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Snapshots of Contemporary Workplace

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# *Forward*

This collection presents snapshots of our contemporary work environments through an examination of the ways in which architecture and design have conceived the idea of the office and other workspaces since the turn of the 21st Century.

The office is an architectural type that is as politically, economically, and culturally charged, as it is technical and tectonic. With technological advancements and changes in labor practices, the workplace was liberated from the domestic realm, causing a spatial, programmatic, and ideological schism. This strict delineation of office and house became a key concept of modernization that motivated architecture and urban design practices. Currently, there is a paradigm shift that reunites these two environments, creating a gray zone between the spaces occupied by domesticity and work.

Current workspaces demonstrate an evolution of the workstyle that no longer ties the program of work to the building type of the office. Today's creative offices expand the definition of the workplace from a site of management and production to a place fostering creativity, communication, and community. Meanwhile, emerging coworking spaces act as a catalyst stimulating new programmatic relationships with a new building type that has yet to be determined.

These essays demonstrate our contemporary understanding of the workplace and how it can produce new value in contemporary society.

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*Scripted Space*

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Main workspace at One Workplace in Santa Clara, CA  
Bruce Damonte, 2013.

Office space constitutes an essential part of a company building, providing workers with a workplace and working environment. Office design has evolved to accommodate social shifts and technological advancements into a set of standardized practices and strategies for space planning. These practices and strategies followed a set of spatial standards to maximize efficiency and productivity while de-emphasizing social interaction, creativity, and personalization. As a reaction to office standardization, creative office design promotes customized design elements. These custom elements are designed to anticipate an autonomous, yet cooperative, workstyle. Much like a playwright gives instructions for interpretation in a scene through stage directions and dialogue, so too does the designer, who sets up the components of the workplace to activate certain worker activities throughout the day. By customizing the dimensions of space, adjacency of programs, and arrangements of furniture, designers script the workplace.

One Workplace is a newly-designed furniture company headquarters built in Santa Clara in 2013. By renovating an existing industrial facility, this creative office design has incorporated multiple important programs into its arrangement of space, which all work together to promote the business of the furniture company.

The architecture firms Design Blitz and Dennis Kobza & Associates worked together to realize both the interior design and warehouse innovation. The original warehouse



Entrance at One Workplace in Santa Clara, CA  
Bruce Damonte, 2013.



Central "boomerang" at One Workplace in Santa Clara, CA  
Bruce Damonte, 2013.



Lounge at One Workplace in Santa Clara, CA  
Bruce Damonte, 2013.

is updated to contain twenty-four new truck decks, and the interior space is reconfigured to be an open-plan office which also includes modular office pieces and a showroom. All the furniture in the open-plan office space was designed and installed by One Workplace; they are also used and displayed in the office space, which functions as a large showroom for customers in addition to one smaller showroom.

The main work area serves as a dual-purpose space: the showroom (the retail territory of the customer) and the office (the workplace of the employee). In contrast to traditional furniture firms, which only showcase their products in the showroom, One Workplace utilizes the workspace and transformed the space for the display of their products not only as pieces of art, but also as products that show their functions. From small chairs to large modular offices, designers stage how people would encounter with the displays and intelligently promoted their products in their own office space. By showcasing their furniture in different working zones that simultaneously function as different showrooms, One Workplace features the products they want to sell and allows products and customers to interact with each other.

The designer also scripts how customers receive information about the furniture. From a hallway leading from the entrance, the customers first enter a showroom that exhibits One Workplace's products. As customers walk further into the office space, the workplace reveals itself as a showroom in action. The arrangement of space and furniture then directs customers onto the "Boomerang" in the center of the open-plan office space, allowing them to overlook the entire office. This design serves as a visual landmark for customers to survey the individual products, while overlooking the overall arrangement of the space. This "workplace on display" provides One Workplace's employees with the opportunities to interact with

real organizations of furniture on site, so that employees can observe and learn from actual furniture set-ups for their work and designs. The flexibility of furniture arrangements in the workspace allows employees to test for new schemes of furniture display and showcase for new customers. One Workplace's strategy not only aids in the promotion of its own products, but also stimulates employees' creativity and interactions.

BuzzFeed is a social news and entertainment company with a focus on digital media. The Los Angeles office was founded in 2013 and serves as an entertainment studio for its editorial team to produce original content videos. New York-based interior design firm JIDK, in cooperation with local MAKE Architecture, was commissioned to transform the former beauty supply warehouse into a custom workspace. As an internet media company, it is crucial for BuzzFeed to provide space that facilitates different communication mechanisms, so that individuals are able to share ideas and keep track of the news with their colleagues.

When employees enter the office, they leave personal belongings in one of the twenty boxes next to the front door. They proceed to the centerpiece of the office: two large, three-pronged workstations composed of customized desks with center tracks that provide power and network connectivity. This furniture composition allows Buzz'ers to sit down with their laptops at any location and get to work, creating an intriguing work environment for production. Since both shelves and tables are made mobile by the addition of casters, enhanced collaboration occurs in a flexible office where moving between people and projects is easy and fast.

Furthermore, the office has small windows on the front facade, allowing a visual connection to the street; all other sides are enclosed by brick walls. This visual barrier eliminates



Central workstation at BuzzFeed in Los Angeles, CA  
Peter Kubilus, 2014.



Mobile desks at BuzzFeed in Los Angeles, CA  
Peter Kubilus, 2014.



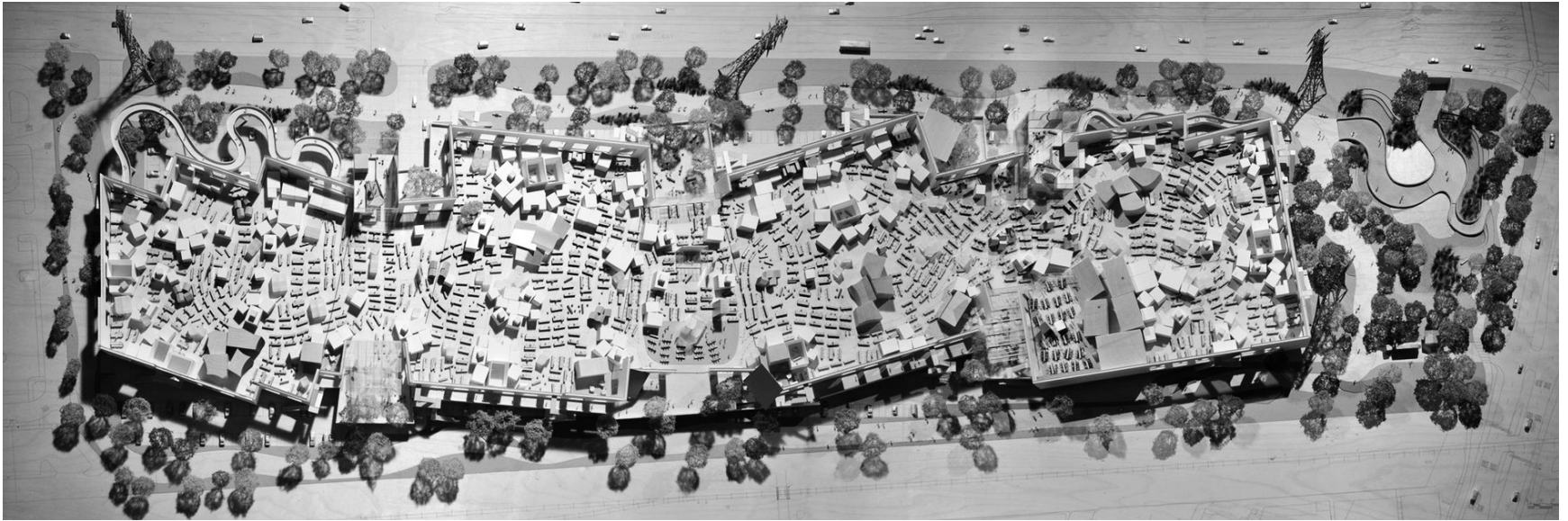
Closet at front door at BuzzFeed in Los Angeles, CA  
Peter Kubilus, 2014.

distractions from the activities happening in the neighborhood, therefore reinforcing a concentrated, interactive working center within the building. Whenever employers need undisturbed time for phone calls or small meetings, they can go to the fully-glazed side wings, which are occupied by meeting rooms, individual offices, and break rooms, or go up to the mezzanine, which occupies the periphery of the volume on three of its closed spaces of the program on the sides.

