CONCRETE CASE STUDY: EASE OF USE

AQUA TOWER
225 N. Columbus Dr., Chicago, IL 60601

Completed: 2010
Height: 876 ft
Stories: 82
Size: 1.9 million sf
Architect: Jeanne Gang of Studio/Gang/Architects

THE NEXT WAVE OF INNOVATION.

Chicago’s Aqua Tower is lauded as an architectural icon. Borrowing from the features of Chicago’s topography, the vertical design of the structure features hills, valleys, and pools defined by concrete slabs. The mixed-use project features 215 hotel rooms, 476 rental residential units, 263 condominiums, 55,000 square feet of retail space, six levels of underground parking, and an eight-story base.

01. Strategically-shaped floor slabs.
The extended concrete slabs create “waves” of exterior balconies of varying shapes and sizes. This design provides occupants with unmatched views.

02. Economical design.
Metal edge forms were used as they could be tacked in place to create the exterior curves, but could spring back to neutral shape for reuse on other floors.

03. Protection from the elements.
To protect the concrete from the weather, the exposed slabs were wrapped in an elastomeric membrane on top, with a water-sealing membrane on the bottom.

04. Energy efficiency is in the design.
The varied balconies provide maximum shade for the areas below, allowing the building to stay cooler in the summer.

AWARDS:

International Highrise Award Finalist, Deutsches Architekturmuseum, 2010
Honor Award, Distinguished Building, AIA Chicago, 2010
Skyscraper of the Year, Emporis, 2009
Annual Design Review Honorable Mention, Architect Magazine, 2009
“Proggy” Award, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), 2009
American Architecture Award, Chicago Athenaeum, 2008

Developer: Magellan Development Group LLC