



ALLPLAN ARCHITECTURE IN PRACTICE

Vertical gardens – fresh air for the office

📍 Renovation of the Microsoft Headquarters in Vienna, Austria

Did you know that the indoor climate in a third of all modern office buildings in Europe fails to comply with the guidelines for a healthy indoor room climate, and that sickness-related absences are therefore much higher than normal? In many workspaces, the air is too dry and contains hazardous substances that may cause health complaints. Many of these complaints can be significantly reduced by simply bringing in plants that purify the air. Plants add water vapor to the air, absorb heat and sounds, and can take in and reduce hazardous substances. People therefore find workplaces containing plants more pleasant, which is proven to reduce stress and signs of "sick building syndrome", such as headaches and fatigue.

Microsoft Österreich GmbH has also recognized that a healthy indoor climate in the workplace is important for achieving optimum performance among employees. The company has been working on the "New World of Work" for many years now and is conducting corresponding studies on this topic. As part of this project, Microsoft has completely redesigned its headquarters in Vienna and has also commissioned the company Vertical Magic Garden to install vertical gardens. Werner Miesl from Vertical Magic Garden Germany: "The vertical garden isn't just pleasing to look at; it also affects people's health and

individual wellbeing. Green walls create optimal air moisture and reduce dust. Certain plants have been proven to filter hazardous substances such as formaldehyde, phenol, or benzene out of the air in the room, significantly reducing the pollution in the room as a result."

The concept for redesigning the company headquarters aims to turn the place of work into a meeting point and communication center. Like a computer, the spatial, functional, and artistic concept is based on four key components: Firstly: the data highway, which represents the horizontal access zone. Secondly, the ICF (interaction and circulation furniture), i.e. the open-plan communication and work area, which at the same time vertically links both employee floors (processor). Thirdly, the meeting rooms (main memory); meeting rooms of different sizes that are organized and designed differently. Fourthly the open workspace, i.e. spacious work areas with some fixed workspaces but mainly hot desks and desk-sharing (hard disk).

In addition to the four main components, the foyer is also significant because this is where you get your first glimpse of the "New World of Work". In the reception area, the main idea is played out through floating lotus flowers, which symbolize purity, loyalty, and creative ability. The blue striped vinyl floor



represents the data flow. A large, vertical garden made of natural plants forms the background. Combined with an LED wall behind the open reception desk, the link between nature and technology is picked out as a central theme."

"One of the reasons we use Allplan Architecture is that it is very easy to implement the plans for non-standard shapes – such as the curved wall of plants – using the 3D modeler."

Werner Miesl, Vertical Magic Garden Germany

Vertical Magic Garden was founded in 2009 in Hartberg/Austria by Johannes Leitner. Vertical plants in modular format for indoor and outdoor areas, acoustic and visual room dividers, and columns and murals containing plants are among the range of products and services the company provides.

PROJECT INFORMATION AT A GLANCE

Focus: Interior architecture

Software used: Allplan Architecture

Project data:

- Client: Microsoft Österreich GmbH
- Architecture: INNOCAD Architektur ZT GmbH, Graz
- Construction start date: July 2011
- Completion: October 2011
- Useful area: 4,500 m²
- Construction costs: 2.8 million euros net