



Ask the Expert

How do shade fabrics affect occupant comfort?

Shades play an essential role in creating a comfortable environment. But the ways in which they do so does depend on the space. That's why it's important to consider the occupancy of the building before you can determine which shades work best. Is this project in a home? Office? Medical facility?

Each has different needs. In a shared space, people don't tend to own their environment as much as they would in their home. Manual shades may remain untouched in an office, even if the space would be better climate-controlled if they were pulled down. In that case, an automated or smart

solution may be the wisest choice.

Beyond whether shades are manual or automated, the color of the fabric also comes into play. While white shades may complement an interior design, they will also result in lots of glare. Black fabrics, on the other hand, have great view-through properties and excellent glare control. However, dark fabric absorbs the sun's rays and that energy is re-radiated, so occupants often feel the heat.

Mermet USA has solved this

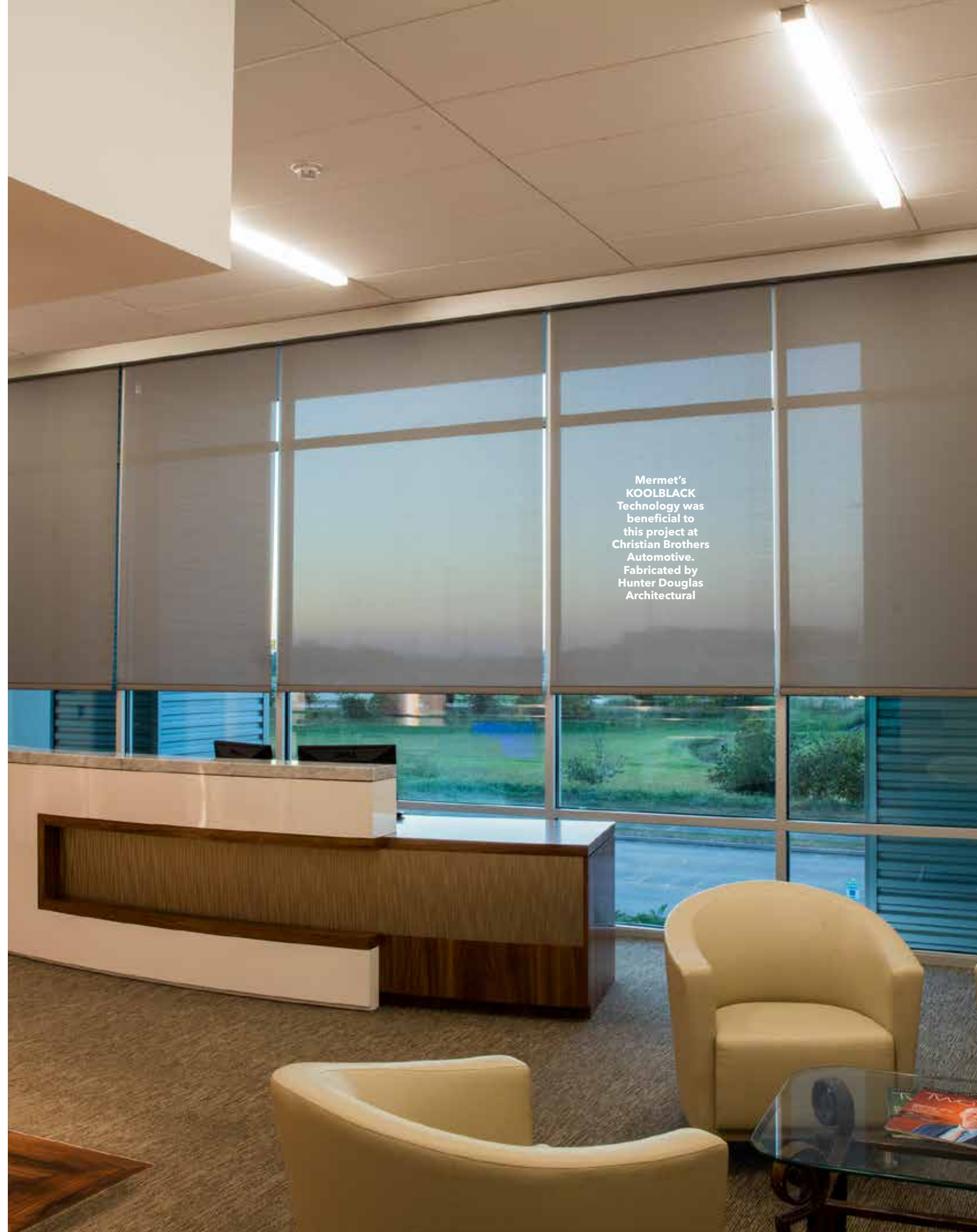
problem with the KOOLBLACK® Technology. On the market since 2012, KOOLBLACK Technology reflects more solar energy than previous generations of dark fabric, keeping the fabric from absorbing heat. This means you can place a desk right next to a window without worrying about excessive warmth from the shades. Selecting a fabric designed to maximize comfort will result in happy occupants. And isn't that what everyone wants?



Colin Blackford,
Director of Strategy
& Innovation,
Mermet USA

Before you can understand shades, you have to understand light. How do UV rays travel? What happens when light comes into contact with materials? What affects whether it's absorbed or reflected? These are some of the questions **Colin Blackford** answers at **Mermet Academy**, a training event **Mermet** holds at its South Carolina manufacturing facility to educate fabricators, dealers, and installers about the science behind their Sun Control Textiles. Because the more these professionals know about the fundamentals, the more successful they'll be identifying solutions for architects and designers. That philosophy carries throughout Mermet's work. Here, Blackford shares more about just how crucial shade fabrics are to occupant comfort.

PHOTOS: BOB PERZEL



Mermet's
KOOLBLACK
Technology was
beneficial to
this project at
Christian Brothers
Automotive.
Fabricated by
Hunter Douglas
Architectural