



INSTITUTE FOR SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS

Architects: Venturi, Scott Brown and Associates, Inc.

Location: University City Science Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Client: Institute for Scientific Information

Construction Cost: \$5,000,000 (approximate)

Area: 132,000 gsf

Completion: 1979

The building is a new corporate headquarters for an international scientific information services corporation that uses advanced computer technology. Located in an inner city research park, the site fronts on a major thoroughfare. The client desired “a building that everyone would recognize as a lively and distinctive contribution to the community and to the information industry.”

The client’s already carefully established program mandated a flat, square building; thin, strip windows; and the location of core elements along one side of the building for future expansion. In addition, the building had to meet the exterior design requirements of the research park; the project schedule for design and construction was highly abbreviated; and the construction budget was quite constrained.

Our design distinguishes the building from its surroundings by imposing on the facade a geometric pattern of colored brick and porcelain panels. The tight, rigorously coded pattern of the overall facade is relieved by the juxtaposition of large abstracted flower forms marking the main entrance to the building. The freshness of the solution and its contribution to its street brought to one critic’s mind the young Louis Sullivan’s description of a house by Frank Furness, as “a flower by the side of the road.”



