

TRW WORLD HEADQUARTERS

Lyndhurst, Ohio

Building Type: Corporate Headquarters Atrium

Overview: Programming and design of 8,000 SF, four story covered atrium



TRW sought to create an office environment that would support their goal to recruit and retain the brightest minds. The headquarters is designed to house a corporate staff of 650 employees drawn from their four business sectors – automotive, mineral extraction, electronics and aerospace. It became apparent early in the pre-design work that a major obstacle to TRW's goal was cultural differences in the employees of the four very different businesses. TRW also realized that many of the staff coming to the headquarters would be from climates much more temperate than that of Cleveland, Ohio.

The central four story atrium was designed to address both problems, providing a “company common” to foster a shared corporate culture, promote communication and provide a respite from the gray, snowy Cleveland winters.

Many contemporary headquarters have atria, but they are treated as gardens to be observed, not as places of social

Role: Project Designer

interaction. TRW retained a psychologist and landscape architect with expertise in corporate culture and public spaces respectively. Identifying the shopping mall as the contemporary equivalent of the New England village Common, they embarked on an empirical study of social interaction in large mall atria in the northern US and Canada. The Atrium is designed according to their observations and recommendations. It is a place of arrival for employees and visitors to the building; company amenities – food service, conference and training, credit union, and employee lounge – open into the atrium; the floor plan is configured to encourage multiple meandering paths across the floor that provide opportunity for chance encounters and areas to stand or sit and talk; and office space on the upper floors looks down into the landscaped social areas.

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