——South of Kuwait借鉴了纽约的SoHo风格，具有城市感，并拥有众多的咖啡馆、小餐馆和餐厅，以吸引年轻、时尚的消费者。地下Bazaar区域，有拱廊和拱形商店，汲取了伊斯坦布尔的Grand Bazaar的灵感，旨在为品牌创造一个框架，让它们脱颖而出。
**THE SOUK**

above and right: The Souk district’s dense and narrow streets, sheltered from the sun, recall Kuwait’s traditional forms and textures.

right: Luxury brands are concentrated in the Prestige district, with elegant materials and generous spaces evoking the feeling of a world-class shopping experience.

opposite: The district’s central plaza features a soaring iridescent dome that spans 36 meters across the space.

above right: The Souk district’s dense and narrow streets, sheltered from the sun, recall Kuwait’s traditional forms and textures.

(72 feet) across. The added width accommodates large crowds and the cafés that spill out into the space. In the smaller districts—Sokka, for instance—the streets are as narrow as 6 meters (20 feet). The walls feel higher there because they are closer together. Small plazas, surrounded by upper-level walkways, dot the district interior. And most of the buildings are designed to give Sokka an urban texture.

Making a real place

Alshaya approved the use of quality materials like brick, stone, and concrete that give authenticity to the shop facades and a lasting quality to the development. “This is not an amusement park. These are real buildings with real materials. The streets feel like real streets,” says Miller-Ramos. The storefronts in the Prestige district, for example, are 18 meters (59 feet) tall, with a central rotunda whose dome is 36 meters (118 feet) across. The surfaces throughout are clad in black marble. Similarly, the circulation paths are detailed and constructed as if they were city streets, not interior corridors.

While the client wanted to create the feeling of an open-air environment, the Kuwaiti climate dictated that the high-end mall be enclosed in order to maintain a comfortable temperature inside. Natural light pours in through the transparent roof made of high-strength plastic, ETFE. Compared to glass, ETFE film is a fraction of the weight, transmits more daylight, and costs far less to install. It’s also resilient, self-cleaning, and recyclable. The material’s advantages aren’t just functional, however. It also delivered huge revenue potential to the client, because the covering permitted the circulation space to be counted as open space instead of as enclosed, built space. That meant that it was not included in the calculation of allowable square footage on the site. “This is a big advantage for the client, because it gives them a substantial reserve of site area that they can put to future use as more retail space or for some other type of facility,” says Miller-Ramos.

Navigation through a mall of this scale can be difficult, but Gensler’s brand designers addressed the issue by unifying the various districts with custom graphics and wayfinding solutions that are easy for customers to understand. Like many cities, The Avenues provides environmental markers and distinct graphic patterns that help shoppers find their way. These human touches—implemented through a comprehensive system of banners, directional signs, and information kiosks—are tailored to each district to give it added personality.

Now that the new districts have opened for business, The Avenues is the place to be in Kuwait, says Miller-Ramos. “It’s the talk of the town.” The launch of Phase III, which coincided with events celebrating the 50th anniversary of Kuwait’s constitution, saw a number of The Avenues’ stores break their sales records. “Without question, The Avenues’ expansion has raised the bar for retail development in the Gulf.”

The Avenues exceeded Mabanee’s expectations even before it was open, the company reported, with more than 85 percent of the new tenant space preleased. Buoyed by that success, Gensler is already hard at work designing the next phase.

**VERNON MAYS**

is a senior editor at Gensler and a contributing editor at *Architect*.
Banking on Experience

As retail banking customers shift their transactions to smartphones and other mobile devices, Chase’s new branch bank anticipates how its clients will anchor those cloud-based relationships to a real place.

BY J. MICHAEL WELTON

At first blush, it seems an unlikely setting for a revolution. Snuggled into the ground floor of a century-old San Francisco building is the first example of Chase Bank’s new branch bank concept. But what better place could there be to launch the next generation of retail banking than the former Argonaut Club—strategically located on a prime corner facing Union Square, in the heart of the city’s retail district?

