

# ***Work hard, play hard***

A book about  
creative spaces  
inside corporate  
environments

A project by

**Design** at  
**Business**



WORK  
HARD

***Work hard***

A project by

**Design** at  
**Business**

# *play hard.*

**A book about creative spaces  
inside corporate environments.**



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# Foreword

Im Haus

- Allgen. Informatica / Energiemfr.
- Verbrauchssteuerarten - Typen
- Statistiken / Vergleiche
- Komponentenübersicht / Zustand / Verbrauchsinfos
- Personenspezif. Steuerung

Untenwegs

- "Showcase" für Freunde
- Unlike Zugriff

Service - Sammlung

- Ort Energy-Monitor (Bezug, Verbrauch, Erzeugung)
- Ort Energy-Monitor (Bezug, Verbrauch, Erzeugung)
- Ort Energy-Monitor (Bezug, Verbrauch, Erzeugung)

Dezentraler Sensor bzw. Licht / Wärme / ...

- Bezugsprozess 1 DI
- Erzeugungsprozess 1 DI
- Regionales Performance-Monitoring für PV-Anlage
- "Installateurszugang" für E-Meter
- Anlagenoptimierung (Sonne, Strom)

Öko-Schaltzettel / Spar-Schaltzettel

- ETIL gibt Antworten auf Energiefragen
- Web-Zugang auf Gesamt-Do-it-yourself-App bzw. (Web-App-Programmierung)
- Finanzierungsservice
- E-FZG Monitoring / Ladungswagen
- Integration von Dritten z.B. Tachometer
- Einfache Netzwerkweiterleitung
- Weitergabe von Störquellen zu Hersteller (z.B. bei WLAN oder Service-Backlog für Daten)
- Home Ready for Energiewende (Lastvariable Tarife, etc.)



This booklet is about collaboration.

It is about what can be achieved when people work together, in a new way and in a new space.

This booklet is itself the result of collaboration between individuals and companies who came together to share and discuss their experiences in establishing and running creative and collaborative working spaces.

This occurred at the SAP AppHaus in Heidelberg early in 2015, where an agreement to document the spaces at each company was made.

This is the result.

It is the result of the collaboration within each company to bring different perspectives and expertise together to create something new and exciting. When reading these stories, you will learn about the reasons, context, and process involved in creating each space.

This booklet shows the daily collaboration between the people who manage these spaces and the customers, partners, and colleagues who use them to be more creative and successful. These spaces are typified by flexibility and multi functionality, and you will read about the different purposes for which they are used.

This booklet aims to demonstrate the value of creating a space at your company while acknowledging the challenges involved in doing so.

It also illustrates the importance of the lessons learned and feedback gained during that process, to be more effective in the future.

The hidden benefits and some important points to consider when setting up your own creative space will be revealed.

Creative spaces are now a widespread tool to help empower your employees and connect them to each other and your customers; to help create greater customer value, employee engagement, and internal collaboration!

Some of the spaces and companies documented here have similarities in their approach, purpose, or industry, but the greatest factor they have in common is a curiosity learn new methods and create new spaces and to meet others who have also done so, so everyone can learn and develop together.

If you're interested in getting started, just open the door to these possibilities, and read on...

If you want to establish your own space and join our community, you'll find details near the end of the booklet.

# Detecon

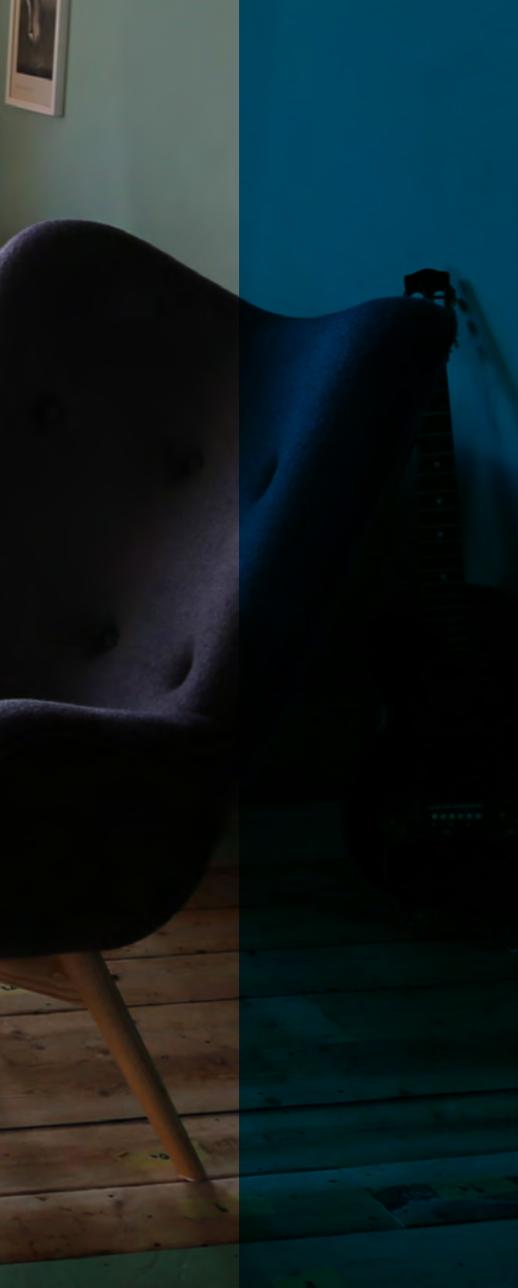


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PPT. That's the core of the successful ongoing transformation at Detecon, a consulting firm within the Telekom group. No, PPT has nothing to do with slide shows. It stands for People, Places, and Tools. These are the components of the 'future work' transformation program that has been operating for the past few years.