The layout of BuzzFeed's LA office is customized with forty-eight mobile seats to give employees the autonomy to move furniture to suit project needs. As they move their workstations without the permission or assistance of management, employees can constantly redesign the space based on project requirements rather than managerial or structural hierarchies. This workstyle creates a visually transparent and permeable neutral space that cultivates an energized, inspiring, and collaborative work environment for creative production in an entertainment studio.

In 2015, Facebook inaugurated its new Silicon Valley headquarters, a 433,000 sq ft open-plan office building with an expansive rooftop park designed by Frank Gehry. As opposed to a traditional workplace that sets up a strict hierarchical structure, the design fosters a relaxed, non-hierarchical working environment unifying different types of groups in the company.

The architect designed the office to be a collaborative lab through eliminating the partitions and walls so that thousands of people work together in one big room. This giant social networking company tries to hold on to its ethos that "anything is possible" as it grows. Accordingly, this campus provides a 22-foot high interior with unobstructed sectional space that can be quickly adapted to different work patterns



Model of Facebook HQ in Menlo Park, CA  
*Dezeen*, 2012.

to hatch new ideas. Shiny ducts run beneath raw-steel beams, which dangle a profusion of wiring tubes to clusters of six or eight tables; curving pathways loop through desk clusters hosting different product teams. Big openings in the facade bring the landscape to the interior, creating a welcoming space for people to move around and talk.

In plan, small rooms are dispersed over the large open working space. The scattered spaces are scripted as self-sufficient zones or pods for individuals or groups. When an employee arrives at work, they will park their car in the nearest parking lot then head to their workstation through intimate hallways between different “neighborhoods,” containing conference rooms and cafés. The whole space does not have any private offices, so everyone sitting in the open office is visible. The architect implemented austere metal, glass, and white-stucco exterior bumps on both the interior and

exterior to exaggerate the space’s monumental vastness. Therefore, everyone works in a space with great fluidity and transparency which reflects Facebook’s values of sharing, collaboration, and organizing face-to-face sociability.

From a conventional furniture manufacturer’s warehouse to a new media production studio, to one of Silicon Valley’s biggest high-tech firms, designers “script” the individual elements in the office space—the furniture, heights of walls, sizes of apertures, circulation, seating arrangements of employees—to control the whole set of space. All these elements are controlled by designers to achieve a result that not only benefits the company, but also the employees. Each individual element is like a character in a screenplay, while the designer acts as the screenwriter who manipulates these elements to indulge employees, customers, and others towards the company’s values and goals. By giving each



character a distinct personality through an architectural strategy, the designer/screenwriter can script the space through an accumulation of effects from individual elements.

In typical workplace design, the architect implements strategies for an efficient workplace (cost-effectiveness and suiting the needs of the company). These investigations of three different creative offices demonstrate that through “scripting space,” the architect designs customized, physical space to script the workstyle that best suits the values of social interaction, creativity, and adaptability. Unlike traditional workspaces, where the utilitarian attitude led fills the space with the maximum amount of workstations, scripting the space becomes a way for designers to create new experiences and values within the workplace. Designers start to play an important role in shifting office space design toward creating new experiences for both employees and clients, sparking creativity and forming an environment which interacts with, and responds to, the changing market.



*Landscaping Furniture in  
Creative Office Design*

Qiyue Li and Yin Liu

*The End of Sitting* installation at Looiersgracht 60 in Amsterdam, NL  
Jan Kempenaers, 2013.

In office design, infill refers to furniture, appliances, stationery, signage, decorative elements, and other office equipment - any part of the interior building system with an occupant interface. Infill organizes spatial and programmatic divisions by using clusters of furniture with the same programmatic function or through unified spatial features.

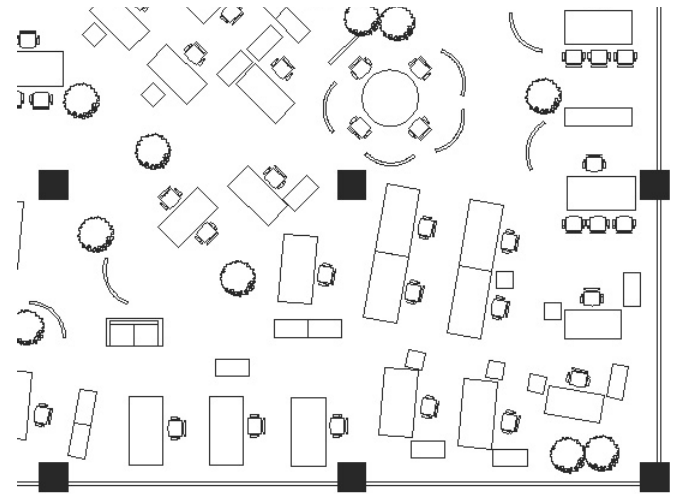
For conventional office design, the design of architectural and spatial features are conducted prior to designing the interior with furniture and workstations as infill added to the space afterwards. Given contemporary office spaces can occupy a large open floor plan on which infill and programmatic zones are arranged and distributed, infill bonds scattered interior features to the space, forming a systematic and organic whole. *Office Landscape* completed by German design team Quickborner in the 1950s, exemplified the integration of interior design and spatial design as a single design project. However, the approach employed by *Office Landscape* neglected a series of spatial design problems.

This investigation of a series of recently-designed offices demonstrates how design conflates infill with the space they innovatively occupy. The pivotal element of such designs is the infill, which transforms a workplace into a holistic landscape field. With its transformative function, such design can be called *Landscaping Furniture*. In considering office infill and office space as a single design project, *Landscaping Furniture* is an internal

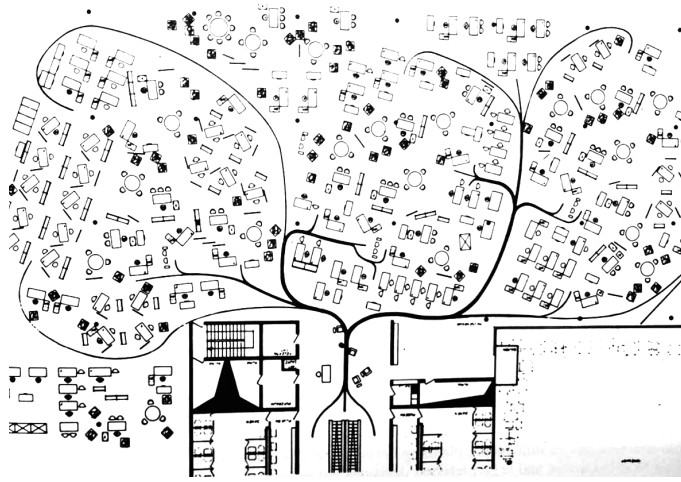
drive within the creative office space in terms of office planning and design. It possesses the performative and transformative characteristics that allow it to constantly render the work space into a dynamic environment.

*Landscaping Furniture* is a type of infill characterized by its modularity and mobility, differentiated work postures, formal continuity, and extension of company branding within a single system. *Landscaping Furniture* occupies a large volume as a whole, thereby infilling a large scale of space. The potential flexibility rooted in the design of the infill allows it to satisfy the demand for adaptability of a creative office through its constant developing process over time.

The goal of *Landscaping Furniture* as a design approach is to equip a creative office with a higher level of adaptability, spatial creativity, social interaction, and design-added value.



Portion of office landscape floor plan showing traditional desks, curved screens, potted plants, and organic geometry Quickborner, 1967.



Circulation plan with major and minor traffic routes designated by varied line weights. Furniture arranged in an intentional configuration based on work paths and roles within the office  
Quickborner, DuPont test space, 1967.

Infill is a design subject typically considered separate from the design of the architectural space. This conventional approach continued to be utilized until the 1950s, when *Office Landscape* presented an ambitious attempt to combine the infill design and office space design into an integrated design approach. Pioneered by the German design team Quickborner, led by Eberhard and Wolfgang Schnelle, *Office Landscape* proposed an office planning solution measured by communication demand within the workplace. With partitions eliminated, large spaces could be designed to be decently lit and serviced. This model also encourages a more open and transparent layout in plan, in which the use of daylighting and more efficient circulation can be realized. *Office Landscape* created a worker-centric model that enhanced the efficiency of communication between employers and employees.

Although labeled a progressive proposition at the time, *Office Landscape* neglected a series of spatial design

problems. While the concept did emphasize an open plan layout, it failed to consider the possibility of the flexible furniture, which resulted in a lack of adaptability of the workplace. The use of fixed furniture sets neglected the programmatic potential of repurposing the workplace through a rearrangement of the furniture by employees. While innovative from a space planning perspective, *Office Landscape* used conventional standard furniture whose appearance was slightly adjusted to include a few contemporary decorative features. Such furniture could not be well adapted to the new working pattern, which requires a variety of differentiated work postures.

