

Crowd-Pleasing *looks*

Stores, malls, office buildings and hotels are among the commercial venues that decorate for the holidays in order to improve employee morale and increase sales. These types of businesses employ professional designers, and their installations often inspire consumers and foreshadow looks in the general Christmas décor industry. The following are examples of recent installations that reflect current trends in the commercial side of the Christmas business.

By Miriam Furman, Contributing Editor

A Holiday Welcome

Each year, Evergreen Specialty Co.'s holiday décor installation brings accolades, visitors and new business to the Brown Palace hotel in Denver.

A two-tiered, beaded and decorated chandelier with more than 42,500 lights is hung from the center of an eight-story lobby atrium the day after Thanksgiving in the 113-year-old hotel. Suspended by a cable from the stained-glass ceiling, this glittering chandelier is made of flame-resistant natural scrub oak on a welded metal frame painted white and covered with more than 470 pounds of gold and silver poly-glitter. The color of the chandelier's bows and other adornments is determined by the Debutantes' Committee — which has held its annual ball at the hotel for the past 45 years — and becomes the dominant accent color of all decorations throughout the hotel.

Below the chandelier is a 12-foot-high lavishly decorated natural evergreen Christmas tree on a four-foot-high banquet base. Fabric swags in the debutantes' selected color are draped from the arches complete the look.

The massive lobby decoration project features more than 12,000 lights, clusters of ornaments (4,800 in total), wired ribbon and other decorative items. It takes 10 hours and a crew of 16 to complete the installation, says



Brown Palace Hotel, Denver.

Evergreen's president Bob Rhodes, who notes that the job attracts a crowd of onlookers every year.

Other events also take place in the lobby during and after the holiday season, giving the decorations plenty of exposure and the hotel plenty of business. "Afternoon tea held daily during the Christmas season is booked up 10 months in advance," says Arnel Santens, hotel managing director, "and people dress up for the occasion." And towards the end of January, a real, live Grand Champion Steer goes on display beneath the chandelier as part of the finale for Denver's National Western Stock Show.

The entire hotel is decorated in the same style and color as the lobby each year and features wreaths, swags, and sprays. Only the lobby features a live tree, as Denver's fire codes require artificial foliage in the rest of the function rooms.