



Reference Bridgestone

REFERENCE BRIDGESTONE

AWAY FROM THE CUBICLE, AND INTO A NEW, OPEN-SPACE WORKING CULTURE

Bridgestone, Japan's world market leader for tyres, reinvented face-to-face communication for its German headquarters in Bad Homburg: According to the latest scientific research, this type of exchange is faster, more efficient and more influential than communication using digital media. In collaboration with König + Neurath, the company translated these findings into communication-promoting open-space solutions using THINK.TANKs, hot desks and tea kitchens. The branch's makeover was nothing short of open-heart surgery as it took place while business as usual continued – without disruptions to the workflows: The traditional cubicle made way for a new, open-space working culture which allows the organisation to successfully take on New Work requirements.



A direct exchange through a personal meeting is a far superior form of communication compared to digital media, so the latest scientific findings. This knowledge was the driving force behind the new design of workflows at the German branch of the Japanese tyre maker, Bridgestone. Wolfgang Sabasch, Commercial Director and in charge of transforming the headquarters, explained why something had to change: Departments frequently lacked efficient communication and the intra-company e-mail ping pong caused frictions. Moreover, the market is constantly changing which is why the intention was to find an organisational answer to the changes taking place.

” The time had come to send a clear signal. “

Wolfgang Sabasch, Commercial Director

The design for Bridgestone was conceived by the well-respected *arealgroup* from Mainz, which merged the skills of asset/property managers, architects and engineers to form a comprehensive interdisciplinary pool of expertise for an open-space solution customised to individual requirements. The only areas still relying on single-user offices are sensitive ones such as HR – and even these provide maximum transparency with

their glass partitions.

Thanks to the planning – which involved gutting the premises – the company was able to reduce the floor area of 3,800 m² to 2,600 m² and do without one of the floors. However, economy of space was not the main reason behind the redesign. Instead, “faster, more efficient communication was clearly the main goal for us”, says Sabasch. That the company strives to genuinely change its working culture was simultaneously showcased by the transformation of the locations in Vienna and Zurich into open spaces.

Bridgestone completely exchanged the old office interior with a quality new interior – and König + Neurath were the leading process supporter for the future-forward design of the working world. To create an attractive, communicative environment that offers quiet spaces for focused working, we zoomed in on the acoustics. We opted for a special, sound-absorbing flooring and upholstered the reverse of the THINK.TANKs with material that offers acoustic privacy. Additionally, we equipped all THINK.TANKs with innovative conferencing technology for them to be used as either a single-user think tank or as communication spaces for team meetings or informal talks.



Sales-oriented staff who visit the office every now and then only will be able to work from 38 hot desks whose size and features are identical to that afforded by the fixed workstations. The ACTA.CLASSIC cabinet

systems with side-sliding tambour doors was used to structure the room. It also provides for the necessary storage space required by the individual working situations.



We furnished all DO.IT 4 work stations with a Flyby screen for privacy, plus a rolling cabinet for safekeeping personal belongings. A smart plus: the additional seating cushion on top of the rolling cabinet which makes this a perfect seating arrangement for an ad hoc talk.

The overall visual impression that this new officescape creates is determined by the predominantly white furniture which forms a discreet backdrop for the company's signature red and green colour scheme.

The new office world is inspiring and open while flexible enough to welcome new employees. Wolfgang Sabasch of Bridgestone was highly satisfied with the planning and implementation, after all: The transformation into an open-space solution took place during ongoing business operations and was organised to a very tight timeline – a particular logistical challenge which König + Neurath championed together with the company's staff.

The feedback regarding the new workstations is largely positive even though accepting an open space always takes a certain amount of time, as Marcus Bohrer of *arealgroup* emphasises. From his many years of professional experience, the architect knows that this new working culture also presents an opportunity towards greater tolerance and mutual consideration amongst colleagues – which bears advantages for

companies in the long run.

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