

The world of the best employers: corporate architecture applied.

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Fill Maschinenbau – what began on 1 July 1966 as a two-man operation is still family owned but now a worldwide leading machine and plant engineering company with 800 employees and one of Austria’s best employers.

In the last years, in the framework of the Fill 2020 project the company has invested around 77 million euros in the expansion of the company's head office in Gurten, Upper Austria. The brand new Innovation and Customer Centre with the Fill Future Dome event centre celebrated the grand reopening on the date of the company's anniversary. Park 21 was specifically created as a domain for innovative new entrepreneurs.

However, Fill offers an infrastructure not only for start-ups, in which the company is involved but also for those wishing to advance innovations together with Fill – with the aim of generating a rapid transfer of know-how with the young creatives. What distinguishes the company in particular, however, is the entirely unique culture, which is based on the applied values, such as fairness, security and harmony. For its major commitment to employees Fill was presented with two gold Pegasus* awards, one for company culture and one for further education.

The architectural firm of DI Andreas Matulik accompanied Fill through the entire new construction project and provided the suitable architecture for the interior and exterior areas of the impressive new construction.

What motivated you to start the Fill 2020 project? What does the project involve in a nutshell?

Fill 2020 is a strategic project that we started seven years ago. It focussed on the medium and long-term orientation of the entire company. The product and market policy was therefore just as important as growth of the company with respect to personnel and infrastructure.

What's the best way to tackle such a major new construction project?

First we defined the space requirements based on personnel planning and thus determined the size needed for the conference and training rooms. It was also a very similar process designing our event centre – the Fill Future Dome – which we planned based on our event formats. As there were two logistical interfaces to the existing building structures, the team of architects prepared both a one and a two storey version. We ultimately decided on the more spacious version.

What measures did you take for employee development?

We call our programme “Fill your life”. It includes projects and measures that cover health, education, family integration and communication and it supports our employees and their families often from birth all the way into retirement.

Park 21 as a home base for the region's start-up companies is a very interesting concept. How is the workspace envisioned?

The office concepts are based on each customer's individual requirements. In my opinion there is also no patent recipe here – each company needs its own, entirely bespoke special office solution.

Architect Hannes Ebner explains the new construction project and its challenges from the design perspective and explains to what extent Fill's strong company culture shapes the company's architecture.

How did you tackle this “mega project”? What were the first steps?

First and foremost by listening, filtering out the thoughts and desires among what was said, taking stock of things with our eyes as to to pick up on what was familiar, often seen and then reinterpreting it. For the first steps in the realisation phase we chose model construction as the architectural language – this formed the foundation for the ongoing project.

To what extent did Fill's company culture shape the planning and architecture?

Fill's values include innovation and competency as well as harmony. For the management it was particularly important to express these values in the architecture. Anyone who has already been to visit Fill and toured the company is impressed by the perfection and the technical cleanliness – paired with innovation and creativity.

Wilfried Fladl spoke about incorporating employee opinions into designing the physical planning of the new construction and revealed where the best ideas emerge at Fill and how the collaboration with Wiesner-Hager came about.

To what extent were employees included in the physical planning?

Each of the relevant teams and managerial employees were involved in the physical planning and were of course also able to introduce ideas. We have always taken great care to present the planning status on our internal communication platform. All of the employees were thus able to follow the models and plans “in real time”.

Where are the best ideas created in your company?

That question is easy to answer: Always and everywhere. Nearly all our employees participate in the generation of new ideas. We have had consistent success with design innovations, due to our innovative idea management. The company constantly adapts to requirements automatically through these changing times.

project description

- *pulse* lounge chairs and *macao* bistro tables were used in the sophisticated company restaurant.
- The workplaces were equipped with *poi* swivel chairs, *veron* desks and/or *foxx_eR* electrically height adjustable desks as well as the *float_fx* cabinets.
- *macao* standing tables were chosen for the encounter and communication zones.
- The training and conference rooms were furnished with *nooi* sled base chairs, *pulse* lounge chairs and the *yuno* stacking tables.
- Flexible positionable seating options (1 to 3 units) were created for the event centre – the Fill Future Dome – at the special request of the building owners and the architects.
- The room acoustics of the reception area and the foyer was optimised with individually manufactured, magnetic felt elements.

Builder: Fill Gurten – www.fill.co.at
Architect: Matulik – www.matulik.at
Photo: www.raumpixel.at