

From Cinderella to princess: consequent user orientation as successful model for stock office property

In the face of high vacancy rates and accordingly horrendous costs, owners of office properties are under enormous pressure to place their stock buildings. Drees & Sommer, in cooperation with the Fraunhofer IAO (Institute for Industrial Engineering and Organisation) and the syndicate research project Office 21, has developed solutions to optimally adjust existing buildings to the requirements of potential and actual users.

The central problem of vacancies is lacking demand due to the economically negative situation. On the other hand however, there are many lessees, who, despite the crisis, are looking for suitable premises. They can find countless offers appearing favourable at first sight – areas, which optimally support work processes, but finding economical premises of quality is extremely rare.

To customise average properties for the respective user, the Drees & Sommer network combines necessary knowledge. With the core service of construction consultancy as well as competence centres for property consulting, organisational building consultancy and facility management and, additionally, the scientific impulses of Office 21 and the Fraunhofer IAO, the necessary experiences of a strategic partnership were bundled.

Together with the partners, a service programme based on investigating current and future user requirements was compiled. The programme comprises three phases: 1. Analysing the building and suitable target groups, 2. Scenario and concept development, supporting property owners and 3. Individual user consultation and planning, which are directly aimed at gained lessees. All work stages are placed under the context of quality and economic efficiency, which is guaranteed by the facility management consultancy of DS-Plan.

In the **first phase**, property advisors examine non-influenceable parameters such as overall size, location of the buildings' development core, traffic-related connection and the area's infrastructure. Trades principally to be considered for the location are identified. This is effected by reconciling their location requirements such as parking spaces, public transport or image and requirements in terms of the building such as flexibility and connected levels with one another. For the property owner, identifying target groups reduces losses due to

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Press information

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non-selective marketing and creates the basis for the subsequent user-oriented conception of buildings.

By means of 20 key criteria, **Phase 2** examines working methods and scenarios of relevant user groups in workshops or interviews. In the example of banks and financial service providers, this might mean: leadership culture = rather cooperative, working atmosphere = strong mutual support, electronic communication = rather less, involvement of externals = rare, absences from the office = rather low, up to 30%. After placing individual emphasis on the various key criteria, the property owner receives a recommendation for the most suitable office design, i.e. whether single or multi-person office cells, combi-office, group or open-plan office or a non-territorial office concept. After deciding about the office format, experts compile a function concept for the user group concerned. The concept determines areas such as reception, team work, formal and informal meeting, "think" cells and touch downs (freely available standing workplaces for laptops) as to optimally support work processes of potential user groups.

Phase 3 serves the individual adjustment of areas for an actual or interested user. This may include for instance, identifying an across-the-board value for areas per workstation and filtering according to company departments, organisational units and functions. Initially, specific user interests are examined, which is supported by an interactive survey tool used to analyse and evaluate the performance of work processes. Planning integrating all defined parameters follows this. Holistic change management communicating new work environment concepts to according staff and receiving valuable feedback supports the realisation of planning and first use.

Target of the service package of Drees & Sommer and its partners is to optimise standard buildings by implementing innovative work environment concepts and to adjust work processes, requirements and expectations of currently aspiring companies. This gives property owners the opportunity of targeted, individual and successful marketing.

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