

WHAT'S
HAPPENING IN

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TOKYO



I firmly believe the future of office space design is never in your own back yard. There are great insights to be learned globally. With that, I've now been to 20 cities around the world researching the future of office space to see how businesses have used their space to positively influence their business challenges. My learnings better inform my local and global clients who deserve the best and most relevant insights.

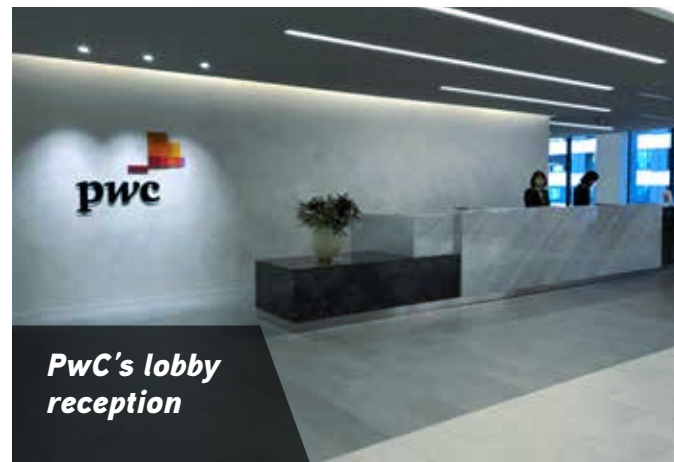
My recent travels took me to Tokyo. My good friends at global architectural giant, Gensler, were kind enough to arrange a tour of two fascinatingly different spaces. One really interesting observation was the quality of construction and pride that people have in their work results in construction with virtually no deficiencies/punch-list items.

The future of office space...



PRICE WATERHOUSE COOPERS

PwC recently moved and managed to reduce their number of floors by increasing the size of each floor. The result, as told by PwC's representative, has dramatically increased communication and connectivity within the firm. With 3,000 employees, effective communication is paramount. Their open office space, with unassigned seating, has become a common theme across accounting firms whose people are often out of the office in client's spaces.



PwC's lobby reception



PwC's open office space, with unassigned seating

My tour started in their lobby which was generously sized. They receive over 3,000 visitors every month and have as many as 6 people at the reception desk which is more than I've ever seen. The lobby is a great and typically missed opportunity to articulate your brand and highlight elements of your offering.

They have a timeline history of PwC on the wall which establishes great credibility with clients and potential employees who come to interview. PwC is not a household name in Japan as it is in North America/Europe and as a result this wall acts as an opportunity to articulate their long history and credibility.



The furniture pays homage to their corporate headquarters in London.



The PwC sign is made of small origami cranes which is a great nod to the fact this office is in Japan.



To further highlight how PwC is global, they have maps of their other global offices overlaid on a map of each respective city, a further reminder of their global reach.

Because they have unassigned seating and different groups don't often go to other floors, a central lounge was important. They have meeting rooms within the lounge so people can collaborate in many different ways within the larger lounge area. The space also acts as a bigger meeting area for company, practice group or client events. In addition, their IT help desk is within the lounge to further encourage people to visit.





NETFLIX

I next visited Netflix's offices. This is a business and content creation office which is expanding dramatically as Netflix is gaining popularity in Japan.

While the open ceiling concept has become commonplace in many parts of the world, landlords in Tokyo haven't caught on quite yet. If a company removes their ceiling system, they have to store it somewhere and put it back at the end of the lease term. As a result, the ceiling is often only exposed in small areas to minimize costs.

As has become popular all over the world, their lounge serves to be a lunch spot as well as great meeting space. Multipurpose space is important.



Netflix has found a really creative vendor who created labels that were put over the beer and wine bottle labels that featured shows that Netflix are working on. Great vendor/client relationship that enhances the culture in the office.



Great patio and views of Tokyo Tower and the whole city. Interestingly, the landlord doesn't allow any patio furniture as it may be blown off in a typhoon!

While everything is free, this "IT store" has prices on all the products to remind staff of the cost to the company which encourages people to be reasonable.



In open office space having a quiet area to meet, work or make calls is important. These pods (furniture systems that can be bought) worked amazingly well.



Netflix provides free technology for employees.



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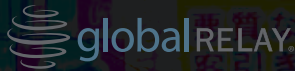
Colin has travelled to over 20 cities visiting some of the world's most innovative office spaces, researching the future of office space and how companies use their space to positively influence their business challenges.

Colin is a winner of Business in Vancouver's Top Forty Under 40, is one of 5 people on the National Advisory Board advising Colliers' Canadian CEO on key national business issues and is a regular faculty member at Colliers University in the Netherlands.

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