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CASE STUDY



Home but away: Boston Consulting Group by Bates Smart
Sydney, Australia

Home away from home –

‘Sense of place’ makes a workplace feel uniquely welcoming and familiar. In its fit-out for Boston Consulting Group, Bates Smart with Schiavello conjure a ‘home away from home’ for its mobile workforce.

For Boston Consulting Group, the subtle nuances embedded by Bates Smart into the new Sydney workspace are part of a sophisticated design language that creates a distinctive and productive home base. Elements of contrast within the new 60 Martin Place office are masterfully articulated in materiality and geometry to generate a sense of fluidity and balance.

Bates Smart designer, Hayden Crawford, explains the overall concept narrative addresses the need for personnel who are out on the road with clients for a large amount of the time to have a workplace that provides a calm, refined and productive atmosphere that promotes productivity, well-being and respite, almost like a “home away from home”.

“What they wanted was a space which is calm, collaborative, and celebrates BCG culture. The approach is restrained, calm, approachable and professional.”

The interior palette also needed to have a distinct relationship to the location, while still integrating with the other BCG Australian offices to ensure a consistent brand aesthetic. Crawford says the team considered what gives Sydney its unique identity and sense of place. They meditated on “iconic Sydney moments” such as being on Bondi Beach, wandering through the botanic gardens or passing between the Heads. The ocean became a part of the design motif, with sandstone and travertine to reflect the visual materiality of the region.

The floorplan was interpreted as a seamless journey from the front of house, past layered green glass to reference waves, to arrive at the open main office with its expansive outlook over the Botanic Gardens and the city towards the Harbour.



Schiavello created integrated planters for seating and workstations that bring the outside leafy character of the city indoors, adding vibrancy and softness, and adding restfulness to the design language of the workplace. The biophilic elements also improve wellbeing.



Integrated planters for seating and workstations.

Crawford explains research has shown having greenery in an office and having outlooks onto green space can improve worker wellbeing by between 50-60 per cent compared to an office without natural elements within sightlines.

“By embedding and integrating (biophilic elements) in a meaningful way, it means everyone can see it and benefit.”

Ashleigh Burness, ANZ operations manager, Boston Consulting Group, says BCG aims to provide a “warm, welcoming, prestigious but non-pretentious workspace” for staff members with high quality finishes across all the Australian offices. The design ethos also aims to clearly reflect the company’s mission, values, culture and purpose.

“We have followed a trend of incorporating the local city history into the overall theme and vision for each fitout which can be seen quite evidently when visiting each different office while aiming for a coherent aesthetic feel across all offices. The increase of plants throughout the office creates a more attractive workplace, reduces stress, boosts creativity, and increases mood and productivity.”

From a functional perspective BCG also aimed to have a more open, flexible and collaborative workspace with improved technology abilities.

A biophilic influence –

The customised Schiavello Krossi Workstations meet this part of the brief through USB points and power hidden within the workstations. Crawford explains that the power and data cabling is embedded through a speedway in the floors.

The shape of the workstations and the seating with inbuilt planters is “curvaceous” he says, which is in keeping with the biophilic influence. The curves of the workstations also enables monitors to be offset so each worker is afforded a degree of privacy.

“Bates Smart worked extensively with the internal BCG team during the concept stage to fully understand our vision and needs for the office,” Burness says.

“The team listened, brainstormed and provided many concept designs to ensure the brief was met. Having also worked on the Melbourne office fit out, they had a good grasp of what the BCG values were and as a result were able to bring our vision to life.”

COVID-19 created challenges, including a need to carefully consider the supply chain. Crawford says Schiavello being an Australian company providing locally-designed and manufactured, bespoke products was a major enabling factor for successful procurement and timely completion. As Schiavello had previously supplied workstations for BCG’s

other Australian offices including Perth, Canberra, Melbourne and Sydney, there was also a mutual understanding of the exceptional level of quality and functionality required for the fit-out – and the level of refinement that BCG could rely on for the final result.

To overcome the difficulties of travel restrictions, Crawford explains 3D renders were used for prototyping. This process enabled the design team to respond to detailed requirements around form, function and colour palette including powder coating of the planters. Colour was key, with Crawford specifying warmth, rather than polar whites.

“Overall, the quality is fantastic and projects a high, quality workspace,” Burness says. “The staff have really appreciated the space especially the new and improved technology and the various flex working spaces.” “The staff kitchen has been hugely popular – it is a very warm, inviting space with amazing views where staff can gather together and enjoy the space.”

Burness says it was an amazing project to work on, particularly during a global pandemic.

“Thank you to all of the Sydney office project team,” she says. “Without such a strong, collaborative team, we would not have delivered the fit-out we did.”



Customised Krossi Workstations with integrated planters.

Interior design Bates Smart
Photography by Nicolas Smith