"We were dealing with agile methodology, design thinking, and customer centricity all the time, and we realised we didn't have a space that covered these subjects. That got the ball rolling..."

A relocation from Bonn to Köln made it easier to address the 'places' element: the comfort zone of Bonn had been left behind after a relocation in 2013 and it prompted some thought about doing other things differently too. Thanks to the help of their facility management colleagues from Deutsche Telekom, they had

a lot of possibilities to create a totally new and innovative working environment.

It should be noted that the 'places' were not the first thing to be addressed, but the need became clear after 'people' and 'tools' had already undergone some transformation. A space to be more creative, to think beyond traditional methods of planning and management was required. The old ways 'takes too much resources, time, and effort...you identify too many risks no-one wants to address...the kind of space we're talking about is the answer, or at least a big part of it'.

"We were lucky in that it was a cost case, so the main goal was to make it affordable"; the standard solutions were not an option, so they brought in artists to redesign and redecorate their meeting and shared spaces and to create artwork for the walls. Even this was done with



an eye for design: the artworks are all the same square shape and size, so they can be swapped around every few weeks to give the building a refreshed feeling without a lot of effort.

These artistic touches were an important way of overcoming not just the cost restrictions but also the constraints of a building where renovations and moving walls around was not an option. Open areas that allow light into the corridors in the middle of the building were transformed into unique and colourful informal meeting areas. Upcycled and individual pieces of furniture mean that the 'traditional' meeting rooms are now more comfortable, with their own look and feel that is anything but traditional. Even some of the artworks created to decorate the hallways have increased in value, as the artists who created them have gained recognition since that phase of the project.

***Employee participation is important too, people need an environment where they feel comfortable***

As already noted, the move from Bonn had already been a catalyst for some changes but that doesn't mean there wasn't some resistance. An internal social network allowed feedback and criticism to be provided: "employee participation is important too", and "people need an environment in which they feel comfortable", but at some point you need to



make the change, and people need time to adjust to the new environment, to experiment and explore the possibilities. "For me personally, it took a year to go from absolutely hating the idea of not having my own office to seeing all kinds of new possibilities to be more creative and develop new ideas...I only started to enjoy the new setup when I recognised the advantages it had in terms of communication, collaboration, and creativity".

From an organizational or 'people' perspective, the changes were extensive: people can choose their own managers; apply to be part of a project that interests them, and exchange roles within a project. That flexibility will be a factor in the future: "A lot of high-potential recruits are in favour of this, because it gives them all the freedom they need to grow and mature". A whole level of management was eliminated, not through a 'flattening' process

but a shift from being very topic-oriented to focusing on customers and using virtual communities where there's specialist rather than disciplinary leadership. This works because senior colleagues can help share coaching and leadership tasks within these communities.

New tools like a system for booking working spaces within the building but also at other offices allow consultants to look up the location of colleagues they'd like to connect with to collaborate or catch up. A project marketplace allows people to look for and apply to join projects, as mentioned above. The organizational change program was global, the workspace program was initially in Köln only but has now also been rolled out in München "and people are excited because they're hearing about our experiences as well. We've figured out how to do things in a better, more functional way and they've really become huge fans".



**People, places,  
tools - you  
can't overlook  
any of them**

The results are impressive, and impressively varied: aside from financial impact, employee turnover has been reduced and the average age has lowered significantly.

The company has won design awards, appeared in brand eins magazine, and gained

a top business consultancy ranking for topics like sustainability. This has led to a greater awareness of Detecon (“most people write the name wrong, with an ‘m’ at the end”) and greater ‘coolness’ as a brand: “We’re attracting people who wouldn’t have considered working for us two years ago; we’re getting noticed a lot more, things like that are important for a company”. Opportunities to share their experiences, through avenues such as the Design@Business community, and projects like



Creative Spaces, are another plus, and they have shared their ideas with other participants from various industries.

The idea of ‘model spaces’, and bringing people into prototypes of their new office spaces is something that has already made it to the San Francisco office, indicating that a real cultural shift has occurred. The freedom, the flexibility, and the inspiration that the working environment provides are very valuable too,

leading to greater efficiency and creativity: you can try things out, and see if they succeed, and you can do anything you want as long as it’s successful and efficient.

A change in working style has happened too: “I sometimes come to work on the weekend, while my family are in the city, and I can get something done here; I’ve brought my kids and they think it’s awesome. You’re proud of the company and the office in a way; not everyone

has something like this”, but not to the cost of work-life: “that freedom and flexibility means I get to see my kids more often”.

The main lesson learned: “people, places, tools – you can’t overlook any of them”, but you also need to allow some time for change. Once you do that though, the benefits might surprise you...



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# EnBW

Technological disruption is a common change agent for many industries and companies, but it is not the only source of change. Take the 'Energiewende' in Germany for example: the move away from nuclear and carbon-emitting sources of power in favour of renewables and zero-carbon methods of generation.

The Innovation Campus at energy company EnBW Energie Baden-Württemberg AG in Karlsruhe is located right next to their coal-powered plant RDK 8 on the Rheinhafen. RDK 8 is one of the most efficient coal-powered plants in the world but after several years of construction will most likely fail to return the investment.

