

# DELIVERING WORKPLACE TRANSFORMATION UNDERPINS DELIVERY OF THE CORPORATE VISION



The challenge facing EC Harris was to inspire exceptional performance throughout the organisation. The objective was to reinforce a position as a knowledge based business, and in so doing, mobilise the company towards delivering to an identified corporate vision. In order to realise these aspirations, EC Harris developed a three-year strategic change programme, using a move to a new London Headquarters as the catalyst for change.

As the first phase in an extensive change programme, the move to ECHQ needed to encompass both a physical shift in location, but more importantly a shift in perception and attitude across the business, from the partners and employees, to the external clients. This challenge was achieved by implementing significant change within the working environment as well as refreshing the external market-facing brand. The entire change programme encompasses not only what EC Harris stands for now, but what it aspires to be and will deliver to in the future.

Although the solution was initially centred on the new HQ, the aim was to inspire and mobilise a step change across the wider network of offices throughout the organisation, across all international locations.

Corporate Real Estate (CRE) was placed at the heart of business transformation. EC Harris developed a joint team, structured into two separate streams. One team focused on the physical aspects of the move, whilst the second team was centred on the business transformation programme.

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*“The £1.5 million targeted benefits were realised in fewer than 6 months.”*

The overarching benefit realised was that EC Harris rapidly created a different culture and belief in their ability. Their new HQ proved EC Harris’ conviction that property can act as a visible catalyst for change when used as part of a wider business transformation programme, and provided the ideal platform from which to launch their next three year corporate vision.

### Creating solutions

- The business transformation stream addressed how EC Harris would operate in the new building and mobilised the entire organisation. An entirely new style of workspace environment was created that helped employees live the vision of a knowledge based business
- A set of behaviours (such as a clear desk policy and encouraging breaks in the café, bar or coffee areas) were also introduced to encourage integration and help embed these new ways of working
- Integrating mobilisation and communications throughout was a key factor. Everyone in the business needed to be involved with the transformation to make it work
- The return on investment meant that this new working environment was combined with a number of other solutions and rolled out globally, aiding the transformation programme to extend beyond the confines of EC Harris’ headquarters, to all areas of the business.

### Adding value

#### Financially

- The £1.5 million targeted benefits were realised in fewer than 6 months
- Net Profit Margin increased by 13% from pre-move levels
- Fee turnover per head increased by 7.5%
- Total occupancy cost per head went down 36% from £539 to £343
- Staff attrition dropped by 10%
- Staff attraction: attrition ratio improved from 1:1 before, to 2.5:1
- Overhead costs as percentage of staff costs reduced by 14%
- Utilisation of workspaces increased from 62% to 85%.

#### Business impact

- Positive impact on how staff and clients view EC Harris; the building helps the business to win work
- Business wide impact on transforming EC Harris
- The success on the ‘return on investment’ means 11 other locations have since followed suit
- New working practices increased integration, flexibility and transfer of knowledge
- Increased visibility of leadership and increased access to most experienced staff
- Improved sustainability; increased recycling and reduced paper consumption - Carbon footprint improved 251%
- The building won industry recognition with the team winning key industry awards including:
  - British Institute of Facilities Management - Best Impact on Organisation and Workplace
  - Premises and Facilities Management - Best Partners in Business Change.

#### Contact

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