



*Watermark's New Facility in Brooklyn, NY*

## AUTHENTIC INDUSTRIAL CHIC

### *Inspirational New Space Is a Fitting Home for International Workforce!*

(Brooklyn, New York. April 16, 2008) Watermark's new headquarters is a world away from the typical office set-up of cubicles and "big box" design. Instead, the renowned designer of customized bath fittings and accessories is feeling at home in totally revamped digs in an eclectic Brooklyn neighborhood that is the perfect setting for its international workforce.

Built in the 1930s, the all-brick building once housed a furniture factory. Today, the space has been completely refurbished, with special attention paid to incorporating the building's inherent industrial style with brick walls and exposed steel beams. The overall effect has a modern flair in keeping with Watermark's trademark design aesthetic. Soaring spaces, state-of-the-art offices and equipment, an on-site engineering department – it's all part of the 60,000-square-foot space that Watermark has uniquely stamped as its own.

The original building was gutted down to its red-brick shell. On the exterior, new windows were installed and glass front doors were inscribed with the Watermark logo. The interior renovation took nearly a year to complete. Company officials worked with architects to design a customized floor plan that perfectly suited the needs of both their corporate offices and the factory production floor.

"We have everyone under one roof – accountants, engineers, polishers, welders, machinists. We needed a space that could accommodate very different work environments," said Avi Abel, General Manager for Watermark Designs.

On the office side of the building, the colors are muted with caramel-colored wood tones, charcoal furnishings and a rough slab tile floor that resembles concrete – definitely in keeping with their "industrial roots." They modeled the offices after those of their architecture firm with large file cabinets serving as credenzas that function as communal spaces for faxes, copiers and the like. While everyone has a private work desk, there are large tables throughout for group projects and impromptu meetings.

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The production side of the building has a light and airy feel, thanks to 20-foot ceilings and a pleasing blue and white color palette. The factory is tricked out with new equipment and warehouse racks, and everything designed for maximum efficiency and creativity.

Abel's favorite aspect of the new building is the absolute transparency it gives us as a company, to each other, with our clients and to the community. A thick glass wall between the conference room and the factory allows everyone to see and be aware of the entire production process. A second glass wall separates the conference room from the front lobby, so visitors can see through the building upon entering.



*Watermark's office*

"It helps us drive home the point that we are a manufacturing company," Abel said. "We are not just importing products from third world manufacturers, but we are actually making them right here in Brooklyn. Having that front and center when you walk in the front door is a big part of our message."



*One of Watermark's Plating lines*

When word leaked out that the Brooklyn-based manufacturer was looking for a larger home, cities from around the country courted Watermark's executives with enticements to move to their locales. In the end, New York City officials helped Watermark find its new location in an economic development zone in Carnarsie.

"It is obviously much more expensive to run a manufacturing business in New York than in other parts of the country, like North Carolina," said Abel. "But the city was committed to keeping – and creating – manufacturing jobs in Brooklyn, as we were to keeping our craftsmen and their families in the city. New York City really worked with us, using tax incentives and other programs that made it feasible for us to stay."

With nearly two-thirds more space than their previous headquarters, Watermark employees are enjoying the luxury of having room to spread out. Two separate plating lines were installed, one for exotic finishes and one for chrome and nickel. The polishing room has more stations than are needed ... for now. "It's nice to have the extra space," said Abel. "Before, if we wanted to expand, we couldn't because we simply didn't have the room. Now we have room for our current needs and the space to grow when the time comes."



*Watermark's machine shop*

Watermark moved into its new home in December of last year. Now that they are in their new facility, they have added new employees, bringing their total workforce to 60, including many master craftsmen from around the world who hand polish and sculpt Watermark's signature collection of bathroom hardware. Because of their on-site production facilities, Watermark is able to do custom work on a level that is virtually unheard of in the plumbing industry.

# WATERMARK

*living for change*

From classic designs to exotic lines, Watermark is a true custom manufacturer that brings nearly unlimited possibilities to bathroom design. Select a faucet style, finish and handle design to suit your own personal style. Coordinate with matching accessories to create a complete one-of-a-kind bathroom that is uniquely your own. With their new larger headquarters in New York City, Watermark brings together skilled craftsmen from around the world who use time-honored techniques enhanced by today's technology. The result of their talent and labor is a stellar American-made product line that also respects the environment with eco-friendly water-saving features.

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