



## The Shop Builders

Landmark Retail Corp. combines construction and retail know-how to deliver the goods

### At a Glance

#### Location

Little Falls, NJ

#### Founded

2009

#### Employees

6 office staff;  
12–15 field members

#### Specialties

Construction management  
and facilities maintenance  
for national multiunit retail  
companies

#### Annual Sales

\$5 million

SOMETIMES A BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY IS SO SIMPLE A KID could get it. “The other day, my eight-year-old son asked me what I do at work,” says Tony Pizza, cofounder and principal of Landmark Retail Corp. (LRC), a New Jersey-based construction and facilities-maintenance firm for national multiunit retail companies. “I told him, ‘We take care of our clients and help their businesses run smoothly.’” This is the foundation of LRC’s approach, according to Pizza, building relationships that enable the company to anticipate and meet clients’ every need.

Partner Jon Spencer agrees with Pizza. “Our business is about communicating,” he says. “It isn’t just hammers and nails.” And others have received the firm’s message. LRC has seen tremendous growth since its inception in 2009, and clients currently include high-profile names such as Swatch, Ben Sherman, Diesel, and

Zara. Revenues grew from \$1 million to \$5 million in the first two years of business, and 2011 sales surpassed that mark before the first day of summer. The numbers are even more impressive considering the company was formed at a time when many others were closing their doors.

LRC specializes not only in construction of new retail locations—current projects include Jack Spade’s second SoHo outpost in Manhattan, New York, and Juicy Couture’s Century City space in Los Angeles—but total facilities projects: national fixture rollouts, seasonal setups, expansions, installations, and repairs. In 2010, LRC renovated 35 locations for Lucky Brand Jeans, operating on an extremely tight schedule. The project was completed without ever disrupting the stores’ day-to-day operations.

Opposite page: Retail projects such as the eye-popping Kate Spade San Francisco have catapulted LRC from \$1 million in sales to \$5 million in just two years. This page: The company recently completed a new Kate Spade location in New York City.



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JON SPENCER, PARTNER

The other large portion of LRC’s business comes from ongoing facility- and building-maintenance services and around-the-clock emergency work for store locations and corporate offices. While the construction projects bring greater revenue per job, the sheer volume of facilities and maintenance projects evens out the earnings on each side; Pizza estimates that LRC completed 120–150 construction projects and 1,500–2,000 maintenance jobs in 2010.

With its principals’ extensive histories and experience, LRC has developed a large nationwide network of vendors and hired a number of technicians who previously were out of work because of the recession. “Our staff and supporting network of technicians have extensive expertise in a wide range of trades,” Spencer says. “This enables LRC to offer a wide range of services.”

The number of services, too, varies according to client. “For some, it’s soup-to-nuts—we find locations, negotiate leases, develop budgets, and design and build the space,” Pizza says. “We also look at design and construction from an operations-and-maintenance perspective, in terms of wiring, mechanical, energy systems, etc. We can tell our clients, ‘This is how much it will cost you to run this store for the next year.’”

Clients are typically gained through word-of-mouth, and retail-sector turnover is a benefit. “Say an employee of ABC retailer is pleased with our work, then, for whatever reason, takes a job with XYZ retailer,” Pizza says. “Pretty soon we get a call from XYZ requesting our services.” As the client base grows, so does LRC’s hiring capabilities. “We’re looking for the best,” Spencer says. “Employees who have a strong background in construction and understand the nuances of working in retail.”

Why? Because both qualities are key in fulfilling LRC’s primary goal: effective communication. “We just want to provide the necessary information before the client ever asks for it,” Pizza says. “By doing that, our jobs run smoothly, problems are avoided, and everyone’s lives are just a lot easier.” —Annie Fischer

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## 5 Key Design Considerations of Retail Locations

1. **Location, location, location.** This is the first important choice to be made.
  2. **Designing with mechanical and electrical systems** in mind is both cost-effective and convenient for maintenance.
  3. **The space must be tailored** to the client’s product—consider the difference in displaying watches, jeans, and shoes.
  4. **Identifiable signage** and display windows are essential to the storefront.
  5. **Thoughtful layout** allows easy navigation for customers.
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