# EVERYONE IS COMPETING FOR TALENT!

How *what are* your *the current* workplace is *trends in* designed *Workplace* impacts performance, *design?* employee engagement, and **innovation.**

blink!LAB

June A. Grant, AIA
**Founding Principal**

**The human connection.** Super-charging the work environment is possible by connecting design, communication and function. 25% of U.S. employees are working in less than optimal environments. The other 75%, struggling to work effectively, are conscious of the less than perfect, feel helpless and lack resources to make change. The result is lost productivity, less innovation, and little employee engagement. FORTY PERCENT OF THE TIME, the work space is utilized, the rest of the time it is used temporarily or vacant. Below are 10 trends kick-starting workplace design with a goal to foster creativity and efficiency.

*Supercharge, denoted by the symbol Q - Wikipedia*

**A CAVEAT:** This is how I experienced the GE Software COE design challenge as a researcher, designer and architect while employed at AECOM. Others might see things differently. The quotes and lessons here are from a three year period - to establish a blue-chip corporation within the extended Silicon Valley.

**A CALL TO ACTION:** These lessons apply to all industries - Corporate Office, Healthcare, Education, Sports and Advanced Manufacturing. The degree of urgency to change may vary, but all of us can learn from these lessons and apply them in some way, shape or form.

# Workspace (not place)

## 01

### NEXT-GEN DIGITAL NATIVES

Defined by an unimpeded capacity to create, 70% communicate through social-networking where the line between play, work and urban life is blurring into a mobile and virtual shared communal space.

**Action:** Informal and collaborative co-working spaces are increasing from San Francisco to New York City. Where we work is less important. Work is mobile and the desktop is virtual.

## 02

### FREEDOM AND FLEXIBILITY

Employees are challenged by the need to balance the need to focus with the  need to interact— people stopping by, meetings, and conference calls.

**Action:** Multiple choices, user-shaped spaces, mobility of furniture and technology.  Look to balance formal and the informal.

# Researched Design

## 03

### RESEARCH-BASED DESIGN

More and more strategic decisions—locating a headquarters, public visibility, resolving workspace optimization, or square feet per person—are based less on corporate standards and more on performance data.

**Action:** The emergence of workplace design as a strategic activity is increasing. By combining sets of previously siloed data, we are discovering opportunities for clients to resolve and innovate to surpass major hurdles.

## 04

### RAPID-PROTOTYPING AND SPACE

Daily, research articles confirm that organizations have learnt that well-designed workspaces, yield cultural cohesion, increases collaboration, improves performance, and generates more frequent market-ready innovation. They see it as crucial to success.

**Action:** Freespace is becoming a standard practice to integrate strategy, collaborative design, and engage management.

# Corporate Campuses

## 05

### PRIVATE INCUBATION & PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Increasingly, headquarters are establishing creative technology outposts which serve two primary purposes: to be the center of excellence promoting interdisciplinary teams to deliver innovative new products. The second, to have a public interface which permits external influence with a goal to a wider inclusive model and foster innovation. The hope is a faster, more agile response to market forces.

**Action:** Design Centers and Flex-Techspaces are attracting corporate attention and increasingly becoming the norm.

# Understand Work Modes

"Global" standards was a response to eliminate the unique. A more effective method is the KIT of PARTS. Systems provide flexibility, adaptability and speed to action.

# Commercial Development

## 06

### CORE BUILDING AMENITIES ARE CHANGING

Today's younger workforce is impatient with hierarchical separation and is forcing a transition in values reflected in the work environment.

**Action:** Mixing work, play and social values is a growing practice. Successful developers are responding by providing large light-filled, centralized atria which act as the civic center. More communication flows in, around and through the building. The greater the variety the more valued and greater the user-experience.

## 07

### INFRASTRUCTURE IS BOTH PHYSICAL + DIGITAL

Higher densities and longer hours of utilization are forcing more robust alternative design approaches.

**Action:** Office tenancy can be simplified by the cloud. Newer buildings require daylight, natural ventilation, open space and integration of urban experiences.