The sociopolitical polemic at the time limited the designers' vision of creating a truly collaborative environment. *Office Landscape*, developed during Northern Europe's post-war Social Democratic movement, sought to eliminate the hierarchical space-status relationship within the workplace. It was intended to foster more egalitarian management by encouraging different levels of staff to sit together on an open floor plan. The *Office Landscape* eliminated walls and built an office with no doors to be closed. However, in translating the ideology into design practice, the seemingly freely-placed furniture was arranged in an intentional configuration based on work paths and roles within the office. Such a strategy failed to create a comprehensively collaborative space whose organization demanded a systematic thinking on the design of space and the potential of cross-programming.

*Office Landscape* focused on achieving a mechanical high productivity. The excessive emphasis on productivity made it overlook other relevant factors, such as the comfort of the employees, the creativity of space, or other design-added value, including the possibility of branding and advertising the company through space planning and design.

With respect to the current trends of creative office design, the goal of *Landscaping Furniture* is to address the aforementioned deficiencies of the *Office Landscape* concept.

BuzzFeed is the leading independent digital media company delivering news and entertainment to hundreds of millions of people around the world. The headquarters of BuzzFeed in Los Angeles was designed in 2013 by JIDK, an interior design firm located in New York. The office exemplifies how the modularity and mobility of infill can flexibly repurpose the workplace based on work needs and innovatively promote workplace values.

In this social news and entertainment company, customized table with wheels are utilized. The customized tables are of the same design, and can be easily relocated according to different modes of communication or different activities happening in the space. The monumental



Modular and mobile workstation at BuzzFeed in Los Angeles, CA  
Peter Kubilus, 2014.

tables produce multiple composition within the same space. Different geometrical relationships in plan indicate different spatial relationships, which leads to the variety of interactions and conversations among people.

The identical units provide a modularity among themselves, aiming to create a flexible workspace to be repurposed. The rearrangement of the furniture can create diversified forms of spatial division as well as various patterns of circulation within the same space. The inclusion of wheels on each unit encourages the employees to design their own space. Such mobility and temporality implies the fluidity of data flow and the high speed of information exchange rate, which metaphorically metaphorically the image of BuzzFeed as a digital media company.

The *The End of Sitting* is an installation at the crossroads of visual art, architecture, philosophy and empirical science. It was



Workspace composition at BuzzFeed in Los Angeles, CA  
Peter Kubilus, 2014.

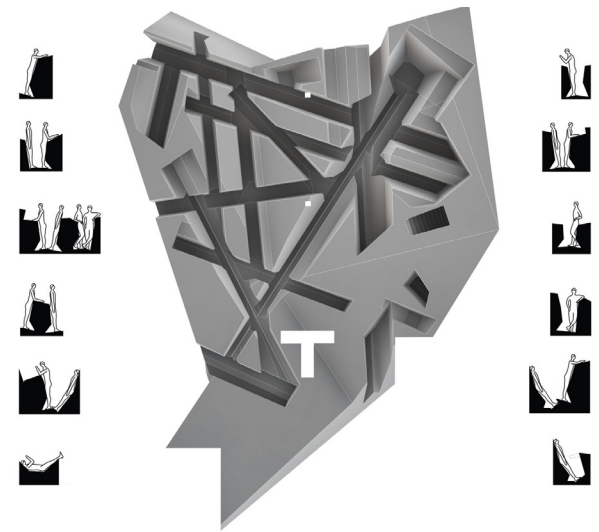
designed by the multidisciplinary studio RAAAF in 2014. As an experimental artistic practice, *The End of Sitting* inspires the implementation of differentiated work postures in workplace.

The experimental design aims to explore the relationship between the body and its surroundings. Workers are encouraged to lean, perch, or even lie down. The large, three-dimensional, continuous masses in different shapes vary from waist-height up to shoulder-height. Some naturally become leaning posts, or ledges for putting a laptop on; others work together to frame spaces that people can sandwich themselves in between, and some are perfect for lying on top of. Users are encouraged to interact and thus find comfortable ways to work in this innovative work landscape.

In this project, the traditional working posture and furniture are challenged by continuous pieces of furniture within a single system. It falls on the categorical boundary of the



*The End of Sitting* installation at Looiersgracht 60 in Amsterdam, NL  
Jan Kempnaers, 2014



Detail of *The End of Sitting* installation in Amsterdam, NL  
RAAF, 2014

infill and the structure/space, and demonstrates how the infill can function as a landscaping force that actively and seamlessly blends the interior elements and the building structure into an inseparable system. Apart from introducing differentiated work postures, the pieces of the installation go beyond the category of “objects” and start to gain spatial quality. These spatial components of varying shapes and sizes also encourage cross-programming – different activities are encouraged to take place on the same piece of furniture.

One Workplace is a commercial office furniture dealership in Northern California. The headquarters of One Workplace in Santa Clara was designed by Design Blitz, a full-service architecture and interior design firm. In the headquarters of One Workplace, formal continuity is presented through the dominating piece of infill in the center of the space.

As a collaborative process, the project brought together Design Blitz's expertise in workplace architecture and One Workplace's special knowledge of furniture to create a layered environment. The concept of the design was to create a combination of office, showroom, and workspace with an open layout dominated by the "boomerang," a curving two-tiered platform in the center of the open space. The elevated conference room and observation platform allows member of the One Workplace team to quickly survey the floor with each product in action and showcase for customers how a variety of systems solutions can intermix to create a unified, flexible and layered approach to workplace layout. It gives prospective buyers the ability to see exactly how their products will interact and solve various office space problems. The continuous platform is surrounded by furniture of different scales: shared workstations located around the work café or other soft seating areas set up for mobile workers.



Main Workspace at One Workplace in Santa Clara, CA  
Bruce Damonte, 2013.



Central "boomerang" at One Workplace in Santa Clara, CA  
Bruce Damonte, 2013.

One Workplace mapped the experiences of both customers and users by the continuous furniture resembling forms found in nature, which is the key to create a more efficient work flow and a more elaborate working experience. It mixes office, showroom, and workspace together, transforming the conventional working environment into one that serves the needs of both its employees and customers. The scattering touch points helped to create a reduced workstation footprint and increased the mobility of the workflow. The design also produces design-added value by serving as a branding strategy to reflect the company's identity. As a result, the visitors have a wonderful tour of the offices while the staff has a fun and unique working environment.

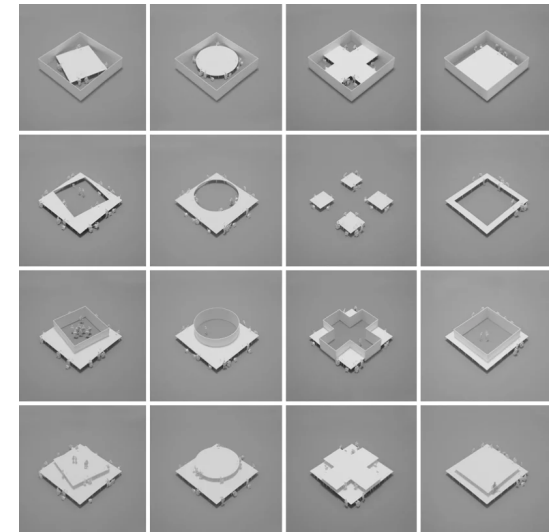
Pinterest is a web and mobile application company that operates a software system called Pinterest. It is a social network that allows users to visually share and discover new interests by posting images or videos to their own or

others' boards and browsing what other users have pinned. The headquarters in San Francisco were designed by First Office, where the extension of company branding is presented through the cultural and physical framework set by infill.

Four "houses" are inserted into the warehouse, with clusters of tables scattered around, forming a large gathering space at their center. There are no cubicles or hierarchies. The giant furniture of different shape defines positive and negative, and carries different activities, either collaborative or individual. Different monumental tables encourage people to invent another way of occupying a workplace, such as having group collaboration, organizing a meeting, or even coming together for a collective lunch. The democratic, circular table can become a lockdown room for engineers on a deadline. All around, white and glass surfaces can turn into white boards, pin boards, and graffiti walls. With objects, sketches, and



Conference room at Pinterest HQ in San Francisco, CA  
Naho Kubota, 2013.



Models of tables for Pinterest HQ in San Francisco, CA  
All of the Above / First Office, 2013.

ideas formed through social contact and activity, the atmosphere is set up and the cultural framework is developed.

