

dialogue



A Gensler publication

Talking about...
**The Place of Leisure
in the Flow of Life**

Retail & Social Media
Destinations: A World of Mixed Use
Travel Gets Hospitable
More Than a Game: The Fan Experience

29

dialogue

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ON THE COVER
CoolMess, New York

BELOW (from left)
Primark, King of Prussia, PA
Petco Park, San Diego
Dwight-Englewood School,
Englewood, NJ

Leisure is part of the flow— or the blur, some might say—of lives we improvise amid online prompts and the push and pull of real places and experiences.

Issue 29 looks at the boundary conditions people negotiate as they move through their days. Leisure is close at hand—self-directed, crowdsourced, impromptu, and planned ahead. Its places draw people in and bring their experiences alive.

02



IN THIS ISSUE:

FEATURES

02
Retail & Social Media
The real/virtual way people live is prompting
a revolution in the retail experience.

08
Destinations
East and west, north and south, city living
means enjoying a vibrant mix of activities.

16
Travel Gets Hospitable
Airlines are taking cues from urban hotels.
And airport hotels are going upscale.

24
More Than a Game
To get more value from their real estate,
sports venues are emulating mixed use.

24



DEPARTMENTS

22
Measuring Experience
Gensler researchers take on the challenge:
quantifying the value of experiential design.

30
Roundtable: Living the
Transitional Lifestyle
The embrace of iHumanity is transforming
leisure's categories, blending old and new.

34
News + Views
Dwight-Englewood School's Hajjar STEM
Center models where K-12 is headed.

34





RETAIL

& SOCIAL MEDIA

above: CoolMess, New York
opposite, from top: CoolMess,
New York; Timbuk2, Chicago

In an age of WhatsApp, Snapchat, and Instagram, retailers are challenged to reinvent themselves and connect with customers in relevant new ways.

By **MIMI ZEIGER**

Today, you can buy just about anything from anywhere with a swipe on a handheld device. For some, this underscores an age of social media where retailers must fight against constant distraction. But for Gensler's designers and thought leaders, online retail and social media offer a rich challenge to extend a brand experience and deepen strategic approaches to design. Gone are the days of pitting e-commerce against brick-and-mortar retail, a period when web activity struggled to direct consumers to a physical store—clicks-to-bricks. "The current language is clicks-and-bricks, because it's happening as a seamless engagement to our consumers," explains Gensler's Jill Nickels.

Amenities that enhance
Consider rapidly changing retail trends as a lightning-fast round of improv comedy. The game: Yes, and. The "yes" affirms this fast-paced condition, which is played out in real time on the street, in the mall, and on the sofa. The "and" is all about adding to the experience—for consumers and retailers.

Because consumer desires are driven by the ever-changing allure of social media, retailers are constantly challenged to reinvent and introduce novelty.



below: El Palacio de Hierro Polanco flagship store, Mexico City
right: NBA Fifth Avenue flagship store, New York



Familiar “ands,” such as a coffee bar or DJ booth, are commonplace. These added amenities draw from hospitality and are meant to personalize the retail experience and increase how much time consumers spend in a space—the “dwell time,” according to Gensler’s Kathleen Jordan. The right amenity doesn’t compete or distract with the product being sold, but offers a complementary use and a respite that allows consumers to recharge and extend their day.

Jordan suggests that the coffee bar concept has peaked—even inviting local coffee roasters to set up in retail spaces has become a cliché. Instead, she works with clients to figure out what amenities and partnerships align and support the overall brand. This could mean a juice bar, barbershop, nail salon, or even a taco stand. “It’s the experiences that you associate with the brand in a positive way and you want to go back to, because visiting the store is like visiting a whole bunch of spaces all at once,” Jordan explains, citing El Palacio de Hierro’s flagship in Polanco, Mexico City. There, Gensler curated a series of gourmet vendors serving the city’s authentic heritage cuisine, bringing street food to a luxury department store.

Reinvention, novelty, and flexibility

Because consumer desires are driven by the ever-changing allure of social media, retailers are constantly challenged to reinvent and introduce novelty, no matter how original their amenities, says Gensler’s Michael Gatti. “As retail designers, we strive to create wonderful, timely, and unique experiences for the customer that unfortunately at times may not be as wonderful in two months,” he says, adding that designers must create spaces that are flexible to changing tastes, interests, and seasons. “Consumers are going to react to what’s happening in style and where things are going.”

For Primark’s 80,700-square-foot store in Pennsylvania’s King of Prussia Mall, the second US location for the Irish clothing retailer, Gensler designed experiential moments into this new prototype, such as digital displays utilizing content from Primark’s #PRIMANIA and integrated Instagrammable opportunities that are sprinkled across the sales floor to engage a key consumer: digital natives/millennials. Generous fitting-room areas (an instant selfie hub where shoppers can upload photos of their “haul” or themselves sporting

Primark apparel) offer respite from the bustling sales floor, and charging stations are embedded throughout the space for customer convenience. “Primark’s priority is to provide an amazing environment and customer experience that matches its emphasis on ‘amazing fashion’ for its product,” says Jordan.

With three floors of memorabilia, merchandise, and state-of-the-art retail technology, NBA’s flagship store on New York’s Fifth Avenue invites fans to truly be part of the game. A 400-square-foot video wall displays real-time game footage, news, and social media posts—all of which can be seen from the sidewalk. Interactive touchscreens provide access to NBAStore.com’s vast inventory and allow fans to shop and locate top-selling merchandise. Video-game kiosks, pop-a-shots, and player measure-ups offer a more analog interactive experience to complement the digital program.