### THE GREAT 2008 RECESSION, ITS IMPACT

**BEFORE 2008**

- 25–35k square foot floor plates
- 250–350 sf per person
- Stacked floors with vertical flow only via elevators.
- 8- to 9-foot ceiling height throughout

**2008 TO TODAY**

- 45ft consistent unobstructed lease depth
- 150–200 square feet per person
- 2 to 3-story opening with interconnecting stairs
- Increased opportunity for unplanned encounters along various circulation routes
- Offset cores
- Landlords and tenants are more sophisticated about sustainability and the bottom line
- 9 to 12-foot typical ceiling heights
- Integrated Design
- Faster Construction Delivery
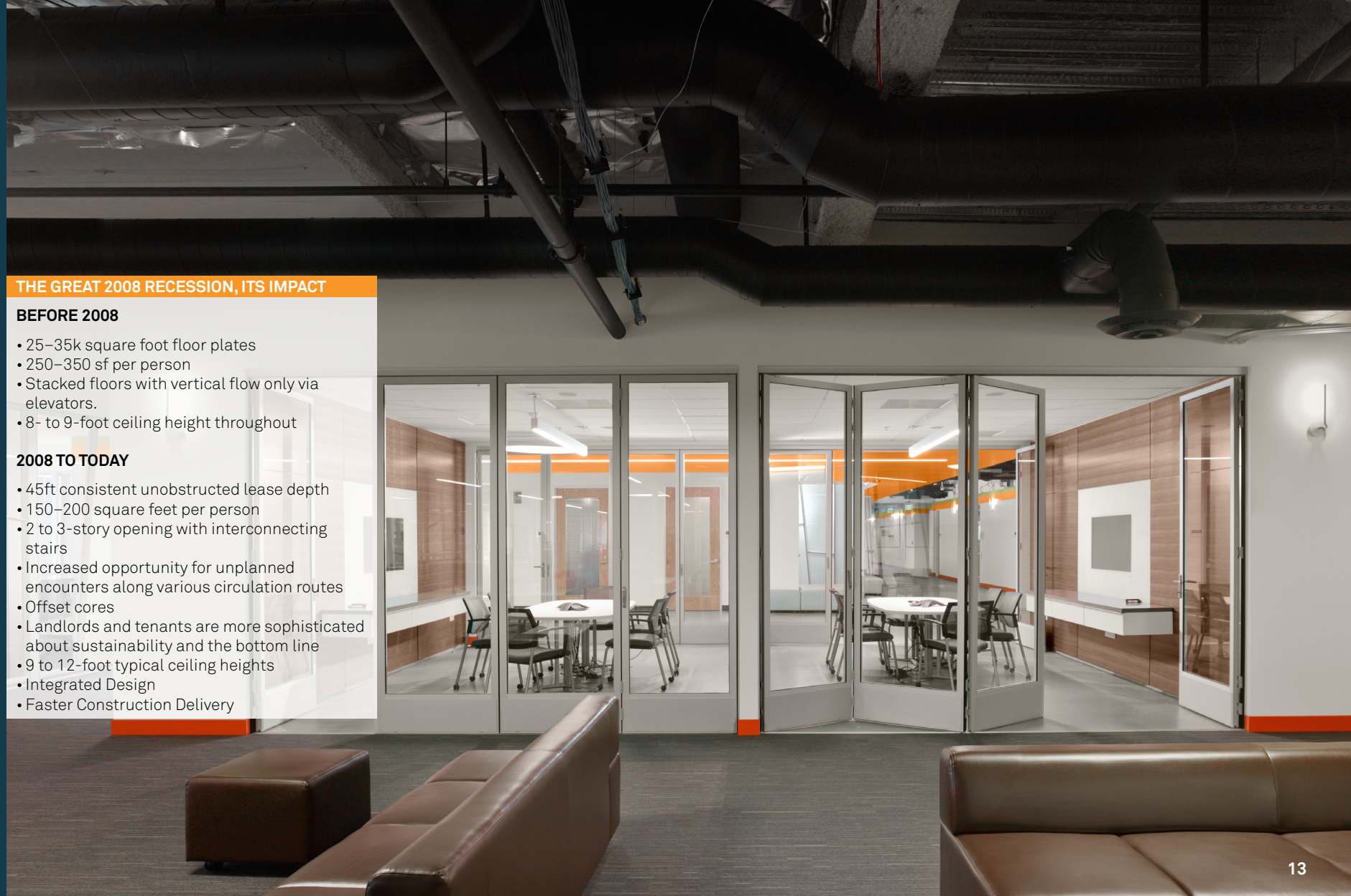
# Technology

