

## Early Involvement Aids Precast Designs



Chuck Merydith  
Executive Editor

**T**his issue of *Ascent* showcases the wide range of applications that can benefit from precast concrete components. Designers face more challenges—sustainable design, faster construction, creative appearances, the need for higher durability, tighter sites and budgets—and precasters can help meet these needs when they are part of the design process.

The range of benefits that precasters can bring to a complicated project can be seen in the articles presented in this issue:

- Lucien Lagrange uses architectural precast concrete panels extensively to achieve an Old World appearance, cladding some of Chicago's largest buildings in some of its most congested and high-end avenues.
- Warehouses requiring large, open expanses; climate-controlled environments; and quick construction to prepare for installation of complicated processing equipment use total-precast concrete systems to keep costs under budget.
- Designers looking to gain LEED points for their sustainable-design project are turning more often to precast concrete panels and structural systems due to the components' energy efficiency, local materials and manufacture, additions to green space, and other factors.
- Massive casino parking structures are using precast concrete designs to meet increasingly difficult challenges. The case histories spotlighted in this article show how the material helped overcome extreme site conditions to produce creative and attractive designs, on time and on budget.

All of the techniques presented in this issue have one thing in common—they provide the most efficiency when the precaster is involved in the design process from the very beginning. In some cases, they were brought onto the team during preliminary design prior to bidding. Early involvement by the precaster ensures that precast concrete components will be as effective as possible in meeting all of the challenges presented to the design and construction team. ■



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