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Chute Gerdeman Wins National Designer of the Year Award

Columbus, OH – Chute Gerdeman, a Columbus-Ohio based retail design firm, has received the 2006 Designer of the Year Award from *Display and Design Ideas (DDI)* magazine. In addition, the publication's Portfolio Awards program again named Elle Chute and Denny Gerdeman, principals of the firm, as two of most influential people in the industry nationwide.

DDI's Portfolio Awards winners will be announced in the magazine's September issue. Editor-in-Chief Roxanna Sway said the awards are based on an annual survey of *DDI* readers. "By asking our readers who inspires them and what projects deserve recognition, we are ensuring the winners are actually selected by the broadest possible representation of their peers."

Both Chute and Gerdeman credit their firm's exceptional work ethic for this recognition.

"Our colleagues at Chute Gerdeman share this award with us. We are fortunate to have an incredible team with diverse talents – visioneers, storytellers, designers and thinkers – who use the power of design to bring brands to life," said Chute. "We are constantly inspired by our clients who bring us thoughtful and challenging projects and who place such great trust in us. And we are honored to be recognized by our peers – because they are absolutely the most discriminating people around!"

In addition to *DDI's* Designer of the Year Award, Chute Gerdeman has received other notable awards recently:

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- Store Fixture Award in 2006 by the National Association of Store Fixture Manufacturers (NASFM) for a freestanding M&M's display at M&M's World Orlando.
- First Place in *Chain Store Age's* Theme Park/Attraction Retail Store Competition in 2005 for its design of Disney Bou-Tiki at Disney World in Orlando, Florida.
- First Place and Best of Show in *Visual Merchandising and Store Design* (VM+SD) magazine's Renovation of the Year Award in 2005 for its re-design of Lane Bryant stores nationwide. In addition, the firm won First Place in the magazine's international design competition for Lane Bryant's in-store apparel presentation and brand repositioning.

About Chute Gerdeman Retail

Since 1989, Chute Gerdeman Retail, based in Columbus, OH, has created retail brands, their identities, their environments, and every other customer touch point, including brand communication materials, merchandising fixtures, and packaging. The firm's client list includes: M&M'S® (Mars), Target, Levi Strauss, 7-Eleven, Sheetz, Chili's, Einstein Brothers Café, KFC (Japan), Marriott Vacation Club Resorts, Smithsonian, Kohl's, Club Libby Lu, Pepsi-Cola, CompUSA, Nationwide Arena, Philips Arena and Lowe's. In 2006, the firm was voted "Designer of the Year" by readers of *DDI* (*Display & Design Ideas*) magazine in addition to the numerous awards it has received for design leadership. The company's work for M&M'S World® Orlando was recently recognized as "International Store of the Year" by the Institute of Store Planners, a professional design organization. For more information, go to www.chutegerdeman.com.

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