While the EnBW classical business model is under pressure, the transformation of the energy market creates new business opportunities. The Innovation Campus is the place where this

***We like  
to keep our  
roots in sight,  
it is inspiring  
to see that  
everyday***

development takes place. The move away from large fossil- and nuclear-fuelled plants to smaller renewables is neatly mirrored in the Innovation Campus. EnBW wanted to create something that would allow them to think and work differently to before, and allow their employees to come up with new business model ideas to help diversify their business.

The decision was made to locate it in an unoccupied building, close to the power plant ("we like to keep our roots in sight") and not too far from the EnBW corporate headquarters in the centre of Karlsruhe, but it was quickly expanded to use a second adjacent building that provided greater flexibility for the project. Input came from start-ups and the creative spaces used in other companies, but also from EnBW employees.

However, once the input was gathered, it was time to act and quickly decide on how to proceed; there could be no long consultation phase as there was simply too much time pressure on the project: a start-up project funded by EnBW had already been established and needed space to work, and an executive management workshop had been booked to inaugurate the new building.



Cost was an issue too: the coal power plant was a good lesson in limiting your investment until you know how things will be utilised and return that investment. In any case, an expensive refurbishment of the buildings would have taken too long.

In the end, the project took about 6 weeks to modernise and refurbish the buildings, which had been vacant for around 4 years, and create a modern and flexible working space. This was made possible by redesigning domestic

furniture and the help of craftsmen from the power plant, with no architectural input or changes.

While “it is not supposed to be a design temple”, it features flexible working spaces and furniture, with rooms for specific purposes like video conferencing but also various project and collaboration rooms. One space fitted with a tiered seating area, provides room for pitch events and larger presentations and discussions.

It is also home to eight separate start-up projects, at different stages of development and with different needs. These start-ups are working in a variety of areas outside of EnBW’s core business, and have already generated significant results. This, combined with the very high level of usage at the Innovation Campus, demonstrates how successful the whole process has been.





***A flexible and comfortable working environment is a prerequisite for people to work differently***

The Innovation Campus is an interesting and successful balancing act in several ways. It is located close to the headquarters and facilities of EnBW, but is deliberately separate while still being closely integrated and it acts as a point of contact for colleagues who are not based in Karlsruhe. It is located in a formerly-disused building that was designed to create something new, in the shadow of the modern coal plant that represents a part of our current business; “It is inspiring and motivating to see that every day”.

It is distinct in look and feel, without the typical EnBW branding, but orange (part of the EnBW corporate design palette) and green, (to match the area around the Innovation Campus) are part of the interior design. This provides an atmosphere which is deliberately different from the other buildings but is also comfortable and welcoming, with electric cars providing a practical link between the two worlds.

It also carefully balances internal and external usage, although both groups use the space for similar purposes: as a workshop for collaboration and a place to learn about design thinking and other agile methodologies. The list of people who have benefitted from the Innovation Campus and the free Design Thinking training available there is extensive: colleagues from EnBW and the start-ups; other companies without their own creative space; universities such as Freiburg, Karlsruhe, and Berlin; even the mayor of Karlsruhe!

What they find there is a flexible and comfortable working environment, “a prerequisite for people to work differently”, where people can really “experience and live the change”, which drives acceptance and helps organic growth of the concepts and methods without top-down influence.

This of course has a natural transformational effect on the people and culture at EnBW; employees bring their experiences back to the core of the company, and an ‘idea box’ allows them to suggest and develop new business model ideas which can then be pitched at events held at the Innovation Campus. It also hosts social events such as barbeques in the summer and monthly networking sessions for the start-up projects to share their progress, which helps ensure any mistakes they might make are not repeated by the others.

The location of the Innovation Campus might be industrial, but it is also very green, both inside and out; it balances the old with the need to embrace the new. It allows EnBW to be a company that is generating both new business and new business models, not just power.



MOIN MOIN!

FAIL HARDER.

HOW BIG CAN YOU DREAM?

ALLA DANN!

ET KÜTT WIE ET KÜTT.

# THINK BIG.

SUBBER SACH.

DONE IS BETTER THAN PERFECT.

NU ABA RAN AN DE BULETTEN!

OUR CHALLENGE IS OUR PROGRESS.





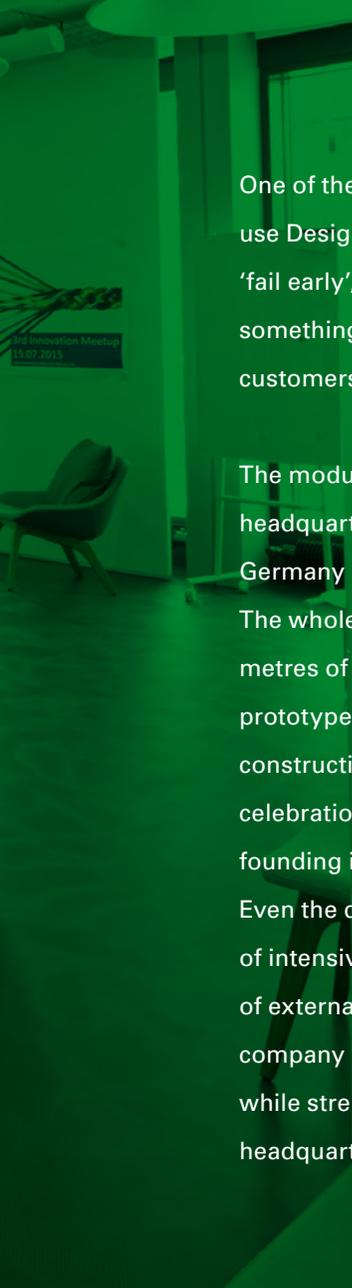
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One of the hallmarks of creative projects that use Design Thinking or similar methods is to ‘fail early’, and the main objective is to create something that really meets the needs of customers or users.

