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## Why You May Want to Hire an ASID Designer

The differences in a decorator and ASID designer could be surprising

By Margaret Chambers  
Special Contributor

It is always important, whether in an economic downturn or not, to get the best value for your dollar. In interior design, the best value for your time and money is hiring an ASID certified designer for your project. ASID stands for American Society of Interior Designers. The organization celebrated its 30-year anniversary in 2005.

Professional members of ASID must pass a rigorous acceptance standard. They must have attended an accredited school, have design and full-time work experience, and pass a two-day examination admitted by the National Council for Interior Designers Qualifications (NCIDQ). Once qualified, to keep an ASID professional standard, members must take several continuing education courses annually to maintain membership in ASID. This became effective January 2008. The classes include green sustainability, ethics, and accessibility.

ASID has 20,000 practicing interior designers; 4,000 in residential, 6,500 in commercial, and 9,500 in combined residential and commercial. There are more than 12,000 members of student chapters at colleges and universities. Many of these students will become allied ASID members before they take and pass their NCIDQ two-day rigorous examination. At that time, they will become professional members of ASID.

Ethics and professional conduct are also strictly regarded by ASID. ASID is responsible for pushing through the licensing for professional interior designers. In other words, they set the standards and made official the qualifications of an ASID designer. An interior decorator cannot use the words "interior designer" until they have taken and passed the NCIDQ examination.

An ASID professional designer has the training and expertise to plan, schedule, execute, and manage your project from start to finish. They know and work closely with many vendors, contractors, architects, and artisans. The ASID industry partners include more than 2,500 companies, which manufacture different products and services that assist interior designers on their projects.

In addition to their independent knowledge of products, materials, and finishes, designers also provide specifications and purchasing services to procure materials, furniture, accessories, art, and bring together the entire design team to execute projects, some of which are not accessible by the general public.

The regard for public safety that is required of an ASID designer is also something to consider. For example, if you have fallen in love with a certain fabric for your banquet, an ASID designer will be sure that the material meets fire code and durability standards.

An ASID designer will also consider function for someone who may be handicapped and planning a house. For example, how will a shower be made accessible to someone in a wheelchair? Perhaps handlebars need to be installed in the walls. Interior designers check to be sure the architect has these items in the overall plan.

ASID designers also work with green materials. They can help homeowners decide whether or not to use a material that is recycled — such as bamboo flooring — or paint that doesn't give off toxic fumes. Other important considerations are lighting, sound, acoustics — especially in office spaces, condominiums, and apartments.

So, take the advantage. Hire an ASID designer and you will feel confident that you're off to a fabulous start with your project in good hands.

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Photo: Danny Plassick  
2008 ASID Legacy of Design Statewide Awards — second place residential model home: The goal was to create a modern showplace in a moderately sized space with an overall warm tone. The look was created by using naturalistic materials throughout the home.



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