The office environment creates a cultural atmosphere and company identity, which is crucial and indispensable in a creative office, apart from efficiency and productivity. Offering an abstract framework where collaborative, social, and emotional relationships transform the architectural space produces a sense of belonging for the workers. People working there will feel encouraged to contribute their ideas – to fill in the blank, just like the Pinterest website itself. This cultural framework was physically represented through the organization of the space by means of *Landscaping Furniture*, an approach for each person to take part in the creation of company culture.

New creative offices reveal a current design ideology. Such ideology, which can be recognized as *Landscaping Furniture*, pursues an innovative combination of the design of the



infill and the design of space for comprehensive workplace design. *Landscaping Furniture* illustrates an innovative design strategy that employs infill as a generative feature that dictates not only the design of the interior, but also the overall architectural space of the workplace.

The important features of a creative office include an enhanced level of productivity, the establishment of an innovative culture, and a platform of self-advertising and other related design-added value. With *Landscaping Furniture* implemented, a high level of productivity is actualized through the creation of an adaptable workplace. Such adaptability is built upon the modularity and mobility of the infill. Beyond that, an innovative culture is realized through an enhancement in the spatial creativity and social interaction. Such enhancement is achieved by employing furniture that accommodates differentiated work postures and is equipped with formal continuity. The design-added value is achieved through designing the infill to be a platform of self-advertising and company branding.

Archdaily. "One Workplace / Design Blitz," 2013.

Archdaily. "Pinterest Headquarters / All of the Above + First Office + Schwartz and Architecture," 2013.

Archdaily. "The End of Sitting / RAAAF," 2014.

BuzzFeed. "About BuzzFeed," 2018.

Meng, Andy. "What is Pinterest and how does it work?" Jan 20, 2014.

Pile, John. *Open Office Planning: A Handbook for Interior Designers and Architects*, 1978.



*The Creative Corridor*

Seungbin Choi and Brian Lee

Courtyard at TBWA\Chiat\Day in Playa Del Rey, CA  
Benny Chan, 1998.

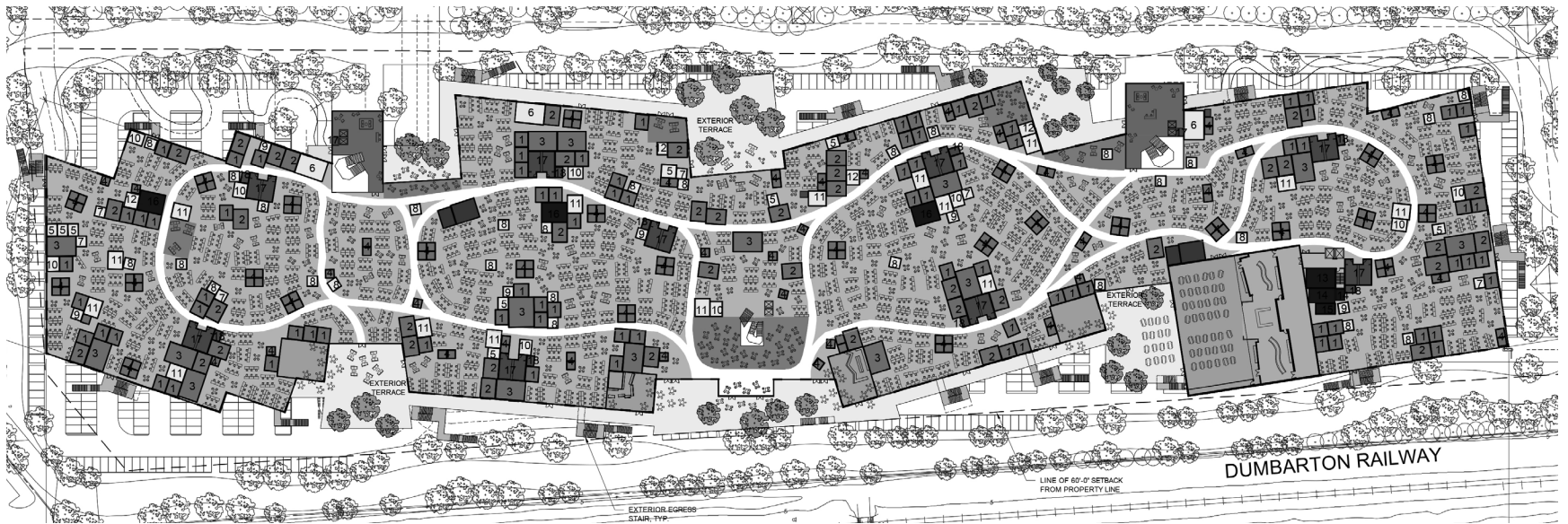
In creative office environments, nurturing a culture that allows for the production of new ideas plays a substantial role in a company's success. Furthermore, a constant flow of new, good ideas is critical to a company's successful development. This is why today's leading tech companies have begun to pay more attention to the places in which their employees work. By facilitating interactions between employees, the office space acts as the medium through which ideas come about. This applies not only to program spaces such as meeting rooms or lounges, but also to the interstitial spaces that connect them, such as corridors. While the term "corridor" suggests certain uses or spatial qualities tied to a standard office setting, some creative offices have started to challenge these standards to augment the creative potentials that corridors can provide. Such modified types of corridors can be categorized as *Creative Corridors*.

The corridor is the circulation space that connects all the rooms and desks in the office. Unlike the designated program spaces, the corridor is the space through which people move for different purposes; more importantly, it gathers all different kinds of people. In this regard, the corridor can facilitate the formation of casual and informal relationships amongst people who might not otherwise have had the opportunity.

While the traditional corridor's main function is a path that connects one end to the other, it is also a place where individuals are susceptible to distraction, where serendipitous encounters with others happen and random ideas spark.

Taking advantage of these characteristics, *Creative Corridors* activate circulation space by maximizing visual and physical connections with adjacent workspaces, increasing the chance for cross-disciplinary interactions between people and integrating various programs which encourage creativity and innovation. As a result, the *Creative Corridor* bears some characteristics such as functional inefficiency, transparency and multi-functionality. With these physical features, the (Creative) corridor is no longer there just because it needs to be: in fact it is quite the opposite. The Creative Corridor can be a driver of office design by providing a space where people run into one another, where conversations begin, and where different ideas collide. It is the heart of the informal interactions that foster and enhance opportunities to generate new ideas.

Facebook uses their corridors to engender ideas by encouraging such interactions between employees. While the development of high-rise buildings engendered the vertically-organized office layouts, Facebook expanded their office horizontally to fully utilize the advantages of the *Creative Corridor*. Vertical circulation via elevators gives employees a more efficient way to move through the office; however, it reduces the horizontal movement through corridors. This vertically-oriented office type was characterized by high panel cubicles, displacing employees based upon their rank within the company's hierarchy. As a result, there was less chance of encounter between employees unless they planned the meetings. When the groups of employees are divided on a horizontal plane, they share corridors. Their circulation paths intersect and their meanderings collide. Ultimately, this slows people down, forcing them to take longer to get from one place to another. However, time spent in the in-betweens, like walking across Facebook's campus for a meeting, means more potential for serendipitous interaction. To achieve this, Facebook employs strategies like redundant pathways, where



Plan of Facebook HQ in Menlo Park, CA  
*Business Insider*, 2013.

employees interact in both directions. The result may be inefficient, but it is a functional inefficiency that *Creative Corridors* deliberately create.

In Frank Gehry's design for the new Facebook campus, which opened in 2015, the application of the Creative Corridor is evident throughout the office. At 430,000 sq ft, the office has the largest open floor plan in the world, large enough to hold 2,800 employees. With underground parking below and a roof garden above, the interior is one giant space – one designed to foster the free exchange of ideas. This warehouse-type space is 24 feet high, leaving room for a number of small structures within the larger space holding conference rooms, restaurants and cafes that scatter like cottages in a village. All these spaces are connected with winding corridors, creating a small urbanism inside. The social network is not just the foundational idea that runs the company but also instilled in their workplace. Gehry designed horizontal, neighborhood-like, campuses that promote movement and interaction, as opposed to isolation and hierarchy.

What is conspicuous in Facebook is their proactive implementation of informal gathering spaces, supplying chalkboards and meeting pods around the corridor to facilitate collaboration. Since innovation and collaboration are critical to the company's success, all the design components are geared toward making it easy for people to talk. If two people run into each other in a corridor and begin a conversation that requires technical discussion, idea generation, or any topic that might benefit from being written down, it is best if they can write it down in these areas. With *Creative Corridors* that encourage people to communicate and write down ideas, Facebook's office is replete with informal gathering space, from large open spaces to tiny corners with whimsical furniture. The strategy of using the *Creative Corridor* as an informal meeting place is apparent in the company's philosophy; the *Creative Corridor* in Facebook can thus be seen as an extension of the company's demand for constant innovation, creating an ideal spatial condition to facilitate informal interactions between employees.