The modular Innovation Center at the global headquarters of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany is a good example of this thinking. The whole building (with nearly 1,400 square metres of floorspace) was built to act as a living prototype for a larger building (currently under construction) that is intended to be part of the celebration of the 350th anniversary of their founding in 2018.

Even the decision to build it was the result of intensive user research and an evaluation of external trends. The goal is to make the company more flexible, open, and innovative, while strengthening Darmstadt as ‘one global headquarters’ for the entire group.

## ***The company has continually transformed itself.***

The new Innovation Center would not detract from their existing and extensive research and development program: it would complement it by focusing on new business ideas from both their own employees and potentially disruptive startup companies that they also fund.

Over the course of their nearly 350 year history, the company now known as Merck KGaA, Darmstadt Germany, has continually transformed itself, making it a leading science and technology company - driven by the desire to develop ground-breaking technologies for

life. This evolution is marked not only by the new building but changes in other areas of the company too, such as the new branding they introduced in 2015, and the appointment of a Chief Digital Officer for the first time.

However, the new building still had the 350th anniversary as a deadline. With the clock ticking and board-level sponsorship in place, a diverse team comprised of people from communications, HR, facilities, internal and external architects, came together to work on the prototype modular Innovation Center. The goal is to ensure the success of the larger building and the underlying innovation program, while establishing important roots that will allow it to operate effectively as soon as it is open.

In the meantime, the prototype building itself is already leading to further change. It provides employees with a focal point to meet and

A modern office interior with large windows, blue armchairs, a yellow table, and a whiteboard. The room is bright and airy, with a view of greenery outside. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

***The Innovation Center  
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user research and  
an evaluation  
of external trends***

collaborate with each other and the external startups previously mentioned. Pitch events allow ideas to be discussed, captured, and acted upon. It supports innovation by providing a new working environment with more flexible hours. Existing ideas that had not been utilized are

being re-evaluated in this new climate, where previously they might have fallen between the gaps. All these possibilities are creating a subtle cultural shift: a less formal atmosphere, more open communication, and greater responsibility for individuals than before.

The team running the modular Innovation Center feels that helping to pave the way is an exciting and fulfilling task. Being responsible for something new means that you can be creative too: there's no right or wrong path. As first movers they can support internal innovators in

realizing their ideas, meet somebody and learn something new every day, while enjoying the full support of the board of the company.

The prototype, aside from the value it has already created, has proven to be a successful testbed for the future building. Lessons have been learned regarding the fixtures, fittings, and equipment for the future Innovation Center, so that it will have greater comfort and functionality along with a larger capacity. The team can demonstrate the value and benefits of the Innovation Center to their colleagues, opening minds to the possibilities that such an innovative environment offers.

***This is living the design  
mentality on a large scale:  
learn, test, improve, repeat.***



***Creating a great design  
or product doesn't  
happen by accident:  
it takes time, iteration,  
and collaboration.***

***Philips***



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Creating a great design or product doesn't happen by accident: it takes time, iteration, and collaboration from a diverse and skilled group of people, and at Philips, using their Cocrete approach and spaces. Philips Design dates back more than 90 years, and has created numerous iconic products in that time.

The Cocrete approach, their variation of design thinking methodology, can be successfully applied anywhere. However, it also prompted the thought: what would the ideal space look like? Their Cocreator Lab located at their headquarters at the High-Tech Campus (HTC) in Eindhoven, is one of several such design and innovation spaces they operate worldwide. When the Philips Design team relocated from downtown Eindhoven to the HTC, they used the opportunity to try and create such an ideal space. Having their design experts working alongside all their business experts, engineers,

and scientists gave them a perfect opportunity to really embed design into their products and unleash their creativity to solve real world problems and drive innovation.

