

# Seeing Is Believing

Even small design firms must present ideas to clients in high-quality fashion.

by Sharon L. Anderson

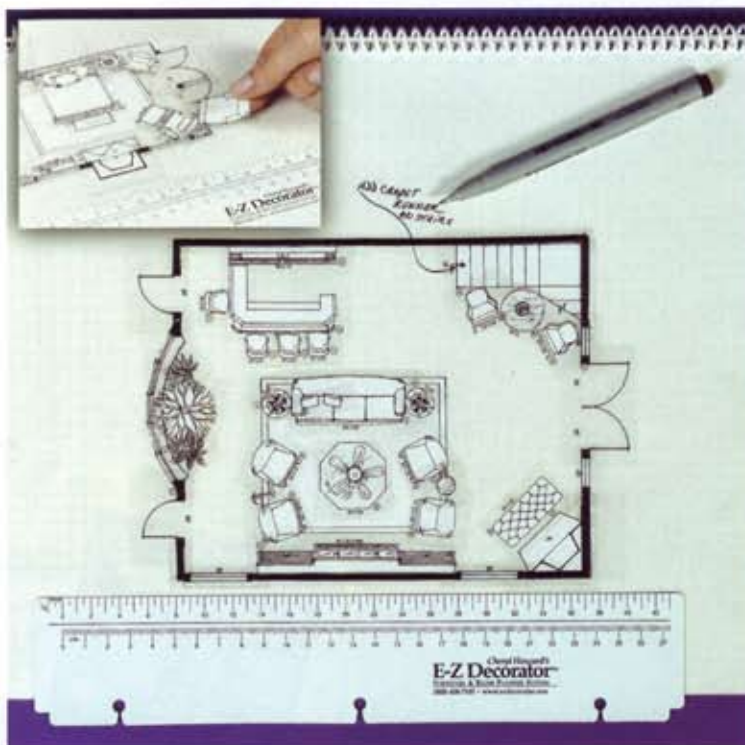
**CHALLENGE:** How important is it to present floor plans to the client? It seems I already spend vast amounts of time and effort on creating color boards and materials boards for clients and, although I have taken drafting classes in school, I find it takes hours and hours of my valuable design time to create floor plans, too.

I demand perfection for my clients and that includes communicating my design ideas in a way that is simple and easy for them to understand. But because my design firm is small, I do not have the budget to hire out architectural drafting professionals. Could you offer suggestions that would be time wise, yet professional? In other words, can I have professional results without the high cost of hiring a professional?

I anticipate your suggestions, as I've always found them useful. In fact, I have shared your articles with the dean of our Interior Design Department as a learning tool in our curriculum.

**SOLUTION:** I agree, drawing floor plans to scale can be time consuming. But it is extremely important that design professionals have working knowledge of how a floor plan works. Once you understand that, you then can search for tools to assist you in the process of making each step in the design process not as time consuming.

Let me share with you what I've found to be an excellent tool of the trade! I recently have been introduced to the E-Z Decorator™ Furniture & Room Planner System by Cheryl Howard (www.ezdecorator.com). Here is how it



Drafting and planning tools such as this will help you present your design ideas to clients simply and effectively while creating professional-looking floor plans to scale.

works. The system is drawn in an overhead plan view and offers floor plan grids and furniture pieces in 1/4-inch scale. The furniture pieces are reusable, as they peel on and off the grid system. You can work directly from the grid, work on a clear overlay, or if you have a 1/4-inch scale blueprint or construction drawing of the home you are working on you can slip it between the grid and the overlay. All the pieces, including the grid, are reusable.

There are 12 pages of illustrations, paper pages, index tabs, a wet erase marker pen and a custom 1/4-inch scale/metric ruler. It is presented in a beautiful binder and is very user friendly. Some of the pieces included are architectural elements, upholstery sofas and chairs, case goods, accessories, dining room furniture, bedroom and nursery furniture, home office furniture, home theater equipment, game room fur-

niture, rugs, flooring patterns and many additional items. There are pages and pages to choose from. Everything is drawn professionally in plan view, as I mentioned above.

You may add color schemes to your creations. I have included an illustration of the system so you can see some of the information I have described. Using a tool such as this—and there are other tools available in this area—will help eliminate the cost of outsourcing this service and keep your costs down in the long run.

*Editor's note: This is a continuing series of articles written by Sharon L. Anderson that will answer some of the many questions we receive at Draperies & Window Coverings as well as questions Anderson has encountered in her own business. If you have a question you would like Anderson to address, please send it to:*

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