## 08

### MEDIA AFFINITY

Mastering media integration (in all its forms) is not voluntary, it is mandatory. While established firms have not fully grasped social media, its next-gen employees have.

**Action:** Personal, multi-interface digital connectivity is a given. Interactive connectivity is revolutionizing every sector. The result is more creativity and patent execution than ever before in the history of the United States. The best will encourage further creative enterprise.

## 09

### MEDIA IS BORDERLESS AND LESS PHYSICAL

From the desktop, to I-Pad and I-Phone, we are connected to the media. We use it for personal, interpersonal communication, entertainment and interactively. It conveys, stores and shares information.

**Action:** Content and delivery are fused together. Size and portability are changing the business landscape. The question of appropriate real estate size is a challenge to conventional business models.

### TECHNOLOGY DEMAND TRENDS

**CLOUD COMPUTING IS EVOLVING**
Non-cloud and cloud devices are connected

**THE INTERNET OF THINGS**
Social collaboration, sharing and processes are becoming more commonplace - it's at everyone's fingertips

**AN APP FOR ANY AND EVERYTHING**
Mobile apps are becoming the official channel to drive content.
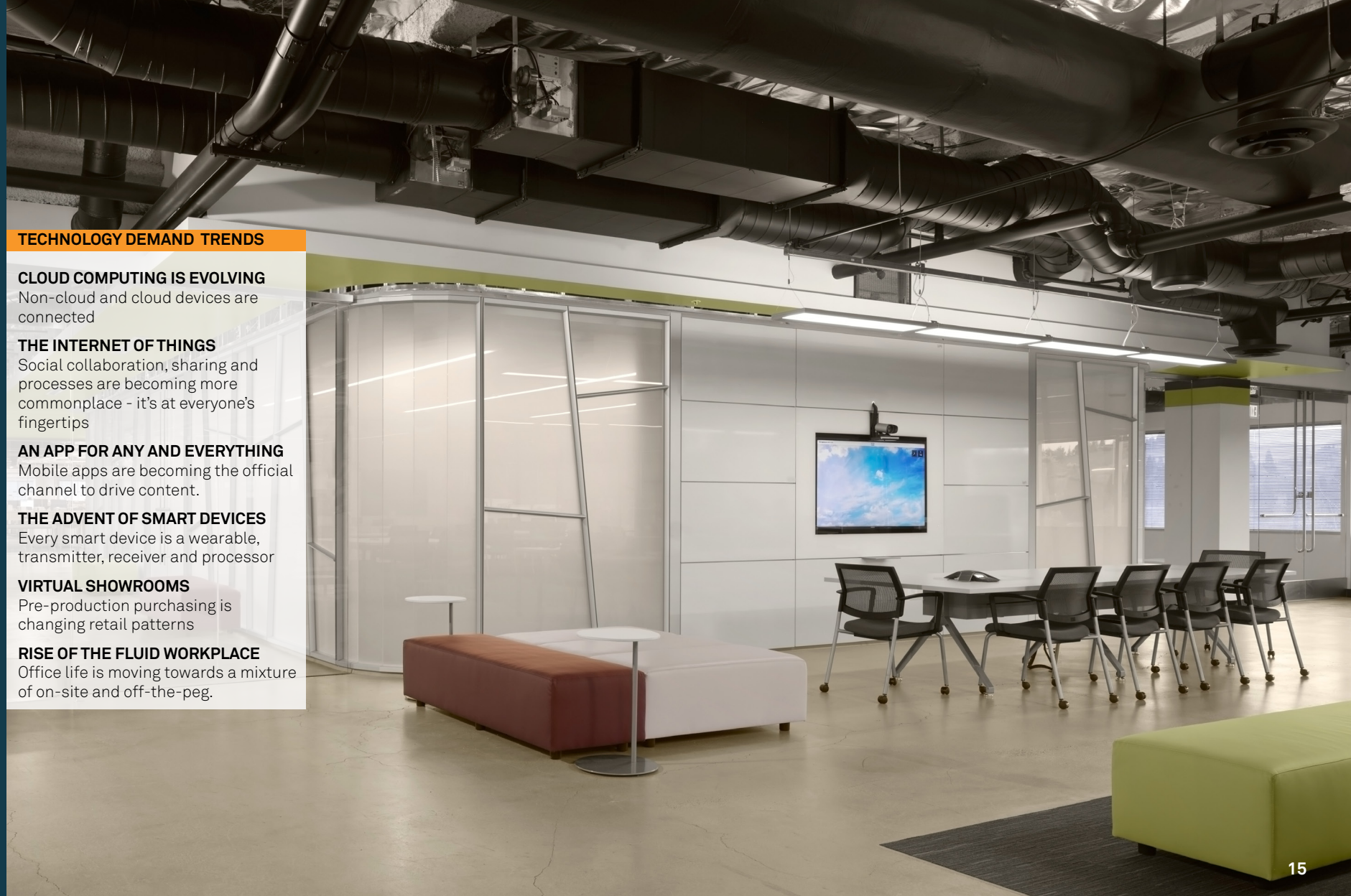
**THE ADVENT OF SMART DEVICES**
Every smart device is a wearable, transmitter, receiver and processor

