Location
Nationwide

Project Type
Restaurant

Area Supplied
Customer Area Floors & Walls, Restroom Floor, Back of House

Products |
Ageless, Custom Dark Green, Icelandic, Nimble, Duro Base, Schluter, Setting Materials

As one of the world's most successful quick-service restaurant brands, Subway continues to evolve its guest experience through thoughtful design, operational efficiency, and global consistency. When the brand partnered with ChangeUp to develop a new restaurant prototype, the initiative required a material package that could support Subway's scale, budget requirements, and design ambitions. Creative Materials played a key role in delivering custom tile solutions, technical guidance, and a streamlined national supply program to support the next generation of Subway environments.

CHALLENGE | Balancing Budget, Design, and Performance

Developing Subway's new prototype required aligning precise design intent with strict budget parameters. ChangeUp needed custom wall tiles matched to exact Pantone specifications, as well as a floor tile that met slip resistance (DCOF), durability, and aesthetic requirements. Additionally, Subway had been experiencing challenges with one of their existing base suppliers, prompting the need for a more reliable, cost-stable alternative that maintained the look and performance they expected.

Collaboration and approval processes added complexity. The project required coordination not only with ChangeUp but also with Subway's Design & Construction department and IPC, the brand's purchasing arm—each with their own workflows, priorities, and review processes. Ensuring the final material package could be executed consistently on a national scale was essential for a brand with thousands of locations.

> "Our collaboration with ChangeUp, Subway, and IPC showcased Creative Materials Corporation's ability to adapt to complex project structures while delivering consistent, on-brand materials at scale."
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> ~Allsion Piche
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> Brand Program Manager,
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> Creative Materials Corporation

SOLUTION | A Custom, Cost-Optimized Material Package

Creative Materials delivered a comprehensive and flexible solution tailored to the new prototype. The team engineered two custom green wall tiles matched precisely to ChangeUp's Pantone color targets, ensuring brand consistency across all redesigned locations. For the flooring, Creative Materials identified a tile that satisfied all

design and technical needs, then transitioned production from Italy to the United States to achieve necessary cost reductions without compromising aesthetics or performance.

To address Subway's prior supplier challenges, Creative Materials also developed a rigid wall base that replicated the look and functionality of the base they had been using, providing a dependable and high-quality solution that eliminated ongoing sourcing issues. This allowed the brand to maintain its design intent while gaining a more stable and reliable supply partner.

Throughout the process, Creative Materials collaborated closely with both Subway's brand teams and IPC, their purchasing organization—demonstrating flexibility and alignment with Subway's established internal structure. This multi-group partnership helped finalize specifications, streamline pricing, and define lead times and logistics for nationwide deployment.

The result was a fully integrated supply program in which Creative Materials became the only vendor able to provide the entire package—tile, setting materials, and rigid wall base—to any Subway project across the United States, enabling consistent, efficient rollout of the new prototype.

CONCLUSION

Through strategic product development, responsive problem-solving, and deep collaboration with both Subway's design teams and its purchasing arm, Creative Materials delivered a cohesive, reliable, and cost-efficient material package for the brand's new restaurant prototype. This program supports Subway's continued evolution as a global quick-service leader and provides a scalable, dependable solution for modernizing restaurants across its extensive footprint.