



# Lakeshore Icon

680 North Lake Shore Drive in Chicago is an elegant 29-story art-deco-style building nestled in the crescent of modern skyscrapers that border the outer harbor of Lake Michigan. Constructed in 1926, it was the largest building in the world when it was completed. Its lovely structure is still visible from many parts of the city, especially in the evening when its brightly illuminated blue pyramid stands as a beacon to a bygone era in the city's architectural past. ▶





The lobbies of 680 N. Lake Shore Drive reflect the classic art deco style that characterizes the building's architectural heritage.

Originally designed by noted Chicago architect Henry Raeder, it was known as the American Furniture Mart. Reaching a height of 474 feet, 680 N. Lake Shore Drive occupies the entire block between Lake Shore Drive and McClurg Court. Construction of the building was completed in two phases, with the eastern portion completed in 1923, and the western, which includes the tower, in 1926. More than 50 years later, it was converted from its initial use as a furniture mart to condominium and commercial space. It remains a Class A mixed-use building consisting of 160 separate residential units, about 65,000 square feet of retail space and approximately 420,000 square feet of office space. Its distinguished address, unparalleled amenities and its proximity to Northwestern Memorial Hospital make it perfectly suited for medical and professional businesses of all types.

### **Aging gracefully**

Today, 680 N. Lake Shore Drive contributes its charm to Chicago's upscale and refined Streeterville neighborhood, giving constant testimony to the fact that classic building design

and architecture can reside harmoniously with today's soaring skyscrapers. Naturally, a building constructed in 1926 requires updating, and between 1979 and 1985 it was completely renovated. In 2009, the decision was made to modernize the six elevators in the East Erie Street lobby. Dating back to the late 1950s, these elevators were serving tenants predominantly made up of medical offices and some businesses.

### **Enter technology**

The idea of taking elevators out of service at 680 N. Lake Shore Drive with the resulting inconvenience to tenants and visitors was a serious hurdle that had to be overcome. The building management firm, Golub & Company, called in leading elevator companies and asked for bids. Schindler's bid stood out because it was the only one that recommended a phased modernization that interfaced advanced destination-dispatch technology with the existing elevator controllers, and offered an immediate improvement in efficiency. In fact, one of the competing elevator firms cautioned the building manager that this was not possible.



According to Tim Conway, Golub's general manager, "As promised, Schindler ID® destination-dispatch controllers were interfaced with the existing controllers, and this was accomplished over a weekend without

any disruption in service. This approach delivered an immediate improvement in efficiency so that when each elevator was sequentially removed from service for mechanical and cosmetic modernization, we were able to maintain a high level of quality service for our tenants. We were pleased to find that after Schindler ID was installed, the five elevators in service proved to be more efficient than when all six elevators had been in operation. And now that all six of the elevators have been modernized, our efficiency has been improved by 20 to 25 percent. Schindler kept every one of the promises it made, and we couldn't be more pleased with the outcome." ■



Photo left: A visitor accesses a Schindler ID terminal. Photo right: A technician inspects the new Schindler ID controllers in the machine room. With the controllers, fixtures and cars all upgraded, 680 N. Lake Shore Drive has the most efficient elevator system in its long history.