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CASE STUDY



“Less gloss, more substance”: Port Jackson Partners’ new office Sydney, Australia

Saying goodbye to a 27-year-old space –

Founded in 1991, Port Jackson Partners (PJP) has grown to become one of Australia’s most well respected strategy consulting firms. From the day that it opened, however, the company’s offices had been in Circular Quay’s AMP Centre, Sydney. So when the building was scheduled for demolition in 2018, the opportunity for a fresh office arose.

“We had been in the building for a long time,” says Shane Guthrie, Director at PJP.

“With the move came an opportunity to have a complete rethink of the way we construct the office in terms of layout, colour and décor. We wanted something that was a bit more current and also reflected our values.”

While the old office was in impeccable shape, it was traditional and lacked breakout spaces, communal areas, AV and agile capabilities, while also featuring colours that felt out-dated.

Moving into Aurora Place – which was designed by noted Italian architect Renzo Piano in 1997 – PJP brought design heavyweight Geyer in to compose the new 1300sqm floor to suit the company's contemporary needs.

"We wanted a slightly larger front of house area and communal kitchen. We wanted to dedicate more space to general open plan team environments and social spaces, and we wanted our staff to have more choice with where they can work," Guthrie says.

Allocated desking with Krossi, plus the best elements of ABW –

Prior to commencement of the design process, Geyer and PJP undertook a vision workshop to understand exactly how PJP staff work and what they need from the space. "Some of the things that came up were that substance was really important – one of the great quotes someone said was that they wanted "less gloss, more substance." They wanted the space to be front and foremost for their people and enable creative problem solving," says Cathy Jameson, Partner at Geyer.

As many PJP employees regularly work offsite, the firm was looking to integrate some of the best elements of an agile-based workspace (ABW), while still remaining in an allocated desk setting.

With desking solutions supported by Krossi – both sit/stand and fixed height – workstations are organised around the central core of the floorplate. "We didn't want people to feel like battery hens; we wanted them to be spaced around, so we have a variety of clusters and workposition types," Jameson says. Krossi's accessory range including cable trays and socks allow staff to keep their desks in pristine condition, meeting the requirements for their office-wide clean desk policy.



Krossi's sit/stand capabilities encourage Port Jackson Partners' staff to move and change positions throughout the day.



"The Karos, in particular, are really handy. You can easily pull up beside someone's desk and sit on one of them," says Guthrie.

Creating social spaces with Karo and OTM –

Providing a more casual work setting to the desks are breakout spaces, something PJP was missing in its old space. These, along with the social spaces, occupy the sides of the building that boast the best views, including sweeping outlooks across the Botanic Gardens and Sydney Harbour.

Karo Ottomans and OTM Tables are scattered throughout these areas, providing occasional seating and tables. "The Karos, in particular, are really handy. Every now and then, you might be chatting to someone and you can easily pull up beside their desk and sit on one of those," says Guthrie. "And the OTM Tables are there if someone needs to put a drink down wherever they are."

Flexibility and teamwork through Schiavello's custom D-end table –

Perhaps what is most unique about PJP's new fitout are the team rooms. These are flexible and adaptable spaces that cater to the privacy needs of PJP staff, featuring four desks and one long D-end bench, supplied by Schiavello, with TV and AV capabilities at the wall. "These rooms can be used depending on what the staff need at the time. They could have four people who are working on the same client, but they might not all be in the Sydney location, so the team rooms enable them to sequester themselves away and work together. A lot of things they work on are sensitive, so they can shut that room down, or if nothing is going on, they can open it up to the rest of the space, and it feels like part of the workstations. The D-end table is quite flexible and allows them to add more people, suiting teams throughout different stages of their projects," says Jameson. "Confidentiality and being able to create different modes for their teams was really important."

An interior that does the location justice –

With a natural, earthy palette and an array of workspaces, including a combination of small offices, an open workspace, big team collaboration areas, focus spaces and secure team rooms, PJP staff are now provided with a great option of work settings.

“The lightweight feeling of many of the Schiavello products helped us to really push home that concept about keeping the space light, bright and natural,” Jameson says. “We have the world’s most beautiful light quality and view out those windows so we wanted to make sure the spaces were clean and did it justice.”

A year after moving in, and PJP is making full use of the different areas. “Everyone is enjoying having more breakout space and flexibility. The openness and décor feels a lot brighter and open which has had a great effect on us all,” says Guthrie.



The office’s team rooms are flexible – with custom D-end tables that help facilitate team AV meetings with offsite staff.

Interior design by Geyer
Photography by Richard Glover