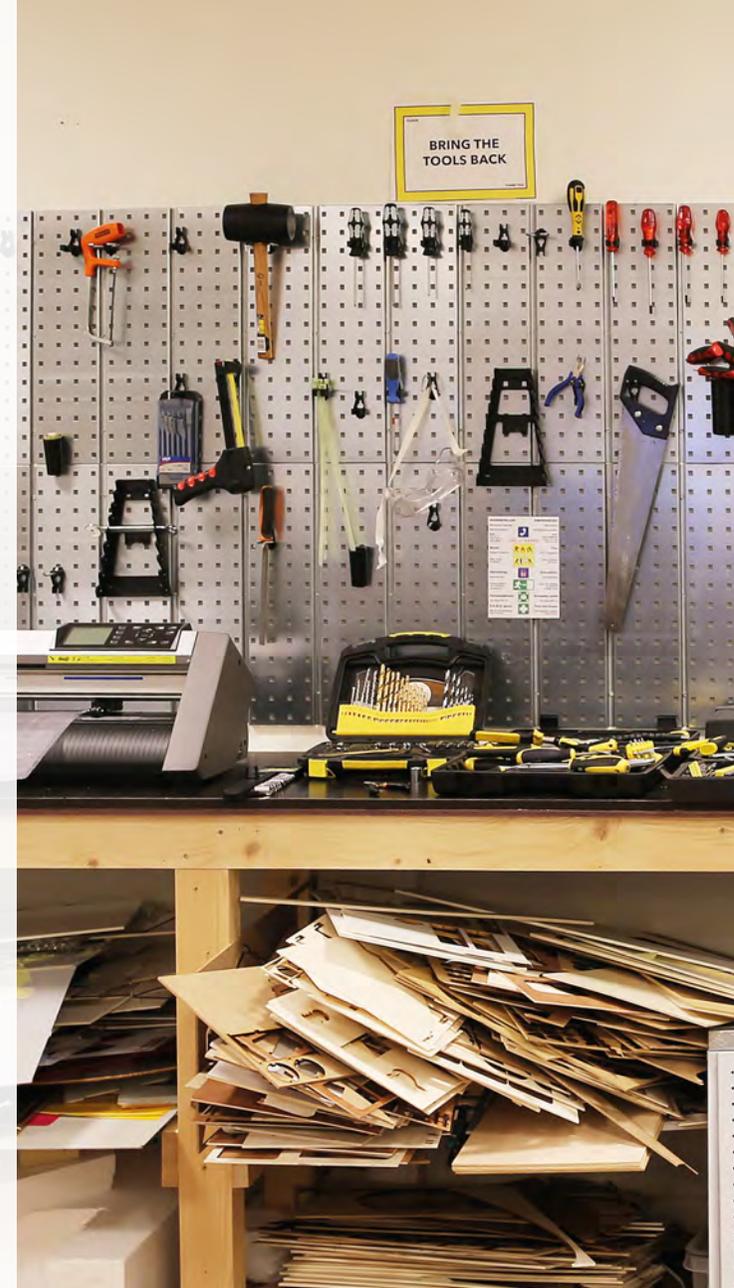
Their approach is the right space, properly equipped for workshops and collaboration, staffed by a dedicated team to make sure everything runs smoothly. Then add a project team with a range of skills to identify and solve the real problem at hand, guided by a Cocrete lead who facilitates the process. The adjacent Maker Space, equipped with devices like 3D printers and various electronics tools allows them to make prototypes rapidly, bridging the physical and digital world and creating a tangible experience, so they can get immediate user feedback and iterate as required. All of these elements are combined in one building which is itself inspirational, and this is the secret to the Cocrete methodology.

It's also important to distinguish between design, and design methodologies: the Cocreate leads at Philips, who facilitate these workshops and leverage the skills of the participants, are not necessarily designers themselves. They have varied backgrounds, which of course is also valuable for the process, but a sensitivity to design and the ability to communicate with people effectively are more important to the role than a portfolio of their own designs. Training in the Cocreate approach is available to every employee at Philips, not just those with a creative or design-focused role, demonstrating the directive that design should be involved in every project at an early stage.

Of course, a change like this isn't completely smooth: working side by side a diverse range of colleagues means you need to discuss changes to the working environment, be pragmatic, and compromise on how to do things: "you can't

be like Steve Jobs in his garage". Ensuring you have the right building, with the right equipment and furniture, means collaborating with facility management colleagues who are accustomed to a very different set of requirements. To decide how this building should look and feel, they used their own experience but took inspiration from other companies too.

It also takes time: for projects that require a facilitated workshop, two or three days are the minimal investment, and up to several weeks may be necessary in some cases. Once an idea has been validated though, it receives ongoing support from the Cocreate team, and the lead will stay with that project for as long as is required. This takes significant resources but it shows that the design methodology is embedded in the product development process. The record-breaking number of design awards Philips received in 2015 suggests that this investment pays off.



***The Co-Create approach,  
their variation of design  
thinking methodology, can be  
successfully applied anywhere.***

