

LOBBY INSIGHT

By Andrew Wales



"First impressions count... the lobby has the capacity to take any building to new heights."



Cherry apartments designed by ROTHELOWMAN in Fitzroy, incorporates an eye-catching lobby synonymous with the area.



Making an impact: D2 student accommodation designed by ROTHELOWMAN.



Coco residential apartments designed by ROTHELOWMAN.

The lobby is the space of first and last impressions. Arguably the single most important aspect of a building's interior, the lobby should reference both the building's architecture and the character and needs of its occupants. Designed well, the ambience achieved in the lobby has the potential to influence people's overall impressions of the building, from the outset.

In spite of this, it's staggering how often the lobby is either thrown together at the last minute or created separately. This creates a wasted space that makes no reference to the landscaping around the entrance to the building or its architecture, and gives no consideration

for the potential the lobby has to raise the bar - and the value - of the entire building.

As the bridging element or transition area between the outdoors and the destination, the lobby is traversed by all occupants and visitors and has many functions. It represents a designer's best opportunity to grab the attention of visitors and occupants and communicate certain aspects of a building's purpose.

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This page and facing:
Charlie makes a grand entrance; the lobby designed for Charlie residential apartments by ROTHELOWMAN



Intelligently designed lobbies allow people to easily navigate their way. When designing a space with this aim, it is imperative that focus points and sightlines are well considered and function to subtly direct the attention of those who enter the space.

There is often an issue of conflicting information when the requirement for clear signage is at odds with the need to create a space of high aesthetic value. The success of the design will be determined by the skill of the designer in balancing these fundamental issues. Signage may take the form of design cues, such as lighting or furniture and material or subtle colour

changes that provide direction and distinguish one area from another.

And while visitors will judge a lobby based on how it looks, occupants will want a lobby that also serves its purpose; function and form are equally important. As lobbies include security systems, mailboxes, places to collect packages and areas where occupants and visitors can meet, an appealing design should complement a building's functionality. They may be on the ground floor but designed well, the lobby has the capacity to take any building to new heights.

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