The design for CoolMess, a new ice cream concept store in New York, reflects the joyful experience of making ice cream, with moments of “mess” expressed through vibrant colors and graphics. Photo and social media opportunities throughout the space prompt kids and tweens to post and share photos of themselves and their ice cream creations on the #CoolIsTheNewHot Instagram feed. A magnetic photo wall features customers who have posted parties in the space, and even the bathroom provides a “selfie moment,” with bold “inkblot” graphics and backwards messaging in the mirror.

An integrated experience

To deepen the retail experience, Gensler teams extend their areas of expertise from real life to the web. Design is integrated across the brand, from the digital experience to how sales staff provide service and how the store fosters community.

Gensler’s design for messenger bag company Timbuk2 in Portland, Oregon, created a natural synthesis between the brand’s association with cycling and the community’s values. The space offers a free bike repair station and is also a hub for Bike Share, a program that allows customers to borrow a bike, helmet, and Timbuk2 bag to tour the city. “It’s beyond purchasing a bag or product from them,” Nickels explains. “It’s how the brand represents their beliefs.”

Similarly, NYX Professional Makeup retail stores cater to the makeup community locally and online; celebrating both enthusiasts and professionals with scrolling Instagram images and touchpoints that link users to product tutorials and information. Gensler integrated digital displays—both monitors and touchscreens—into the artist loft-inspired space.

Design is essential to retail brands, integrating everything from the digital experience to how sales staff provide service, and how the stores themselves cultivate communities of buyers.



With Indian apparel retailer Raymond, Gensler embraced technology to communicate with a digitally savvy customer. “One of our primary goals in the store was to create a richer experience for the customer by leveraging technology,” Nickels says. She describes a scenario where shoppers select their size from a tablet and then garments appear in a fitting room that is loaded directly from the back of the house, leaving the sales floor minimal, almost gallery-like. “We call it ‘attentive technology,’ where technology acts as a sales associate. But there is also that human connection. The sales associate becomes more of a style expert or trusted advisor.”

Gensler’s Keisuke Kobayashi echoes the need for a “high hospitality” experience. “The level of service, in terms of the human emotional response, is traditional in Japan, so it is something people expect,” he notes, adding that retail service extends to in-store recommendations made through digital tools, such as tablets or apps. When brands use digital and live feeds in the store environment, it’s not enough just to have screens filled with compelling images, he says. “Sales staff need to be trained not just to sell or to advise customers, but to really talk about the brand history, where it comes from, and utilize all the digital tools and live streams to build customer relationships. That’s the only way to gain and win repeat customers in Japan.”

Connecting with brand ambassadors
Gensler’s Lara Marrero emphasizes that retailers’ successes come from turning customers into brand advocates. “Right now, the strongest place to make brand advocates is through the peer-to-peer network, best seen through social media,” she explains. “An ‘influencer’ could drive 28 people to go to the space to check it out and potentially generate sales for 12 of those folks.” Giving people something to talk about on social media is what Marrero calls the “gold dust” retailers are banking on, especially when brand loyalty is at an all-time low. “A personal recommendation is far more valuable to a brand than advertising.”

Mimi Zeiger is a Los Angeles-based writer and a contributing editor at *Architect*.

opposite: NYX Professional Makeup at Westfield Santa Anita, Arcadia, CA
below: Primark, King of Prussia, PA



DESTINATIONS



By **PENNY CRASWELL**
and **AMANDA KOLSON HURLEY**

Mixed use is a global phenomenon. Fluid in scale and focused on context, it works best when it draws on the intangibles, not the least of which are the people it attracts. Gensler designers talk about mixed use's destination value—the ability, at every scale, to spark vitality and urbanity where they're needed most.

The Gulf is a good starting point for considering how making destinations has moved to the forefront. Before Chris Johnson and his team designed The Avenues in Kuwait City, they visited the capital cities of shopping—renowned worldwide for their retail districts.

"We walked them, documented them, and brought that information back. The goal wasn't to design a pastiche of these places, but to create a new district that locals find authentic and resonant," Johnson says. The Grand Avenue, its largest circulation route, has the scale and feel of London's Oxford Street, recast in a Kuwaiti context. An inflatable membrane roof covers it and other interior streets. "It's very light, so people feel like they're outdoors," he explains. "It tends to move, so they can sense the weather, but they're protected from it."

