

Thoroughly Modern Mobility

Modernization can be defined as the act of improving something. As a product starts to lose its efficiency, measures can be taken to restore or exceed its original performance level without the need to replace it.

Modernization makes sense

One of the advantages of modernization lies in its economics. This is certainly the case when considering the future of high-rise buildings in congested urban settings. Complete teardowns and rebuilds are rarely practical or financially viable options. However, if such buildings are going to continue to attract and support tenants with the latest technologies and systems, modernization programs must be undertaken. Schindler is constantly working to find ways of applying our latest technological developments to our older products. The ability to bring new technologies to older systems is the essence of effective modernization.

This 15-foot tall statue of Atlas has stood at the main entrance to Rockefeller Plaza since it was installed in January, 1937.





Photo above, top: Skaters take a spin around the world-famous Ice Rink at Rockefeller Center, one of New York's most celebrated attractions. Photo above, bottom: The Weather Room at the Top of the Rock hosts receptions for guests and provides magnificent views of the Manhattan skyline.

The mezzanine-level sky shuttle lobby features a sparkling Swarovski crystal waterfall chandelier.

Higher and higher

An excellent example of how a Schindler modernization works for the benefit of building owners can be found at 30 Rockefeller Plaza, a 70-story building that many will recognize as the skyscraper that soars majestically behind the Rockefeller Center ice skating rink. Having acquired Westinghouse Elevator Company, Schindler has been the building's sole provider of mobility systems, service and modernization since it was originally constructed in 1932. Always a popular landmark, "30 Rock" has become an even more popular New York destination with its recently completed Top of the Rock indoor and outdoor observation decks on the 70th floor. In addition to offering spectacular views of Manhattan, there's a unique venue with open-air terraces called the Weather Room, where special events can be hosted.

Creating the Top of the Rock was a challenge for the building owner. The famous Rainbow Room restaurant and elevator machine rooms on the 65th floor blocked elevator access to the 69th and 70th floors. To solve this challenge, Schindler engineers developed a modernization plan that upgraded eight passenger and four service elevators. Several were transformed into "sky shuttles" to take both tourist and general office traffic to the 67th floor. ▶





Schindler escalators transport visitors from the 67th floor indoor observation area to the 69th floor Top of the Rock observation deck.

Photo right: Hoisted in modules to the 67th floor, all Schindler escalator sections are aligned for assembly and installation.
 Photo below: Passengers enjoy a historical video of Rockefeller Plaza projected onto the dome of the sky shuttle elevator car as it travels to the Top of the Rock observation deck.



► Reaching the top

Bringing the new equipment to the machine rooms on the upper floors presented a major challenge. Would helicopters be required? Perhaps a crane atop the building could do the lifting? Instead, Schindler's unique modular elevator hoist machines were disassembled into five parts with each designed to fit inside an existing service elevator car. When the sections were brought to the machine room, they were reassembled. In order to bring the escalators to the upper floors, a similar approach was employed. A part of the building had to be opened, and new, modular Schindler escalators were disassembled and then lifted through the elevator hoistways to the 67th floor. Finally, they were reassembled and installed to bring passengers to the 70th floor observation area.

Having serviced the elevators since 1932, Schindler continues to maintain the modernized system, which operates 365 days a year from 8 a.m. until midnight. The modular escalators weren't the only innovations. New Schindler computer-controlled destination-dispatch systems have been added to the eight service and passenger elevators, and four sky shuttles to improve passenger convenience and system efficiency.



Top of the Facts

Height:	Upper decks are 850 feet above street level
Area:	Three levels, 55,000 square feet
Design:	Styled after decks of 1930s ocean liner
View:	360-degree view of New York City skyline
Cost of renovation:	\$75 million
Hours of operation:	Daily, 365 days a year, 8:00 a.m. to midnight
Tickets:	www.topoftherocknyc.com/tickets , or at box office located on 50th Street between 5th and 6th Avenues, or by phone 877.NYC.ROCK.

A visitor exits a Schindler escalator at the 69th floor Top of the Rock observation deck.

Today, a phased approach to elevator and escalator system modernization can produce seamless upgrades in performance with no tenant inconvenience. Everything from modular assembly to the virtual instantaneous integration of advanced destination-dispatch electronics with existing elevator controllers is available to building owners and operators. It's never been easier for an older building to compete with a young upstart. ■