

Retail Program



Koe Store – “Design Reclaimed”
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Owner Profile

Dave and Lisa Koe are a couple in their mid-thirties who have one pet, a friendly Manx cat named Sammy. They have no plans to have children. Dave obtained an MBA after getting a Bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering. Lisa has a Fine Arts degree with a focus in sculpture.

The Koes are the owners of the ground floor of a recently converted 10-story masonry building in downtown New Orleans. They have been very active in the New Orleans community rebuilding efforts after Hurricane Katrina, having lived in the area since childhood, and are very determined to see the city rejuvenated. They plan to open a store that features repurposed design products, and have settled on the name Design Reclaimed.

Dave does engineering contract work as his primary income, preferring to have the freedom of choice of projects rather than working as a senior engineer for a firm and being controlled by the projects assigned to him. Lisa teaches evening art classes for a nearby community college and sells her own artwork on the side. For the new design store, Lisa will manage the day-to-day store operations while Dave will manage the strategic business operations and finances.

Both Dave and Lisa have volunteered many hours to efforts such as Habitat for Humanity, helping to rebuild communities of their region that experienced devastation after Hurricane Katrina. Of particular interest to the Koes have been the efforts to salvage materials for repurposed use. They have gotten their hands dirty many times helping to haul away materials that could have a second use rather than be dumped into a landfill. They have come to know a number of end-users for the salvaged materials during this process, and it is the products designed by these innovators that the Koes wish to feature in their new store. Lisa also has some sculpture pieces she has created using reclaimed materials that will be available for sale in the store.

Sustainable design is of great interest to the Koes and they would like to incorporate as many green products and practices as possible into the store furnishings, fixtures and equipment. The style for the new store will be eclectic, merging contemporary design with traditional materials.

User Group

The target demographic customers for Design Reclaimed are men and women in their mid-thirties with an eye for unique products and a passion for the environment and the urban culture of New Orleans. These individuals have disposable income and are often seeking ways to spend their money that will leave them with a good feeling about their expenditures. They appreciate the fine arts and particularly enjoy procuring unique, one-of-a-kind products for their homes and to give to friends and family as gifts.

Product Lines

The product lines will contain merchandise that features or incorporates materials from prior use. Much of the merchandise will be created by local artists and designers who have developed product lines using found materials, often from salvage yards. A key aspect of the products featured by Design Reclaimed will be the uniqueness of the items. Typically no two items will be the same; these products are not mass-produced on an assembly line. The products will generally be of local or regional origin, although there will be some merchandise that is brought in from outside Louisiana to round out the product lines and offer additional ideas for repurposed products. Examples of these repurposed product lines are:

- Purses and bags made from everything from fabric scraps to neoprene to bicycle tire tubes to pop tops and more
- Bottle openers made from seatbelt hardware and bike parts
- Jewelry made from everything from electronic components to skateboard cutouts
- Placemats and napkin rings made from candy wrappers
- Vinyl record albums made into clocks, bowls and coasters
- Sculpture and clocks made from everything
- Picture frames made from recycled materials
- Light fixtures made from glass bottles
- Tables and shelves made from building materials

Goals and Objectives

Dave and Lisa Koe have the following goals and objectives for this project:

- Create an environment that feels as special and unique to the customer as the products being featured. It should not evoke the sense of being in a place that is selling used goods, like a thrift store.
- Create a space that is productive and inspiring for the employees, incorporating a coffee bar for both employee and customer convenience.
- Provide display space for Lisa's sculpture, either as a separate merchandising area or integrated with other product lines.
- Along with the repurposed product lines, the store should support sustainable design and have a low impact on the environment by utilizing local repurposed materials and labor.
- Design an environment that is conducive to open house receptions for designers and customers.

Story

In collaboration with the rebuilding efforts in New Orleans, many salvage yards and drop-off sites have sprung up to receive materials that have been damaged from their original purpose but are still viable materials.

Expanding on this theme of reclamation, many artists and designers have developed product lines that utilize the large volume of excess materials. It is on this theme that Dave and Lisa Koe have decided to build the story for their business.

At a glance, the store's product lines will appear as typical, trendy design objects. Only upon closer inspection will it be apparent that the products are unique and made from repurposed materials. The store should have a style that follows the expectations of high-design shoppers, while simultaneously being different in the sense that the store itself is furnished with repurposed materials.

The story for the consumer is that buying used goods is a desirable thing to do. In fact, choosing used or repurposed merchandise is actually a better choice than buying newly manufactured products because of the lower impact on the environment. Design Reclaimed offers responsible and desirable products for the environmentally conscious high-design consumer.

Wants and Needs

Wants:

- Special unique display area for each product line
- Open house reception space
- High-end restroom
- Dedicated space for Lisa's sculpture pieces
- Coffee bar area for customers and employees
- High-end office
- Follow LEED guidelines for retail space
- Latest technological advances

Needs:

- Product line areas separated by different display units
- Convertible for multi-use
- Unisex public bathroom
- Display space for sculpture throughout store
- Space for espresso machine and supplies
- Office space
- Patronize local products and services
- Meet basic requirements for sales, comfort and security

Room Requirements

Name of Room	Square Footage	Adjacencies	Comments
1 - Entry/Decomp. Zone	100	2, 3, 4	open area
2 - Merchandise Area 1	350	1, 5, 8, 9	product lines displayed by wall shelves or hanging
3 - Merchandise Area 2	350	1, 5, 8, 9	product lines displayed by specialty cases
4 - Merchandise Area 3	350	1, 5, 8, 9	product lines displayed by floor arrangements
5 - Cash/Wrap	200	2, 3, 4	computer, supplies, storage
6 - Manager's Office	100	7	desk & chair, two guest seats
7 - Employee Area	200	6, 10	seating for four, bulletin board, eight lockers
8 - Stock Room	200	2, 3, 4	open shelving
9 - Public Restroom	100	2, 3, 4	one unisex
10 - Kitchen	70	7	sink, dishwasher, microwave, cabinets

Keepsake Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment

Item	Dimensions	Final Destination	Comments
Couch	36"H x 72"W x 20"D	Merchandise Area	repurposed by local artist
Chandelier	138"H x 36"DIA	Cash/Wrap	repurposed by local artist
Row of lockers	6'H x 8'W x 12"D	Employee Area	for employee storage
Espresso machine	11.75"H x 8"W x 10"D	Kitchen	for employees
Sub-Zero wine storage	34"H x 15"W x 24"D	Kitchen	for open house receptions

Stating the Problem

Form

- Group merchandise areas by product lines.
- Incorporate Lisa's sculpture into displays.
- Construct product displays from repurposed materials whenever possible.
- The employee area should be aesthetically pleasing.
- The motif should be trendy and classy, and nothing like a thrift store.

Function

- The store needs to be able to accommodate the occasional open house reception.
- The entire merchandise area should be visible from the cash/wrap area.
- Provide a coffee bar that is accessible to both employees and customers.
- The manager's office should include two guest seats in addition to a desk and chair.
- Consider portability of product displays for ease of changing merchandise arrangements.

Economy

- Dave and Lisa have budgeted a portion of their savings for this endeavor. They also have an outside investor. The budget for the space is not extravagant but it does allow for mostly custom millwork and furnishings. They want to invest in repurposed and sustainable materials and long-term energy-efficient solutions.

Time

- The Koes have no definitive plans to leave the space. They expect a move to be preempted by a change in circumstance, such as a need for more space or a different financial situation.