**VIRTUAL SHOWROOMS**
Pre-production purchasing is changing retail patterns

**RISE OF THE FLUID WORKPLACE**
Office life is moving towards a mixture of on-site and off-the-peg.

# Innovation

## 10

**TOWARDS CO-CREATION**

**"90% of what you need to learn you'll learn from outside your industry"** - Gary Hammel. Both small and large companies are beginning to see the need to involve people outside their organization in an effort to remain relevant.

**Action:** Engaging employees and customers meaningfully will require collaborative platforms that let people play the role of co-creators. The result will improve generation of innovative ideas in a more cost-effective way.

The answer is continued ease of access to technology, on-demand information and instant communication.
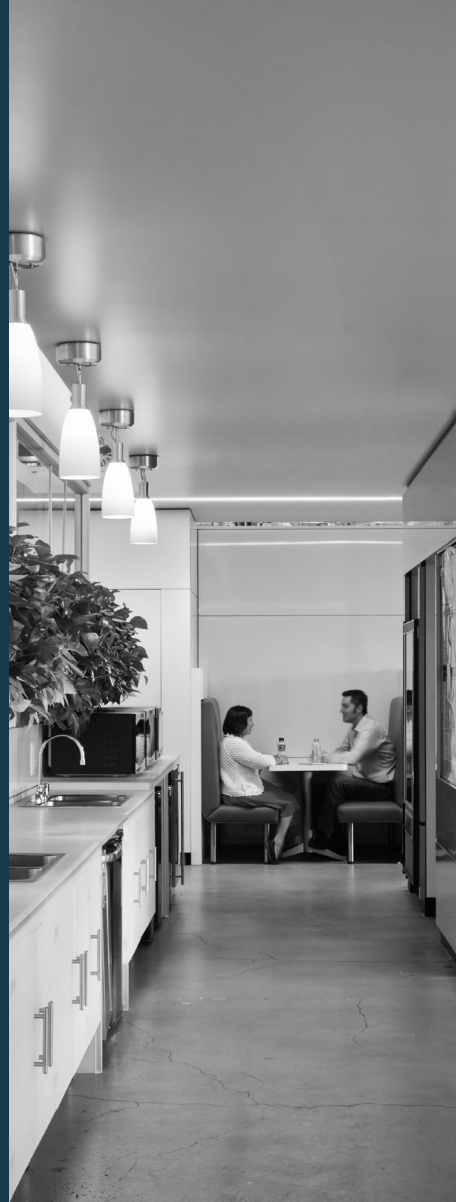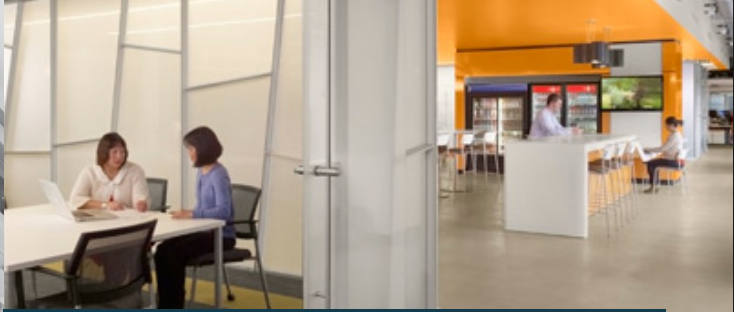
## The revolution is "human connection".

