

Press release

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Office furnishers optimistic

Mobility, acoustics and light set the agenda

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The office design and furnishing industry is enjoying another stable year. However, the domestic trade situation demands a more judicious examination of the facts. Whilst preliminary estimates of sales of office equipment in the paper, office and stationery sectors point to a slight decline of 2.5%, consulting and planning services, as well as specialist office design and contract furnishing for the office sector, have all held up well since the most recent ORGATEC in 2016 and closed the 2017 trade year with a growth in turnover of a good 2%.

For the current 2018 year, office design companies from the Trade Association for the Office and Writing Culture (HBS/ Handelsverband Büro und Schreibkultur) are optimistic. But since the industry is sensitive to external economic influences, there is no cause to celebrate yet.

The generally good economic climate provides the basis for high demand and is also having positive effects on redesigns of the workplace. Health considerations and a modern workplace design are becoming material criteria in the courting of potential new employees. Appealing workplaces motivate and help in the retention of employees. Financial incentives are no longer the sole determinant of where people choose to work. Instead, flexible working hours, a pleasant working environment and flexible structures also figure highly. Office design has to take these all into account.

My office is wherever I am

The trend towards the home office and especially the mobile office continues unabated. The more flexible organisation of working time with regard to an improved work-life balance calls for a constantly changing work environment and a work culture oriented to modern and innovative work world concepts. The focus is thereby on the linking of mobile work with the office workspace. The enduring trend toward flexible forms of work, including outside of one's actual office workspace, meaning that the office is there where the employee just happens to be, results in a shift of investment to other areas of life, which are made "office-compatible".

Peace and quiet help me to concentrate

Another big theme with which the branch is concerned is acoustics at the workplace. Noise in any case, but also quieter auxiliary noises at the workplace considerably impair concentration, so that work results suffer as a consequence. Here the industry offers assistance in the form of complex consultation and planning tools, with noise-absorption surfaces and furniture.

My workplace in the right light

When working at a computer workstation, we glance between documents, keyboard and screen more than ten thousand times per day, placing huge stress on our eyes. We can only cope with this if the lighting in the workplace is right. Ergonomic lighting in the workplace ensures that the work area is brightly and uniformly lit and matches the employee's body clock. This is why investment in lighting concepts is increasing, in order to improve employees' well-being and, and ultimately, the success of the company.

Consultation quality and further education

The HBS sees its member companies as positioned well with regard to addressing the increasing demands for qualified customer service. The industry associations work together closely with regard to continuing education. The HBS traditionally accompanies the training programmes in the Fachschule des Möbelhandels (vocational school for furniture commerce) in Cologne, in which the focus is on supplementary qualifications for offices + properties. It is also the co-issuer of the Quality Office mark, which was initiated by the interior business association (iba / Industrieverband Büro und Arbeitswelt). This seal has already guaranteed a high level of quality for office furniture since 2006, which is increasingly called for as a criterion of quality in invitations to tender. The focus of the HBS has been on the new qualifications for consultants and for trading companies (Certified) since 2011. With respect to the subject of increasing requirements for the consulting personnel, commerce and manufacturers are coming closer to one another, as the focus of consultation is primarily found in commerce.

ORGATEC provides new impulses and findings

The trade fair form office and property furnishing will draw the entire office specialty trade to Cologne from 23 to 27 October 2018. There it will discuss solutions for every type and size of office. Here customers will be brought together with their own suppliers. Here is where the experts of the trade will provide information on the new trends in ergonomics, in forms of work and in design, and identify the technological, social and cultural transformation in the office furniture branch. Here is where providers and solutions for the challenges of acoustics, of light, of floor, ceiling and wall design play a prominent role.

The commercial association for the office economy (HBS) has its stand in hall 7.1, stand B071, directly at the entrance. Thomas Grothkopp and André F. Kunz can be found there to provide information and for discussions.

Photos and further information is ready for download on www.wohnenundbuero.de.

The Handelsverband Bürowirtschaft und Schreibwaren (HBS) represents the professional, political and technical interests of office business commerce in Germany. The association represents the interests of 2,200 companies.

The HBS is one of the individual trade organisations that is headed by the Handelsverband Deutschland (HDE) with its offices in Berlin and Brussels. The members of the HBS are the national associations of the individual trade organisations and hence the office business dealers and distributors organised there.