Surprisingly, your first encounter as you walk into this bank is a warm greeting from a real person. That’s a sign that technology here, visible and impressive though it is, must work hand-in-glove with the more human dimensions of Chase’s retail banking service. It’s also a telling symbol of Chase’s evolving approach to branch design—one that places the customer at the center of the transaction.

“The traditional image of wood paneling, teller lines, and cashiers—almost all of that goes away,” says Michael G. Meyer, Chase Bank SVP and Head of Architecture, Design and Engineering. “What can’t go away is the human interaction.”

The point here is to support the customer relationship. Near the entry is an array of ATM-like flat screens; in the background are café tables at standing height, with kiosks and conference rooms behind. But there are also a number of bankers unobtrusively standing by, ready to answer questions and offer solutions when needed.

“Technologies should be fully integrated into the space, but our priority today is to provide personal service for progressive users,” Meyer says. “It’s welcoming, not overwhelming,” adds Gensler’s Chip Williams. “It tells people that Chase is there to help them connect, explore, learn, and make choices.”

At a time when its customers can handle many of their retail banking transactions with mobile technology, the new Chase branch concept gives them a reason to come inside. It’s a new kind of banking experience, one that integrates real and virtual interactivity while exuding the feel of a hotel lobby or even the retail shops on Union Square. But it’s by no means a big box experience. “It’s still a financial institution,” Meyer says. “The design is well thought out—it makes visual impact and presence with stability. The aim throughout is to satisfy our customers’ sense of who Chase is.”

Building on trust

Retail banking may have taken its share of knocks during the past five years, but Chase has emerged from the fray with a greatly-enhanced reputation. The new branch concept is designed to build on that solid foundation, winning customers who are increasingly savvy about their money and discerning about their banking relationships. Chase’s Union Square branch embraces new realities in banking today, while its vibrant, unexpected location in the city speaks to the bank’s commitment to its customers’ active lifestyles.

“Chase is at the forefront of a global trend,” says Gensler’s Owain Roberts. “It understands that retail banking is more than a series of transactions—it’s an experience that responds to the customer’s unique wants and needs. People are turned off today by a one-size-fits-all mentality, especially from national and global brands. They want a
meaningful relationship that speaks to them as individuals.

So Chase’s new branch concept puts a premium on face-to-face interaction. Bankers can offer their customers whatever level of support they want or need. “The idea is to connect and reconnect with them,” says Douglas Wittnebel, who led the design team for Gensler.

Since the banking experience is no longer just about sales, products, or services, this new design places the human relationship front and center. Technology is part of it, but Chase wants to see it as a trusted advisor. “People want convenience, speed of transaction, and full confidence that the interaction will be handled in a private way—safely and securely,” Meyer says.

Global and local

While Chase’s new San Francisco branch provides a localized experience tailored to its setting, it’s also the opening act in a program that soon will roll out across the country. “It’s designed to change,” Wittnebel explains. “Other branches may be larger or smaller, depending on the location.” Some of the elements, including the technology, will be consistent, but others can vary to address nuances of place and setting, with dialogue and input from the local Chase team.

“We want to avoid the ‘me too’ experience that pervades retail banking,” Meyer says. “The new branches are designed to be simple and intuitive to use. That has to be created from scratch, by focusing so clearly on the needs of every customer. An exciting new look is the headline, so to speak, but what’s truly revolutionary about our new concept is its ability to keep pace with the future. It’s designed to change.”

For Union Square, Chase has built a jeweled box of a space, appropriate for a destination where the cream of the retail world converges for the consumer’s eyes and feet. One competitive edge inside the new branch is its 7-foot-high, 19-foot-long curving video wall—with 18 high-definition screens projecting time-lapse videography of local San Francisco scenes. “It’s one of the features that ties this branch to the city,” Meyer says. “In other locations, that tailoring may be as modest as saying the artwork and finishes.”

The Chase logo does appear on the video wall, but only as a punctuation mark at film’s end. Those walking by can easily view familiar images of San Francisco’s financial district, its bay, and its bridges. “The spirit of place prevails,” Meyer says. “It’s part of a new kind of bank, specifically designed to connect with customers.”


PNC looks beyond LEED

A net-zero PNC branch in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, returns power to the grid and breaks new ground for branch bank architecture.

