

## THE NEW 67,000 SQUARE FOOT WPLG FACILITY IN MIAMI, FLORIDA

A testament to the obstacles that creative design can overcome, the new 67,000 square foot WPLG facility in Miami, Florida seamlessly unites the highly technical demands of a modern broadcast station with attractive, user-friendly aesthetics.

The concept of the new building reflects a linear element with strong vertical intersecting planes. Constructed of tilt-up concrete – chosen for its weather-resistance, speed of construction, and the contractor's proficiency with the material – the

building includes a large glass curtainwall that provides daylight and views for the building's occupants. Much of the building's interior, including the newsroom, features exposed structural components.

A number of thematic elements are strategically duplicated from interior to exterior. At the entrance, the towering wave wall creates a dramatic backdrop for the reception desk and subtly echoes the effect of the lake outside.

Dark brown fins on the reception desk mimic the strong linear elements of the exterior, and cool porcelain tiles are used both for the interior flooring as well as an exterior accent. Interior and exterior elements – including the use of bright colors in the news studio and the palm trees in the landscaping – pay homage to the surrounding Miami culture.

Numerous factors drove the layout of WPLG, including departmental adjacencies, centrally located and easily accessible management, and strict city requirements for site margins, architectural style, materials and color. The entire building is designed to convey an open feel, with glass, high white ceilings, and a high degree of connectivity between departments. The lobby, staff lounge, newsroom, offices, and conference room are connected by a grand, wrapping staircase.

Lighting was a key issue in the design of the WPLG facility. As with any high-tech broadcast facility, the occupants require both high and low light levels to optimally perform their jobs. The design team provided a high degree of controllability with the lighting systems to ensure employee comfort and energy efficiency. Additionally, REES endeavored to take maximum advantage of lake views to the north and west while maintaining needed shade for some offices.



Constructed on a long, narrow, 6-acre L-shaped lot with a green space requirement of 20%, the site posed significant challenges to the design team. In order to visually break up the length of the site and meet code requirements, a walking path with heavy indigenous landscaping was installed.

In addition to the challenges brought about by the site, the design team also was required to design the facility to meet Category Five hurricane standards – double or more the IBC standard.

The station is designed to maintain functionality in the event of a weather emergency, and includes covered parking for most station vehicles as well as sheltered docks for loading news trucks during inclement weather. Additionally, the facility includes storage space for goods related to weather preparedness, and employees and their families are encouraged to use the building as shelter in the event of a hurricane. Several furniture elements were selected to do “double-duty,” reclining to serve as beds during inclement weather.



Already the recipient of several design awards, WPLG’s new building is combination of high-tech functionality, user-friendly design, and aesthetic richness. The sleek facility unmistakably reflects WPLG’s dedication to serving the community through the delivery of uninterrupted, high-quality programming as well as the station’s commitment to the welfare of its staff.