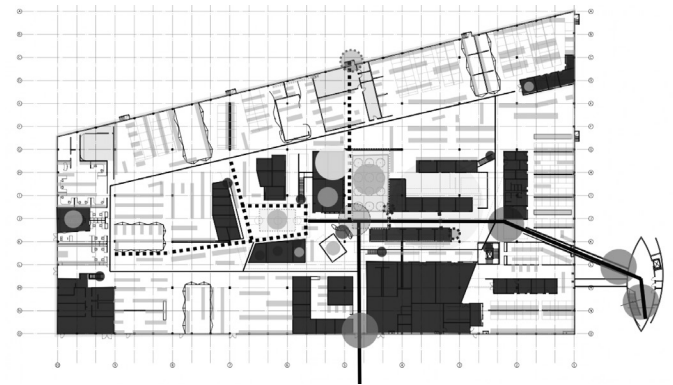


Interior view of Facebook HQ in Menlo Park, CA  
*PAE Engineers, 2016.*

Traditional corridors in offices often are walled off by adjacent program spaces and offices, resulting in an introverted, doorway-lined tunnel that leads to a certain destination. This physical and visual barrier between the office space and the corridor cuts off any communication opportunities between the two spaces. Ultimately, the work produced in an individual office space will remain contained within, and neighbouring office spaces will be unaware of the chances to collaborate – even when they are working on something that is highly relevant to that work. Not all office types are suitable for this model, but in a creative office like TBWA/Chiat/Day, where collaboration within the company is critical, this introverted notion of the traditional corridor is simply against the company's ideals. One of many offices which sought to challenge accepted notions about the traditional workplace, TBWA/Chiat/Day accordingly takes advantage of the *Creative Corridor*.

Designed by Clive Wilkinson Architects in 1997, the current headquarters of TBWA/Chiat/Day in Playa Del Rey is one of the creative offices that best showcases how the *Creative Corridor* exhibits and exchanges ideas.

TBWA/Chiat/Day's 120,000 sq ft building houses over 800 employees. The company is a creative advertising agency with a reputation for quirky, "disruptive" work. The project is a renovation of a large existing warehouse space with 27-foot high ceilings which consolidates the company in one space as one community. The project became known as an "Advertising City" housed within the warehouse envelope. The office is organized as a grid of free-standing structures along broad pedestrian alleyways, with different departments clustered together to form work neighborhoods. The entire complex is bound together by a network of "outdoor streets," stairs, and elevated walkways – a network of *Creative Corridor*. What qualifies this network of circulation spaces as *Creative Corridors* is its transparency: by removing the visual barrier between the work spaces and corridors, transparency allows for the natural flow of information between the two spaces. Although the office is compartmentalized into individual



Plan Diagram of TBWA\Chiat\Day in Playa Del Rey, CA  
*Spatial Affairs Bureau, 1998.*



Interior view of TBWA\Chiat\Day in Playa Del Rey, CA  
Benny Chan, 1998.

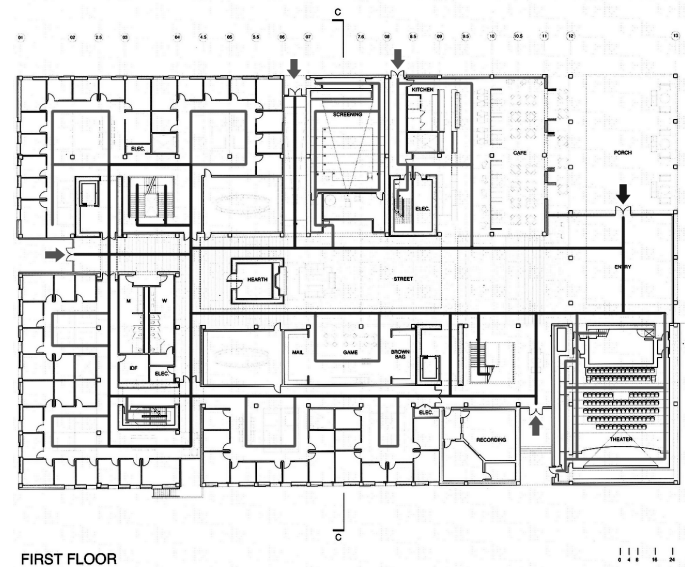
spaces, cubicles, and desks, these office spaces are still very open and transparent to promote constant and maximized sharing of creative work within the “city.” By removing the walls facing the corridors and utilizing low cubicle partitions, one can see directly into each workspace when walking along any of the “streets,” or elevated walkways.

Such openness is not only applied horizontally, but vertically. The space’s central axis is “Main Street,” which is flanked by yellow, three-story-tall, shed-like buildings. These structures house the two-person pairs that make up the company’s top advertising teams. Walking down the Main Street, one can view employees in all three levels working in their own spaces, exhibiting the ideas which they are currently working on. This transparency in the office displays employee activity, thereby additionally creating a certain level of surveillance and improving productivity.

In the traditional sense, the corridor is a space divider. Along a narrow corridor in the middle, rooms are parallel on both sides, and departments are grouped according to the corridor configuration. Because companies were formerly more focused on production, it was necessary to divide groups and departments to ensure that workers would focus on their job. Corridors were therefore considered as a default space that only divided groups of people. Departmentalizing the space makes people stay in their office, reducing the freedom to explore outside of their designated area. However, as today’s companies are increasingly concerned with creativity, the corridor needs to change its mono-functional characteristics. In the creative office environment, corridors are where people relax, exchange ideas, work in teams, or even meet with clients. Instead of dividing spaces, *Creative Corridors* merge departments and house multiple programs to generate more human interactions.

With architect Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, Steve Jobs, then the CEO of Pixar, designed his company's headquarters in 1999. This two-story building provides 218,000 sq ft of space for about 700 employees. Jobs envisioned the headquarters to be a place that promoted encounters and unplanned collaborations. Given that collaboration has recently been one of the major topics in office design, and that the late 90's office setting was filled with cubicles, his ideas were ahead of his time.

Pixar's campus design originally separated different employee disciplines into different buildings: one for computer scientists, another for animators, and a third building for maintenance. Jobs recognized that separating these groups, each with their own cultures and approaches to problem-solving, discouraged them from sharing ideas and solutions. Because Jobs was interested in unplanned collaborations in the office, he envisioned a campus where these encounters could take place; the design therefore included a great atrium space that acts as a central hub for the campus. Jobs believed that if a building doesn't encourage collaboration, the workers will lose a lot of the innovation and creativity that is sparked by serendipity. Accordingly, the focus of the building's design was to make people get out of their offices and mingle in the central atrium with people they might not otherwise see. This atrium can be seen as a *Creative Corridor* where people freely circulate and have encounters. There is a reception area, employee mailboxes, cafe, foosball, fitness center, viewing rooms, and a large theater in this large corridor. All these components are mixed in such a way that the boundaries between them are not clear. Although this setting does not seem like an efficient use of space, it makes people run into each other, and adjacent programs are more welcoming for the employees. With the application of the *Creative Corridor* model, Jobs ultimately succeeded in creating a single building that housed the entire Pixar team.



FIRST FLOOR

Circulation diagram of Pixar HQ in Emeryville, CA  
*Jessica Castillo blog, 2012*



Atrium corridor at Pixar HQ in Emeryville, CA  
*eGarage, 2011.*

As contemporary companies continue to require more human interaction and communication to generate new ideas, they are extending the idea of creative office design into the interstitial spaces. From Facebook's horizontal, meandering corridors that promote different people crossing paths; TBWA/Chiat/Day's "open streets" that offer the view of employees working in their own spaces and exhibiting ideas; to Pixar's central atrium corridor that facilitates various programs for gathering people, these are all successful examples that exhibit the essential characteristics of the *Creative Corridor*. As explored in these examples, the design of the creative office goes beyond the designated workplace to promote work-related values in non-work-related spaces like corridors. Corridors that promote certain values through the physical characteristics such as functional inefficiency, transparency and multi-functionality can be categorized as *Creative Corridors*. Aside from planned meetings in offices and meeting rooms, the *Creative Corridor* is where people interact, where relationships begin and develop. It is the one of the main facilitators of the creative office environment and the platform for all things both communal and informal.





*Decentralization of Communication  
in the Workplace*

Tianyu Kan and Xiangru Xu

Interior view of Facebook HQ in Menlo Park, CA  
New York Times, 2017.