By J. Michael Welton

PNC Bank’s commitment to sustainability can be summed up in two words: net zero. Its just-opened, 4,900-square-foot branch bank in Fort Lauderdale will generate more power than it consumes annually. “During the hot summer months, it pulls power from it,” Gensler’s Benjamin Callam explains. “But it has evolved so rapidly that we’ve had to update our design three or four times to keep up with the changes. We’ve saved PNC more energy every time.”

Callam is part of the Gensler team that designed the project for PNC, a company that’s well known for its commitment to green design. In Fort Lauderdale, that commitment has been extended to create a new branch bank prototype that’s unlike anything PNC has ever done. “It’s a textbook example of how to design a super-sustainable retail bank,” says Gensler’s Jordan Goldstein. “Instead of following a playbook, we created a playbook.”

PNC’s net-zero branch bank is actually making two statements. First, it’s providing a retail setting that conveys what PNC is about—in terms of business practices, as well as bricks and mortar. Second, it’s demonstrating that it’s possible for a visually pleasing spatial experience to give back, in terms of energy. “The branch has a unique design driven by solar orientation and passive solar features,” Goldstein says. “We hit the net-zero target with a building that has a clean, modern aesthetic.”

The Gender team didn’t work in a vacuum. They drew on design criteria for net-zero buildings developed by the US Department of Energy and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. The team also applied the City of Fort Lauderdale’s master plan for the South Central district, where the branch is located. Finally, the team took a hard look at the current PNC branch bank concept, retaining its light-colored brick and its stucco-and-metal paneling while adding to its already numerous sustainable features.

“It’s a huge step in terms of business practices, as well as bricks and mortar. Second, it’s demonstrating that it’s possible for a visually pleasing spatial experience to give back, in terms of energy,” Goldstein says. “We hit the net-zero target with a building that has a clean, modern aesthetic.”

The Gender team didn’t work in a vacuum. They drew on design criteria for net-zero buildings developed by the US Department of Energy and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. The team also applied the City of Fort Lauderdale’s master plan for the South Central district, where the branch is located. Finally, the team took a hard look at the current PNC branch bank concept, retaining its light-colored brick and its stucco-and-metal paneling while adding to its already numerous sustainable features.

“Hit the net-zero target with a building that has a clean, modern aesthetic.”

The Gender team didn’t work in a vacuum. They drew on design criteria for net-zero buildings developed by the US Department of Energy and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. The team also applied the City of Fort Lauderdale’s master plan for the South Central district, where the branch is located. Finally, the team took a hard look at the current PNC branch bank concept, retaining its light-colored brick and its stucco-and-metal paneling while adding to its already numerous sustainable features.

“It’s a huge step in terms of business practices, as well as bricks and mortar. Second, it’s demonstrating that it’s possible for a visually pleasing spatial experience to give back, in terms of energy.”

“Hit the net-zero target with a building that has a clean, modern aesthetic.”

The Gender team didn’t work in a vacuum. They drew on design criteria for net-zero buildings developed by the US Department of Energy and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. The team also applied the City of Fort Lauderdale’s master plan for the South Central district, where the branch is located. Finally, the team took a hard look at the current PNC branch bank concept, retaining its light-colored brick and its stucco-and-metal paneling while adding to its already numerous sustainable features.

“It’s a huge step in terms of business practices, as well as bricks and mortar. Second, it’s demonstrating that it’s possible for a visually pleasing spatial experience to give back, in terms of energy.”

“Hit the net-zero target with a building that has a clean, modern aesthetic.”

The Gender team didn’t work in a vacuum. They drew on design criteria for net-zero buildings developed by the US Department of Energy and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. The team also applied the City of Fort Lauderdale’s master plan for the South Central district, where the branch is located. Finally, the team took a hard look at the current PNC branch bank concept, retaining its light-colored brick and its stucco-and-metal paneling while adding to its already numerous sustainable features.

“It’s a huge step in terms of business practices, as well as bricks and mortar. Second, it’s demonstrating that it’s possible for a visually pleasing spatial experience to give back, in terms of energy.”

“Hit the net-zero target with a building that has a clean, modern aesthetic.”

