

## Material Connexion Comes Into its Own

By Peter Carey



I always wondered why Material ConneXion was spelled that way. And why is the X capitalized? It was clearly a choice that emphasized a deliberate intent of the company, but just what that intent was remained a mystery to me until I went over to their latest space, located at 60 Madison Avenue in New York. I was aware of their status as a global material consultancy (they have four other locations; two in Europe and two in Asia, each with a different colored capital X in their logo) and knew they focused on materials for construction and design, but, as a resource librarian myself, I noticed they didn't catalog materials the same way that I or my fellow resource librarians did. During my visit I soon came to realize that Material ConneXion is a unique company that, in the end, expertly indexes what is possible in manufacturing and design.



The capital X in the name is meant to speak to what they call "cross transfer" or the connection of technology from one industry - say a high-tech like aerospace - to another wholly different consumer-driven industry like industrial design. The pooling of knowledge that happens at Material ConneXion is remarkable. Whereas the agenda in most architecture resource libraries is to catalog products that fulfill a certain need (as well as a particular appearance) that suits the clientele of the design firm, Material ConneXion catalogs items by each material's chemical makeup or manufacturing process. Design aesthetics, while they play an important part for their clients, are not an overarching priority when it comes to what Material ConneXion includes in their materials library - material performance and innovation are their top interests...



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