Communication in the context of the workplace means the effective imparting of information and exchange of ideas regarding commercial, professional, or bureaucratic chores between multifarious workforces. The workplace is designed as a container for communication scenarios, including regular meetings, team discussions, work handovers, and task allocation. Face-to-face communication, an important activity in the traditional workplace design, is strictly regulated. In a traditional workforce structure, employees are assigned to fixed desks or enclosed rooms to undertake their respective duties, and only meet with others in a specific meeting room when it is needed. Within in the structure of the traditional office face-to-face communication is centralized.

However, in the article “Workplaces That Move People,” unpredictable encounters and unplanned interactions between knowledge workers, both inside and outside the organization, contribute immensely to the improvement of their work performance.<sup>1</sup> Spontaneous communication can occur everywhere outside meeting rooms, including corridors, lounges, and dining halls. The result is a shift of workplace communication scenarios from centralized to decentralized. In response to this shift, centralized communication in a traditional workplace has to be re-evaluated; many companies accordingly make an attempt to root face-to-face communication in their work as much as possible. The decentralization of face-to-face communication is mainly achieved through an open plan and blurred boundaries between programs, which

obscures the line between informal and formal interaction to create more potential occasions for communication.

Looking into the emergence of communication in a workplace can provide another aspect to review the design of a workplace. The recent transformation of architectural spaces in workplaces due to the impact of decentralization of face-to-face communication can be reviewed through Facebook Headquarters, WeWork coworking spaces, and Pinterest Headquarters.

As one of the pioneers of online social media, Facebook provides a digital social platform where people meet, chat, and communicate without physical limitations, diversifying means of communication among people. Although their work focuses on digital communication, Facebook values important face-to-face communication is in a workplace amongst its various departments and more than a thousand engineers. Mark Zuckerberg, founder of Facebook, considered



Interior view of Facebook Headquarters in Menlo Park, CA  
*Modlar, 2015.*



Model of Facebook Headquarters in Menlo Park, CA  
*Dezeen, 2012.*

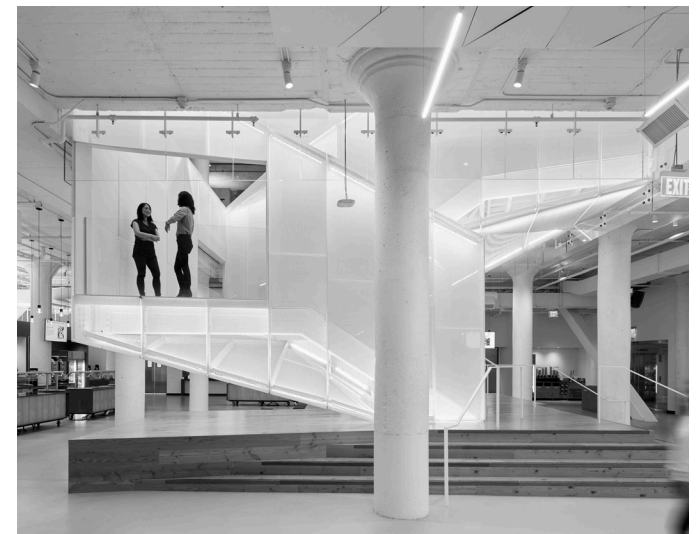
the headquarters a space intimate enough to meet the major demands for collaboration between employees.<sup>2</sup> The campus preferences a flattened spatial hierarchy rather than separated office cubes so that employees would not be isolated from each other as seen through the immense open plan of the building.

The open plan eliminates physical barriers between individuals and groups as much as possible, which allows communication to be distributed everywhere due to better physical proximity. Office tables are scattered over the floor and solid walls are discarded to form the open plan.

During work hours, people sit next to each other without any physical barriers. Potential face-to-face communication exists everywhere; even if they stand up for a while, they can have eye contact with others. They are fully engaged with each other and interact more during work hours, regardless of their

communication or content. Its workplace is permeable to the employee, the community, and the information they share.

Pinterest is a web and mobile application company that operates an online system designed to discover online information, mainly using images and, on a shorter scale, GIFs and videos. The site was founded by Ben Silbermann, Paul Sciarra, and Evan Sharp. Pinterest CEO Ben Silbermann concluded the company as a “catalog of ideas” that inspires users to “go out and do that thing,” rather than as an image-based social network. To accommodate more than 800 employees and allow for growth in the future, the company pursued its new headquarters in San Francisco’s tech-rich South of Market district, designed by the local team of IwamotoScott Architecture and Breton Architects. Its four-story building accommodates offices, meeting rooms, and other amenities. It is especially famous for these amenities, including,



Central staircase at Pinterest Headquarters in San Francisco, CA  
*Architectural Record, 2016.*



Dining hall at Pinterest Headquarters in San Francisco, CA  
*Architectural Record*, 2016.

but not limited to, a dining room, coffee bar, and myriad social spaces for lounging and spit-balling, where people can gather together to communicate with each other. In Pinterest's Headquarters, amenity space becomes the key to decentralizing face-to-face communication.

The office's defining element, the "Knitting Stair," wraps the central staircase in a perforated steel and that intersects at the midpoint. The combination of the design, the light, and selected materials dominates the staircase as the heart of the headquarters. Thanks to its large scale, it has become a popular gathering place in the building. Employees love to occasionally stop by and talk to each other for a while at a time.

Organized around a large central atrium and stair, its dining area takes the form of a large town hall on the ground floor, with large openings. The pleasant spatial quality encourages people to sit down and talk more. Since it is accessible

to everyone 24 hours a day, a lot of them are willing to go downstairs and have a conversation in the dining hall with others. The flip-up desks in the dining halls are also designed to be removable so that the dining hall can also be used as an event space. The communication is then partially transformed from workplace and meeting room to dining area. Some corridor areas are devoted to social areas as well. These amenities together create a collegial sense of intimacy, which finally enables the decentralization of communication in the Pinterest Headquarters.

WeWork is an American leasing company that offers shared workspaces for entrepreneurs, freelancers, startups and small businesses by selling monthly memberships. Instead of being a landlord, it strives to create a subculture community by gathering individual cohorts together. It operates relatively small-scale workplace compared to Facebook Campus and Pinterest Headquarters; unlike those big corporations,



Hot desk area of WeWork - Fine Arts Building in Los Angeles, CA  
Photo by Authors, 2018.



Interior view of WeWork - California St. in San Francisco, CA  
*Curbed San Francisco, 2016.*

however, its workplace needs to coordinate multiple individuals and groups with respective targets and issues under one roof. Decentralization of communication naturally lies in WeWork's business model because it not only happens inside an independent organization, but also between different players. Achieving the balance between private and public and promising decent communication at the same time becomes a difficult task for WeWork. Multiple layers of transparency are brought into the workplace to meet their requirement of communication by using architectural language.

Similar to Facebook's open-plan, there is no physical barrier in hot desk areas which allows communication to happen anywhere. Without any designated desks, people who own monthly memberships can sit wherever they want. They normally have different neighborhoods every day so that they can explore with other groups

and outsiders. As communication is not limited between the same people – it is decentralized in another way.

Transparent partition walls in WeWork coworking spaces enable visual communication is dispersed everywhere. When people pass by, they can have a quick look into the office and be aware of what others are doing. It boosts the communication between different groups while ensures their privacy.

Physical space could mentor the distribution of communication to a certain extent. By designing different spatial qualities, architecture can promote communicating activities and increase the possibility of encounters and unpredictable interaction. Facebook Headquarters, Pinterest Headquarters, and WeWork coworking spaces exemplify how architecture forms and programs contribute to the decentralization of communication in the workplace. Facebook Headquarters is a typical case of open plan that allows face-to-face communication wherever and whenever. Pinterest Headquarter proposed amenity areas as communication venues so that communication is broken up within their leisure time. By developing multiple layers of transparency in WeWork, communication is not only dispersed in space, but also between different people. It does not matter if the content of communication is all related to work. Rather than forcing employees or workers to communicate more in the workplace, inventing spaces which provide much more potential communicating chance by programming and spatial arrangement is more effective, cogent and lasting.

1| Ben Weber et al. "Workspace The Moves People," *Harvard Business Review*, 2014.

2| Etherington, Rose. "Frank Gehry to design new Facebook headquarters," *Dezeen*, 2012.

# *Community*

Mark Kamish, Willem Swart, and Miaojie Zhang



Continuous ribbon desk at Avex Group HQ in Tokyo, Japan  
*WWD Japan, 2017.*

A community is any social body with at least one commonality existing in the same space at the same time. From two people gossiping by the water cooler to the entire company watching a presentation, communities coalesce, dissipate, and recombine within the workplace throughout the day—even though the design of the space they inhabit frequently discourages social phenomena. The stereotypical workplace diminishes community formation through rigid organizational hierarchies, artfully illustrated by the grid of fortress-like cubicles in Jacques Tati’s film *Playtime* (1967). Innovation arises from cooperation and community rather than individuals.

