

Division 9 Finishes & Coatings:

Ceiling Systems, Wall Coatings, and Architectural Mural Integration

CASE STUDY: UF Library West Starbucks (Phase I & II)

In high-traffic commercial retail environments, Division 9 Finishes extend far beyond aesthetic application. They function as critical vapor barriers, hygienic shields, and brand-defining architectural elements. The University of Florida Library West Starbucks project required a complete ceiling and wall coating system, paired with a custom architectural mural installation - all executed within an active academic library environment.

1. Ceiling Coating Systems & Substrate Preparation

The ceiling infrastructure in a commercial cafe is subject to relentless thermal cycling from espresso equipment steam and HVAC exhaust. Ducere's Division 9 teams executed a full ceiling coating system, beginning with deep substrate preparation to address existing surface imperfections and moisture damage from the prior space configuration.

A commercial-grade epoxy-modified acrylic primer was applied across the ceiling substrate to create an impenetrable vapor barrier. This prevents steam-driven moisture from penetrating the ceiling cavity and compromising the acoustic insulation shielding the adjacent quiet study areas above and around the retail node. The finish coat was specified for high-humidity resistance and rapid curing, minimizing downtime in the active library footprint.

2. Wall Coating & Vapor Defense Methodology

All demising and partition walls received a multi-layer commercial coating protocol. Because the Starbucks boundary walls separate a high-humidity retail environment from dry academic reading rooms, the paint system functions as a critical moisture-control layer.

Ducere applied a high-build commercial primer followed by a scrubbable, cross-linked acrylic topcoat in all back-of-house and front-of-house zones. This formulation withstands repeated commercial chemical cleaning without film degradation, and resists the abrasion from backpacks, furniture, and constant foot traffic inherent to a campus retail node. Zero-VOC formulations were used throughout to ensure compliance with university Indoor Environmental Quality (IEQ) standards during occupancy.

3. Architectural Mural Installation & Brand Integration

A defining feature of the Library West Starbucks build was the installation of a custom architectural mural on a primary feature wall. This required precision surface engineering beyond standard painting methodology.

The mural substrate wall was first leveled and sealed with a high-adhesion primer to ensure a flawless bonding surface. The mural was then meticulously installed and integrated with a protective clear topcoat, creating a durable, cleanable finish that defends the artwork against UV degradation, moisture exposure, and physical contact from customers.

This installation demonstrates Ducere's capability to merge commercial branding requirements with structural coating integrity - ensuring the aesthetic centerpiece of a retail space is also engineered to last.

4. Precision Execution & Institutional Masking

Executing a full ceiling, wall, and mural coating program inside an active library requires surgical masking and overspray control. Ducere utilized negative-air containment barriers and HVLP (High Volume Low Pressure) application techniques to eliminate aerosol drift.

This ensured that sensitive data infrastructure, library collections, and adjacent architectural finishes remained completely untouched throughout the Division 9 application process. All work was sequenced during narrow off-peak windows to prevent disruption to university operations.