

State OF PLAY

IT'S NOT VERY OFTEN THAT ONE ASSOCIATES WORDS LIKE "FUN" AND "INSPIRATIONAL" WITH THE INTERIOR OF AN OFFICE BUT DIGI'S HEADQUARTERS HAVE BEEN DONE UP, BY PAUL + PRIS, EXACTLY SO.

Conformity is definitely not in DiGi's bag. After all, the company has been known for its creative ads and innovative business approach. Therefore, it's probably no surprise that its office adopts the most unorthodox layout (in Malaysia, at least): instead of using regular cubicles, DiGi's office takes on an open, quasi-library concept where employees, who all work on laptops, can shift freely from one place to another.

This nomadic culture is prevalent throughout the building. Small, cosy common areas which spread sporadically across the office spaces have been set up to give employees a quiet spot for some reading, private chats, or even enjoying a cup of coffee.

It's unfortunate that no one seemed to be using these common areas – that is, until Paul + Pris gave them a spanking new makeover. "It's quite sad that these spaces had been going to waste," laments Priscilla Ng of the design duo. "Our work was to restore their original function; and turn them into fun, vibrant and inspirational spaces." >

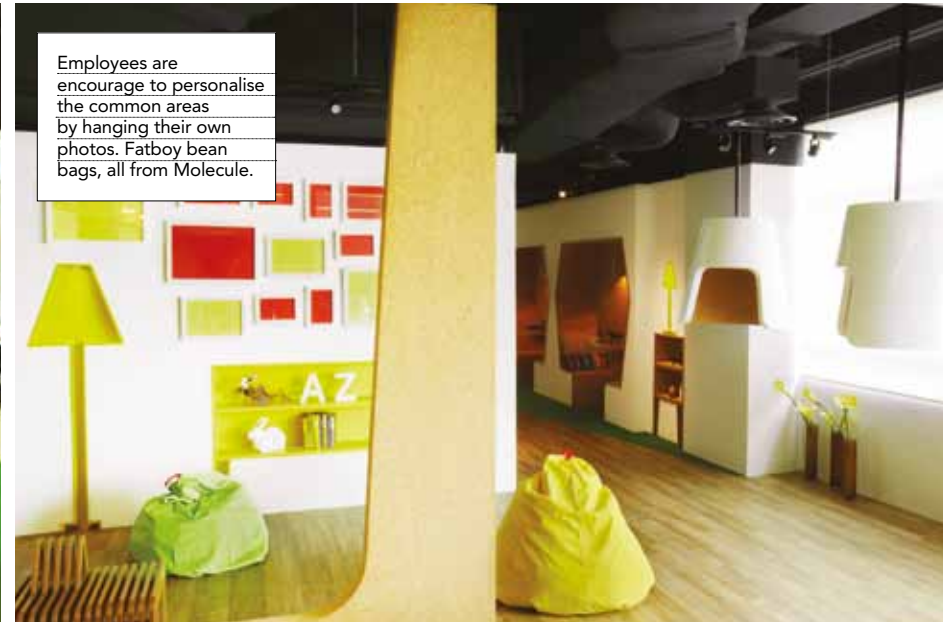
A splash of colour in the common area brings life to the bleak office setting. Cutting vase, Tubes vase and Pan Pan rabbit sculpture, all from Ligne Roset; Cushions from BoConcept.



Made of corkboard, the "private pods" are, at a certain level, sound-proof. Fatboy bean bags, all from Molecule.



Employees are encouraged to personalise the common areas by hanging their own photos. Fatboy bean bags, all from Molecule.



Built-in modules fit perfectly on a narrow space. Animal sculptures and cushions, all from BoConcept.



top Custom-designed desks made of eco-friendly MDF board. Bouquet vase, from Molecule.
below right The "phone pods" are reminiscent of Darth Vader's helmet. Armchair, from Kian; Animal sculptures, billiard balls, vase, all from BoConcept.

After a hasty two-month renovation, these monotonous voids have been given a new breath of life with splashes of bright, bold colours, radiating a playful, relaxed mood. Yellow, DiGi's official colour, dominates the colour scheme, punctuated by sharp, occasional bursts of orange and green. Faux grass carpets add texture and character while generating an outdoor atmosphere. "It has a picnic-in-a-park kind of feel to it," enthuses Ng.

Paul + Pris also filled the spaces with custom-designed furniture and fixtures. Among all, the "phone pod", reminiscent of Darth Vader's helmet, generated the most buzz. "Everyone's wondering what does it do and it's good that they do. Design is about making people curious," comments Ng. "It took a while before they finally figure out that it's where you can have a private conversation on the phone.">

For the unadventurous, the unconventional facelift may seem a tad too juvenile - frivolous, even. But a "contrast between work and play" is exactly what Paul + Pris wanted to portray through their design. Winning an award in the 2012 International Property Awards in the Office Interior Design category certainly proves that their effort has paid off.