The Gender team didn’t work in a vacuum. They drew on design criteria for net-zero buildings developed by the US Department of Energy and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. The team also applied the City of Fort Lauderdale’s master plan for the South Central district, where the branch is located. Finally, the team took a hard look at the current PNC branch bank concept, retaining its light-colored brick and its stucco-and-metal paneling while adding to its already numerous sustainable features.

“It’s a huge step in terms of business practices, as well as bricks and mortar. Second, it’s demonstrating that it’s possible for a visually pleasing spatial experience to give back, in terms of energy.”

“Hit the net-zero target with a building that has a clean, modern aesthetic.”

The Gender team didn’t work in a vacuum. They drew on design criteria for net-zero buildings developed by the US Department of Energy and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. The team also applied the City of Fort Lauderdale’s master plan for the South Central district, where the branch is located. Finally, the team took a hard look at the current PNC branch bank concept, retaining its light-colored brick and its stucco-and-metal paneling while adding to its already numerous sustainable features.

“It’s a huge step in terms of business practices, as well as bricks and mortar. Second, it’s demonstrating that it’s possible for a visually pleasing spatial experience to give back, in terms of energy.”

“Hit the net-zero target with a building that has a clean, modern aesthetic.”

The Gender team didn’t work in a vacuum. They drew on design criteria for net-zero buildings developed by the US Department of Energy and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. The team also applied the City of Fort Lauderdale’s master plan for the South Central district, where the branch is located. Finally, the team took a hard look at the current PNC branch bank concept, retaining its light-colored brick and its stucco-and-metal paneling while adding to its already numerous sustainable features.
ONLY CONNECT

For brands of every type, establishing real affinity with the customer is the Holy Grail. And today, every touchpoint matters, as Gensler’s new brand awareness survey reveals.

BY KEVIN CRAFT
Branding awareness reflects many different strands of experience and expectation. For the cafe chain that competes for our loyalty, it's not just about the coffee—cshs design and the familiarity engendered by constant encounter can be just as habit-forming. Similarly, the smart devices we carry reflect our values as well as their technological edge over competing brands. Technology matters, of course, but emotional factors like co-brand appeal may matter more.

These different factors all fall under the umbrella of brand engagement, the ability of a brand to forge a distinct emotional connection with target customers. The process of forming an attachment between a person and a brand is closely associated with retail and leisure brands of all stripes. Today, though, public institutions, universities, airports, and even cities are equally brand savvy—and actively pondering what their brands communicate and how to engage their target audiences.

For Gensler's Deanna Frank, brand engagement is the new brand loyalty. "Easy access to far more choices, faster ways to comparison shop, and the wariness that economic ups and downs can induce have made consumers more fickle," she says. "Always being meaningful is how you keep them loyal, but this requires constant interaction and engagement with target customers." She proposes two salient questions that brands face today: What constitutes meaningful brand engagement? How can it be measured? To help answer these questions, Gensler surveyed more than 2,500 consumers to understand what brand engagement means to them and why certain brands inspire loyalty.

Matching personal values

The economist Thorstein Veblen observed in 1899 that what people buy is more than a means of obtaining necessary goods. "It is the expression of their personal style and values than low-affinity individuals," says Gensler's Andrees Androu, who did the statistical analysis of the survey responses. "Low-affinity individuals are perceived by consumers, meaningful face-to-face engagement is a stronger driver of high-affinity loyalty. Respondents were more likely to say they felt "very satisfied" after face-to-face interaction with a brand than after interacting with it virtually."

"It’s one thing to follow a brand on Twitter or Pinterest; it’s another to say you would spend more money for it or would be devastated if it disappeared," Frank says. "That’s real engagement." As Gensler’s brand awareness survey clearly shows, understanding brand engagement means looking beyond traditional transactional metrics. "Brands are personal and people are possessive," she notes. "Every customer wants to say, ‘This brand is mine’—that’s where engagement starts. Smart brands aim to make it an enduring relationship.”

Kevin Kraft is a Gensler senior writer and the editor of its thought leadership blog, GenslerOn.

**Dialogue 23 | Talking About Lifestyle**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FROM</th>
<th>TO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unaided brand awareness doubled in the months following the new DoubleTree by Hilton brand launch.</td>
<td>07%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unaided brand awareness doubled in the months following the new DoubleTree by Hilton brand launch.

