



# Ellison Bronze Doors Help Under Armour “Make A Statement”

CHICAGO AND BALTIMORE

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Thomas Walsh  
VP Global Stores  
Development  
Under Armour, Inc.



*Under Armour Brand House – Chicago*



*Under Armour Brand House – Baltimore*

Ellison Bronze custom balanced doors help companies “make a statement” – and this is particularly true for two distinctive locations of Under Armour, Inc., the sports clothing and accessories company.

Under Armour recently began opening a series of “brand houses,” flagship stores that give customers an immersive brand experience. Brand houses represent an elevated presence, with more emphasis on design, digital presentation, customized interaction between the store and its customers, and a broader selection of apparel and footwear.

“An Under Armour brand house is designed to represent the ‘best of the best,’” says Thomas Walsh, VP Global Stores Development for Under Armour, Inc. “Customers are treated to a total immersion of our brand with the highest ideals of quality and innovation at the forefront.”

Two of its recent brand houses are in Chicago and Baltimore. Each store features Ellison Bronze custom balanced doors that help form an impressive exterior and which Walsh says provide customers an “easy flow into the brand experience without distraction.”

The 30,000 sq. ft. Chicago store opened in March 2015 in the heart of the city’s Magnificent Mile, the upscale section of Michigan Avenue. The store captured top honors at the annual Design Awards of the Association of Retail Environments (A.R.E.), including the Store of the Year award and Best Specialty Store (more than 25,000 sq. ft. in size).

The store features two single and two pair of 11 foot tall Ellison Bronze custom balanced doors made of extruded aluminum, painted. The doors and vestibule are part of a newly constructed entrance of about 15 feet into the store, allowing the location to become what Walsh calls a “bold corner” at 600 North Michigan Avenue.

The “oversized” doors were a challenge made easier by Ellison’s attention to detail and overall responsiveness, according to Michael Smoucha, Project Manager, Glass Solutions, Inc. of Elmhurst, IL. Glass Solutions handled the glazing and installation.

“Ellison set us up beautifully with very detailed instructions, specific tools to use with this installation, touch-up paint provided in advance if needed, and generally being immediately available if we had any questions,” Smoucha said. “These were enormous doors going into a repurposed space – Ellison provided excellent support when minute adjustments were necessary.”



*Under Armour Brand House – Baltimore*

The Chicago brand house (Job #30969) boasts a two-level rotunda with a 65 ft. high ceiling, large-scale images (graphics and videos), and a generally high-energy environment. It’s a modern aesthetic but supported by what Walsh calls “true materials” – such as steel and real wood – all to serve as a “backdrop to great product.”

The Baltimore brand house (Job #30756) is a similar story. Located on South President Street in Baltimore’s Harbor East, Walsh says it’s “all about the street corner, big and bold.” The Ellison Bronze custom balanced doors (also extruded aluminum, painted) are 12 feet tall. Walsh says they look big and powerful “but are so easy to use.”

“The Ellison doors make the shopping experience as easy as possible,” Walsh says. “When you walk up to them, they seem to say, ‘We got you covered, don’t worry about a thing.’”

The Baltimore brand house includes a 7’ x 9’ video board, “hometown exclusives” (themed merchandise that celebrates individual city neighborhoods), and beta testing of the company’s latest merchandise.

In both locations, Baltimore and Chicago, Under Armour has had no negative issues with the doors and Walsh says, “they always provide optimum performance.”

“Ellison set us up beautifully – provided excellent support.”

Michael Smoucha  
Project Manager

Unlike conventional entry doors, an Ellison aluminum door is constructed from heavy wall extrusions that are made solely for Ellison and specifically designed to work in conjunction with their balanced hardware system. The door leaf's horizontal top and bottom rails are attached to the vertical stiles using both welded and bolted connections, yielding an extremely durable and long lasting entrance

While Ellison balanced doors consist of heavy and robust components, they can still be opened with ease. A balanced door features an inset pivot point at two-thirds the width of the door, creating a balance that distributes the weight so the door requires little force to open. The inset balancing point allows for an easier open force, even against external wind and internal building stack pressure.

Under Armour, Inc. was founded in 1996 and has its global headquarters in Baltimore. The company operates in North America, South America, Latin America, Europe, Asia, and Australia.

How important are these brand house locations?

A recent headline in *The Baltimore Sun* read, "Under Armour looks to brand house stores to propel growth."

The paper said the stores "could represent the future" for Under Armour and described the Chicago location as "the brand's newest, largest and flashiest, showcasing not only its core training apparel, but fishing and hunting gear, innovations in running and basketball sneakers, and a fitness tracker 'wearables bar.' "



Under Armour Brand House – Chicago

Ellison provides detailed record keeping and full warranties – important when considering the extensive lifespan of an Ellison door. Every door made is imprinted with an individual project number (similar to that of a car's VIN number) to facilitate easy tracking and maintenance. Furthermore, all Ellison balanced hardware components are machined in-house, which means that replacement components are always readily available.

The article goes on to say that brand houses are not designed just to increase sales, but as the name clearly implies, build brand awareness and increase market share.



Under Armour Brand House – Chicago

Interestingly, the *Sun* reports that, even with fast-growing online sales, 88 percent of Under Armour’s purchases occur in physical stores. A company executive is quoted: “We’re not going to be saying we will only do one type of store. We believe in a balanced portfolio.”

And, when Under Armour brand houses can look as impressive as the Chicago and Baltimore locations do, the company apparently also believes in custom balanced doors. In this case under the brand name of Ellison Bronze.



Under Armour Brand House – Baltimore

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