

FITTS



Columbia Fireflies and Spirit Communications Park

Case Study

Columbia Fireflies

Project
Wide Format
Printing

Columbia Fireflies

The Columbia Fireflies are the South Atlantic League affiliate of the New York Mets.

Winners of Ballpark Digest's Best New Branding and Logo Award in 2016, the Fireflies play games across the southeast and mid-Atlantic regions, including against in-state rivals in Charleston and Greenville. The Columbia Fireflies brand is steeped in Columbia's history of unity. The firefly mascot was inspired by the actions of a particular species of fireflies found in the Congaree National Park. The Congaree National Park is one of six places in the world where the entire colony of fireflies will synchronize their flashing. This phenomenal display was seen as an appropriate metaphor for the City of Columbia and its people. A spirit of cooperation and unity continues in Columbia today in various forms including education, arts, and cultural events.

Spirit Communications Park

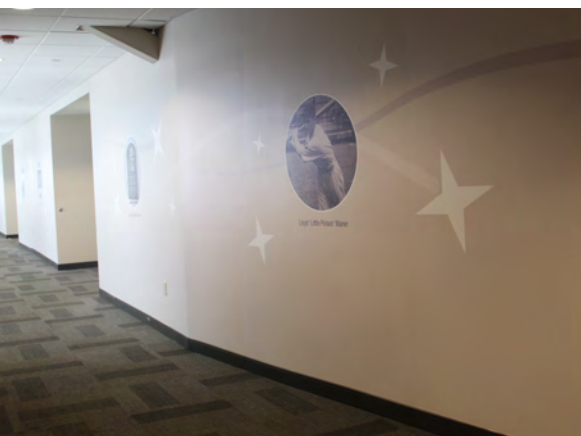
Is a 365-day per year multi-use sports and entertainment venue located in the heart of downtown Columbia, SC.

Designed for baseball, concerts, football, soccer and a host of other activities, the venue seats approximately 9,000 for sporting events and up to 15,000 for major outdoor concerts.



Challenge

Part of the original scope of the project was to brand the corridors of the 7,000 square-foot Club Level Lounge, interior common areas and the soffit of the team store to increase the consumer experience through visual interest.



Sky Design was contracted by Columbia Fireflies to create a dynamic graphics/ environmental package for Spirit Communications Park when the team relocated from Savannah, Ga.

However, just before the project was sent out to bid, these elements were eliminated from the scope. After completion of the rest of the stadium, and in an attempt to keep the facility fresh and new, the decision was made to move forward with these brand elements and discussions of this part of the project were revisited. One challenge was the existing walls were already painted and the new wall coverings had to match the existing paint color, so a sophisticated color matching system was required and not easily found in the Columbia area. Sky Design reached out to FITTS. During the exploration process, it was also determined the venue was in need of some additional wayfinding signage. Typically, the same company cannot provide both product types in-house which would require contracting with two companies to complete the task at hand. The proposed artwork and signage had to be designed, sampled, manufactured, and installed. There was a significant time constraint for getting the prints and signage up as the 2017 South Atlantic League All-Star Game date was quickly approaching. It was going to be the first time the game was held in Columbia since 1992. Sky Design was seeking a solution from FITTS to provide the prints and signage in a very tight time frame.



Leon Goslin

Solution

Sky Design specified particular substrates for the wall coverings to be printed. The specified material was sourced, tested, color matched, and samples were created.

The design intents for the wall coverings were received from Sky Design. The signage standards were also received for the exterior signage as there were already signs like these in other areas of the stadium. The exterior signs were created in FITTS' 3D modeling software. All signage products are created in 3D modeling software and run on CNC routers at FITTS. The artwork from SkyDesign was also prepared to be run on FITTS new HP large format latex ink printer.

Models were created and prints were made to ensure the end product was in keeping with the design intent. On-site visits to FITTS were made by Columbia Fireflies and Sky Design so changes or adjustments could be made to the samples immediately if necessary.

