**CAN YOU RECOGNIZE A METAL BUILDING FROM THE OUTSIDE? THINK AGAIN.**

You can’t judge a book by its cover. Or a building.

Not these days.

What looks like brick on the outside could actually be a metal building. What looks like stucco could also be metal. What looks like wood could be metal. What looks like anything but metal could be…you see where we’re going with this: metal.

Metal is no longer easily detectible. Its gotten sneakier visually. In fact, its disappeared. And a great example of that is the Madison Square retail center in Norman, Oklahoma.

The 20,000 square-foot structure finished in 2010, with an additional 80,000 square-feet expansion currently under construction with a completion date set for Fall 2014. It isn’t a warehouse or an industrial complex; it isn’t storage space or a personal garage. It’s a stunning retail space off 24th Ave. NW that, just before dusk, settles into the landscape with a relaxed air as if its been there for ages.

That was the hope behind the appearance. It’s old world style meets new world technology, says Tim Grissom, co-owner of Precision Builders, who built the complex and is currently handling the expansion.

“We wanted an old, small town downtown look where you have multiple facades of buildings that are done in different ways with different materials,” says Grissom. “That makes each space unique.”

The veneer is a variation of stone, split-faced rock, and brick of varying sizes.

“I don’t think there’s anything in the way of veneer that we couldn’t use if we wanted to use it,” says Grissom.

The varying appearance gives the building, as well as the tenants, the opportunity to streamline their visual persona, such as BA Fitness, a private personal training business, with the lighter brick and large block lettering, or Old Republic Title, a title company, with their more classic façade and logo.

The appearance of a metal building never looked less like metal. And that fact has retail businesses of all kinds keeping an eye out.

“As soon as people started seeing that building go up, they wanted in there. Before we even finished construction the first tenant had moved in,” says Grissom. “It doesn’t look like a metal building and that allows us to tailor the exterior veneer to the clients needs.”

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