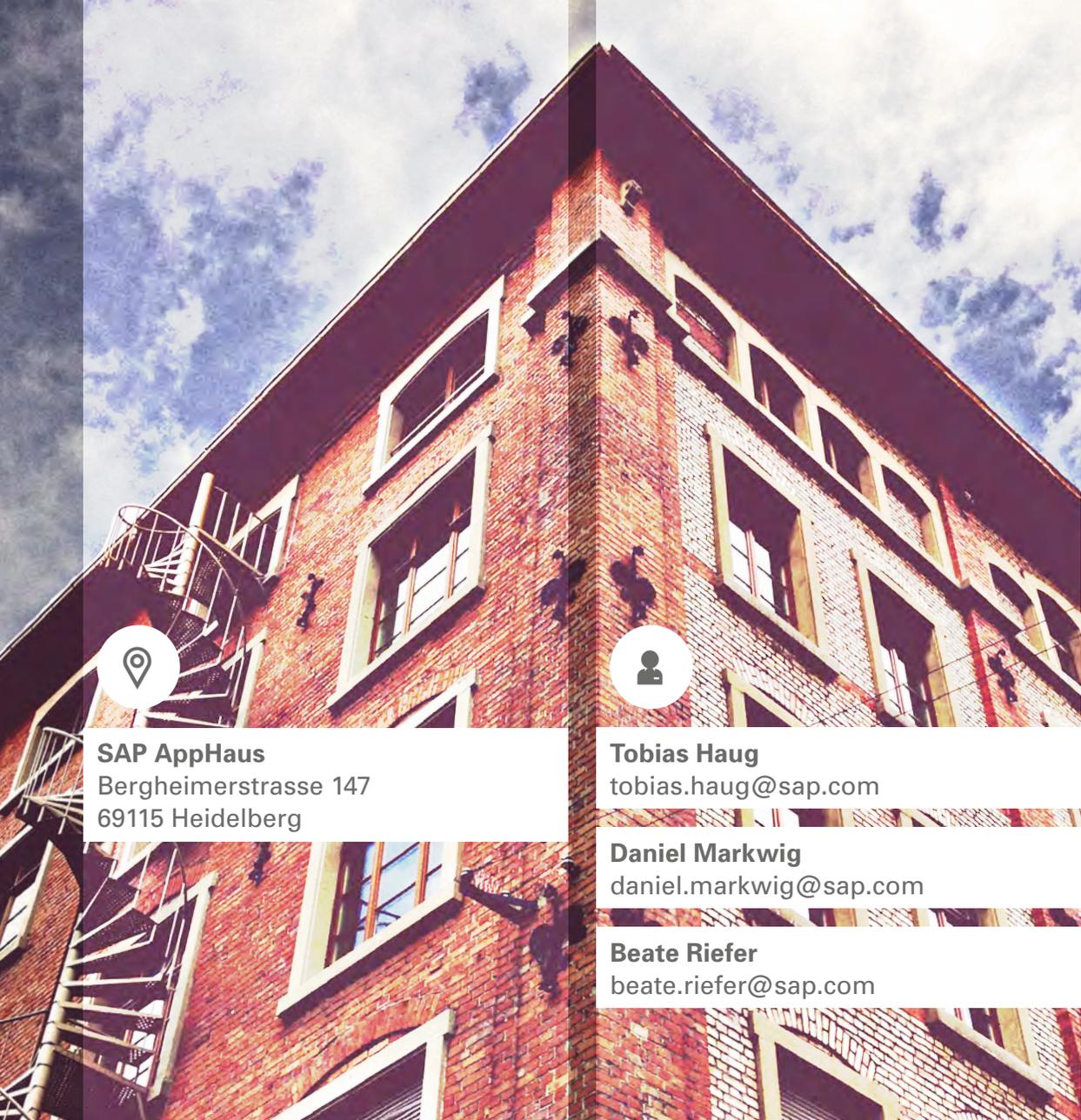




***The record-breaking number of design awards Philips received in 2015 suggests that this investment pays off.***

This approach and freedom of thought allows them to take on problems of great importance and complexity: how should the future of healthcare look? What would a hospital look like if you designed every element from the ground up? By using this coherent combination of space, people, and methods, this is the scale of the problems that Philips are tackling with Cocreate. Problems that can't be solved by traditional or typical methods, unless of course you have a long tradition of design like Philips.





**People, process and place,  
combining to create  
an innovation culture**



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# SAP

The AppHaus in Heidelberg, Germany was created by the Design and Co-Innovation Center (DCC) team at SAP to highlight and demonstrate how much SAP has embraced a design-driven mentality when it comes to developing products, collaborating with customers and partners, and delivering a better experience to users.

The establishment of the team, and the creation of the AppHaus in Heidelberg, is the culmination of gradual changes that have occurred at

SAP over the period of a decade. Like other industries, software companies also face challenges, such as the increasing use of cloud-based software, and the changing expectations of users who are accustomed to smartphone applications. These challenges can only be met by delivering solutions that engage users and truly meet their needs, and this can only be achieved through new ways of developing software.



One important change was the establishment of lean and agile development methodologies across the development organization at SAP. The greater flexibility and empowerment these methods provide allow a better connection with customers and users, to understand and meet their needs. Another important outcome of this change was a workplace renovation program called Office Space for Teams (OS4T), which remodeled the existing office spaces

to provide the teams with a more flexible and personal working environment to better enable collaboration in this new working model.

Around the same time, in 2010, the first AppHaus was established not far from SAP's offices in Palo Alto, California. The aim was to create a startup-like environment, close to but separated from the main SAP campus there, to develop consumer applications. Important knowledge



was gained from building a distinct working environment with a particular purpose, and the work done there contributed to the creation of a brand-new unified user experience approach and technology that would be applied to the whole of SAP's product portfolio and herald a new user-driven focus to product design.

All of this had been influenced and facilitated by the previous recruitment and training of





Design Thinking coaches and dedicated design colleagues, a process that started back in 2004, establishing an understanding that design is a mindset that helps create better products and not just better-looking products.

This mindset is mirrored in the changing approach of SAP's Global Facility Management (GFM) organization. The office transformation of course meant a significant challenge for

them, but they were always pragmatic when managing the huge portfolio of SAP locations worldwide. "Standardization kills innovation", and you always need to allow a local flavor, according to Matthias Grimm, Head of GFM at SAP. 'It is impossible to give each employee the same workspace, but it wouldn't make sense even if you could'. That brings us back to the establishment of the AppHaus in Heidelberg. The DCC team realized it was important to

combine the design studio approach of the first AppHaus with greater customer-centricity, to establish a place where creative and innovative work could be combined with true understanding of customer requirements. They received support from Sam Yen, Chief Design Officer at SAP, and SVPs Andreas Hauser and Michael Augsburg of the User Experience and Design organization, to create a space that they felt would meet this need.