After samples and models were approved, both product lines were expedited through production in order to be installed before the All-Star Game at the Spirit Communications Park. The wall coverings depict the history of baseball in Columbia and bring a great degree of visual interest to the luxury suite and reception area. The interior branding in the team store carries forth the brand even more and the interior banding really makes the retail area pop.



Results

- Increasing wayfinding signage for ease of locating seating sections
- Providing visual interest to the luxury suites and team store
- Increase through the story of people and events of baseball history as shown on the wall coverings
- Completion of the original design intent
- Fulfill the concept of continually keeping the venue fresh and new with the additional signage and the colors

In response to project objectives outlined by Sky Design, FITTS developed a plan and schedule to create the necessary wall coverings in the time required and the original design intent was completed.

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Q&A



Interview With

John Katz

President at Columbia Fireflies



"FITTS is a corporation with a family feel which is something I like as a customer. I think their work ethic and capabilities will open more doors with us in the future because other vendors don't meet the standard of quality we have seen with FITTS."

John Katz

Please explain the design intent/inspiration behind the interior wall covering designs

The Columbia Fireflies brand is, at its essence, Unity. Inspired by the spirit of unity displayed throughout the history of Columbia and a strong desire to create unity by bringing generations of people together at the venue, this brand element is displayed in both of the wall coverings. The wall coverings in the luxury suites pays tribute to the rich history baseball has in Columbia and the fireflies over the city scape in the retail store is a great extension of the brand. However, both parties realized a vendor strong print capabilities would be required to bring the design from conceptual renderings to actual products in a timely fashion. Sky Design then reached out to FITTS.

What were some of the reasons that led to selecting FITTS for this project?

FITTS had worked with SkyDesign on another signage project in Atlanta, GA. During a tour of the FITTS plant it was learned the extent of the print capabilities FITTS held with the new large format HP printer. Since FITTS performed well on the exterior signage project we thought they would be a good partner for this project. Since exterior signage would also be required along with the interior wall coverings they were a great solution. It was in the best interest of the project to keep the vendors to a minimum due to the time constraint. We also saw from our previous work together the attention FITTS pays to small details which is really important when working with interior finishes.

How would you describe the response time of FITTS to the project schedule?

Sky Design: We really did not think the wall coverings could be made and installed by the deadline from our past experiences with other vendors. We communicated those doubts to the Fireflies. FITTS expedited this project to the top of the production schedule and brought in many resources to meet the deadline so we could have the new wall coverings up for the All-Star game.

A great design requires precise execution in order to bring the desired intent to fruition. What is the impression of the spaces once the wall coverings were installed?

Columbia Fireflies: The wall coverings on the Club Level capture the essence of both our brand and the history of baseball in Columbia. This began with design and was matched by the quality execution of the installation. It is an inviting space that creates an exceptional ballpark experience. The quality of the prints make the designs come to life. The wall covering needed to match the painted wall and when you look down the hall you cannot tell which areas are painted and which are not. They also realized the door headers were not included in the print designs, went back to the office to print more vinyl, and came back the same day to install it. Customer service above and beyond. The wall coverings on the interior and exterior of the circular soffit in the store create a dynamic focal feature in the space. SkyDesign created a great brand element and FITTS provided products that exceeded my expectations in terms of both quality and timing.

As this was your first experience working with FITTS, would you consider utilizing them in the future? What types of projects would you explore?

Columbia Fireflies: This was our first experience with FITTS and we would definitely like to explore future interior and exterior branding opportunities with them.

FITTS

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About The Fitts Company

The Fitts Company is a nationally acclaimed solution based manufacturing company delivering innovative designs and products for a diverse client base across multiple industries.

Our team is comprised of highly experienced individuals that enable our capabilities of consulting, design, manufacturing, implementation, and maintenance services. We manufacture a diverse range of products that includes interior/exterior signage, ATM & self-service enhancements, modular buildings, branch/store transformation and automotive solutions.



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Installation



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Refurbishment
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Painting

Our Solutions



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