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# drycleaner<sup>®</sup>

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PRODUCT REVIEW  
Spotting Chemicals

47TH ANNUAL

## Plant Design Awards

Plus Your Business' 2008 Budget ■ Resolve to Keep More Money ■ Promote Your Operation Boldly



**Grand Prize**

Best Plant Design

## Urban Renewal

**Meurice Garment Care**

New York, N.Y.

**A**fter years of searching in one of the highest-priced real estate markets in the nation, Meurice Garment Care operator Wayne Edelman got an unexpected call from his broker. There was a building available in the Bronx that might be able to house a large drycleaning plant. Edel-

man immediately got up from his desk and went to meet the broker.

What he saw was a warehouse packed floor-to-ceiling with holiday decorations; it was full of leaks and covered with graffiti. But he also noticed that the 12,500-sq.-ft. space had only four columns—it was a blank slate onto which he could draw the plant of his dreams. When the property went on the market the following Monday, Edelman made an offer.

The offer was accepted and Edelman strapped himself in for what would prove to be the most challenging time of his long and distinguished career in the industry. Because of the red tape involved with the surrounding economic empowerment zone, it took more than a year to take possession of the building.

From the outset, however, he had a vi-

sion of creating a better work environment for himself and his 40 employees; he also needed a space that could handle his operation's next decade of growth. Already a large and well-respected player in New York City, Meurice needed a space that could handle multimillion-dollar sales without sacrificing the couture quality for which it is known.

Early in the project, Wayne Wudyka, founder of the Certified Restoration Dry-cleaning Network (CRDN), told Edelman to make the new plant a place where people would walk in and say either "I want to work for these guys," or "I want to do business with these guys." Meurice is an affiliate of CRDN and Leading Cleaners Internationale (LCI).

Edelman set to work with an architect and industry contacts including consultant Jane Zellers and Trevil America's Rich Becker. He added skylights to the building to furnish natural light. He added a network of gas, water and electrical lines for today's business, and tomorrow's. He spent four times the estimates on epoxy floor coatings. He added a breakroom and a mezzanine. "I'd spent years working in basement offices," he says. "I wanted light and space."

Today, the plant floor is bright and spacious, and offers plenty of space for expansion. One side of the plant opens to the street via two garage doors, offering indoor loading of the vans that shuttle work to Meurice's three stores in the

**Opposite: Meurice's new production floor, as seen from the plant's glass-walled mezzanine offices. Right, top to bottom: Edelman installed several skylights to provide natural light; another view of the production floor; the operator's first office above ground; the production-only plant's unassuming exterior.**

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metro area and serve three routes.

Edelman moved much of the equipment from Meurice's previous location, including four Columbia/Ilsa drycleaning machines; the plant runs hydrocarbon and perc for full drycleaning capabilities, and has enough space for a fifth planned machine. He also moved his classic Hoffman X presses and Wascomat Aquaclean wetcleaning machine.

To the mix, he added Trevil tensioning equipment and up-air boards, a Perfect Pleat drapery machine, and wetcleaning machines and a washer/extractor from Imesa. He also brought in an Imesa flatwork finisher for the operation's burgeoning bed-linens business. Last, Edelman bought a forklift to access the plant's elevated 1,000-sq.-ft. storage area.

White Conveyors supplies the plant's expanding network of sorting, assembly and distribution systems, and a Compassmax point-of-sale (POS) system tracks items. Edelman picked an oversized Cyclothem boiler and Kaeser compressor with growth in mind. "He has foresight," says Trevil America president Stuart Ilkowitz. "To be able to work with a guy like him is a pleasure—he's someone who *gets it*."

Today, Edelman can look down on his bright, new production floor from the glass-walled office and conference room on the mezzanine. "I finally have an office," he enthuses. "I'm proud of what we built here, and I can honestly say that we've achieved what we set out to do." ○

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**Left, top to bottom: The leaky warehouse that would become Meurice operator Wayne Edelman's dream plant; the drycleaning area features four machines today and has room for a fifth; a mix of old and new in the laundry and wetcleaning area; an Imesa folder installed to handle sheets.**

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