

# Outsulation<sup>®</sup> MD System<sup>®</sup> Case Study



## Dryvit Reflectit<sup>™</sup> Finish Creates Eye-Popping Curb Appeal for Missouri General Contractor's Office

**Renovation of existing split block government building creates stunning transformation  
with sweeping radius wall entrance**



A utilitarian former state vehicle emission testing building just outside of St. Louis, Missouri has been transformed into an eye-catching office building thanks to the remarkable ability of Dryvit's new Reflectit finish to replicate the look of metal panels at a budget-friendly cost.

Or, as building owner and General

Contractor Gus Cervetto, Principal of the CB&E Construction Group in Chesterfield, Missouri put it: "Using Reflectit gave us an opportunity to reclaim a building that was on the death watch."

The original state vehicle emission testing building was, like many government buildings, designed to be fairly Spartan. The most distinguishing characteristic of the simple, split-block exterior box were the dual garage bays on both ends of the building. In its earlier use, vehicles would simply drive in one end of the building, get the emission test, and then drive out the other side. When the state of Missouri suspended the operation of the testing facilities years ago, the building was placed up for sale. For many years, it attracted little interest due to the fairly unusual building use and configuration. Despite an excellent

Project Name:  
Office Building  
Chesterfield, MO

Architect:  
Gray Design Group  
St. Louis, MO

Dryvit System & Finishes:  
Outsulation MD  
Reflectit

GC:  
CB&E Construction Group  
Chesterfield, MO

Dryvit Applicator:  
T.J. Wies Contracting  
Lake St. Louis, MO

Dryvit Distributor:  
Ceiling Supply  
St. Louis, MO

location in the fast-growing Chesterfield Valley region of Missouri, there were no takers for the building. No one could figure out quite what to do with the curious structure.



Enter Cervetto, whose company purchased the building two years ago without an idea what to do with it either. Most around him were arguing to tear the building down and start from scratch, an idea Cervetto and his management team rejected on the basis of the environmental impact of such an approach. Cervetto and his team ultimately decided to move their corporate offices to the building – using the existing structure as the core of what they wanted to convert to a “cutting-edge” design that would attract attention.

“We are very big believers in sustainable construction – we did the very first green building project in Missouri years ago – and we knew that the energy we would use in knocking the building down would be too great. The problem we were struggling with was what we could do with it that wouldn’t end up looking like a gas station ... without the gas pumps,” Cervetto explained. “Preserving the building was a top priority for us. Our architects did a tremendous job getting us a design that featured what we call the ‘swoosh wall’ concept, which is really the signature feature of the building.”

In addition to preserving the structure, the owner wanted the materials selection to be design-centric. They wanted a building that would draw the eye and express the nature of their business by accenting structural elements.

St. Louis-based Gray Design Group Principal Architect Larry Milles and his team presented a design that took advantage of the high garage bay doors to create a central work area surrounded by work stations and private offices. By converting the former garage bay doors into large windows, the interior space became bright and accessible. But without question, the principal design feature is the curvilinear façade that extends the front elevation along the street frontage to define the new, elegant building entry, accessed through a new, landscaped entry courtyard. In addition to devising a first-rate design solution, the choice of the Dryvit Outsulation MD system as the cladding provided the sustainability-conscious owner with a highly energy efficient

solution with a carbon footprint five times smaller than brick and almost three times smaller than stucco.

The new design elements create the illusion of a larger building, as well as achieve the “cutting-edge” features Cervetto and CB&E sought for their corporate headquarters. Originally the design called for metal panels, which were ultimately rejected on the basis of their significantly higher cost. That is where the Dryvit Reflectit finish provided the solution both the owner demanded and the architect needed.

“What Dryvit offers with this product is the ability for architects, who always want to work with exotic materials to achieve great, identifiable work – but are almost always constrained by budgets – to create some truly great design” said Milles of Gray Design Group. “To do a radius with either metal or block or other materials is certainly possible, but it is substantially more costly and more difficult to work with. Dryvit’s Reflectit offers a look that everyone responds to, and you don’t have to worry about the cost.”

The idea to bring Reflectit finish to the table actually came from Cervetto, the building owner whose General Contracting company had recently used Reflectit on a hotel project in the Phoenix, Arizona area.

“I had just used the product and loved the way it looked on the project we did in Phoenix, so I suggested it to the architects, and we could not be happier with the result,” Cervetto said.

Both Cervetto and Milles offered high praise for Dryvit-listed applicator, T.J. Wies Contracting, the Lake St. Louis, Missouri contractor who applied the 1,200 square feet of Reflectit finish to the façade, as well as the Dryvit Outsulation MD System that was applied to metal framing and DensGlass® Gold sheathing over the original split block structure to create a more uniform appearance.

“The applicators who applied the Dryvit system did a spectacular job in getting it right,” offered Milles. “It looks, even right up close to the façade, like a first-class metal panel. It can absolutely fool you.”

For their part, Rick Faulkner, Vice President, Project Management at T.J. Wies, says the weather, wind and an accelerated project schedule made their first experience with Reflectit

finish a challenging, albeit extremely rewarding, one. “When we started to spray on the Reflectit finish we had a lot of rain and humidity, as well as some high wind conditions, that made the drying times difficult,” Faulkner explained. “Once we realized that it had dried a little unevenly in a few places, we worked with the Dryvit Field Service Manager, Dave Roberts, who recommended a second spray coat. When that dried it was perfect and looked really, really good.”

The Outsulation MD System went up easily over the stud walls the Wies crews erected over the existing split block walls.

“The split block simply had too many discontinuities to apply the Dryvit system directly to the original building. It could have been done, but we felt the better way to go was to build out stud walls and apply the system over the DensGlass Gold,” Faulkner said.

The results speak for themselves, as the new CB&E offices look nothing like the pedestrian former exterior hidden beneath the shining Dryvit exterior.

“Using a Dryvit system in a building renovation is a great way to ‘hide the warts’ on older, plain buildings, which this project clearly demonstrates,” says architect Milles. “But the Reflectit finish really takes that to a new design level, allowing a lot of flexibility to bring very dramatic features to the building design at an affordable price.”

For more information about Outsulation MD, or any of the systems and products sold by Dryvit Systems, Inc., call Dryvit Technical Services at 1-800-556-7752 or visit us on the web at [www.dryvit.com](http://www.dryvit.com).

