

Hello,

Welcome to the very first edition of our Insider Brief.

This is your front-row pass to what’s shaping the world of display and retail activation. From fresh ideas to on-the-ground insights, we’re here to keep you ahead of what’s new, what’s working, and what’s worth watching.

It’s a community-driven initiative built to bring you more. In the coming editions, expect contests, giveaways, and new ways to engage, learn, and win along the way.

We’re excited to kick this off with you. Dive in and enjoy.

Warm regards,

Ken Lall
KD Group

Retail, Reimagined



Success Story →

Elevating the *Walmart* Bakery Experience

When retail giant **Walmart** embarked on an ambitious re-launch of their bakery departments, they had a clear vision: to create a warm, inviting, and premium visual experience that would draw customers in and showcase freshly baked goods. Translating this elevated concept into durable, scalable retail fixtures, however, presented significant challenges.

“

Cost-efficiency does not require compromising on design.

...



The Solution →

This is where **KD Displays** stepped in, leveraging deep expertise to bridge the gap

between design concept and retail execution. The team took a hands-on approach, engineering through structural and material challenges while preserving the intended aesthetic.

By prioritizing fit, form, and function, display components were re-engineered to withstand high-traffic environments. Through strategic value engineering, innovative materials and streamlined manufacturing processes ensured the fixtures remained functional, safe, and easy to maintain.

The Result →

KD Displays ultimately delivered a comprehensive, turnkey fixture solution that brought the bakery re-launch to life at scale while adhering to Walmart’s strict budget. The transformed spaces demonstrate that cost-efficiency and elevated design can coexist, balancing structural integrity with a refined in-store experience.

A reminder that great retail design succeeds when aesthetics, function, and scalability work seamlessly together.

April 2026 Issue →

How is retail design evolving?



The **evolution of retail design** is an on-going process. This year appears to be rooted in “neuro-responsive architecture” or experiential design. Brands are leveraging psychology and sensory engagement to create spaces that actively improve customer well-being and encourage dwell time.

“**Retailers are no longer just building stores; they are building community and lifestyle districts.**”

Shift in Consumer Behavior

The lines appear to be blurred between residential comfort and commercial retail. Consumers, fatigued by digital overload, are seeking out physical spaces that feel authentic, grounded, and welcoming. Retailers are no longer just building stores; they are building community and lifestyle districts.

The Aesthetic of 2026

The **aesthetic of 2026** is rich, warm, and highly adaptable. The new look replaces the cold chrome, harsh lighting, and glossy whites with depth, character, and flexibility.

Retailers are leaning heavily into modular fixtures and Silicone Edge Graphics (SEG) fabric systems. This allows stores to completely refresh their visual identity and replicate complex textures like wood grains and brick without costly downtime or construction costs.

Stores are mimicking the comfort of home interiors – maybe because we spent so much time there during the pandemic. We are seeing an influx of terracotta, greens, and ochre. Wood grains and aged metal accents like unlacquered brass or nickel are on the rise.

Execution and Reality





Navigating this landscape requires immense agility and a deep understanding of both aesthetics and logistics. The retail space activation company needs to be flexible to make those changes be it concepts becoming reality like warming up the ‘big box’.

For example, remodeling bakery departments integrating softer wood facades onto gondola shelving shifts from sterile warehouse aisles.

In short, the retail interior of **2026** is about blending residential warmth with commercial agility. Fit-outs must be highly engaging yet easily adaptable – a balancing act that full-service partners like KD Displays are successfully mastering across the continent.

Building Partnerships, Solving Problems →

A Professional Journey



From Floor Plans to Epiphanies Long before becoming the Owner Operator of KD Group, the foundation for a career in design and problem-solving was already being poured. After graduating with a Double Major in History and Sociology from the University of Toronto—while simultaneously running a painting and landscape company—the entrepreneurial bug had firmly taken root. This led to purchasing and scaling a golf franchise to four locations with his brother, eventually managing store layouts and buying for the new ownership group.

Seeking an avenue that blended the creative aesthetics of space design with the technical rigor of building it, he joined KD Displays (now KD Group) as General Manager. However, the true turning point in his career development came during a tense meeting with David Lauzon of Lauzon flooring regarding a flawed design. When asked why KD built a unit they knew would fail just because the client asked for it, Lauzon delivered a piece of advice that would become KD Group's guiding philosophy: *"Sometimes in life, you must tell us we are wrong... We are looking for a partner, not a seller."* From that day forward, the mission was clear: KD Group was no longer just a fixture company; it was a **problem-solving company**.

Leading with Purpose and Innovation Today, as sole owner and operator since 2012, that partnership-first mentality drives the day-to-day operations. Mentored early on by Robert Shatilla, who taught him the vital mechanics of the business, his role now is to bridge the gap between a customer's ultimate needs and the physical realities of manufacturing.

This collaborative, solution-oriented culture has led to massive diversification and success. Whether it is redesigning the entire Adidas section for SportChek, revolutionizing Loss Prevention fixtures across hundreds of Home Depot locations, or designing a first-of-its-kind integrated lighting fixture for Gerflor, the goal remains the same. The ultimate professional reward is delivering a solution that prompts a client to say, *"I didn't expect it to be this good."*

Designing the Future of Retail Looking ahead, he recognizes that the retail landscape is shifting. With the rise of the "Skip It" consumer generation and the decline of traditional department stores, brick-and-mortar retail must evolve to survive. He believes the future of the display industry lies in experiential retail—giving consumers a compelling reason to visit through well-stocked, highly tactile environments, knowledgeable staff, and immersive branding. Always looking to expand his own technical toolkit to meet these future demands, his next personal professional goal is to master SolidWorks.





Off the Clock When he needs to focus, his productivity hack is simple: close the door and turn on the radio. Outside the office, he is a dedicated family man who loves spending time with his wife, two kids, and dogs. A lifelong athlete and leader, he has translated his business acumen to the ice, coaching three different hockey teams to major championships, including an OHL Cup and the Ontario Winter Games.

Summers are spent on the golf course or near the water, where he hides a surprising talent for slalom waterskiing and wakeboard backflips. Fueled by James Patterson novels, steak with pasta aglio e olio, and the occasional cherry PEZ, he tackles life with hard work, smart planning, and a good sense of humor, knowing exactly enough about the air velocity of an unladen swallow to avoid being thrown into the Gorge.

We create better retail experiences.



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