



(U) New Space Architecture - It Starts With Your Workspace!

FROM: the SID Design Team
Unknown
Run Date: 10/25/2006

(U//FOUO) Pilot program will test various open-architecture seating arrangements. Ultimately, the "winning" design will be phased in across the enterprise.

(U//FOUO) A New Space Architecture sounds as though it could be associated with Star Trek or NASA, or in NSA's case, with overhead collection, but in this instance, New Space Architecture refers to NSA's effort to move to a new workspace design - one that enhances workers' abilities through an open, collaborative, flexible and reconfigurable architecture. It's the name for our implementation of the concept known in the design community as "caves and commons." While this is an evolving concept, we wanted to let you know about some of the initiatives underway and where the Agency is with its thinking on this subject.

(U//FOUO) Concept Demonstration Project in the Sub-Saharan Africa Division (S2A2)

(U//FOUO) By January 2007, the Sub-Saharan Africa Division in the Office of Regional Targets will be using a pilot installation of NSA's new open architecture seating. The goal of the pilot is to experiment with three different furniture types from three different vendors to evaluate workspace design as it relates to mission performance, to generate ideas, and to help refine the new space architecture concept to give NSA every chance of getting it right both for headquarters and across the enterprise. **Basically, we want to figure out what works and what doesn't.** S2A2 was chosen to participate in this demonstration from a number of candidate organizations because of their space configuration, mission functions and enthusiasm toward change.

(U) The Process

(U//FOUO) To give NSA the best chance of developing an optimal workspace design, the Installation and Logistics (I&L) organization is acquiring over 50 model workstations (furniture only) from each of three competitively selected vendors (Herman Miller, Steelcase and American Seating) and will place them in the S2A2 workspaces to test and evaluate them for a period of time as personnel perform their day-to-day functions. In addition to the analysts, reporters, and managers in S2A2, we are also inviting the Cryptologic Centers (CCs) and others across the enterprise to send TDY'ers to Ft. Meade to provide input.

(U//FOUO) NSA will use the results of this Concept Demonstration Project to further refine the new space architecture requirements. One of the designs used in the prototype could stand out, but more likely, NSA will develop a new set of design requirements based on unique features and lessons learned from each. At the end of the evaluation period, a final solicitation will be conducted using knowledge gained from the pilot. **Ultimately, this workstation design will be used at the CCs and across the enterprise.** From that point forward, the new concept will be installed in all new renovations, and the old, cubicle furniture will be phased out.

(U) The Design

(U//FOUO) The New Space Architecture is looking at clusters of desks on the floor plate that will be grouped into neighborhoods and communities separated from each other by mobile support furniture like lightweight partitions, bookshelves, plants, lateral files, and so on. This peripheral

furniture will provide a delineation of space, break up sight lines, and provide a measure of privacy while at the same time allowing team members to easily share knowledge through collaboration and to be aware of what is happening around them.

(U//FOUO) The workstation furniture will be designed for multiple data screens (up to 3 screens per workstation), task lighting, rapidly adjustable desk height to let employees change positions (sit/stand) while they work, and a modular interface with power, data and communications to facilitate rapid and simple workstation reconfiguration. Proper lighting will be provided through a combination of day lighting, uniform indirect ceiling mounted and variable furniture-mounted task lighting. Technology components (computer and communications) will also be tested in this demonstration. Large video displays will be mounted around the office space to support information sharing and collaboration. There will also be a "backyard" - an area with soft seating and warm lighting that is conducive to creative conversation, or quiet reading.



(U) The SID Design Team

(U//FOUO) I&L is not working this New Space Architecture alone. In June 2005, a team of SID intelligence analysts, linguists, collectors, and computer scientists was put together to help influence the design of the new CC buildings and the interior workspaces, to work with the CCs to arrange organizations optimally on the floor plate and to engage the workforce so that they understand what is being done, why, and how. Over the past year and a half the team has quickly gotten up to speed on the state-of-the-art of interior workspace design and workflow.

(U//FOUO) Team members have made numerous visits to each of the CCs to engage their leadership and workforce in order to understand their needs and to participate in the CC building design review process. They have conducted surveys and interviews here at the Headquarters campus. They have engaged subject matter experts, both internal and external to the Agency, various facets of industry, and have scrubbed the Internet for pertinent information (both pro and con).

(U) Summary

(U) The more we learn about the art of interior workspace design; the more we realize how much the spaces people inhabit affect them. Sir Winston Churchill once said, "*We shape our buildings: thereafter they shape us.*" ***The Information Age is driving us to be more open, collaborative, and flexible. We must provide an environment that facilitates, and even encourages, those behaviors.***



(U//FOUO) If you have thoughts on this topic, please post your comments on the [SID today blog](#).

(U//FOUO) POCs

The SID Design Team consists of:

- Brian Biesecker (bvbiese)



"(U//FOUO) SIDtoday articles may not be republished or reposted outside NSANet without the consent of S0121 ([DL sid comms](#))."

