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Dyer Brown completes new 125,000 s/f headquarters for International Data Group

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Needham, MA Representing their latest achievement in workplace strategy and design, national architecture and interiors firm Dyer Brown has completed a major new headquarters for leading global market intelligence and data analytics provider to the technology ecosystem International Data Group, Inc. (IDG). The new, 125,000 s/f workplace on a scenic campus, consolidates under one roof the company's three distinct business units – IDC, IDG Communications, and primary corporate entity IDG – with each division housed on its own floor, custom-designed to accommodate each group's particular activities and workflows.

Boasting a brand-inspired setting and innovative solutions for employee productivity and wellness, the reimagined interiors also present original environmental graphics and state-of-the-art spaces for video, broadcast and podcast production. Accommodating more than 500 employees, the innovative

workplace has resulted from a collaborative engagement process between Dyer Brown's acclaimed workplace studio and IDG corporate leadership. The company is expected to move into the new headquarters later this year.

"To best serve IDG's unique culture and operating needs, a twelve-person steering committee including representatives from each business unit and several of the company's executives collaborated with the project team to ensure a successful and effective headquarters design," said architect Ashley Dunn, AIA, director of workplace for Dyer Brown. "While working to realize IDG leadership's goal of coalescing operations for the three business units together under one roof, the committee also articulated a strategic workplace vision to support each division's activities, goals and workflows, with bold graphic installations inspired by the company's history, global reach, and perspective."

The palette of finishes and flexible, ergonomic furnishings also support wellbeing and productivity for every employee, adds Dunn. "We believe the strategy-driven design will help support IDG in its continued success and growth in the technology and media marketplaces, both as a platform for talent recruitment and retention as well as a stage for honing client relations and workflow."

Occupying three floors of the modern facility at 140 Kendrick Street in Needham, about 12 miles southwest of Boston, the new workplace dedicates roughly one floor per business unit, with programming of the L-shaped plan tailored to suit the unique culture of each. For example, leaders of the more tech-focused IDG Communications, publishers of MacWorld among other notable titles, expressed their preference for an open-plan office, dominated by clean rows of workstations interspersed with huddle spaces and collaboration zones. Upstairs on the third floor, on the other hand, the corporate umbrella group IDG requires an executive board room and enclosed offices.

Uniting the workplace at the elbow of the floor plate are common zones and public-facing amenities, starting with an entrance lobby that also serves as a pantry and break area, offering visitors a glimpse of company culture in action. Some shared centralized services are located together for efficiency and coordination, such as the human resources center, which has offices for all three divisions together on the 1st floor. The three floors are unified through new corporate furniture standards developed by Dyer Brown, as well recurring themes such as open ceilings in common areas and subtler touches like pendants with Edison lamps.

Also unifying the three divisions, an imaginative and memorable installation of Dyer Brown-designed environmental graphics celebrates the company's global reach and worldwide operations. Signs indicate distances from the headquarters to other IDG city hubs such as in Paris and Singapore. A list of the company's international offices appears above banquette seating in the pantry area. Each floor also displays a graphic theme focused on global regions IDG serves, such as Asia and North America, with a major city from each geography inspiring the graphics in common areas and outside conference rooms: One floor's collaboration space, for example, sports imagery of Big Ben, while a similar area downstairs is emblazoned with a map of São Paulo.

"It's all about the multitude of influences coming together to create something exciting and whole,"

said Mikala Siciliano, AIA, project manager with Dyer Brown. “The city maps illuminate this idea in how their blocks coming together to form neighborhoods, for example, a theme reinforced in the abstracted carpet pattern evoking urban maps or computer circuitry. Reinforcing the distinct business units, a different primary color dominates each floor -- blue, burgundy, or green -- yet each level also includes references to all the other colors, creating a cohesive and memorable experience.”

“The idea from IDG leadership was to create a space that reflected their identity as a ‘house of brands’ rather than a ‘branded house,’” adds Dunn. “So while there is an overarching design concept, each floor is distinct from the others in notable ways.”

Before the company officially moves in later this year, Dyer Brown will work with project team partners on finishing touches including a Memorial Wall, a mission statement installation, and brand-inspired signage.

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