From the corner cafe to the Boardroom, the demand is growing for new approaches and holistic settings.

**Technology and emerging work styles are influencing parallel transformation of cities and buildings as individuals seek personal and professional fulfilment.**

The greatest change is a convergence towards individual simplicity and authorship. Simultaneously, the work-space must provide a variety of means to communicate with employees and customers.

**The revolution that started changing the workplace in the late 1990s is now spreading to buildings themselves, urban centers and business districts — we are always connected .**
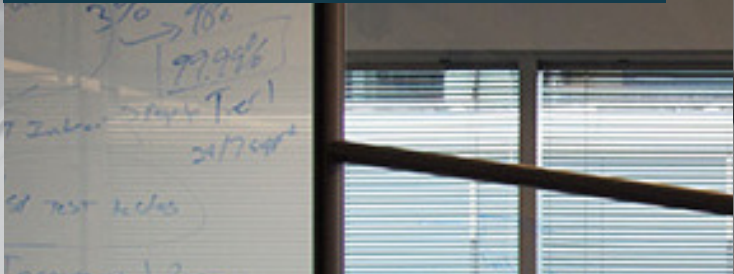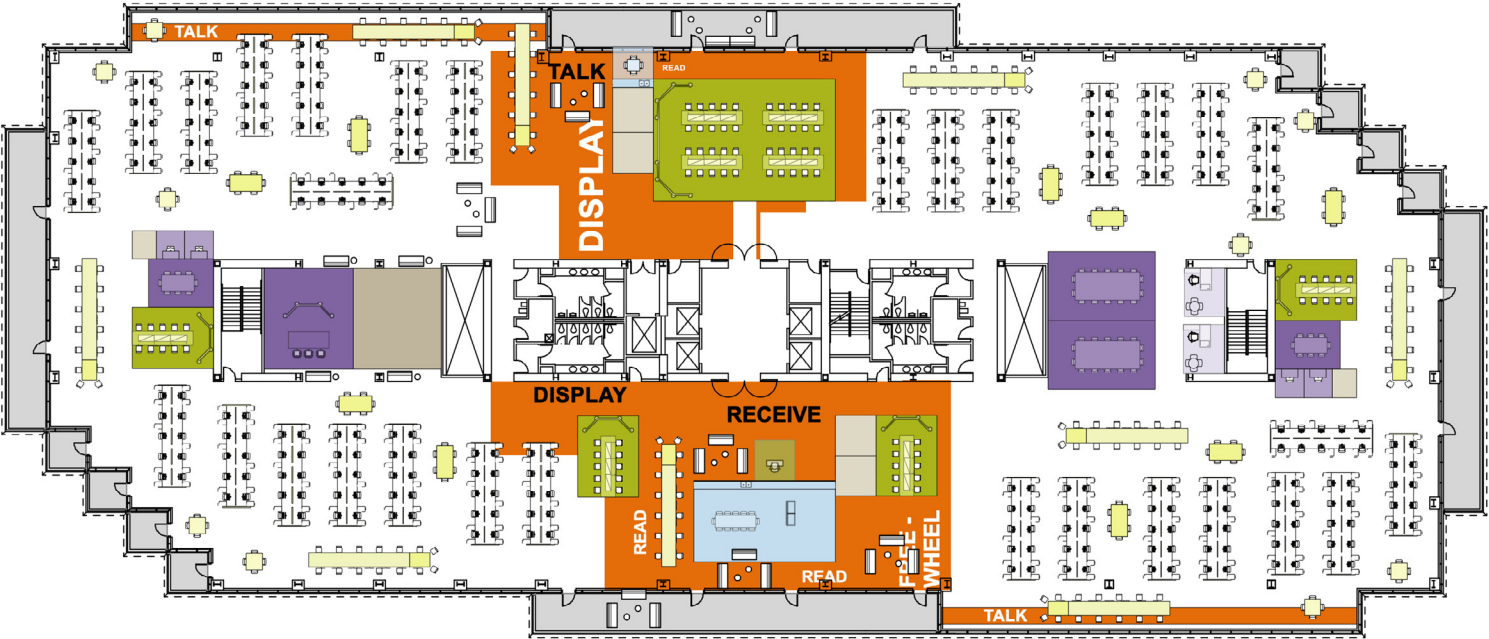
# Individuality means Bring Your Own Devices.

