

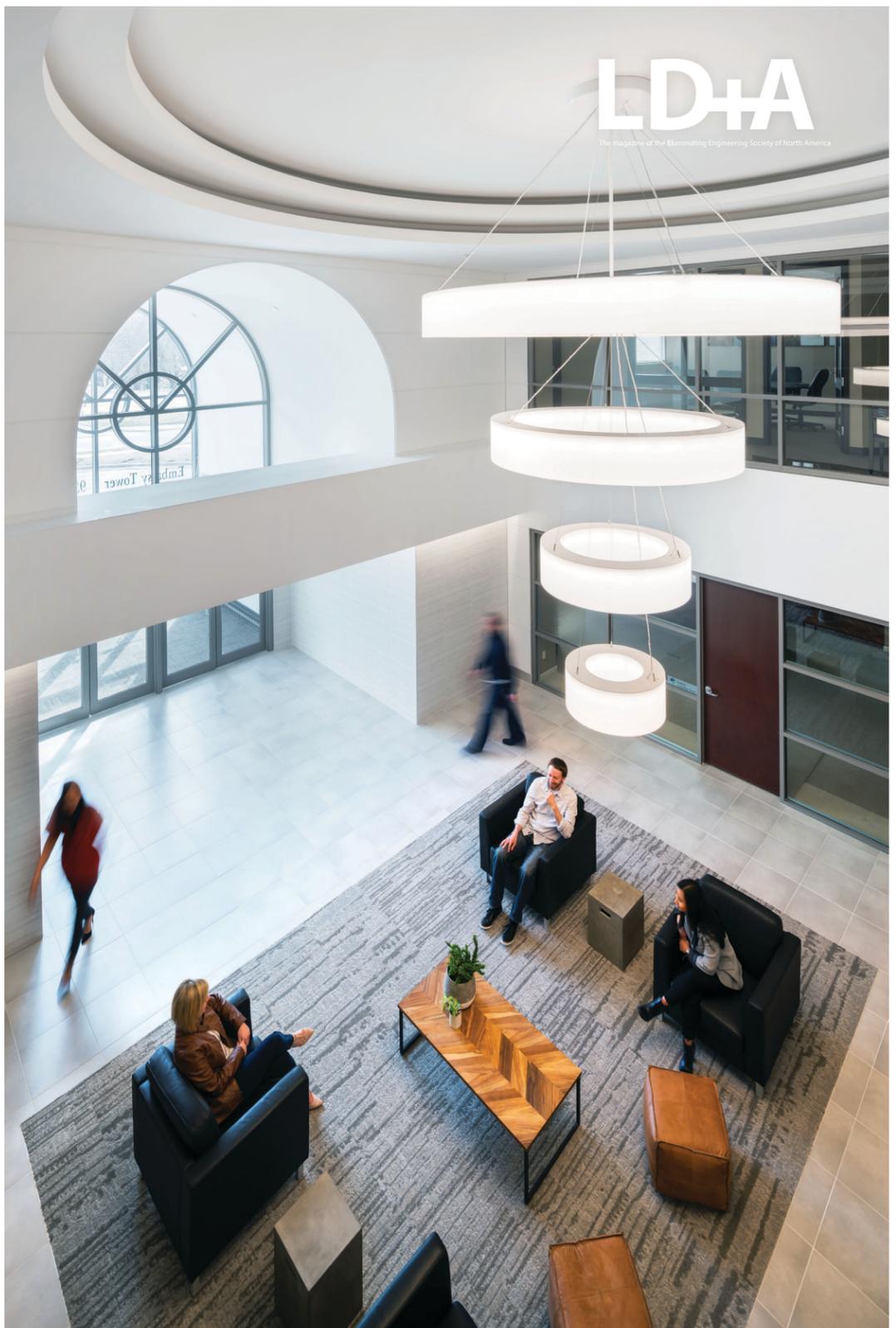
# Hospitality Haven

Redone in a hotel motif, an office building in Omaha, NE goes from drab to fab

BY LEONORA DESAR

The owner of a 25-year-old building, Wassco LLC, was looking for a minor upgrade of finishes. But when Amanda Swartwout, owner and creative director of Studio | BRiNK in Omaha visited the building (elegantly named Embassy Tower of Omaha), she realized that a lot more would be required. For one thing, the lighting was problematic, from a patchwork of outdated luminaires to inconsistent color temperatures and awkward alignment of fixtures. "Instead of working with the space, the lights were working against it," Swartwout says. "It was really dark and dingy - it would have been a shame to put a brand new set of finishes in there and then not have anybody be able to see them."

Swartwout envisioned giving the main lobbies, elevator lobbies, and other amenity spaces a hospitality aesthetic. "One of the main reasons why it looked so drab is that there wasn't really any variation or focal point; it was just all one neutral cream tone. In building lobbies, you want something to attract your eye and draw you in."



## THE CHANDELIER

Swartwout created a focal point with a custom 215-pound LED chandelier (SPI Lighting) in the building lobby. Prior to the redesign, there had been strip lights that drew attention to recessed circular elements in the ceiling. The perimeter was lit by old, fading HID fixtures and there wasn't anything lighting the center of the grand two-story space. The chandelier, on the other hand, is composed of four rings that are spaced equally apart. The circular nature of the chandelier highlights the existing circular architecture in the ceiling, as if it was always meant to be there in the first place.

The chandelier also creates a sense of grandeur, of presence and arrival. "It makes the building seem like a destination rather than just an office building," Swartwout says. "It communicates that the space has been designed and thought about, that it's a professional setting. The 3500K color temperature of the chandelier adds a warm touch to the space, highlighting the new wood finishes. "Winters in Nebraska can be cold and dark - it's nice to have a warm, welcoming looking when you walk in," Swartwout says. [...]

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