**JUMP IN BRAND AWARENESS**
With 14,200 restaurants in 120 countries, YUM! Restaurants International takes Buckminster Fuller’s maxim, “think globally, act locally,” to heart. Dyke Shipp, YUM!’s chief development officer, worked with Gensler to create a contemporary expression of YUM!’s KFC brand. “Fresh food in a fast-food world is a differentiator,” Shipp says. Developed as a kit of parts, KFC’s new restaurant design speaks in a modern, culturally aware idiom, whatever the location.

How do you say “fresh” in a quick-serve context?

Dyke Shipp: Distinctive graphics and messaging express the idea of great-tasting food freshly prepared right there. The bigger move is a new operational system that creates separation at the front counter, so customers can order at one point and collect their food at another—a big shift with implications for our kitchen and flow. It lets us focus on the customers as they order, and speeds up delivery. While their colleagues are gathering orders, checking them, and presenting them, the up-front part of our team has time to personalize each transaction, acquaint people with our menu offerings, yet keep the queue moving along smoothly.

As a truly global brand, how does KFC speak “local”?

DS: KFC is a brand with remarkable reach and affinity. Our design options have an underlying similarity that effectively communicates KFC’s story and unique attributes, creating a brand edge. Yet it allows local flexibility in how this is expressed in different places and cultures. Our menu has the same diversity, mixing globally familiar food choices with others that appeal to distinct tastes.

Give some examples of tailoring to a local market.

DS: To localize a restaurant’s design to a specific market, we might include photography that reflects it, moderate or intensify the color balance, and tune the seating to local habits like lingering over meals or socializing during them. Color, graphics, messaging, and furniture are the design options, but the best tool for localizing the experience is the restaurant staff. They do more to bring forward KFC’s global brand and local spirit than anything else.

For KFC, how do mature markets compare to new ones?

DS: Certainly, the challenges of launching a legacy brand to a new group of consumers are different from those of sustaining that legacy brand among a group of consumers who have a lot of experience with it. KFC’s brand life cycle moves across a spectrum—from its entry into new markets to its growth stage, when it’s becoming more established, to its reinvention in mature markets.

In established markets, we sustain the KFC brand by keeping our product offerings balanced between familiar favorites and new tastes. To improve the experience, we elevate our customer interaction and ensure that the restaurants themselves stay contemporary, comfortable, and relevant.

Allison Arieff, who interviewed Dyke Shipp, is a content strategist at San Francisco’s SPUR and a contributing columnist for the New York Times.
When the wood 250-meter indoor cycling track became the world standard in 1996, it left Japan without training facilities. The country hadn’t placed in the world championships for 20 years, so JKA (Japan Keirin Association—keirin means “racing wheels”) planned a velodrome at Nihon Cycle Sports Center for Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) Category-1 sprinting events that could also serve as a world-class training center.

JKA asked Gensler to design a state-of-the-art velodrome that could toggle between these activities by adding temporary, readily elements to a facility built mainly for training. It’s sustainable, as JKA requested, using cool groundwater for air-conditioning and incorporating other measures to save energy and reduce operating costs.

Gensler’s Jun Asakura and Masahi Kato worked with a third-generation designer of wood cycling tracks, Ralph Scheurmann. Based in Germany, he proved to be globe-trottingly busy. After visiting Japan to plan the “dialogue” between the wood track and the building, he met with the Gensler team in three different cities in Europe where he was working. “Hunting for Scheurmann” is how Asakura describes their collaboration.

The Izu Velodrome encloses the wood track in sleek but durable industrial materials ranging from the utilitarian—like locker rooms, bike maintenance, and doping control—to more public settings like an art exhibit space. Gensler also developed a compelling website and a print collateral system for the velodrome to communicate the high-speed rush of cycle racing. For the October 2011 opening, the Izu Velodrome Memorial Plaque Project, planned by the team, gave people the historic opportunity to put their names on engraved, Gensler-designed plaques. Some 2,000 people paid to line the velodrome’s walls with them.