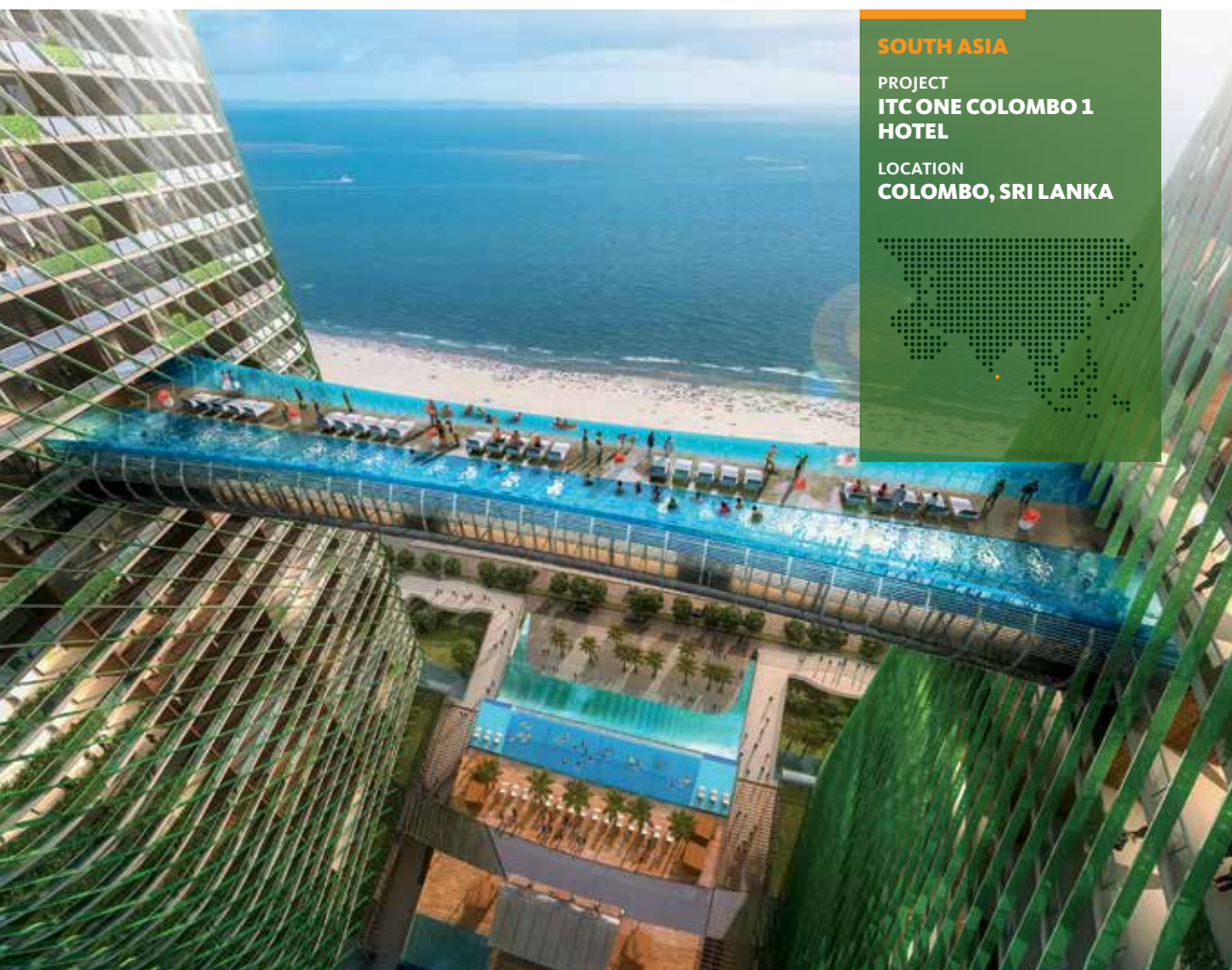
Msheireb Downtown Doha has what Philip Gillard calls a civic scale: 95 buildings—30 designed by Gensler—on 31 hectares (76 acres). Local inspiration matters. "The client wants it to be quintessentially Qatari," he adds. Climate is a factor: Doha gets hot, but benefits from cooling winds off the Gulf. Seaside views are popular. A C-shaped plan and buildings that step up as they move away from the sea deliver both. The housing is mixed to cater both to expats and typically large Qatari families. "It's not only about size. The required spaces and how they're laid out differ from the usual expat standard," says Lukasz Platkowski.

MIDDLE EAST

PROJECT
**MSHEIREB DOWNTOWN
DOHA**

LOCATION
DOHA





SOUTH ASIA

PROJECT
ITC ONE COLOMBO 1
HOTEL

LOCATION
COLOMBO, SRI LANKA



EAST ASIA

PROJECT
COEX

LOCATION
SEOUL

Catering to Nigeria's urban affluent

In Lagos, Marty Borko and Bart Tucker designed an urban precinct at Eko Atlantic, a new area of the city built on land reclaimed from the sea. It reflects the city's rising middle class, on the hunt for better quarters: walkable, amenity-filled, and safe enough not to need security fences. Lagos lacks transit, so Eko Atlantic residents will have cars and drivers. Families are large, with live-in help. "There's very little market data or precedents," Borko says. "The plan allows course corrections. We can change the mix between two- and four-bedroom units depending on what's selling." Eko Atlantic "breaks with the local pattern in Lagos of developing isolated towers. Even without transit, mixed use saves people a lot of time," Tucker explains.

In Sri Lanka, a team led by Kap Malik and Garo Balmanoukian designed ITC One Colombo 1—with 350 hotel guest rooms and 135 residences—for the Indian hospitality group ITC. It is aimed at that country's fast-growing regional travel market. The project's two towers are linked

by a sky bridge with a pool and piano bar. Each tower has shading fins that are tinted to emulate the ocean water. Balconies are accented with durable wood-grained panels that recall local timber construction. "We visited some breathtaking houses by Sri Lanka's renowned Geoffrey Bawa to understand how we could bring a modern sensibility to the island's architectural traditions," Balmanoukian says.

That influence is apparent in the podium, one side of which is a stepped landscape that resembles terraced tea plantations. Connected to the surrounding community, the podium mixes shops and restaurants with other uses and the hotel and residential tower lobbies. A water feature flows through it to tie ITC One Colombo 1 to a new park and the ocean. "There's no back door," Malik says. "It has great views on both sides."

Designing for East Asia's cities

Four large developments in Korea and China illustrate how destinations fit into the dense fabric of their major cities.

Located in Seoul's upscale Gangnam district, the largely subterranean COEX Mall—85,000 square meters (915,000 square feet) in area—was devoid of light and life. With Korean partners, a Gensler team led by Duncan Paterson opened it up with a distinctive theme, "the unfolding sky." The centerpiece is a grand atrium whose cloudlike roof reaches up to light and air. "It gives Gangnam a heart, accessible from the subway and the street," Paterson says.

A similar relationship occurs in Nanjing's World Trade Center, where Hasan Syed and his team designed a sunken plaza above a metro station that connects passengers to a retail podium, two residential towers, an office tower, and a five-star hotel. It anchors Nanjing's regional financial district, with a mix of uses that meet the financial sector's need for a full range of urban amenities.