The team were all very personally involved throughout the design and construction of the space, from when it was still a construction site through to picking the furnishings and decorating each meeting room in a unique style. It was certainly built with a strong Design Thinking perspective with an inherent capacity to evolve around the team as it grew, rather than dictating how the team would work within in. It was already in use on a pilot basis, tested and refined, before the official opening in November 2013.

Since then the DCC team has hosted hundreds of SAP's customers at the AppHaus, to help them understand the real needs of their own employees, end users, and customers. In many cases this led to a software-based solution (although not always) but the most significant result is the real business insight and value that is uncovered during this process; the role

of the DCC team is increasingly focused on demonstrating the value of design to SAP's customers and partners, and help them establish this mindset internally.

The benefits are clear if you combine the right people with new ways of working, in a new environment that supports them, with the freedom to experiment and grow. SAP, its customers, and its partners benefit from collaborating to solve real business needs, making jobs simpler and lives easier. And the DCC team? They can call the AppHaus home and work together 'more like a family' than just colleagues; it's a great place to be.



**Standardization  
kills innovation while  
flexibility and variation  
don't increase  
maintenance effort.**



HUMAN  
CENTERED

***The team developed  
a unique version of Design  
Thinking, called Industrial  
Design Thinking***



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# Siemens

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Developing disruptive solutions and speeding up the development process through fast iterations of learn-build-test while focusing on people and their needs - those are the factors behind the development of creative approaches and workspaces at Siemens.

The idea of developing and implementing the user-centered approach of Design Thinking at Siemens came originally from the former Head of Corporate Technology China; Dr. Arding Hsu. With his extensive working experience

in the Silicon Valley and his position within Corporate Technology, Dr. Arding Hsu was ideally placed to appreciate the value offered by Design Thinking for product, service, and technology development in the early phases of the development process. In particular, he saw a great benefit for the Chinese market, where local competitors had a clear advantage in terms of ongoing access to potential customers as well as close customer relationships, to better understand and meet those customers' actual needs. In addition, these Chinese companies

used the power of a lean start up approach and released their new products onto the market in a fast and “good enough” manner and then continuously improved them.

In 2012, in order to deeply ground the user-centered and agile approach of Design Thinking within the company, Siemens gradually evolved their own set of design thinking tools and methods. The goal was to constitute the best possible addition to the predominant technical approach in problem identification, product as well as service development, design, and implementation, applicable to Siemens broad range of industries. To do this the Design Thinking team worked closely together with experienced partners: the innovation company IDEO as well as with the Center for Design Research at Stanford University. In the first step, the Design Thinking team carefully studied how the partners applied Design Thinking within

research and development projects, how the teams reacted to the approach and tools used, as well as the impact of each activity. Based on their learnings, the team developed a unique version of Design Thinking, called industrial Design Thinking (i.DT), in order to address the unique challenge within the Siemens context.

Since the Design Thinking approach has proved successful, the i.DT lab in China was significantly expanded by mid-2015. The expansion included a larger workshop room, several dedicated project rooms, and an advanced machine shop with 3D printer and a CNC laser cutter, which will take the low resolution prototypes to the next, more professional level. Nonetheless, management had to be persuaded first that spaces were needed to allow project teams to think and work in playful and visual ways, tinker with models, and improve them step by step. The set-up of the i.DT lab in China followed



the Design Thinking approach as well. The Design Thinking team continuously learned what their project teams needed and gradually implemented those insights in the concept of the lab. In the very beginning, the working environment in Beijing was purely functional: flexible tables and white boards to visualize information. In the second iteration a facelift was conducted to change the appearance, bringing more color into the room. In the third iteration, a small lab with simple tools for prototyping was added.

In 2015 the Design Thinking activities within the department expanded to Germany. Since then, two additional spaces were established in Germany. What they have in common isn't necessarily the design or the color scheme, but the need for an inviting, flexible, and functional space. These spaces are foremost used for product and service development projects in

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the early phases of the development process. At the same time, they help to demonstrate the principles and value behind a user-centered approach such as Design Thinking to the people at Siemens. In addition, more and more employees are expressing their need for a changing work environment: they want environments that inspire, provide space to visualize relevant data, and support team collaboration. Responding to this development, the Design Thinking team is collaborating closely with the internal real estate department, Siemens Real Estate, to share the insights and



learning from setting up creative spaces and using them for project-based collaboration projects and workshops. Furthermore, the Design Thinking team supports the various business units and divisions within Siemens in establishing their own creative spaces.

By bringing in internal customers and business partners for creative workshops and collaborating with a variety of colleagues within Siemens, the Design Thinking coaches have created a real information hub around the different spaces and topics and have helped

develop new informal networks. Fostering these informal networks mirrors how Siemens learned about and developed these creative tools and methods in the first place and acts as an excellent source of knowledge sharing and collaboration opportunities.

The ability to combine such a source of information with expertise and increasing creativity sounds like a powerful opportunity indeed.

***People want environments  
that inspire and support  
team collaboration.***



**You can't just  
change one thing,  
but the Brain Gym  
is where it comes  
to life.**



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# Swisscom

Swisscom's 'Brain Gym', located in the former main post office building in Bern is a glorious combination of classical architecture and modern 'garage groove' repurposing. The former atrium and service area is now a casual but cozy co-working area but with a preserved and beautifully decorated vaulted ceiling, while upstairs you'll find an assortment of meeting rooms, creative spaces, open-plan offices, and private space. However, as impressive as the building might be, this space is just the result of a longer and larger process of change.

