Office Space Planning
Designing for Tomorrow's Workplace

ALEXI MARMOT AND JOANNA ELEY
3. Nortel Networks,  
Brampton, Ontario  
4. Andersen Consulting (AC): Wellesley,  
Massachusetts  
5. "Location Free" Means Fewer Changes:  
MCI Telecommunications, Boston, Massachusetts  
6. Repair and Renewal to Bring Hope:  
7. From Corporate Office to Creative Warehouse:  
Campbell-Ewald West, Los Angeles, California  
8. Quadruple Whammy Generates Property Savings:  
Arthur Andersen, Boston, Massachusetts  
10. One Size Fits All for Organizational Effectiveness:  
Alcoa Headquarters, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania  
11. Fundamental Change on a Gradual Basis:  
West Group, Egan Minnesota  
12. Caves, Cubicles, and Creativity:  
Silicon Graphics, Inc., Redwood City, California  
13. Enclosed Offices for Education First:  
Education First, Cambridge, Massachusetts  
14. Classy Furniture Is Good Value:  
Publicis & Hal Riney, San Francisco, California  
15. Playing Musical Beanbags: Rhino Entertainment Company, Los Angeles, California  
16. Developing a Sense of Responsibility:  
Conde Nast, New York, New York  
17. Waste Not Want Not: World Neighbors  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
18. Student Union in Ideas Factory:  
BBDO West, Los Angeles, California  
19. Fun and Sun: TBWA/Chiat/Day,  
Los Angeles, California  
20. Escape the Cube, Destroy the Box:  
Arthur Andersen, Chicago, Illinois
An o sit on simple furniture is also served one natural and neutral just as the peo-

Case History 18. Student Union in Ideas Factory

Organization BBDO West
Location Los Angeles, California
Completed 1996
Area 45,000 ft² (4,200 m²)
No. people 200 plus
Designers Beckson Design Associates, Los Angeles, California

Team discussions over the net during a table tennis game is how people at advertising agency BBDO West now work. Management has realized that people are the greatest asset of this creative company. To help them enjoy work, the associated “play” areas are at least as important as the workstations in the new layouts created by Beckson Design Associates, despite taking up only 5 percent of the total space (Fig. CH.18.1).

BBDO occupied two and a half floors of a 25-story building. The aim of the refurbishment was to increase communication and interaction between different parts of the organization, to make the space feel completely new, and strip it of the staid gray granite, gray walls, gray carpet image. Today the carpet is a riot of technicolor patchwork.
carpet tiles. Unconventional displays of BBDO’s advertising products allow clients to gauge the agency. Ceilings are open, structure and services are exposed, and lighting is indirect. Twenty meeting rooms are planned, and one, known as the “star chamber,” has walls forming a star in plan (Figs. CH.18.2 and CH.18.3).

One workplace standard for everyone was introduced to replace the earlier hierarchical set. Traditional enclosed offices with everyone organized by department were abandoned, and people are instead organized into client core teams. Workstations are made up of industrial components—unistrut posts and laminate desks. There are many options for panel materials, each suited in a different way
BBDO’s advertising agency. Ceilings are painted white, and lighting is recessed, and one, forming a star in the ceiling.

Materials introduced to break functional enclosed spaces were abandoned into client core with industrial components. There are many different ways for writing or display: chalkboard; perforated steel to which pictures may be tacked up with magnets; corkboard; mdf; boards composed of recycled banknotes; and tectum and dry-marker panels (Fig. CH.18.4).
Figure CH.15.1 Rhino’s entrance immediately presents core values of the company—music, recycling, casual informality, and mixed styles from the 1950s on. (Photograph: Carolyn Cole, Los Angeles Times.)

informed about company trends, and musicians occasionally give live performances there. A table-tennis table sits adjacent to the gym. In an industry with many freelancers, the aim was to create an environment that would feel like a special “club” where they would be made to feel welcome and part of the club and a place and company with which they would be pleased to be associated. In fact, 10 percent of the floor area is taken up by communal spaces for employees, but these are the crucial areas that most demonstrate company values.

Work areas comprise 45 percent of the area and are mostly open workstations. Standard desks from established furniture manufacturers felt too refined. A rougher image was wanted, and the selected approach was desks made from pegboard and other materials (Fig. CH.15.3). The building itself is newly built, with Rhino the first tenant. To

make it more open, then varied light fittings zigzagging down exposed, then ne...
Figure CH.18.3  Plan of the two BBDO West floors showing the stairway connecting them.
(Beckson Design Associates.)
Figure CH.18.3  (Continued) Plan of the two BBDO floors showing the stairway connecting them.

(Beckson Design Associates.)
Figure CH.18.4  Workstations of Unistrut with a variety of infill panel, all selected for writing on or displaying works in process.  
(Photograph: Tom Bonner.)

A lofty warehouse is a hive of activity, a happy balance of old and new. TBWA/Chiat/Day captured plenty of process work. Los Angeles building and design offices. The city planning department was not considered the main focus. Banks, and fitness facilities. "Main Street" reached and whining is a range of ...
Case History 15. Playing Musical Beanbags

Organization  Rhino Entertainment Company
Location  Los Angeles, California
Completed  1994
Area  36,000 ft² (3,300 m²)
Designers  Beckson Design Associates, Los Angeles, California

When a quirky company, whose business is to re-release music of the 1950s and 1960s, needs to replan its office, a traditional solution with cubicles and classy executive suites for the top people is unlikely to emerge. Rhino needed something utterly different. Beckson Design Associates articulated the philosophy of the owner and company. The corporate values are that companies should be creative, fun, and ecologically responsible—hence, recycled items are embedded into the floor, and recycled cassette cases form the main reception desks (Fig. CH.15.1). Making people feel comfortable is also important. The main gathering point is a multipurpose space next to the cafeteria, a “playroom” furnished with little other than beanbags (Fig. CH.15.2). “Beanbag meetings” are held there to keep everyone
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make it more dynamic, ceilings were omitted, services exposed, then new and varied ceiling planes inserted with varied light fittings. Circulation routes were set at angles zigzagging down the floor plate, and different colors were applied in different zones (Fig. CH.15.4). The building fit out was delivered in eight weeks on a very modest budget.
Figure CH.15.3  Workstations made of pegboard depart from the style found in a standard corporate office environment.

(Photograph: Tom Bonner.)

Figure CH.15.4  Plan of the Rhino office showing zigzag circulation and many shared spaces for meetings and employee gatherings.

(Beckson Design Associates.)
Case History 15. Playing Musical Beanbags

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