



# medicine show

We've seen some impressive technology-based projects in our time, but we don't think we've yet to encounter anything to match the forward-thinking approach adopted by Wyeth Ireland for its new corporate HQ.

Wyeth Ireland, a top five pharmaceutical company within the Irish market, is the largest pharmaceutical employer in Ireland and is one of the fastest growing companies in its sector. The new state-of-the-art corporate headquarters in Ballycoolin was built to reflect the company's focus on innovation, cutting edge science and leadership. Ray Sheridan, Director of Operations and Quality, and Geraldine O'Connor,



## case study



▶▶▶▶ this in any way possible in the new premises through the provision of a bright and attractive working environment contributing to an enjoyable working day. As well as that, partitions in the office have been removed, which encourage a greater flow of communication and sharing of knowledge.

‘We recognise the importance of internal communication but specifically in relation to a major move. This is demonstrated in our continued investment in staff. We constantly encourage feedback from employees on improvements for the new office. As well as that, we update employees on new developments coming down the line so that there are no surprises. We are keen to ensure our development does not stop here but that it remains an evolving process, which is constantly improving.’

‘Our success is directly related to our staff and we have invested a substantial sum to reflect this. The new premises have allowed us a spacious, bright working environment with room for added

employee benefits such as an external patio for summer lunches, a new large modern staff canteen and lounge and a staff gym.

‘There are numerous breakout and quiet areas all within a short distance from any desk area. The canteen offers a different style of dining areas from traditional table seating 4-5 people; long benches that allow 8-10 people and soft furnishing couch areas for a more informal relaxed atmosphere.’

Geraldine further explains the space planning concept: ‘The design, whilst not totally open plan, incorporates a lot of the thinking behind open plan offices, by providing many opportunities for staff interaction via the use of numerous meeting spaces, both formal and informal, standing and seated.’

‘The central ‘drum’ has been designed as a unifying element that relates equally to every part of the floorplate. It removes the element of feeling ‘hidden’ around a corner at the back of the central core by effectively removing the corners of the core. The drum contains all of the ‘peripheral’ elements of

day-to-day office life, such as toilets, showers, tea points, photocopy and print rooms, lifts and stairs. This leaves the floorplates clear for desking, meeting, seating and breakout areas.

‘Even the cellular offices, where included, have sliding glass partitions enabling the front wall to be ‘opened-up’ or ‘closed off’ to the rest of the office, encouraging conversation, discussion and the sharing of ideas whilst open but also giving workers the option of privacy when needed. The aesthetic of the interior is designed around a ‘natural’ theme, with quality, natural materials of prime importance. The drum is clad in natural Cherrywood veneer and rises right through the centre of the building. Feature lighting illuminates the drum at night and is visible from the main road passing outside. Limestone flooring is used in the canteen and front atrium, which together with touches such as occasional lighting, wallpaper, comfortable seating, and so on, are used to give a domestic feel to the space, encouraging staff to feel at home.’

Splashes of colour are introduced to the interior with coloured glazing, occasional furniture, and illuminated feature walls. The floor to ceiling glazing to all four sides also introduces the natural colours of the surrounding landscape into the building and the remainder of the interior has been purposefully kept to a neutral palette so as not to detract from this.’

The use of Bulo furniture throughout the space makes an important contribution to the overall ambience and the high quality of the design scheme. H2O HUB, Superstructure and KRS storage feature in the open plan areas, with Jean Nouvel designed executive desking. A bespoke ‘floating’ credenza houses Wyeth’s sophisticated AV/IT in the boardroom and accompanies Bulo’s elegant cherry and leather boardroom table.

Clearly, IT is of key importance for such an organisation, as Ray confirms. ‘Design and implementation of an up-to-date and efficient IT infrastructure is critical to any company’s information technology strategy. When Wyeth decided to move its new European Headquarters to Ballycoolin, this provided the organisation with the opportunity to design a new IT infrastructure with the future in mind. This infrastructure was designed to help IT to become an enabler in driving business growth, while remaining in compliance with best practice and corporate guidelines and strategies.’