The new velodrome has already met its promise to resurrect Japan’s international cycling presence, Kato notes. In January 2013, the Japanese contender Kazunari Watanabe took the silver at the UCI World Cup in Aguascalientes, Mexico.
SFO’s recently renovated Terminal 2 is an unqualified success—passengers love it and concessions revenues have soared. Next in line is Terminal 3’s Boarding Area E, which Gensler and Hensel-Phelps are renovating and expanding. Built in 1979, the nine-gate concourse is long, narrow, and dark. Gensler’s redesign increases seating, food- and beverage options, art, and amenities.

“San Francisco and the Bay Area strike you because of their varied landscapes,” says Gensler’s Melissa Mizell. “That inspired us.”

A large information terrace provides a vista point where travelers can plan their route. Subtle expansion of the concourse will add some 4,000 square feet of amenity space. Serving 1.5 million passengers a year, the regionally themed concessions—a pop-up store included—are designed as oases that preserve the openness of the larger setting.

New windows, clerestories, and skylights frame the views and let in filtered daylight. “The skylights are placed so the play of light in the space changes hourly and seasonally,” Gensler’s Jeff Henry explains. A new roof, more than 15 feet high, made it possible to insert a 25-foot-wide “picture window” at the north end of the concourse. With some of SFO’s best views of the planes as they take off, “it should be a magnet for kids and adults,” Henry predicts.

An upgraded concourse lighting system is expected to be at least 15 percent more efficient than the California Energy Code. Photovoltaic panels will also cut energy use. Another sustainable goal is to exceed Terminal 2’s benchmark of 60 percent recycled waste. Air filtration/purification and low-emitting finishes will make for a high-quality indoor environment. Recycled content, regionally produced materials, and sustainably harvested wood products round out a project aiming for LEED Gold.

One of the project’s most sustainable aspects is its partial reuse of the 36-year-old structure. While substantially rebuilt, it retains core components like the supporting columns that would be extremely energy consuming to replace.

With Boarding Area E slated to open in 2014, the design-build team of Gensler and Hensel-Phelps is designing the renovation of an adjacent part of Terminal 3. Building on the success of Terminal 2, these major new projects continue the transformation of SFO’s domestic terminals—work that’s changed the game for US airports and the passengers and airlines they serve.
Nokia’s new West London Headquarters is designed to win talent and foster creative cross-pollination. Occupying three floors of a nine-story building, the 65,000-square-foot space pairs the community’s social epicenters—villages—with workplace, client support, showrooms, and a restaurant.

Working with Nokia’s brand team, Gensler found that the old headquarters was underused because so many employees chose to work from home. To learn why, Gensler used a Workplace Performance Index survey to identify employee workstyles ranging from office-centered to entirely mobile. The new headquarters attracts them all.

While the number of traditional desks decreased, new workspaces of differing size, height, and configuration were added to accommodate the more mobile users. Transparency and “office rules” about when a person can be interrupted help minimize the distractions that make it hard to focus.

Keeping Nokia’s culture at the forefront of the design, Gensler coupled technology and urbanity with sustainability and grit. A ground-floor space, facing a atrium echoes its volume but achieves an intimate scale that helps conversations happen.

The working floor is designed for collaboration. Its three villages offer a variety of workstations, conference rooms, and plug-in spaces to support activity-based interactions. A “heart zone” at the center of the floor encourages off-the-cuff collaborations. “Blending the four work-style profiles gave us an overall density of 1.8 people per desk,” says Gensler’s Matthew Kobylar.

Taking aesthetic cues from skate parks, the headquarters’ ASIAN restaurant is a spatially antitheticus to the working floor. It can seat up to 125 people for dining or up to 240 people for town hall meetings, complete with audiovisual presentation and broadcast capabilities.

Gensler is preparing to carry out a post-occupancy Workplace Performance Index survey of the new headquarters, but—thanks to people’s positive initial reactions—it’s already seen by Nokia as a precedent for future workplace projects.

Along with providing an attractive place to work, “It was important to Nokia to break down silos and fire up collaboration,” says Gensler’s Matt Jackson. “The transparency of the headquarters makes people visible, even when they’re working on their own.”

The new headquarters has enabled Nokia to reengage its community. “The preference for working at home quickly went away,” Jackson notes. “People love to be here.”