

Telecom Turmoil

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a company
more than
just a bunch
of desks?
Great design

Dream Offices

A curved table adds
a playful touch to Toni
Steedman's ad agency

Bringing Nature Indoors

David Oakey Designs

LaGrange, Ga.

WHAT IT DOES: Textile design and manufacture

EMPLOYEES: 12

GOAL: To inspire creativity and make the best use of natural materials and the landscape.

COST: \$1.4 million

When designer David Oakey creates his soft, muted textile and carpet patterns, he often draws inspiration from the countryside around him. So it was only natural to set up shop among the rolling hills of LaGrange, Ga., ... hour's drive from Atlanta.

Welcome to Pond Studios, David Oakey Designs' 12,000-square-foot headquarters, named for its picturesque meditation pond. Formerly housed in an old Coca-Cola Co. bottling plant in LaGrange, the company moved in 1997 to a custom-built headquarters on six wooded acres.

Designed by the St. Louis firm

of Rubio/Durham Architects, the two-story steel-and-concrete building is actually three separate, connected structures: a design studio, a conference and display area, and a small manufacturing facility. Floor-to-ceiling windows keep employees in touch with nature and create a light and airy ambience. Adhering to Oakey's green esthetic, his architects designed an energy-efficient building and chose local building materials, such as Georgia cedar siding and the rustic touch of exposed nailheads.

Bringing the great outdoors indoors has proved to be every bit as inspirational as Oakey had hoped. He recently designed a new line of carpet tiles that mimic the random patterns in a field of grass. What could be more natural?

—STEPHANIE B. GOLDBERG

Oakey's separate but connected studio/display area/manufacturing facility has an airy, leafy ambience

