

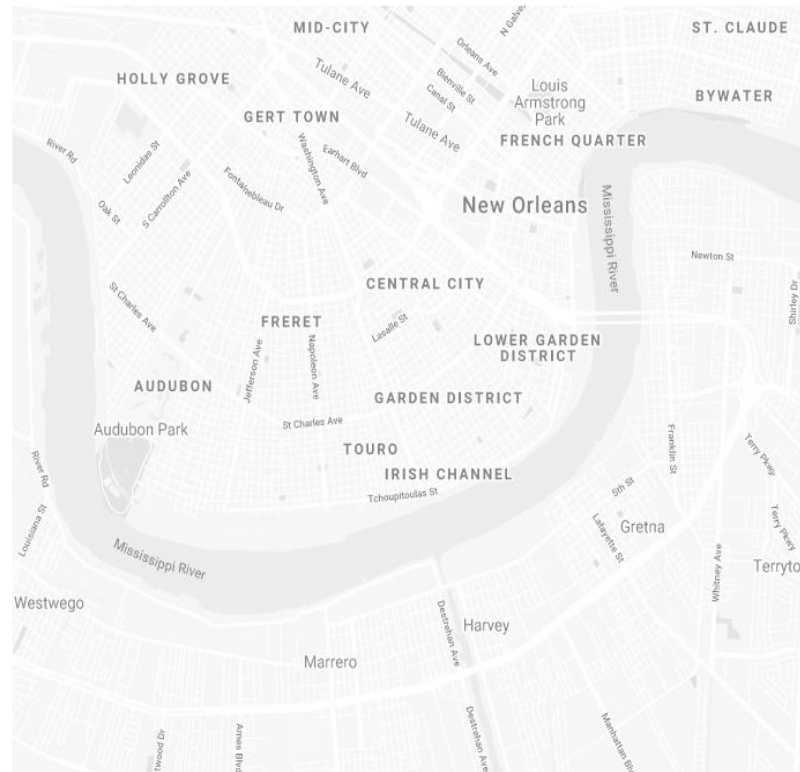


# Case Study



## THE CHALLENGE

Not one, not two but three significant site issues were discovered during the design of this project. The first was that being a corner location the store had windows on two sides. They in fact extended nearly to the stockroom. However, the new store required the center cabinet component to be symmetrical. In addition, simply placing graphics over the entire bank of windows wouldn't be approved by the HDLC (Historic District Landmarks Commission). The second challenge was the inside entry was not in compliance with the ADA as the sidewalk and sales floor were about a foot difference in elevation. Thirdly, while a third-party survey was conducted, the Landlord didn't relay the fact until design was complete that a required fire egress hallway - which jutted into our space along one side at a concerning height - even existed. Those three challenges all needed to be resolved at the same time it was necessary to work through all the details of introducing a new design.



## Launching a new store design in a high-profile location is challenging by itself. Having to address unique site conditions at the same time made it even more so.

Wanting to get as much product on the sales floor while creating a sleeker European styled selling floor - one with ties to its historic wood heavy style - led to what was dubbed Design 3.0. The previous redesign departed too far from what a True Religion store looked like and the desire to get back to that led to the new look.

It takes usually one projects length to address all the details of a major redesign such as this. What are the materials, how are they installed, and in this case flushing out this cabinet library as to its size, material and functionality.

And then there was the location.

Situated at the corner of Bourbon and Canal in the historic French Quarters, the space presented a whole new set of challenges.

Old historical buildings provide unique opportunities for retailers and restaurateurs to present their brand in a unique way, and this project was no exception. This usually only relates to the exterior, but it was the site constraints effect on the interior that posed the real challenges.

But in the end, the result was, in the words of the locals, stupéfiant.

## THE SOLUTION

The low hallway above was fortunately just high enough to slip in the cabinet library feature that dominates the center of the store. The HVAC distribution was more challenging to address but lowering the ceilings slightly made that component workable. The existing interior ramp that addressed the sales floor height differential needed to be brought into compliance and short of changing it out for a lift rebuilding the ramp was really the only option. That is pretty straight forward, but once you create a landing and then a complaint ramp we were getting really deep into the store. The first issue we encountered though was the most challenging. How do you create a window display that you can't access? The entire wall needed to be fixtured to get enough SKUs in the store. The result was to use one of the mirror bays as the access point to the display window. The internal storage had to be deleted and a door added to the back of the unit. It was not only functional, but also seamless which was key to not altering the aesthetics of the space.

## THE RESULT

While the Landlord built the ramp different than expected we were able to make additional adjustments in the field. More so, getting in touch with the HDLC early allows us to do something we thought was a long-shot - repainting the exterior of the building. From the renderings (shown on this page) to the final product (photo on opposite page) the result was, for all the unique site conditions, nearly identical. Ultimately the client was ecstatic with the finished product and it ushered in a new look for the iconic Los Angeles made product.