

WANTED: CHOICE WITHIN WORK ENVIRONMENTS

PRESS RELEASEApril 25, 2018 || page 1 | 3

Fraunhofer IAO presents initial findings from its Effective Office and Working Environments study

A survey conducted by Fraunhofer IAO shows that modernization of work organization is usually too slow. More than 1000 office and work environment experts from a variety of companies participated in the survey conducted on behalf of designfunktion Group. The “multispace” office is set to become the leading future office setup. A range of different working spaces offers numerous benefits, e.g. it has positive impacts on employer attractiveness, collaboration and personal autonomy.

How and to what extent do office and working environments support companies, ultimately helping them meet their goals? This question has important implications for work organization and was addressed in a study conducted by the Fraunhofer Institute for Industrial Engineering IAO on behalf of German company designfunktion. The initial findings will be presented today, April 25, 2018, at the press conference of Orgatec – the leading international trade fair for office and workspace furniture and equipment.

Modernization of work organization usually too slow

In all sizes of company and across all functions, study participants feel that modernization of work organization at their company is clearly not happening fast enough. In fact, with increasing company size the respondents even perceived the rate of transformation as substantially too slow. An exception were the respondents from top management, who deemed the modernization of work organization within their company to be happening at just the right speed. The results of the study further highlight that in companies with a slower pace of modernization, the supporting function of the office and work environment is less evident, the quality of spatial design is lower, collaboration is less evident and employer attractiveness drops significantly.

“Multispace” offices set to become leading future setup

Of those participating in the study, 54 percent expect that multispace offices will become the main office setup in their company. In a comparison of the various office setups, the study shows that, for a range of different criteria, a multispace working environment yields significantly better results than other

Press contact

Dipl.-Ing. (FH) Juliane Segedi | Fraunhofer Institute for Industrial Engineering IAO | Phone +49 711 970-2343 |
Nobelstrasse 12 | 70569 Stuttgart | www.iao.fraunhofer.de | presse@iao.fraunhofer.de |

FRAUNHOFER INSTITUTE FOR INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING IAO

office setups. This means that if there are a range of different spatial options available in the workspace, and if all employees can use these options on a flexible basis, the working environment provides a significantly higher support function. In addition, collaboration is more evident, a higher degree of autonomy prevails and employer attractiveness ratings are higher. When compared with other working environments, a multispace setup is least reflective of company hierarchy. The multispace working environment also offers many more possibilities for employees to retreat if they need to concentrate, or to take a short break, than all the other office setups – also compared to work environments with single-office layouts.

PRESS RELEASEApril 25, 2018 || page 2 | 3

Reference data

The study was based on a survey of approximately 1000 people who are involved with the concept of “new work environments” within their organization. It was conducted between April and December 2017. The respondents came from a range of different sectors. They can be categorized as supply-side experts (broken down: 37 percent architecture/construction/real estate, 9 percent consultancy) or as demand-side experts (54 percent of respondents). Of all the participants, 55 percent belong to small- and medium-sized companies (with up to 500 employees), while 45 percent come from large companies (over 500 employees).

The **Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft** is the leading organization for applied research in Europe. Its research activities are conducted by 72 institutes and research units at locations throughout Germany. The Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft employs a staff of more than 25,000, who work with an annual research budget totaling 2.3 billion euros. Of this sum, almost 2 billion euros is generated through contract research. Around 70 percent of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft’s contract research revenue is derived from contracts with industry and from publicly financed research projects. International collaborations with excellent research partners and innovative companies around the world ensure direct access to regions of the greatest importance to present and future scientific progress and economic development.

Contact

Udo-Ernst Haner | Phone +49 711 970-5470 | udo-ernst.haner@iao.fraunhofer.de | **Stephanie Wackernagel** | Phone +49 711 970-5467 | stephanie.wackernagel@iao.fraunhofer.de | Fraunhofer Institute for Industrial Engineering IAO, Stuttgart | www.iao.fraunhofer.de

FRAUNHOFER INSTITUTE FOR INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING IAO**About Fraunhofer IAO**

How will people live and work in the future? Asking this and similar questions, researchers at Fraunhofer Institute for Industrial Engineering IAO apply their findings in practice to achieve concrete results. Our experts shape the interaction between humans, technology and organization with a view to the whole, keeping each customer's specific needs in mind. We help companies and institutions recognize the potential of new technologies, harness them for profit, and open up attractive future markets. Employ our knowledge advantage to make your business a success!

www.iao.fraunhofer.de/lang-en/

About designfunktion

Represented in 16 different cities in Germany, the designfunktion Group is one of the nation's leading planning and furnishing companies. It focuses on the design and implementation of modern office and working environments and on furnishing commercial properties. designfunktion teamed up with Fraunhofer IAO to explore the extent to which office and working environments support companies, ultimately helping them meet their goals.

www.designfunktion.de

PRESS RELEASE

April 25, 2018 || page 3 | 3

The **Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft** is the leading organization for applied research in Europe. Its research activities are conducted by 72 institutes and research units at locations throughout Germany. The Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft employs a staff of more than 25,000, who work with an annual research budget totaling 2.3 billion euros. Of this sum, almost 2 billion euros is generated through contract research. Around 70 percent of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft's contract research revenue is derived from contracts with industry and from publicly financed research projects. International collaborations with excellent research partners and innovative companies around the world ensure direct access to regions of the greatest importance to present and future scientific progress and economic development.

Contact

Udo-Ernst Haner | Phone +49 711 970-5470 | udo-ernst.haner@iao.fraunhofer.de | **Stephanie Wackernagel** | Phone +49 711 970-5467 | stephanie.wackernagel@iao.fraunhofer.de | Fraunhofer Institute for Industrial Engineering IAO, Stuttgart | www.iao.fraunhofer.de