▶▶▶▶▶ ‘Our LAN is based on a CISCO catalyst 6509, linked with diverse fibre connectivity providing the business with a resilient and redundant communications path to the outside world. This provides high speed connectivity to our business systems in Wyeth Data Centres throughout the world. Voice and data is channelled through thirty kilometres of CAT 6 cable throughout the new offices in Ballycoolin. Voice capabilities to the site are provided by a Siemens AP3700 fed through to a centralized HiPath 4000. This provides us with the ability of routing calls via PSTN or via VOIP centrally. This unique survivability gives us the confidence of always maintaining our telecommunication infrastructure to enable the business. By implementing VOIP technology throughout the organisation, we not only reduced our infrastructure implementation costs but have also strategically placed the organisation in a position to reduce its telephony costs into the future.

‘Wyeth encourages collaborative communications in Plaza 254 and is fully wireless enabling the entire building to the 802.11a/g standard, allowing staff to roam throughout the building to offices and meeting rooms with their laptops while maintaining connectivity. This provides a highly flexible working environment where access to data is available at all times.

‘Our meeting suites have been installed with the latest in presentation and AV technology. Dedicated projectors, PCs, audio, wireless keyboards, mice and connectivity for laptops makes these rooms highly flexible and easy to use, providing systems access for formal presentation and ad hoc meetings. We made sure we facilitated staff familiarisation programmes to ensure optimum uptake of the new

technology. Our boardroom has state of the art video conferencing equipment which provides all staff access to other Wyeth colleagues worldwide where face to face meetings can be arranged without the high cost of travel. Ease of access to all AV, audio and video conferencing functions is further complemented by the implementation of an AMX Control system which utilises a graphical interface to intuitively manage all functions. As we become more dependent on IT to help drive business growth, it is imperative that we ensure continuity of electricity supply, especially during business hours. A large UPS has been installed in the building to protect our considerable investment and to also ensure continuity of supply.

‘Reducing our carbon footprint is always on one’s mind when moving into a building of this class and magnitude. Here we feel that we have significantly contributed by installing a highly customisable Building Management System. This system controls proximity activated lighting which turn on the office and open area lights when the area is occupied. It also efficiently manages our air conditioning and heating systems. To further reduce our carbon footprint we have eliminated the use of personal printers in favour of centralised printing on each floor and encourage less printing where possible. Furthermore, we plan to implement further initiatives next year. The overall IT strategy has been to provide an infrastructure platform that is scalable to meet the present and future challenges that face the business each day.’

Wyeth is a successful commercial enterprise. The bottom line, of course, is whether imaginative design and investment in infrastructure of this quality provides real ‘bottom line’ benefits. Ray confirms that

Ballycoolin delivers. ‘The design of the building is open plan and flows naturally, thus allowing greater access and communication. The circular timber drum allows all office services to be removed from the working area and also allows breakout areas to be close to work spaces. This has the effect of allowing working areas to be clear of large unsightly peripherals and maintains an atmosphere appropriate for working. Because of this openness it allows for effective team work. The result has been impressive, allowing for a fantastic working environment, greater team work as a result of the removal of physical barriers as well as the circular nature of the drum, and also helps attract (and no doubt retain) highly skilled employees who see the work environment as modern, attractive and with a fun atmosphere.

‘After all, if our employees are positive then overall business benefits.’●

## essential ingredients

Client:	• Wyeth Ireland
Architect:	• Devereux Architects 020 8780 1800
Systems Furniture:	• Bulo 020 7253 0055
Storage:	• Bulo 020 7253 0055
Meeting Tables:	• Bulo 020 7253 0055
Executive Desks:	• Bulo 020 7253 0055
Boardroom Meeting Table & Credenza:	• Bulo 020 7253 0055