

How the COVID-19 pandemic will affect future office design

Working from home and online meetings have become the new normal. This calls for new ways of designing physical offices, including a need for more small meeting rooms and zones. In a new online feature from Troldtekt A/S, experts and architects present their takes on new trends in office design.

The COVID-19 pandemic turned our working lives upside down. While most knowledge workers used to spend their working lives at the office, it is now the norm to have two or three WFH days a week. But which changes to our working lives are transient, and which are here to stay?

In a new online feature from Troldtekt A/S, which manufactures acoustics solutions for, among other things, office environments, three experts offer their suggestions. The three experts are:

- Hans Westlund, Professor of Urban and Regional Studies at Sweden's largest technical university KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm.
- Eva Bjerrum, Distinguished Organisation Analyst at the Alexandra Institute in Denmark and an expert on New Ways of Working
- Maria Svensson Wiklander, co-founder of The Remote Lab

"Even before the pandemic, many workplaces had started implementing activity-based office layouts or open office landscapes for greater flexibility. The pandemic has just accelerated that trend," says Eva Bjerrum.

She encourages companies to use the pandemic as an opportunity for experimenting with their office design on a small scale – for example in order to accommodate the emerging yet considerable need for small meeting rooms for online meetings.

The office as a social space

In the new online feature, several leading architects – including architects from the Swedish firm of architects Krook & Tjäder and the Danish firm C.F. Møller Architects – talk about the way the new trends in office design have been translated into a number of new and successfully realised corporate headquarters.

According to Julian Weyer, a partner and architect at C.F. Møller Architects, the office will come to fulfil more of a social function in future. He says that having a desk at an office is still necessary for those who are unable to set up a sensible workspace at home. On the other hand, he sees that people are moving away from having individual workplaces to offices with a slightly different function.

"We need offices for meeting and engaging with our colleagues. So, what we're seeing is a greater focus on other parts of the office, which are now being enlarged. It's the places where we can meet – either formally, online or in completely random meetings with colleagues," explains Julian Weyer.

"Good office design is now a question of combining quiet zones and active zones so that it's never far from one to the other, enabling the employees to make the most natural and attractive choices," he says.

Flexible environments with a healthy indoor climate

A flexible working environment is exactly what characterises Klöver's 850-square-metre head office in Gothenburg. The office, which was designed by Arkitekterna Krook & Tjäder, was one of three finalists in the running for Sweden's Most Beautiful Office 2020.

The entrance leads into the heart of the office – a wide staircase where employees can sit down, enjoy their lunch and hold meetings or conferences. Other areas are divided into zones as well as small telephone pods and conference rooms.

Common to Klöver and the other projects in the online feature is that Troldtekt acoustic solutions ensure a healthy indoor climate with superior acoustics and characterful design.

Read the online feature about office design in full at www.troldtekt.dk

FACTS ABOUT TROLDTEKT

- Troldtekt A/S is a leading developer and manufacturer of acoustic solutions for ceilings and walls.
- Since 1935, Troldtekt's production, which is based on locally sourced wood and cement, has been taking place in state-of-the-art and eco-friendly facilities in Denmark.
- Troldtekt's business strategy is based on the Cradle to Cradle design concept, which is key to the company making further environmental progress towards 2022.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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