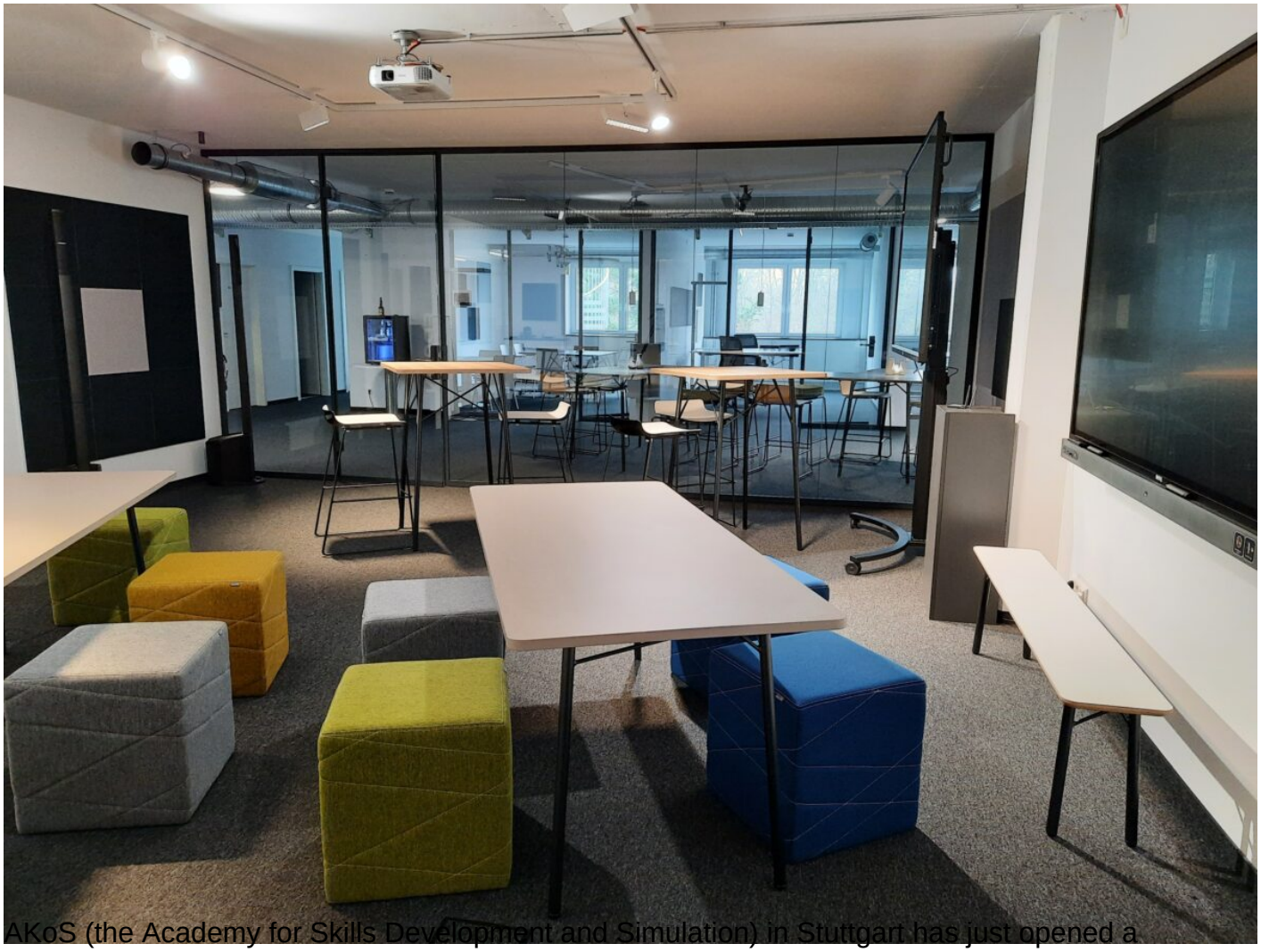
AKoS Collaboration Center: more than just a business centre

Date : Wednesday January 18th, 2023



AKoS (the Academy for Skills Development and Simulation) in Stuttgart has just opened a business centre that's far from ordinary. At the AKoS Collaboration Center, they have created ultra-modern facilities for learning and working – with rooms for workshops, seminars, training courses and co-working. The Managing Director of AKoS, Horst Heinzmann, explains the concept behind it.

AKoS recently opened its Collaboration Center in Stuttgart. What's the idea behind it?

Because of the pandemic, everyone is now familiar with working from home, online meetings and online seminars. But a great many companies are increasingly finding that their managers and employees are enjoying meeting up in person again, too. The Collaboration Center has facilities for

workshops, seminars and training courses – and also for larger conferences for up to 100 people. Some of our customers book rooms just for one day, but more and more are meeting up with colleagues regularly once or twice a week. The rest of the time, they are mostly working at home or out on the road. The Centre offers all the infrastructure they need for their meetings – from coffee machines and drinks to media technology. Another feature of the Collaboration Center is its partnerships with interior designers and media equipment providers. We are supported not only by the furniture manufacturer Wiesner-Hager but also by Konferenzraum.tv for media technology and ISOLED® FIAI Handelsgesellschaft for lighting. For a training course to be successful, in addition to a qualified instructor, it also has to have comfortable and functional furniture, media technology that works and is easy to use, and suitable lighting.

You and your company offer help with setting up online learning and teaching arrangements. What exactly does that service consist of?

An interactive display is now standard equipment for any room used for training courses. But thanks to our specially selected partners, we are also able to offer support with teaching methodology. So what’s important is that we don’t provide just the equipment but also instruction and training for the course leaders. And we don’t only want to offer this experience, and the opportunity for hands-on practice in using the media technology, to people taking part in courses or meetings. We’re opening up the chance to try out the equipment and the software to any company or educational institution that’s interested. What’s more, all our rooms are equipped with the latest video technology, so we offer the option of hybrid events. This event format is growing in importance and is being asked for more and more often.

What were your main priorities in designing the different meeting, seminar and workshop rooms at the Collaboration Center? What did you focus on?

The main focus was on flexibility. We wanted to create spaces that can be very quickly and easily adapted to meet our customers’ needs and preferences. A creative workshop, for example, requires different furnishings and media technology from a traditional classroom training course scenario. So we deliberately made our rooms very different from one another. With the standard arrangement, there is one traditional training room for up to 20 people, one conference room and one creative room, each for twelve people. The largest room can accommodate 50 people with parliament-style seating or up to 100 people with theatre-style seating.

The Collaboration Center also offers co-working spaces. How do you envisage your co-

working concept?

Co-working spaces were a thing even before the pandemic – at that time often due to a shortage of office space. Now they are used more to boost a company's external image. We offer co-working spaces in combination with meeting rooms. Above all, our clients need stylish premises in which to meet their customers and business partners. Thanks to our interactive welcome display, both the people hiring the co-working space and their customers get a personal welcome. That makes them feel instantly at home in our facilities with all their modern equipment. It's a concept that is particularly popular with start-up companies.

About Horst Heinzmann:

The Akademie für Kompetenzentwicklung und Simulation GmbH – AKoS for short – is a spin-off company of the University of Stuttgart and has been in existence since 2010. It helps companies to develop and implement their online teaching and learning arrangements with the aim of futureproofing them and keeping their employees' skills regularly updated. The Managing Partner is Horst Heinzmann, a qualified vocational training and technology instructor who has been working successfully on the digital transformation in (commercial) teaching and learning processes for many years.

AKoS Collaboration Center

Eichwiesenring 4F

70567 Stuttgart

www.collaboration-center.de