Creative offices differentiate themselves from traditional workplaces through unusual architectural features; the environmental disruption of conventional offices emulates the disruptive character of many creative office business models. Employees seem to gravitate toward novel conditions in space. Therefore, many creative offices invest in unorthodox objects and furniture as totems around which communities congregate. The archetypal monolith that unites a tribe of early hominids in Stanley Kubrick’s *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) shows the organizing power of iconoclastic objects. In the workplace, these “unexpected” features are not random, but intentionally designed to coordinate the hierarchy of community scales that comprise creative coworking ecosystems.

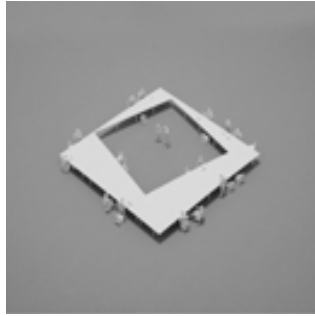
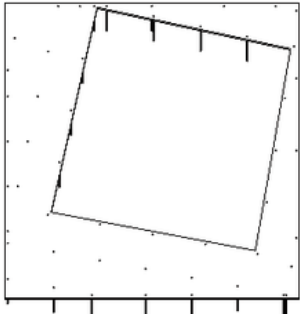
A minute community describes a partnership: two people, the most basic collaborative unit. A pair is a unique

social condition, the smallest possible plurality. It’s also the only social body in which all of the members give each other exclusive, direct attention; a pair of people spatially orient to each other like two points in a straight line. Larger groups manifest a web of interactions, and thereby lack the inherent intimacy of minute communities.

In professional contexts, a minute community is more properly described as a partnership. Cubicles prohibit partnerships by segregating employees from one another, whereas the more flexible, open plans of creative offices enable people to more readily work together. Cross Campus El Segundo utilizes a wide, habitable wall rather than individual partitions. As a solid object, it separates the first floor into distinct zones; voids cut out of its poche create enough space for two people to work facing each other. Each cavity houses two seats and a table. The orientation of the wall forces direct communication, and the closeness of the alcove engenders a spatial intimacy appropriate for minute communities.



Habitable wall at Cross Campus in El Segundo, CA  
Photo by Authors, 2018.



“White on White” table for Pinterest HQ in San Francisco, CA  
First Office, 2013.

Larger than this, three to nine people compose a small community. Whereas partnerships are bilateral, small communities are multilateral relationships, otherwise known as teams. Despite the increased social complexity, small communities retain personal familiarity that allows for intense interactions such as heated disagreements, but also meaningful compromise. By virtue of having more members than a partnership, small communities also sustain a diversity of people and opinions. This plurality is important for problem solving. When working on a common goal, a small community becomes a team.

A charrette table is a place where teams organize to design solutions. This furniture typology is architecturally challenged by First Office’s “White on White” table, a concept for the Pinterest Headquarters. This oversized table is a large forum for an entire team to convene around. The void inside of it produces narrower parts of the surface to allow smaller teams and even partnerships to temporarily break away and work

together. This solid/void design recognizes the versatility of small communities, their ability to break down and recombine.

The transition between small and medium communities marks the threshold between direct and indirect connectivity. It is not possible for all of the members of bigger communities to directly relate to one another. As opposed to a partnership or a team, an entire company represents the medium scale, which are communities organized through immediate adjacency. Various small teams are situated next to each other, and though the nature of their work differs, their proximity loosely connects them. Within a company the human resources, accounting, sales, and management departments all constitute separate teams, but they are spatially accessible to one another. This loose interconnection allows a company’s teams to specialize while providing support for each other.

In many creative offices, such as the Square Headquarters, stairs have been designed to bring people from different departments together. Stadium stairs are scaled to function both as gathering places in addition to vertical transit. They constitute neutral, liminal territory between floors so that employees do not have to choose whose area to meet in. They are also a space for people to convene for company-wide events, such as presentations and screenings. However, people cannot walk up excessive flights of stairs, and eventually they will have to switchback. Therefore, stairs cannot sustain communities any bigger than medium scale.

Members of the large scale community are transitively connected to one another: the operation is simply too large for everyone to be immediately adjacent to each other, but they are related to one another like the links of a chain. Large communities are even bigger than a single company – they are corporations. In such hierarchical



organizations, it is unlikely that employees interact with anyone except for their immediate supervisors and subordinates. The chain of command comes to define their social interactions and their place in the office building.



Stadium stairs at Square HQ in San Francisco, CA  
Matthew Millman, 2017.



Single continuous table at Avex Group HQ in Tokyo, Japan  
*Japan-Architects*, 2017.

Avex Group Japan occupies a tall tower in Minami-Aoyama, Tokyo, but nonetheless engenders a sense of community through design continuity. All of the employees, from the first floor to the CEO's office, are conceptually connected by a single table that weaves through the building's many floors. As a result of its exaggerated length, the table takes on multiple functions within this creative working environment. Its height changes throughout the building: the table rises and falls to provide seating, standing desks, gateways, nooks, and walls. It undulates through the floors to subdivide an open plan into different programmatic areas. At times it is a surface for individual desks but in other cases it frames spaces where minute, small, and medium communities may convene. The table's universality within Avex—its ability to juggle communities of many sizes—makes it a symbol for the large community. This final scale of community is an amalgam of all of the previous social groups within the office. It is a loose network of partnerships, teams, and company-sized communities that are united

more by an idea than a direct relationship. In this case, the long table represents the idea of Avex as an organization – an identity that unites hundreds of workers into one large community.

Community refers to connected people. Innovation and collaboration depend on group cooperation, so the design of communities within creative offices is important to the success of those enterprises. In terms of efficient operation, comfortable working environment, and sustainable growth, a company determines the desired scales of community and how to encourage their dynamic formation. Architecture that reinvents conventions of office design produces novel conditions for communities to coalesce.

1| Michael A. West et al. The Essentials of Teamworking: International Perspectives, 2005.



*Post-type Architecture*

Alexander Abugov and Joshua Nelson

Music performance at Podshare in Los Angeles, CA  
*Medium*, 2017.

Most activities no longer require a specific building type. Building typology assumes a connection between architectural form and program, classifying buildings into discrete categories based on their differences. Recognizable forms typically correspond to the activities prescribed within. However, due to a shift in life-workstyle brought about by the seamless conveniences of mobile technology, the importance of this classification and correspondence is fading. This phenomenon is called *post-type architecture*. *Post-type architecture* exhibits an indifference to the connection between architectural form and program. It responds to growing networks of information and implements interchangeable elements to suit contemporary economic and cultural conditions. Coworking and co-living businesses are capitalizing on this attitude of indifference and interchangeability to unlock new opportunities. Through the analysis of three coworking case studies, the decoupling of program and type reduces space to an elemental condition that frees it to respond to contemporary needs.

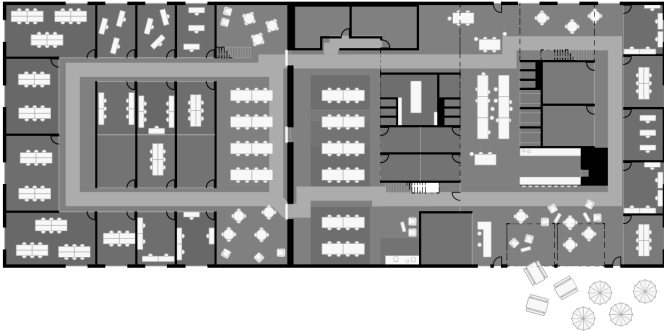
WeWork is a coworking business that leases buildings, fills them with desks and amenities, and sells use of its space through monthly memberships. Its model of space allocation is deployed in a variety of building types across the world. This model replaces the centrality of the office building as a platform for work and subverts the viability of its typical leasing model. Economic shifts make space designed for manufacturing more profitable when resold as office space in smaller units and for shorter durations.

WeWork does not change the nature of a building, but fills it with the creative aesthetics, conveniences, and community that its members desire. It then maximizes the earning potential of space by dividing leases into smaller units, providing affordable and flexible lease-like membership products in spaces that would otherwise require considerable long-term investment and maintenance.

Proving the economic validity of decoupling program and building type, WeWork leverages its brand and membership base with a trend towards becoming a total provider. They furnish living, working, and learning through a consolidation of capital and resources that is then redistributed under their terms throughout the city. This lets WeWork acquire long-term leases regardless of building type because they reprogram space according to the most profitable emerging economic and cultural conditions. With over 175,000 members across the globe, WeWork is expanding



Casual indoor/outdoor space at WeWork in Culver City, CA  
*Office Lovin'*, 2017.



