

CROSS PORTFOLIO BENCHMARKING AND GLOBAL DATA CAPTURE ENABLES WORKPLACE OPTIMISATION



The ABN AMRO portfolio consists of 635 buildings occupying 1.8 million square metres in 54 countries worldwide and a presence on all continents. In early 2007, ABN AMRO approached EC Harris for a specialist to undertake the role of Head of Global Workplace Strategy.

The Global Workplace Strategy role featured the following objectives as fundamental components of Global Real Estate's cost savings programme:

- To implement a single global standard of measurement, thereby enabling like-for-like cross-portfolio benchmarking
- To formulate and implement processes for the collection of current, relevant property and workplace data. Upon receipt of data, to analyse and formulate metrics as well as management information reports to facilitate better planning and forecasting
- Dissemination, awareness and progression of the 'New Ways of Working' message and ABN AMRO's 'High Performance Workplace'
- To support Global Real Estate in its efficiency programme by developing workplace strategies that deliver advanced working practices, thereby reducing space requirements and generating significant CAPEX and OPEX savings.

With the takeover by the RBS-Fortis-Santander consortium, ABN AMRO's Global Property and Facilities Management Services department was required to play a pivotal role in the transition, separation and integration of ABN AMRO business units, assets and staff to each consortium partner.

Opex saving of
€18 million

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Creating solutions

EC Harris carried out a Time Utilisation Study and staff survey at an ABN AMRO European country HQ to assist planning for its relocation. Having developed an alternative workplace model based on a desk-sharing and flexible working concept, we determined that business efficiency and continuity could be served utilising just five floors of the new HQ, not six as originally proposed, and were consequently able to highlight potential savings of €18 million, CAPEX and OPEX.

EC Harris has undertaken a major workplace occupation study at ABN AMRO's Singapore office buildings, capturing occupation levels, activities and work patterns for 2,200 staff in 21,000m². Our report demonstrated that by implementing advanced working practices the Bank's growth projections could be accommodated in existing property without recourse to acquisition. To further this proposition we conducted Flexible Working workshops to engage stakeholders and staff and to gain buy-in for the future re-organisation.

EC Harris continues to work with ABN AMRO to support the alignment of property with the integrated businesses, such as a Workplace Strategy project to evaluate their sites in Jakarta. We are serving consortium partner RBS with fundamental workplace strategy pieces, for example with the development of a city scenario modeller that automatically generates disposal and acquisition options.

Adding value

- Potential Capex and Opex savings of €18 million highlighted for a country HQ relocation project. Scenario modelling undertaken based on advanced working, reduced space requirements and better workplace metrics
- Global data capture processes implemented current and relevant data thereby providing a sound foundation for all CRE strategy work. Management information dashboards introduced to support faster review and decision-making

- Cross-portfolio benchmarking using standardised measurements has enabled the bank to target sites for workplace optimisation and consequential savings. Portfolio flexibility has been enhanced, for example in Singapore where it was shown that growth could be accommodated in existing buildings and acquisition deferred
- Our workplace evaluation projects have highlighted the potential for efficiencies through implementation of advanced working practices. Better staff engagement and feedback through online staff surveys, thereby assisting Property and FM planning as well as providing post-project measures of success.

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