Preserving a tie with history was Syed's strategy for BM Plaza, a mixed-use development along Shanghai's Suzhou Creek. In planning its third phase, he reviewed the

In the major cities of West Africa, South Asia, and East Asia, the rising and increasingly affluent middle class is the dynamo behind a proliferation of destination-style mixed-use developments.

site's existing buildings, opting to restore four villas in the city's *shikumen* tradition. "Preserving this history locates BM Plaza in time," Syed says. BM Plaza pairs a school with office, hotel, and residential uses. Inserting culture into the urban mix is a trend now in China, so a museum was also considered as a potential added use.

In Shenzhen's Qianhai precinct, Shamim Ahmadzadegan and his team planned and designed Shima Canal City, a high-end destination within a free trade zone across the bay from Hong Kong. "China's megascale has an outsize impact," he says. "Designing for context means relating a destination to a city's larger setting, economy, and population."

What Gensler envisioned is a walkable, urban quarter that relates to Shenzhen's canals and the bay. The development's lower levels are surrounded by water elements that reference its history as a waterfront site. Yet it also relates to Shenzhen's terraced rice fields and the mountains and their valleys.

Changing stripes in Sydney

The Porter, designed by Simon Trude, shows that a successful destination needn't be big. When 1 O'Connell, an office building, lost its anchor tenant, "we learned that other tenants often hosted meetings in cafés and bars in the neighborhood," Trude says. The building

needed "a place people are drawn to that lets them interact and be social."

Billed as an executive lounge, part of a repositioning strategy aimed at attracting creative tenants, The Porter mixes food and beverages with work and meeting spaces. Haworth was a strategic partner in The Porter's development as a curated experience, and continues to operate the space. The project exemplifies a trend also seen in US cities: office buildings are gravitating to mixed use.

Adding destinations in Latin America

Mixed use is a growing category in Central and South America. In Santiago, Chile, Gensler is helping to expand



Parque Arauco. “It opened as a mall in 1982,” Tom Ito explains. “People still feel an emotional connection to it.” Ito’s and Malik’s design revives the shopping component, adds new hotel and office towers, and links the project to a nearby park to create a larger destination in the heart of Santiago’s Las Condes district.

In Heredia, home of the National University of Costa Rica, Ronald Fonseca and his team are designing Plaza Andén for Grupo Aliss. “It’s a transit hub—buses and trains. We’re making a place where people can stop, shop, eat, and enjoy cultural events.” In San José, Christian Wolff is focused on an urban-scale mixed-use development that includes a sports facility and a large outdoor plaza. “The city lacks places to shop or stroll. This will provide them,” Wolff says.

As in China, culture plays a role in Latin America’s mixed-use destinations. To celebrate the second year of Costa Rican fashion magazine *Traffic*, Gensler created a pop-up event on San José’s Plaza de la Cultura, above the Museo

del Oro Precolombino. (Tienda de los Museos del Banco Central is its Gensler-designed retail space.) The event’s focal point was a striking 5-by-5-meter cube pavilion. Its gold strands reached down into the museum, connecting the two and providing a dramatic setting for fashion. The cube’s reflectivity also proved to be a selfie-taking magnet.

For the final weekend, *Traffic* turned the plaza into a runway, hosting a public fashion show featuring local talent. The design team of Richard Hammond, Federico Montero, and Anastacia Chaves showed that quick, inexpensive interventions can draw crowds to cultural landmarks—conveying how new uses can activate such sites.

North America’s mixed-use wave

The popularity of mixed use in US cities reflects the fact that it’s “an asset that works for you 24/7, 365 days a year,” says Peter Merwin. The components activate each other to add drawing power. Take Buckhead in Atlanta and

River Oaks in Houston. They were desirable areas, but not yet citywide destinations. Developer Oliver McMillan and Gensler teamed up to make this happen.

Peachtree Boulevard and MARTA’s Red Line connect Buckhead to the city, but it felt internally disconnected and uninviting. The 8-acre (3.2-hectare) project gives it a real center with upmarket housing, offices, a hotel, shopping, and dining. To root it in place, Paterson and his team wove in elements like covered porches, and paid close attention to the scale of the buildings and the qualities of the public spaces. “Street parking, sidewalk widths, landscape, canopies, and the spaces between the buildings—these details induce people to walk around,” Paterson says. Many of the restaurants have roof terraces that overlook the lively streets, while pedestrians enjoy the buzz from above.

Paterson knew the project was a success when he took a taxi to Buckhead and the driver asked, “The Village?”

Destinations play off of everything that draws people in, whether it’s a waterfront with promenades and marinas, or a civic plaza and museum that can spark hugely popular cultural events.





That the locals had named Buckhead's new center means they see it as a real place.

In Houston's River Oaks, Gensler gave a spread-out commercial zone a center. The 15-acre (6.5-hectare) project crowns restaurants, a cinema, and retailers like Cartier, Dior, and Hermès with a hotel, office space, and housing. Landscaped, shaded sidewalks connect it all to create a walkable district with a downtown feel.

Entertainment is a theme of the ARK Group's Music Factory, designed by a Gensler team led by Barry Hand. Located in Irving, a major business center in metropolitan Dallas, the goal of this public-private partnership development is to spark nights-and-weekends vitality. "Rapidly growing segments of our communities are looking to work and play in the neighborhoods where they live," Hand says. The Music Factory's concert venue—totaling 8,000 seats, indoors

and outdoors—faces a new community-serving plaza surrounded by offices, dining and entertainment venues, and a boutique movie theater.

