

ARCHITECTS & ENGINEERS

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Emerging trends in office space design that will save you money

The economic downturn of the past several years has

prompted businesses both large and small to reevaluate their use of space and



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to explore new efficiencies. With annual office lease expenses second only to salaries in many cases, the desire to reduce these expenses has led commercial tenants to seek out flexibility in office space, with an overall objective of scaling down the amount of space per worker. At the same time, smart employers are sensitive to the needs of their people to work in surroundings that are comfortable, stimulating and that promote positive work flow results. To

allow for the employee not to feel “cramped” it is important to consider sound attenuation and natural light in the design of the employees’ environment.

The removal of barriers such as lower work station separators or none at all promotes interaction and collaboration. This new open office plan can now incorporate corridors, backrooms and break areas creating informal, café-style meeting zones. This is an atmosphere especially appreciated by creative staff members.

Hotelling offers advantages to organizations built around a mobile workforce. Rather than assigning specific workstations to employees, reservations are made for communal desks that can serve a team of employees as individual visits to the office dictate. This allows

companies to allocate less space for desks, reaping significant savings on square footage no longer needed for this purpose.

The open space created by these strategies is made more valuable as technological advances in communication devices and connectivity free workers from their workstations. Many people can now work anywhere, inside or away from the office. This in turn allows business owners to use a lesser amount of space for a multiplicity of purposes. The emergence of “the cloud” as a solution to data storage adds yet another layer of potential savings with major investments in computer rooms and equipment no long necessary.

Finally business owners are rethinking the way they conference. In

the past it was common for firms to have several conference rooms all dedicated specifically for that purpose. Today, with a growing shift to teleconferencing and webinars the focus is on a single, modular conference area with multiple points of connectivity and movable partitions. Large staff meetings can be accommodated in the full size mode, or 2 or 3 smaller rooms created by repositioning partition walls.

These and other emerging trends in office space design are giving landlords and tenants the tools to construct transformative 21st Century office space that saves money while meeting all their business needs.

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