

Rack'n'Roll





We have to confess that, for a while, we were slightly sceptical. We were hugely intrigued, but a little sceptical. You see, we've come to Hayes in Middlesex to take a look at the new UK headquarters of Rackspace Hosting and, from what we already know of the project, we're not here to look at a run-of-the-mill corporate space. In fact, we're not sure what we're in for.

press releases sent our way talk of Number 10 Downing Street and Austin Powers, and there is even a musical YouTube clip showing the company's staff packing up their stuff and relocating. Brilliant. But this is a leading IT hosting company, so surely we're not going to find anything too out of the ordinary here, are we?

The impressive white and glazed, symmetrical building sits outside the Middlesex town, on the equally new Hyde Park. In fact, the address – HPH1 – gives an indication as to how early Rackspace became involved in this pristine business facility.

We have to admit that our first sight of the park and the Rackspace facility eases our scepticism – which is eased further as we walk into the clean, modern and bright reception area. Before we are met by Jamie Kinch, Rackspace's Business Services Manager, we take a quick look around reception, and focus on an array of proudly displayed trophies and awards. An even closer inspection reveals that each and every one points to Rackspace as >>>>>

Case Study



might look like and talked to them about what we were trying to achieve. We also announced at that point that we'd managed to secure additional space in HPH3 for a fantastic gym. It was great to give that cherry on the cake.'

Each floor here has a different theme, inspired by the 'family home' – but with more than a bit of a twist. The ground floor represents a garage, complete with its own personalised Mini Cooper. As Jamie points out to us as we walk around the amazing space, each of these themed areas are actually extremely functional. 'Where we've got the garage theme, for example, we've actually got a lot of great meeting space – and it looks really cool. It's a bit different. People were keen for us to not just throw something in because it looks cool; they wanted it to serve a purpose.'

'We had a variety of themes that we were looking at but they really didn't have that strong link to Rackspace, and that's where we started talking about this becoming our Home of Fanatical Support – and then we started looking at the concept of building the office around the theme of the home.'

The first floor features a '70s inspired retro lounge for meetings, with chairs situated around an artificial fireplace and psychedelic colours used throughout, whilst the hub of the second floor, also perfect for meetings, is themed around a classic library, including dark leather chairs, long mahogany tables and bookcases. The garden – complete with decking, loungers and fake grass – is situated on the third floor, along with the boardroom – a complete replica of Number 10 Downing Street.

We haven't even mentioned the amazing London-themed restaurant (we've heard rumours that this might be called the Hard Rack Café – and that's the first time we've been out-punned by an end-user!) or the adjoining games zone, complete with table tennis, pool and a mind-boggling selection of home entertainment systems.

Thanks to Jamie's enthusiasm and wisdom, plus this amazing scheme, our scepticism hasn't just disappeared – we can't even remember why we were sceptical in the first place ●

▶▶▶ think, but that's the sort of brief that we took to Morgan Lovell.'

Speaking of the Lovell, how did the appointment of the leading design and fit-out company come about? 'When we invited people to pitch for the business – and we'd worked with Morgan Lovell a few times before – we said that we wanted this to be design-led.'

'A Rackspace design-led scheme means that it must be interesting, an amazing place to work, but also functional – and we're not going to pay £100 per square foot fitting it out. We've been a successful business because at the right times we've always been quite prudent and we do try to get a great deal for our money as well.'

'I think Morgan Lovell understood us as a company, understood our culture and understood what we wanted to achieve here. We didn't have the luxury of time here either – we signed the lease in August and

moved in the first batch of people in November.

'We moved people in floor by floor, each over one weekend. Our business didn't even notice it! They finished on Friday, we moved in on Monday – the problems we had were so insignificant. Every single person had a working PC.'

We move on to talk about the design itself. 'One of the things that was really important to us in terms of the design was that we wanted it to be themed; we wanted it to be cool though, and we wanted our Rackers to be really engaged in the process as well,' Jamie continues.

'We put together a consultation group, we shared the designs with them, we gave everyone in the business the opportunity to provide us with feedback and, before we'd even signed the lease on the building, we brought the entire company here and showed them a 3D walkthrough of what it

essential ingredients

Client • **Rackspace Hosting** | Project Manager • **Saltire Project Services Ltd** 01366 710398

Design & Fit-Out • **Morgan Lovell** 020 7734 4466

Systems Furniture • **Herman Miller** 0845 226 7202 / **Senator** 020 7388 7621

Task Seating • **Herman Miller** 0845 226 7202 / **Sedus** 020 7566 3990

Soft Seating • **Boss Design** 020 7253 0364

Carpets • **InterfaceFLOR** 08705 304030