Entertainment, sports, and conventions all draw crowds. Gensler used all three to help AEG turn L.A. LIVE into a destination that keeps fans and energy downtown after the events are over. Now John Adams, Olivier Sommerhalder, and their team are designing a Metropolis, a mixed-use center for Greenland Group on a pivotal 6-acre (2.43-hectare) site. It will open with a 38-story residential tower and a 19-story hotel along Francisco Street—recast as an easily walked route to the convention, financial, and civic areas in downtown Los Angeles.

A new landscape of mixed use

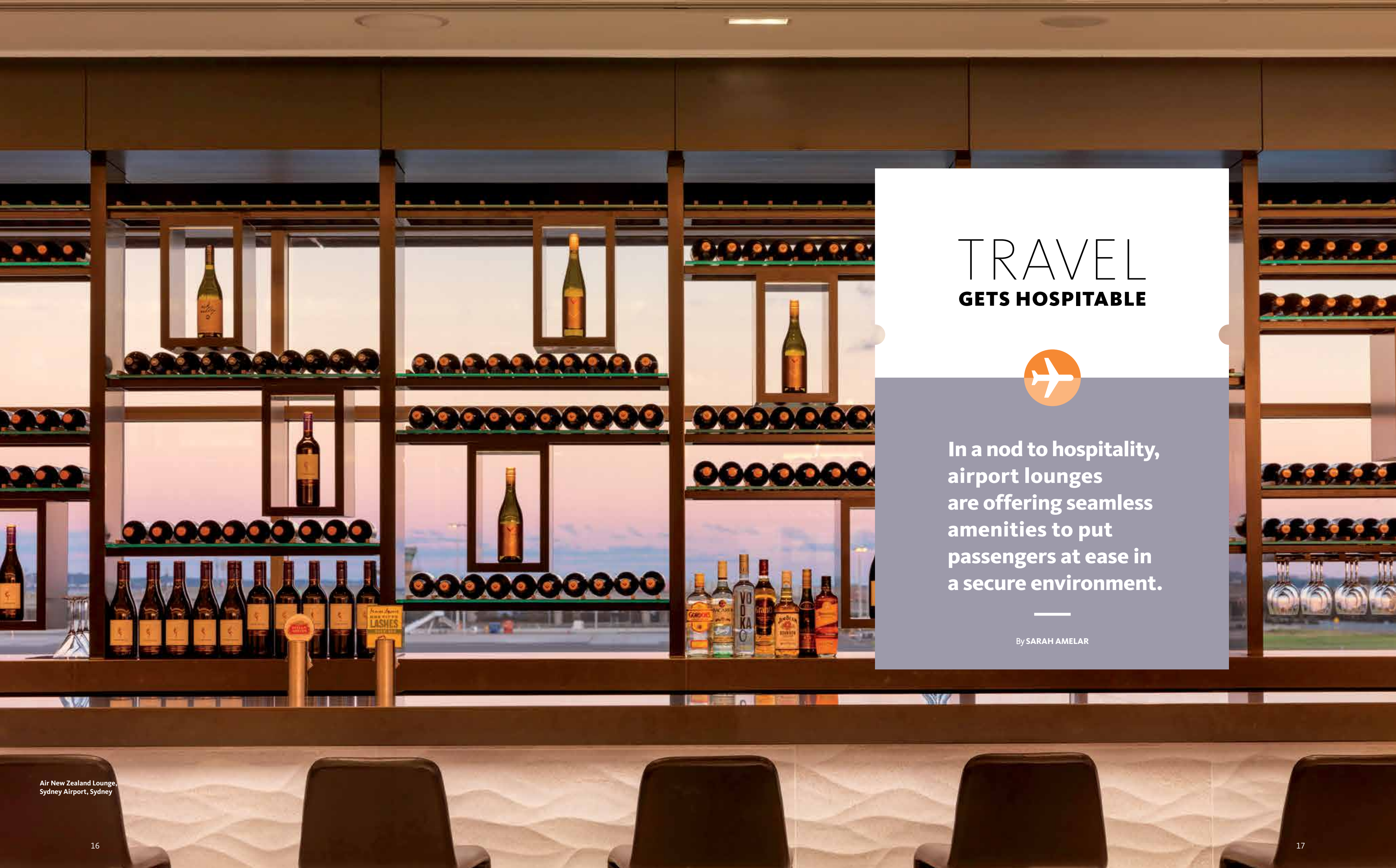
"It's about how a place unfolds in relation to humanity and nature, and how it scales up without losing those qualities," Borko

says. Successful mixed-use destinations begin with a vision of a place and a strong initial plan. Then you have to work it, constantly rethinking the pieces and parts to align with the market and the community around it. "This is true at every scale, whether you're talking about the heart of a city or the suburban edge," he adds. "Great places take time."

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TRAVEL GETS HOSPITABLE



In a nod to hospitality,
airport lounges
are offering seamless
amenities to put
passengers at ease in
a secure environment.

By SARAH AMELAR



left: Westin hotel and transit center at Denver International Airport, Denver

The joys of flying are often eclipsed by 21st-century hassles, particularly when airport security is involved. But there’s a movement now to bring Hospitality—with a capital H—back into the air traveler’s experience.

That heightened hospitality vibe is permeating the entire arc of the traveler’s journey, from airports to destination hotels. Let’s look at how it’s playing out.

Easing the stress of air travel

San Francisco International Airport, or SFO, has been treating ordinary travelers to spatial sequences and amenities designed to bring back a sense of comfort, ease, and fun. Gensler has completed a series of pivotal projects, beginning with its renovation, expansion, and interiors for Terminal 2 (T2), serving American and Virgin America airlines (completed in 2011). For the firm’s latest SFO projects at United Airlines in Terminal 3 (T3), Gensler’s Melissa Mizell and Jeff Henry have expanded on the successes and lessons learned from the design of T2. “We learn so much from the things that get photographed and posted a lot on the web and Instagram,” says Mizell. Among the top hits were T2’s and T3’s yoga room, as well as gate-side ‘hydration stations,’ where anyone can refill a bottle with filtered water free of charge.