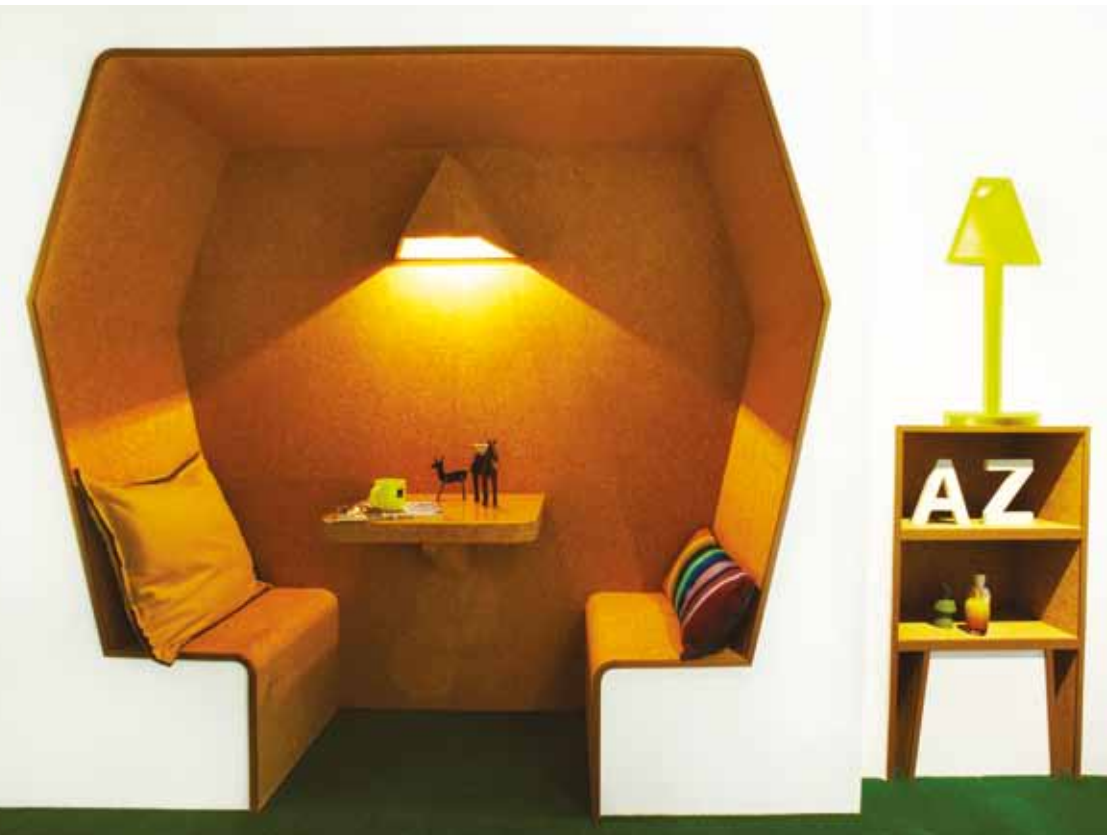
GREEN PEACE

In fact, there's more about Paul + Pris's design than what meets the eye. According to Ng, the underlying theme is "green". The design concept is the extrapolation of DiGi's Deep

Green movement, an initiative in addressing the importance of eco-conscious living. The telecommunications giant believes that this programme has to stem from the company's core - by encouraging its employees to implement a green lifestyle.

"We devised a series of design modules, dubbed 'Green Silhouettes', which are all green in material profile and explores the concept of silhouettes," explains Ng. "These modules are then integrated into all 26 common areas in various configurations to reshape these otherwise mundane spaces into inviting, functional zones."

Not only are these smart design modules >



Even the lockers have been given a new coat of colour. *left* An alcove for private meetings.



"OUR WORK WAS TO RESTORE THEIR ORIGINAL FUNCTION; AND TURN THEM INTO FUN, VIBRANT AND INSPIRATIONAL SPACES."

Plastic stool and plastic bench, all from Kian. Egg-shaped Dolmen lamps, from Ligne Roset. *below left* Egg-shaped Dolmen lamps, from Ligne Roset; Candleholders and photo frame, all from BoConcept.

pleasing to the eye, they become testament to the ingenious assimilation of eco-friendly materials into a workplace. The custom-made coffee tables, for instance, are made from Medium Density Fibreboard (MDF), a durable, cost efficient and often underrated substrate material. The partitions, on the other hand, are kept neutral with VOC-free varnish.

The recessed storage units are lined with corkboard wallpapers imported from Japan. Compressed from 100per cent natural bark tissue, this porous material retains its natural moisture and therefore does not emit toxic compounds in the event of fire. For flooring, Paul + Pris uses fully recyclable vinyl floor strips while the faux grass carpets are entirely hand-woven. "We serve with a purpose," says Ng. "We, too, believe in the importance of going green. With this project, we're helping DiGi 'turning yellow into green'."

Visit www.paul-pris.com to see more of the sisterly duo's work. ●

