

Re-thinking the Work Environment: Drees & Sommer Office in Munich Wins Award

Munich, Germany, March 25, 2022. Work-life balance, remote work and more flexible corporate structures: the line between work and leisure is becoming more and more blurred in everyday life. Companies must adapt to this trend and create a working environment that promotes both productivity and a community spirit. Drees & Sommer SE shows us how this works. The Stuttgart-based planning and consulting company specializes in construction and real estate. At its Munich location, the company has now used the very latest techniques to put its expertise in the design of working environments into practice. The mission was clear: to design an office environment based on individual needs that encourages both creativity and togetherness. The concept has now been recognized with the international *Best Workspaces* award for architecture.



The marketplace is the core of the office: the entire space is based on the structures of a small town, providing parallel opportunities for collaboration, communication and concentrated work, and for recreation and refreshment. © Drees & Sommer SE

The *Best Workspaces* award was set up by architecture publisher CallweyAn. An independent jury of experts gave awards to a total of 50 office projects in the categories 'working environments' and 'office buildings'.

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Award winners are companies that create a flexible place for their employees, promoting concentration, encouraging interaction with one another, and contributing to physical and mental well-being. By doing so, the award takes the latest developments into account. 'Between remote working from home, third places and workation, the office has an important role to play: it must function as a touchpoint to the brand and as an emotional filling station,' says Anette Dittel, User Experience expert at Drees & Sommer. The new working environment is a follow-up project to the Drees & Sommer hub in Stuttgart, also an award-winner. 'The office is based on the concept of a town with neighborhoods where people can meet by arrangement, but also by chance, to collaborate and share news. Where libraries enable people to focus on work in a community setting, and studios provide professional answers to hybrid working methods. In between, there are green oases, sports facilities and open spaces for creative use,' explains Drees & Sommer's Creative Director, Alexander Strub.

Quality Over Space

There are no longer any personal workstations in the new offices. Instead, the concept is based on the interplay of freely selectable work options: anyone who holds video conferences or wants to work creatively needs a different environment than someone who is just focusing on writing. Suitable room types are available for all these different requirements. In addition to ergonomic workstations, for example, there are also areas for collaboration, concentrated work and relaxation, such as in the in-house library or in the light-flooded yoga space. To avoid wasting space, the experts on the working environment got rid of passageways and corridors between rooms. They are replaced by what are called 'promenades', where printers, coatrooms and communication areas are positioned, thus serving as interaction zones for casual conversation every now and then. Digital tools also make day-to-day work easier: employees can book the rooms they need by app, set the right light and temperature for the space, and digitally measure room utilization. Valuables can be stored in lockers that also have digital controls.

Sustainability Comes First

This cleverly designed space and routing concept promotes daily exercise in addition to interaction. The concept thus addresses increased requirements in terms of well-being and health. The new office building is all about feeling at ease: plenty of natural light, greenery appropriate to the specific situation, and high-quality tactile materials such as wood and linoleum create valued quality of space.

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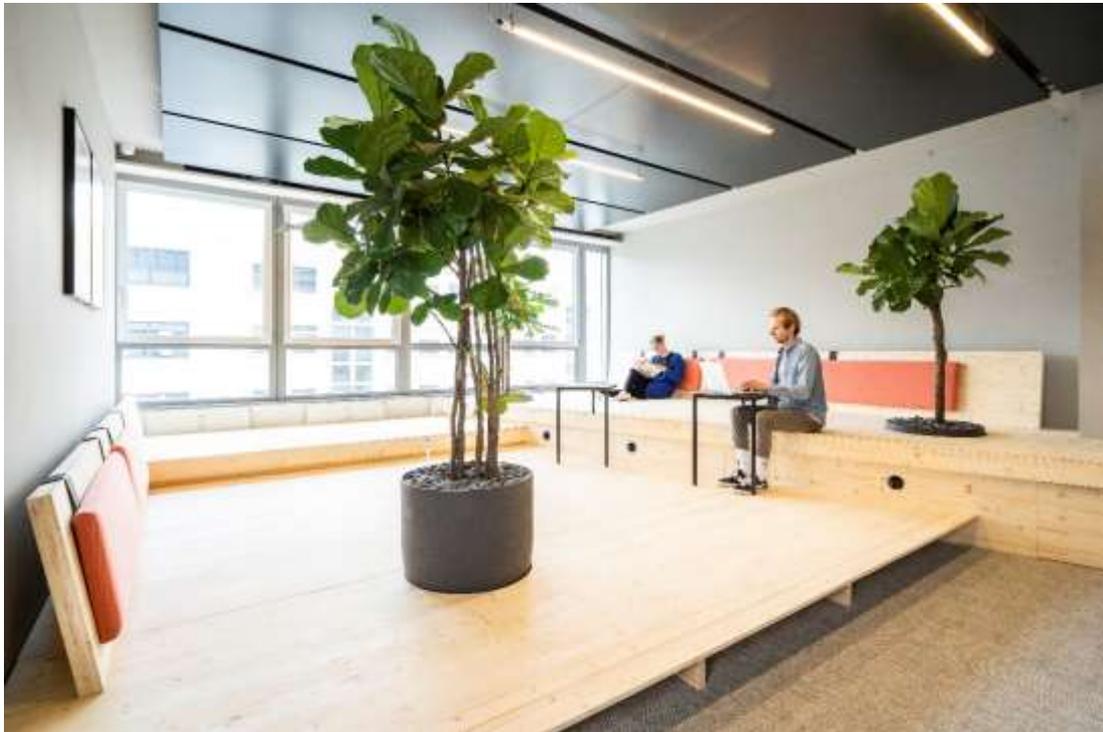
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The sustainability concept goes far beyond the interior design: together with the circular economy experts from the Drees & Sommer subsidiary EPEA, the planners put every aspect through a sustainability assessment, from certified furniture to catering, through alternative mobility concepts. Anette Dittel brings it to the point: 'All our knowledge and our passion have been put into this project. We were able to prove that we focus on the user, take sustainability seriously, and we can respond flexibly to new requirements.' And Alexander Strub adds: 'If you want to raise the topic of *New Work* in your own company, we can provide you with a tangible showcase.' Visitors will be able to take a guided tour of the premises and talk to those in charge.



Multifunctional pocket park: depending on the time of day: yoga studio, break-out opportunity, or meet-up area for teams

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Concentrating on work in the library: a ban on cell phones makes it possible to enjoy a community spirit without disruption.

Drees & Sommer: Your Innovative Partner for Consulting, Planning, Construction and Operation

As the leading European Consulting, Planning and Project Management enterprise, Drees & Sommer has worked with private and public clients from construction bodies to investors on all types of real estate and infrastructure projects – both analog and digital – for 50 years. With its pioneering and future-shaping consulting, the company offers solutions for successful buildings, high-return portfolios, powerful infrastructure and livable cities. Around 4,000 employees in interdisciplinary teams based at 46 locations worldwide support clients across a wide spectrum of sectors. All the services provided by the partner-run company take into consideration both economic and ecological concerns. Drees & Sommer calls this holistic approach ‘the blue way’.

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