# ONE WORKPLACE SOLUTION
## GE SOFTWARE - SAN RAMON

## Average 115 sf/person

**COLLABORATION**

**WORKSTATION - 1**
121@30SF=3,630 NSF

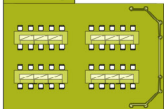**WORKSTATION - 2**
121@36SF=4,356 NSF

**OPEN MEETING - 1**
12@90SF=1,080 NSF
**OPEN MEETING - 2**
9@180SF=1,620 NSF
**PROJECT AREA/ROOM**
8@300SF=2,400 NSF

**GROUP WORKSHOP**
1@1,200SF=2,100 NSF

**INFORMAL ZONES**

**URBAN CAFE'**
2@100SF=200 NSF
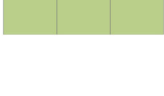**CAFE'**
3@500SF=1,500 NSF

**PLAY/GAME ROOM**
1@500SF=500 NSF

**PUBLIC INTERFACE**

**RECEPTION**
1@100SF=100 NSF
**PROTOTYPE / DEMO**
3@300SF=900 NSF

**PRIVATE**

**PRIVATE - TYPE 1**
8@120SF=960 NSF
**FOCUS ROOM**
**CONFERENCE ROOM -
TYPE A** (SEAT 8)
5@240SF=1,200 NSF

**CONFERENCE ROOM -
TYPE B** (SEAT 15)
5@450SF=2,250 NSF

**CONFERENCE ROOM -
TYPE C** (SEAT 20+)
3@900SF=2,700 NSF

**VIDEO CONFERENCE**
(SEAT 10)
5@240SF=1,200 NSF

**SUPPORT / UTILITY**

**COPY**
6@150SF=900 NSF

**STORAGE**
6@100SF=600 NSF
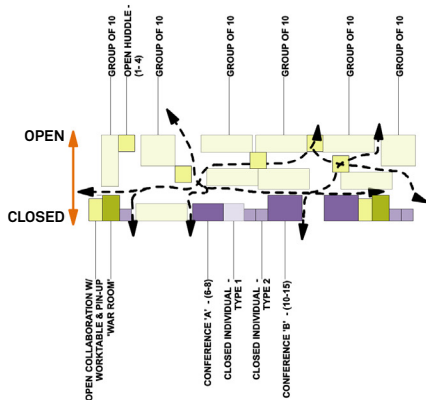**IT / DATA CENTER**
3@180SF=540 NSF
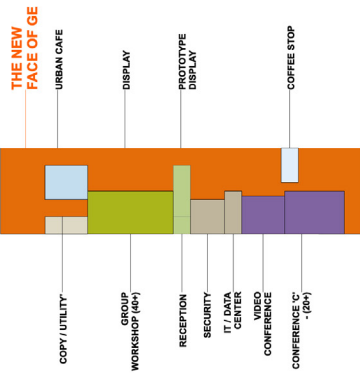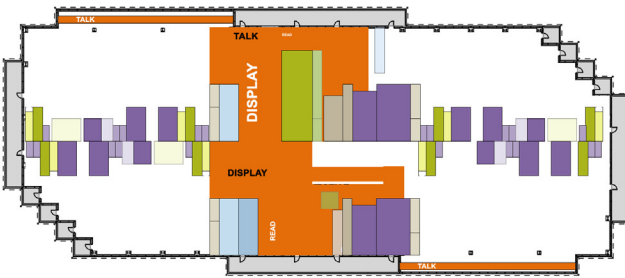
**SECURITY**
1@400SF=400 NSF