“To elevate the experience for everyone,” explains Mizell, “we’ve tried to anticipate millions of people’s different needs.” Unlike the rigidly conjoined seating in

conventional gate lounges, T2 and T3 address a range of traveler scenarios with playful, varied, and comfortable high-design furnishings. In the general-boarding areas, *Mad Men*—sleek Arne Jacobsen Egg Chairs provide for a relaxing, cocooning experience, while low-slung benches or living room seating have become group perches. Inventive kid play areas, window-side café tables, and quiet zones with fully wired work stations meet other passenger needs.

“We took as our model the ways best-brand hotels create an integrated food and beverage experience,” says Henry. “So, instead of a separate food court or corridor away from the gates, we exploded and embedded those opportunities throughout the holding areas, so you can grab a sandwich or an extra cup of coffee or a glass of wine—and keep an eye on whether there’s a plane docking at your bridge.” These smoothly integrated, stress-easing conveniences serve both passengers and tenants.

It’s an experience enhanced by daylighting, airfield views, and such mood-influencing features as an innovative ventilation system and, at T3, circadian-rhythm illumination. “People actually show up at the airport early—or even stay after landing,” says Mizell, “just

to hang out, feast on some mostly local food, or get some work done.”

Elite lounges step up their game

As airports begin to upgrade the experience for everyone, there’s pressure on elite lounges to surpass their traditional offerings for business- and first-class passengers. “Airlines are really spending to make sure they’re stepping up their game, and they’re competing with each other,” says Gensler’s Ashley Dowell, whose interiors work has included lounges for Air New Zealand. Her team worked with the airline to create its flagship lounge in Auckland, plus new facilities for international airports at Sydney and Brisbane. The team also established the design standard for the airline’s lounges in the region.

The design concept for these lounges focused on creating havens embodying New Zealand’s “on-the-edge-of-the-world” character. That translated into an experience beginning with an elegant but discreet lounge façade with the cachet of a “secret entry,” followed by a “hero” moment: a feature wine wall showcasing New Zealand wine.



“Airports are creating an experience—getting you to spend more time there shopping, dining, and even entertaining family, friends, and colleagues.”

The Auckland and Sydney facilities each feature a live chef offering cuisine on demand, bringing, as Dowell puts it, “the idea of entertainment, or theater, into the space.” The culinary focus is “tastes of New Zealand,” but the visual focus also takes in dramatic airfield views and large-screen video displays, presenting Kiwi landscapes. Other amenities include quiet nooks, shower facilities, and children’s play areas. Auckland’s lounge also features an outdoor terrace and a “green wall.”

“It’s not just about making a pretty and gracious hospitality space,” Dowell says, pointing out that hotels don’t handle the complex airport functions or daily (even hourly) guest traffic these lounges see. “This is a hotel-style environment that needs to be secure, extremely robust, and easy to maintain, while still feeling luxurious.” A key goal is to make the experience fluid and effortless: “At the lounge, all the details are handled for you to give you a seamless journey.”

Embracing local culture and heritage

Much the way Kiwi character imbues Air New Zealand’s elite lounges, the Etihad Airways counterpart at New York’s JFK International Airport draws on the airline’s home country and its distinctive culture. “How can we bring a little bit of Abu Dhabi to the world and share its historic culture, as well as its 21st-century modernity and progressiveness?” was a key question the Gensler design team tackled, recalls Matthew Johnson, who oversaw the project, along with the development of a design standard for Etihad’s guest facilities in airports around the world.

Inspiration came from the airline’s “facets of Abu Dhabi” brand concept—drawing on that country’s architectural heritage, with geometric patterns and light-filtering screens, as well as its hospitality traditions. Faceting is a recurrent theme in this lounge, shaping its entry façade, custom furniture and fixtures,

and the view-capturing screen in its dining-and-bar area. The array of spaces—unified, yet varied—includes a serene prayer room with an ablutionary antechamber, and for passengers flying Etihad’s “The Residence” (a personal apartment, with its own bathroom and shower, on board the Airbus A380), there’s a private, deluxe VVIP suite for preflight relaxation. “What we set out to achieve for the whole venue,” says Johnson, “was more like a five-star hotel.”

A destination for locals and travelers

“Airports are no longer just about flight,” says Gensler’s Kap Malik. “They’re creating an experience—getting you to spend more time there shopping, dining, and even entertaining family, friends, and colleagues.” And that, he observes, is part of a growing trend: the emergence of “airport cities,” vital urban nodes that are transforming the once-drab, fringe territory around air hubs.

below: Grand Hyatt Incheon hotel, Incheon, Korea



A forerunner in the development of airport cities is Denver International Airport, where Gensler has done three independent, interrelated projects: the 519-key Westin hotel and conference facility, a transit center with a rail station, and a civic plaza. (The hotel and plaza were completed in November 2015, and the transit center is slated to open in 2016.)

With rapid rail connections to downtown Denver, mountain and urban-skyline views, public art, and food and beverage venues, the complex was designed as a magnet for locals and air travelers. The grand plaza is a communal gathering space, poised to host such year-round activities as outdoor concerts, festivals, and theatrical or sports events. The complex, says Malik, provides “seamless connections—horizontally and vertically—between the hotel, transit center, civic plaza, and the existing airport.” The airport’s people mover system connecting its concourses will eventually continue through the hotel and transit center and link to a future terminal, all interfacing with the baggage, ticketing, and security systems.

