

# REBRANDING CHICAGO'S TOP DOG

CUSHING LOADS PORTILLO'S HEADQUARTERS WITH DIMENSIONAL LETTERS, GRAPHICS AND ALL THE FIXINGS.



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PORTILLO'S is a Chicago-based restaurant chain, best known for Chicago-style hot dogs, Italian beef sandwiches,

char-grilled burgers, cheese fries, fresh salads and famous chocolate cake. Have we whet your appetite? Their brand is lively with color and personality. And while the restaurants share this energy, their branding department decided their corporate office, located in nearby Oak Brook, needed a refresh.

### IMAGES TO RELISH

The design team from Cushing (Chicago) presented mockups with visuals and office-graphics-update ideas to Portillo's senior leadership team. Painting a picture created consensus and moved the project forward. On the menu? For starters, a mix of wide format display graphics and dimensional lettering through-



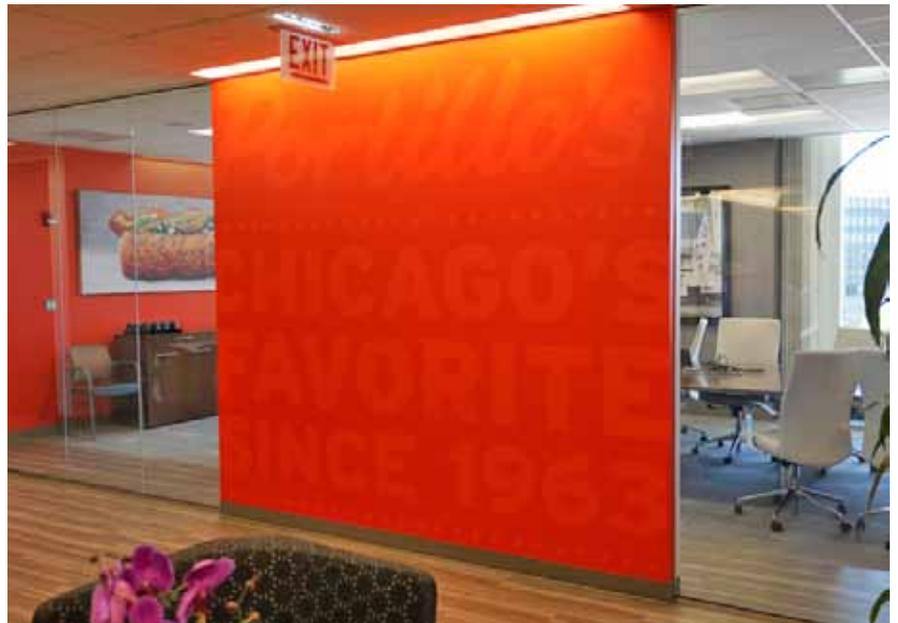
*Cushing (Chicago) freshened up the corporate office walls and more with bright new graphics for local restaurant Portillo's.*

out the office. As visitors step off the elevator, they would be greeted with a reception-area wall graphic. From Portillo's history to happy employees, it would showcase a mix of images.

Prior to Cushing's involvement in this project, a brushed aluminum Portillo's logo had been installed to a wall in the reception area. In good condition, the aluminum logo provided a perfect opportunity for repurposing. It would also save the client some money. The graphic design team created a placeholder – literally a blank spot in the new artwork – to

accommodate the logo. The brushed-aluminum piece was removed and then reinstalled with double-sided tape.

In the reception area, Cushing's advance-of-installation team removed old paint, patched walls, and applied a fresh coat to the surfaces. Back at the shop, the reception area graphics measuring 300 x 81.87 in. were printed using our Epson SureColor S80600 on a 3M IJ40 Matte wallpaper vinyl. We protected the graphic with 3M 8520 Scotchcal Matte Overlaminant applied on our SEAL 65 Pro laminator, and our installation team eventually



*The graphics included photos of Portillo's signature Chicago dog, Italian beef and a french-fries icon for one elevator's doors.*

squeegeed it into place. Past the reception area graphics lie the front lobby and waiting area. There, we strategically placed the second IJ40 wall graphic, which measures 117.25 x 108 in., across from the seating. We applied 3M 8510 Scotchcal Overlaminate to this second graphic.

For the conference room, an Epilog Laser was used to cut and pre-drill acrylic letters, which were then painted Portillo's red, to display company values. Our team installed the letters with a 3M VHB Tape, a double-sided product that uses a commercial-

grade, high-tac adhesive. To keep the letters level, installers attached a paper template to the wall, then drilled holes, matched up and mounted the letters. Notice how the letters are installed over a graphic? Take a close look and you'll see a medley of food icons, which represent meals from the restaurant.

In the same conference area is a clever way to add bark to branding graphics. Yes, a playful pooch is a nod to their signature hot dog menu item. Printed on 3M IJ40, it stretches 213 x 108 in.

### **WITH SOME MUSTARD ON IT**

More of Portillo's menu items cover the walls in the conference room and separate meeting area. Imaged to giclee canvas paper, prints were gallery-wrapped, given mirrored edges, and stretched to 94 x 40 in. Because these are oversized prints, Cushing used 2-in. stretchers instead of thinner versions. The 2-in. depth offers dimension off the wall and allows for the image to wrap around. On the backside of the prints we placed reverse French cleats, allowing the Portillo's team to hang different





*The variety of branding elements featured routed tweets, color prints and a neon sign (previous page), as well as word-cloud graphics and dimensional acrylic letters (this page).*

iPF9400 inkjet on bond matte 12-color prints, each measuring 17 x 11 in., and mounted to <sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub>-in. white foam board. These are only temporary because soon, replacement images featuring Portillo's team members recognized for achievements and categories such as "top dog" will take their place.

#### **KETCHUP TIME**

One final branding element opens the way out of Portillo's office building. The three elevators on Portillo's

floor of their building feature 41.75 x 83.75-in. icons of a hamburger, a bag of fries and, of course, a hot dog on 3M IJ180C vinyl. We used IJ180C here instead of IJ40 because the metal elevator doors have a textured coating, and IJ180 conforms better to that texture. For finishing, we again applied 3M 8520 Scotchcal Matte Overlaminat.

All elements of this project were kept under wraps to surprise the Portillo's corporate crew with the new décor and dimensional signage.

We accomplished just that by installing everything over a weekend; a team of four worked eight hours for both weekend days. In addition, the graphics were completed in time for a board meeting, so like a Chicago dog and fries, it made a nice twofer. Since then, Portillo's has told us they've received more positive feedback on the lettering and graphics from employees who visit for training, as well as the other companies within the building. ■