

## Who to hire *Get the job done*

Ask anybody in retail about the future of the industry and they'll tell you shops need to become spaces for "experiences", not transactions. They're probably right but that doesn't mean you should rush out and fill your shop with interactive screens or turn it into a gimmicky playground. All you need to do to create a lasting – and positive – impression is to stimulate your customers' senses.

Plump for tactile wrapping paper, a subtle scent and a layout that sparks curiosity and you'll have the best kind of "experiential" boutique. Don't forsake the basics: a warm wooden floor, well-angled spotlights and mannequins that show off your clothes can seal a purchase. Here's our round-up of the specialists you can rely on to take care of all the details in a fledgling shop. Whether you're after a sensitive refit of a historic space or looking for something a little more cutting edge, here's who to hire for the job.



### 11 Schweitzer *For the whole shebang*

**Preface:** For everything from sketching preliminary designs for an interior to manufacturing physical fit-outs and furniture, Schweitzer is the company to call.

#### ► **In numbers**

10 to 15 projects on which the company works at any given time  
1,000-plus staff worldwide  
19 offices around the world

In the quiet north Italian town of Naturno lies one of the retail sector's most enterprising companies. "We have a beautiful location here in South Tyrol," says CEO Bernhard Schweitzer (*pictured*), grandson of founder Leo, "but it is in the middle of nowhere." Remote it may be but that hasn't prevented an impressive list of high-profile clients such as Waitrose, Le Bon Marché and Nutella from paying Schweitzer's vast headquarters a visit.

Since opening in 1927, the company has made a name for itself by delivering shop concepts from design to build in a way that blends German efficiency for production with an Italian flair for design (in accordance with its location in this bilingual region). Its scope ranges from huge department-store behemoths to small shop-in-shops.

It's not just the sketching and strategy that Schweitzer takes care of but also the top-to-bottom manufacturing of entire interiors. Rails, coat hangers, cashier desks,

signage: Schweitzer has the capabilities to take care of just about everything.

For bespoke design and build projects, Interstore Design (Schweitzer's retail design agency, dedicated to visualising a shop's needs) sets out the mission, creates a concept, works on look and feel, and designs everything from layout to furniture. This can take as little as three months or as long as two years. The plans are then sent to Schweitzer in Naturno, where a team creates a prototype of the shop and mocks it up at the HQ. Once the client signs off on a design, Schweitzer undertakes production of the shop fittings in Naturno, with everything from lacquering to veneering done in-house. [schweitzerproject.com](http://schweitzerproject.com)

#### **Monocle comment:**

Why turn to different companies when you can get everything from one? Schweitzer is more than just a one-size-fits-all, with innovative bespoke designs to boot.