With remarkably quiet interiors (thanks to an acoustically advanced, glazed building envelope), the Westin hotel hovers over the rail station, with views of the trains, public square, soaring jets, and Rocky Mountains. Unlike old-school airport accommodations, this was designed as a destination hotel, with its own plush, resort-like offerings, including an enclosed rooftop pool. As Gensler’s Tom Ito puts it: “It’s not just about making the most of airport-adjacent property, but about offering something—a dynamism and excitement—that’s only possible at an airport. At the same time, you’re taking it in from a surprisingly tranquil setting, so it completely transforms the experience.”

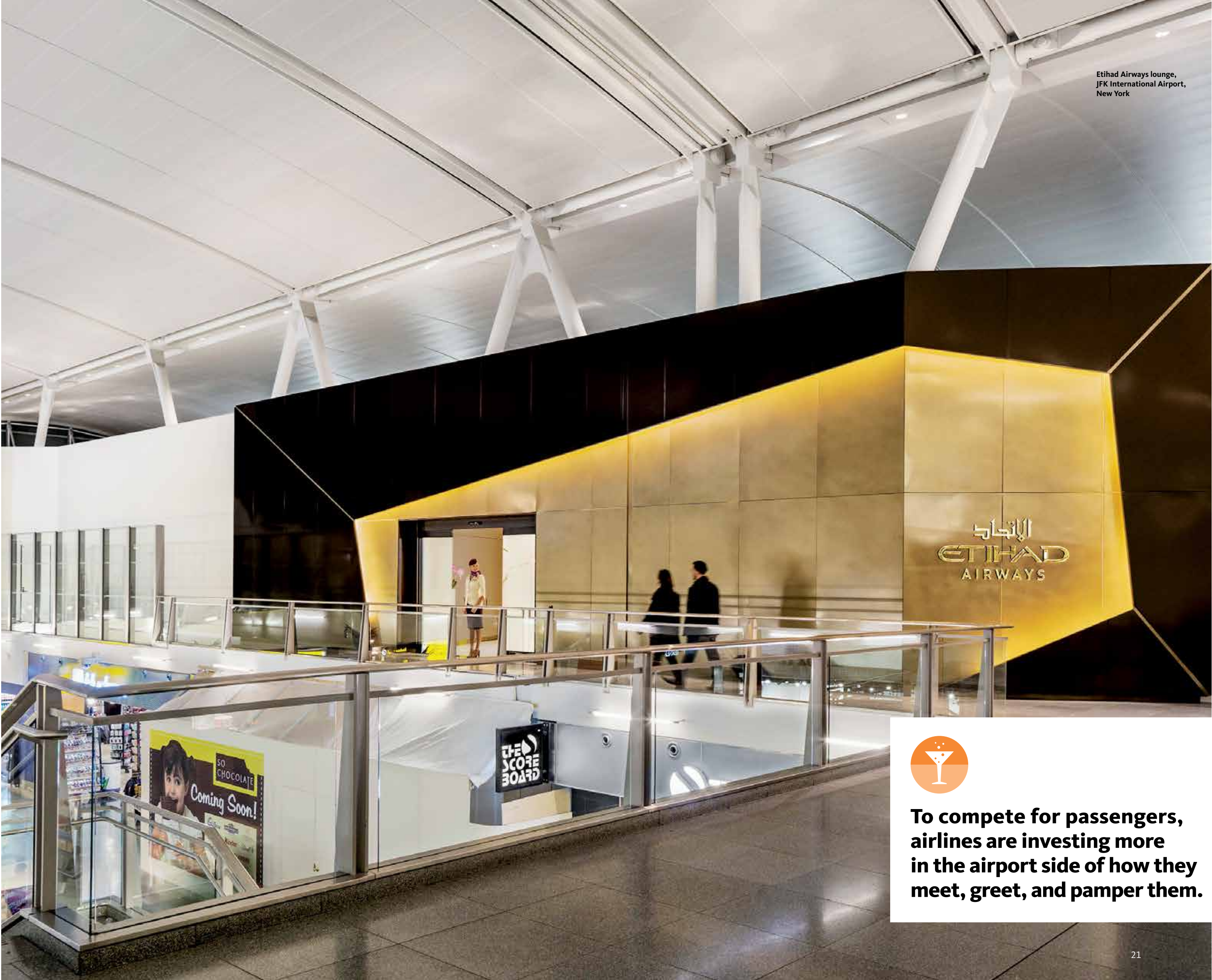
Rise of the airport city

Another rising airport city occupies the manmade island of Incheon, an hour outside Seoul. It’s the site of Gensler’s Grand Hyatt Incheon hotel, a destination property designed to attract air passengers, vacationers, and locals. Though this is an international world-class hotel, it is subtly Korean in spirit. Inspired by flight, by the fluid movement of the ocean and air, the building’s form is, Malik says, “almost like a wave rippling in the play of light.” It’s also about addressing all five senses, from atmospheric lighting and water sounds to the textured limestone exterior cladding that transitions to Carrara marble on the interior, where scents are piped in.

Amid an abstracted Korean textile pattern motif, the amenities extend from indulgent spa offerings to food and beverage venues. “And increasingly,” says Malik, “people stay for a couple of days before flying out, just to savor the pleasures of the island and the hotel.”

Although such enhancement of the travel experience is by no means universal, change—from aviation terminals and gate-side lounges to airport meccas and destination hotels—is undeniably under way.

Sarah Amelar writes for Dwell, Architectural Record, and the New York Times.



Etihad Airways lounge,
JFK International Airport,
New York



To compete for passengers, airlines are investing more in the airport side of how they meet, greet, and pamper them.

MEASURING EXPERIENCE

Modeled after its longstanding workplace research, Gensler prepares to launch a new, lifestyle-focused initiative examining the factors that impact experiential design.

