



Concrete masonry continues to demonstrate its usefulness and versatility even in projects constructed mostly of steel and glass.

Concrete Masonry's Versatility Ideal for Steel, Glass Buildings



AN EXCELLENT EXAMPLE IS THE NEW SSM HEALTH OUTPATIENT CENTER IN ST. CHARLES COUNTY.

Mark Wilhelms of Midwest Block and Brick finds the new \$26 million facility a unique combination of concrete masonry units, daylight glazing and metal panel systems.

"I think what's most impressive about SSM Outpatient Center is the fact that it shows that concrete masonry units can be used in modern buildings," says Wilhelms. "The architect did a great job of blending the materials together. The light colored concrete masonry contrasts with the darker metal panels and the translucent glazing; it just has a nice appearance."

Trattino Units Complement Stone

The striking white concrete masonry units feature a distinctive face texture reminiscent of natural stone such as travertine. Known as the Trattino™ finish, the random textured appearance is created by a unique production process.



"The Trattino units are a combination of split-face and ground face," notes Wilhelms. "The units are fractured, then run through a grinding machine that takes the high points off the block. So, you have a very unique combination...a very polished surface as well as a rough recessed cavities in the texture of the block. As sunlight hits the wall it really creates some unique interest and adds a depth to the wall that you don't get often with heavy flat materials."

The building's entryway features natural stone and the Trattino units were chosen to complement the design detail at an affordable price. "Those special veneer units give a design flair that blended well with the other materials on the facade," says Wilhelms.

Mason's Attention to Detail

Wilhelms also gives credit to the masonry contractor's strict attention to detail. "The mason had excellent workmanship on the project," says Wilhelms. "He actually blended two colors together to create a subtle range to match the natural stone that was used at the entrance."

The project was built during Missouri's winter season but contractors kept the project on track and finished the building ahead of schedule. Today, the striking structure sits on a hill overlooking a busy interstate. "The owner got a building that relates well to their patients and the city of St. Charles city got a nice building that's going to be there for a long time," Wilhelms says.

Right Product, Right Application

A product such as Trattino is just one of the building materials offered by Midwest Block and Brick.

"At Midwest Block, we have brick, stone, concrete masonry so we can pick and choose the product that is right for the application," says Wilhelms.

"We look hard at what the architect is trying to deliver to the owner. Is it driven by budget, is it driven by aesthetics, is it driven by building performance? We really try to find the right solution for the project. We're not trying to approach these projects to push a certain material. We like to hear what's important, look through the resources and materials we have and then come back with a solution. I think in this case on SSM, Trattino was the right product for the right application."