Plan showing provisions of space and amenities of WeWork in Culver City, CA  
Drawing by Authors, 2018.

its services, catering to corporate clients, branching out to offer co-living and upscale gym access with WeLive and Rise by We. The company even plans to run WeGrow, a Bjarke Ingels-designed school with “a conscious entrepreneurial approach to education” at their headquarters in New York. WeWork’s reach is reflected in its \$20 billion valuation, demonstrating the company’s ability to produce value in subleasing space, creating mini-cities of convenience and specific aesthetics within larger cities around the world.

WeWork recently acquired Case to collect data that informs the redistribution of their resources, producing new networks across the city and world. Case is a building information and technology company that uses the mobile device as a means of collecting spatial and temporal data about how people use architecture. By triangulating the locations of mobile devices in the office (the app is required for all members), Case mines the data produced. The data collected enables the company

to optimize the layouts of their offices to most efficiently and profitably distribute membership products based on how those members use space. The networks of information produced here are capable of responding to fluctuating user needs while optimizing the economic potential of space.

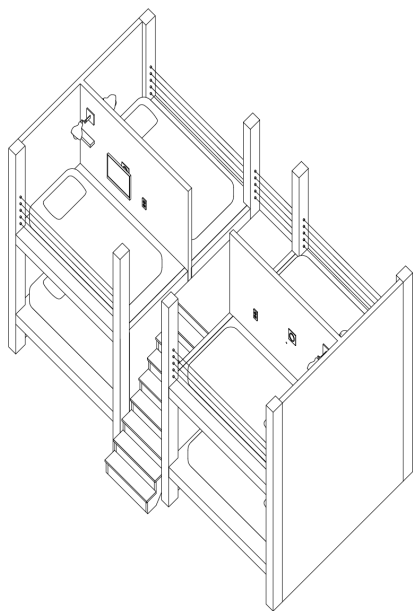
WeWork uses these technologies to design spaces representing a condition of *post-type architecture*. Rather than working directly on the building, a practice more closely linked with building typology, the designer becomes a choreographer of systems and information. The technologies used for design look less like representations of buildings—drawings—and more like the processes that produce them.

PodShare is a coworking and co-living company organized around an aggregation of pods which can fit into any building type. The pod, PodShare’s trademark product, is one module of rentable, personal space. Pod rental also



Cluster of pods and their inhabitants at PodShare in Los Angeles, CA  
*progrss*, 2017.

includes access to all locations across the city, promoting the lifestyle of an urban nomad. Someone staying in the Hollywood location could shower, charge their devices, and wait out traffic at the Venice location before returning home to their pod. This network model considers location in relationship to the city as a whole, providing members greater flexibility for a lifestyle dictated by urban programming.



Axonometric of Podshare's pod features  
Drawing by Authors, 2018.

Like WeWork's ability to fit out coworking space in a variety of buildings, PodShare also has a keen understanding of the incongruence between program and building type. Podshare advertises that it seeks "1,000-3,000 sq ft [spaces] with at least 12 ft ceilings for any lease duration, nearby public transportation." Location and connectivity surpass type and form as the most important qualities of a space. As a repeatable module, the pod is a product that creates value—space to sleep, work, access to utilities and amenities—whether in a repurposed warehouse or the corner of a highrise.

By commodifying community, PodShare leverages the social interaction its members crave by minimizing privacy.

This allows the company to profit from a low square footage per occupant while providing members an antidote to the social alienation typical of urban dwellers. Abolishing the concept of privacy—even the bathrooms do not have doors on them—fosters community and makes efficient use of available resources to increase profit. A product of millennial culture, PodShare turns the lifestyle into a formula to derive maximum benefit from minimum space. All pods have outlets, wifi, lights, and mounted monitors with subscriptions to millennial necessities such as Netflix and Adobe.

PodShare disrupts the conventions of individual property ownership and leasing by promoting a flexible model of collective access to resources and services. As the lowest common denominator of personal space and efficiency, the pod fits in any building type. This condition of post-type architecture allows PodShare to establish a network across the city based on desirability, price, and proximity rather than concentration around dominant forms of real estate. The opportunities afforded to members through this network prove the access economy's power in reacting to and shaping new lifestyles.

Neon Roots is an app development firm in Los Angeles which operates out of a single family home. Their headquarters, the Wave House, merges activities that were once separated by building type to intensify an emerging casual work culture. The consolidation of their largest expenses—space for living and working—into a single expense frees capital for other ventures. However, beyond being used as a commodity, the house serves as a scene for the production and dissemination of a culture that has benefits for the company.

For the founders of Neon Roots, the combination of both working and living into a single family home provides opportunities for homeownership that may not have



Living room of single family home updated to flexible workspace at Neon Roots in Los Angeles, CA  
*Neon Roots blog, 2017.*

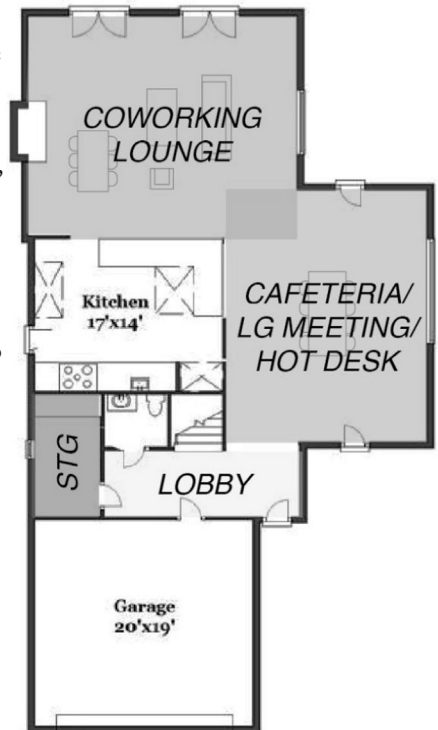
otherwise been available. Given that the median home value in LA is \$671,000, the consolidation of business and personal capital may be necessary to afford this expenditure. In this case, this real estate holding is the company's greatest asset.

Perhaps even more valuable than the house as a commodity, however, is the house as a scene for the production of culture. App developers who are participating in Neon Roots' program come to the house to work, but it also serves as a set for photographs. The dissemination of images of the house helps bolster the air of exclusivity through which the firm brands itself. This brings a physicality to the idea of social media influence: the place itself provides a point of reference for the proliferation of its image in digital space, but the digital "place" takes on a new meaning and persona that is an augmented version of the physical location.

Aside from the culture which it disseminates digitally, Neon Roots produces a new kind of work culture defined by its

candid, nonrestrictive nature. The activities of lounging and working have merged into one space, and people are motivated by a passion for the work at hand rather than the idea of a surveilling body. One employee mentions in a YouTube video: "I usually work at the breakfast bar, in case breakfast comes," suggesting a workplace that doesn't try to control where and how people work as long as the work happens. This shift from the surveillance and control typical of machine-age office buildings puts employees in charge of managing their own productivity, improving both mental health and brand image.

Rather than domestication of the workplace, or the implementation of furniture, aesthetics, and lifestyles of a home into the working environment, Neon Roots flips the process into *workplacification* of the domestic. Through this reinterpretation of the single family home as a coworking clubhouse, opportunities for home ownership, digital augmentation of physical presence, and candid work-styles are unlocked.



Plan showing transformation into workspace of Neon Roots in Los Angeles, CA  
Drawing by Authors, 2018.

These case studies undermine the idea that there has to be a connection between program and building type. WeWork is a model of space allocation adaptable to any building type. Podshare fits out any building type with a standard unit. Wave House merges separate programs under one roof. Together they demonstrate the emerging phenomenon of *post-type architecture*. Through an attitude of indifference and interchangeability, *post-type architecture* approaches design from a systematic, information-based, and even logistical outlook. *Post-type architecture* produces spaces that respond to contemporary economic and cultural conditions, rather than attempting to prescribe conventional relationships between program and building type.

- 1| "Home: WeGrow," *WeGrow*, 2017.
- 2| Bertoni, Steven. "WeWork Hits \$20 Billion Valuation in New Funding Round," *Forbes*, 2017.
- 3| "Membership Based Co-Living | Podshare Los Angeles," *Podshare*.
- 4| "Los Angeles CA Home Prices & Home Values," *Zillow*, 2018.
- 5| Entrepreneur. "OFFICELAND: Neon Roots - App Development Agency," *Youtube*, 2017.



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