Many industries have faced disruption through technological advances over the past few years and will continue to do so in the future, but arguably telecommunications have faced the biggest challenges due to the proliferation of service providers, the impact of internet-based communications, and the massive rise in the use of mobile and smart phones. It might be helpful to think of disruption as unmanaged change; change is near-constant, it is when steps aren't taken to deal with change that businesses find themselves struggling.

Swisscom recognized that these disruptive innovations are often technology-based however, and customer experience is often a much smaller or later consideration. By becoming a completely customer-centric company, selling experiences rather than products, they have ensured their value and relevance to their customers.

To do this, they have gone through a very systemic change. First they embraced human-centered design techniques, and trained people in methods like agile development, scrum, and early prototyping and so on, to enable the company to transform its product portfolio every three years. However “you can’t just change one thing”: you need to fix systems, find the real problems and address them. As a result, they have developed a new model that addresses space, people, strategy, metrics and incentives, processes, and the meaning

and purpose at the company. This has led to teams who have the skills, tools, and mindset to continually work on reinventing themselves.

This was originally a management-driven change and initially based in Silicon Valley, but subsequently introduced in Switzerland and scaled from an initial 5000 employees to the whole company. In this regard, the Co-creation Department acted initially as consultants on human-centered design, to ensure that customer experience was a part of every product and decision. Their scope and influence gradually increased as the approach was validated by the creation of successful new products using their methods.

The relaunch of their physical stores across the whole of Switzerland was a great success, but only after a year or so when other aspects were also changed to match the new stores





themselves. Creating 18 separate prototypes, and then studying how staff and customers behaved and interacted within these prototype stores were part of the process. These successes culminated in the creation of the Brain Gym, but this also prompted further changes: the space is inherently imperfect by



design and has evolved and been improved as a result. Teams and even executives have changed how they work in the space, with greater usage of previously under-utilized rooms, a new style of executive meetings and communication, less formality, and more 'creative collisions' in the shared spaces. Teams need some time



to adjust to the different spaces, ("oh, that's nice" is a bad response to hear) but this also helps to create a managed change of the other elements too. As executives buy into the overall concept, a network of support grows within the company and they often sponsor subsequent improvements to the space.

***The Brain Gym is a glorious combination of classical architecture and modern “garage groove” repurposing***

However, this shouldn't suggest it was an easy process: these changes were challenging and in some cases confrontational, but the dialog that this created led to understanding that every choice was made deliberately and consciously. When you need to argue for every change, “it keeps you honest”. This aspect is very important, as each decision can be explained and justified.

As previously acknowledged, some of the changes were challenging and uncomfortable for people who were not expecting to work in such a space. An important lesson learned was

expectation management, and telling people in advance about the different atmosphere at the Brain Gym. This extended to visitors from other companies, to help make sure that they can benefit from the experience too.

Ultimately the conflicts led to dialog, mutual understanding, and collaboration, from colleagues in facility/real estate management to senior executives. The value of the approach, and not just the much lower costs involved, are clear from the benefits: a faster, better, customer-centric company, with happier employees. Something to bear in mind when

storyteller





considering the value of such a change for your company: “disengaged employees cost a fortune”.

The ‘space’ that the Brain Gym represents might have been a relatively late addition to the change process that Swisscom has gone through, but “it’s where it comes to life”, providing a tangible experience for Swisscom employees that can be scaled where required. The need to be able to demonstrate the value of the process and to be able to justify every decision has influenced a change in metrics at Swisscom too: in addition to the typical external

metrics like Net Promoter Score, teams are now evaluated based on the ‘customer-centricity’, and faster, easier pulse-checks of employee sentiment have been introduced to ensure that management have real-time insight into the company, rather than relying on large infrequent surveying of questionable value.

The future? Change of course, but also greater cooperation in the creation of a new innovative co-working building in Biel, and the renovation of all the office and working spaces across Switzerland.





The stories presented here share several common themes. Often, these spaces were created as a result of external pressures affecting each company. However, they weren't created out of some reflexive response to those pressures; they were just one result of ongoing change at each company. They weren't created to solve a particular problem, but to give each organization greater flexibility and ability to change so that future challenges can be better met. They represent attempts to create a new working environment that meets the needs of company, employee, and customer; leveraging the current strengths and identity of each company so they can ensure their ongoing success.

The companies involved learned from each other and their experiences when establishing these spaces, taking stock of shared knowledge and adapting that insight for their

own circumstances. Since many of them are customers of each other, or partners in other areas of business, then participating in this community makes a lot of sense. Companies can learn how to better collaborate by seeing how the others operate, and take inspiration what others have done to create a better environment for their employees, today and in the future.

It's this combination of the people at each company, the environment in which they work, and the tools, methods, and processes they use that makes each case unique but also so powerful. The things that are learned during these change projects, the mindset that is developed, and the creativity that is unleashed not only allows people to build better products and make customers happier but also to build a better company, leading to a sustainable cycle of innovation, learning, and growth of incredible potential.

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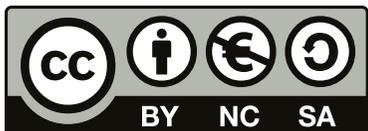
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