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Creating well-branded signage to expand and transform a property – South Bay case study - by Richard Poyant

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In today's competitive retail environment, the strength and relevance of your brand image is more important than ever. Signage and "streetscape" play a major role in your business and are an untapped opportunity to target a critical mass audience of potential customers so close to your front door.

How can retailers create a unique and exciting experience that will draw consumers to their center rather than shop online? Building a vibrant, fresh, bright, and striking environment will attract new customers and businesses and will strengthen and enhance your new brand.

Creating an effective visual solution is the first step in an overall business strategy that conveys a clear message of what your customers will experience when interacting with you. Powerful visual branding is the most cost-effective way to maximize your impact on shoppers.

When considering different visual design options, consider the following:

- Keep it consistent, visible and legible – Your "streetscape" is your "first impression" and must project the powerful image you want the public to have of your center.
- Tell your own unique story – Consider what your tenants, visitors, and customers will value about your location, tenant mix and unique property features upon opening your center. Determine what they will like about the products and services that you offer and leverage those characteristics in the design. This will ensure a strong and successful brand for years to come.
- Design – One of the most important factors for an upcoming brand is the design development. Your design must make a commanding statement. A design that can be read and understood with a quick glance will create the most effective sign. Keep it simple.

Your "streetscape" will make thousands of impressions every day, creating top of the mind awareness. A well-researched and well-engineered branding program will promote a better visitor experience, improve traffic patterns to your location, and reflect your overall brand image.

Poyant had the opportunity to work with EDENS, a leading retail real estate developer for South Bay's expansion project in Boston, Mass. The vision for this mixed-use development was to create a space that the local community could enjoy through shopping, dining, and other entertainment. Designs for this space would reflect the area's culture and history, creating an inviting and energized environment for visitors.

The site measures 750,000 s/f with 160,000 s/f of new retail. Tenants include shops, restaurants, a hotel, and residential space. Included in the development is a 6-story parking garage with ground-level retail and dining destinations. This new project is located adjacent to the existing South Bay Mall, which was also updated.

Poyant collaborated with EDENS on the goals for the project:

1. Transform the look of the property from outdated to bright and energized, while also paying attention to the local culture and history, drawing new customers in from the community.
2. Improve the wayfinding for the new pedestrian-focused development.
3. Create a vibrant and exciting property that is also environmentally-friendly and sustainable.
4. Leverage the exposure of the center to Southeast Expressway traffic.

Focusing on these goals, the Poyant team began work on several signage elements that would be installed throughout the South Bay property. Poyant fabricated and installed this signage package that would align with the main goals of the project, helping to create a striking destination that the local community would be able to appreciate and easily navigate.

Poyant completed work on two pylons for the location. The first was the refurbishing of an existing double-faced sign facing Rte. I-93. This was done by removing the existing letters, decorative elements, and internal lighting. The two brick columns were painted white and new faces masked and painted with gray faux wood grain were installed. New South Bay face lit channel letters were added, and the existing lighting was replaced with white LEDs. The second 30-foot-tall pylon is located on Mass Ave. It is double-faced with a vertical South Bay decorative structure and several tenant panels for the retail and dining locations. Other signage elements include parking entry signs, pedestrian and vehicle directionals, and standard traffic signage. Poyant carefully selected the proper materials and finishes to protect against any potential vandalism or wear over time. In addition, LED lighting systems were installed for all signage, creating great energy savings for the property.

“Poyant was great to work with in all aspects of our South Bay Expansion project,” said Wells Stanwick, construction manager for EDENS. “They executed in a timely and professional manner to help us achieve our goal of creating a gathering place that celebrates the historic community of Dorchester.”

Poyant was proud to have partnered with EDENS on this new development. Our singular focus is, and always has been...Building Your Brand, Building Your Success. The South Bay project was completed in February of 2018, on-time and on-budget, and is considered a huge success by all involved.

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