# ONE WORKSTATION

CONFERENCE/ LEARN/ DISCUSS

FLEXIBILITY

COLLABORATE

FOCUS

LUNCH MEETING

## INTERSECTION - INTERNAL (DISTRICT 100)

GROUP OF 10
OPEN HUDDLE (1-4)
GROUP OF 10
GROUP OF 10
GROUP OF 10
GROUP OF 10
GROUP OF 10

OPEN

CLOSED

OPEN COLLABORATION W/ WORKTABLE & PIN-UP "WAR ROOM"
CONFERENCE 'A' - (6-8)
CLOSED INDIVIDUAL TYPE 1
CLOSED INDIVIDUAL TYPE 2
CONFERENCE 'B' - (10-15)

## INTERSECTION - EXTERNAL

THE NEW FACE OF GE
URBAN CAFE
DISPLAY
PROTOTYPE DISPLAY
COFFEE STOP

COPY / UTILITY
GROUP WORKSHOP (40+)
RECEPTION
SECURITY
IT / DATA CENTER
VIDEO CONFERENCE
CONFERENCE 'C' - (20+)

## GE BISHOP RANCH - FUNCTIONAL PLAN

TALK
TALK
READ
DISPLAY
DISPLAY
READ
TALK

# Design Drivers

## Challenge over Comfort.

Coca-Cola Company CEO Muhtar Kent summed it up best: **"The best ideas aren't inside the company, they are outside."**

## Creativity + Business

There is a direct line of sight between creativity and performance in the marketplace.

## The Maker Culture

**"It's what you've made that is at the core. That informs the experience"** at Blink-lab we talk a lot about our "maker culture" which reflects the fact that we are interested in creating moments, environments and experiences that people interact with.

## People First

We design people experiences. **"People are the real mobile devices. Not the computing king. We are the ones that carry the mobile experience with us"** Bill Buxton, Microsoft.

## Work that matters

As designers and creators of the new, having a higher purpose galvanizes effort, and inspires creativity.

**Client**
GE Global Software Enterprise
**Smart wall fabricator**
DIRTT Wall Solutions
**Millwork**
Commercial Casework & 3Form
**Photographer**
Cesar Rubio

**Research**
BDCNetwork
CoStar
DesignIntelligence
Wall Street Journal
Wired Magazine

# The Future is *Multi* & Personal!

# The Team

The GE Software assignment was a collaborative effort towards a future based on change. Balancing technology, accessibility, mobility, transparency. desirability, feasibility and viability.

## DESIGN



**June Grant,** blink!LAB architecture

To excel is an obligation to practice and research. Every design should be based on in-depth research into materials, technology, craft, financial considerations, and social psychology.  This is the thread that weaves through the GE Software project.

The audience is client decision-makers who face a crisis in space and real-estate attraction.

Contact:
June A. Grant
blink!LAB architecture
4228 martin luther king jr way
Oakland, CA 94609
Tel: 510.326.2176

## SMART WALL FABRICATION



**Lewis Buchner,** DIRTT Environmental Solutions

What are the benefits of software-driven, automated manufacturing to support these trends?
- Space compression
- Technology integration
- Increased Sustainable Practices
- High quality fit and finish
- Flexibility and Reconfiguration

The audience is client decision-makers in commercial, education, government & healthcare.

Contact:
Lewis Buchner
DIRTT Environmental Solutions
431 Jackson Street
San Francisco, CA 94111
Tel: 415.672.1527

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