By MARA HVISTENDAHL

“Capturing and quantifying the impact that design has on the customer experience is new territory.” So says Christine Barber, Gensler’s director of research. The firm launched its Workplace Performance Index (WPI) in 2005. It now drives global thinking about how work settings impact the office workforce. Developing a lifestyle-focused Experiential Design (ExD) Index poses greater challenges. “The needs of the office workforce are generally similar across different kinds of organizations,” she explains. “To quantify design’s impact in a lifestyle context, we have to look at human experience in broader terms.” With that breadth comes a lot more complexity. It also complicates the question of what measures really matter to clients.

Laying the groundwork
Faced with the need to sort this out, Gensler started small. An internal survey of relevant practice leaders

surfaced their client concerns. One theme quickly emerged: the growing sophistication of consumers regularly redefines what makes for a great experience. Other themes included the need to engage next-gen consumers and to stand out in crowded markets. Clients had to weigh the costs and risks of doing this against their profitability. Design plays a critical role in market differentiation, says Gensler’s Tom Ito: “We address the experience in every project.” But the insights gained are hard to apply elsewhere. “We’ve got the anecdotes, but where’s the data?” Gensler hopes the ExD Index will change the conversation. “The idea is to use qualitative research to give our design teams and their clients insights and feedback during the design process, not afterward,” says Ito’s colleague Tate Ragland.

A series of roundtable discussions with Gensler clients is now under way in different US cities and in China to help focus the ExD Index and identify regional

differences in how experience is perceived and valued. The first two sessions began with presentations from an array of thought leaders in the experience realm: a futurist, a robot designer, and a food and sensory experience artist. Audiences of experience-driven clients listened and then weighed in.

Talking about design’s impact
Drawing on work and life, participants honed in on the nature of experience, what makes it impactful, and how design figures in. The focus on experience rang a bell with participants, says Gensler’s Irwin Miller. “Because of the businesses they’re in, they think about this all the time.” The first two roundtables, held in Los Angeles and New York, have already yielded important insights. One takeaway is that experience is highly heterogeneous, with the definition of a good experience varying from one person to the next. For some participants, technology is front and center, while for others it is all about unplugging and getting back to basics.

“There’s no single formula for a great experience,” says Gensler’s Elizabeth Brink. “There are so many dichotomies.” Yet commonalities quickly surfaced. One is that the person who mediates an experience for you can make it or break it. “The speakers told stories about their great experiences,” Rohani says. “Invariably, they pointed to specific individuals whose interest, knowledge, and genuineness made all the difference.”

Another commonality is that memorable experiences often start with something recognizable and then take it in a novel direction. “As the designer Carla Diana told us in New York, leading with the familiar is one way to engage people and make them feel comfortable, then you flip that on its head—a tactic drawn from concert halls and haute cuisine,” says Gensler’s Lauren Adams. A third commonality is that quality experiences provide guideposts without overly constricting consumers. “You bound the experience lightly, and then give people a lot of freedom to make it theirs—ideally on a continuing basis,” says Miller. A related tactic is to analyze what’s getting in the way of a great experience. “You don’t always need something crazily new,” adds Adams. “As Diana said, just get rid of the frustrations and time-wasters.” Car and bike sharing are examples, trading on convenience, but other sharing platforms get a premium for offering an experience that goes substantially beyond convenience.

Taking the next steps
The roundtables point to survey questions that could gauge consumer experience, heterogeneous as it is. “When we first conducted our WPI surveys of the office workforce, we quickly learned to avoid generic questions,” says Brink. “Did the experience feel cohesive? Did it feel authentic? That gets better answers than if you ask, did you enjoy it?” Such prompts can help

identify what made an experience negative, like a spa that promises tranquility yet annoys you with a roaring air conditioner. Following roundtables in San Francisco, Washington, DC, and Shanghai, Gensler’s ExD Index team will tap consumer research and conduct in-depth interviews with experientially savvy clients who can offer concrete advice about what matters and how to measure it. Consumers are also in view as the likely target of a first large survey. “We expect the ExD Index to show its first results in 2017,” Barber says. “Like the Workplace Performance Index, it will be refined and sharpened as we develop it.” Gensler expects that once it’s launched, the ExD Index will be a critical resource for its designers and its clients. Projects benefit when designers and clients share insights about experience—the attributes that matter to consumers and how design can evoke them. “We intend the ExD Index to be open-ended, not formulaic,” Ragland says. “Our goal is not to prescribe outcomes, but to unleash people’s creativity.”

Mara Hvistendahl is a contributing correspondent for *Science* magazine. Her book *Unnatural Selection* was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize in 2011. She is based in Minneapolis.

below, from left: Johns Hopkins Fast Forward Innovation Hub, Baltimore; LMHQ, New York; Bon Appétit Test Kitchen, New York; Brooks Trailhead, Seattle



MORE THAN A

GAME

As professional teams seek to increase attendance and grow their revenues, they're expanding and enhancing the fan experience with amenities inspired by a hospitality mindset.

By **VERNON MAYS**

In professional sports, the competition to win fans’ loyalty off the field can be just as intense as the action that takes place on it.

With an explosion of digital media and in-home, high-definition broadcasts clamoring for people’s attention, sports franchises are doing all they can to enrich the game-day experience with amenities inspired by the hospitality and entertainment industries.

A year-round destination

And where better to amp up the entertainment than in Los Angeles? There, a stadium for Major League Soccer’s latest expansion team, the Los Angeles Football Club, is breaking new ground by incorporating a mix of uses. Located in Exposition Park, the 22,000-seat stadium will serve as a year-round destination. Ancillary program elements include a conference center, meeting rooms, retail, a large food hall, a stand-alone restaurant—and possibly a world football museum.

“The owners want this stadium to be active for as much of the year as possible, rather than for only 22 games per year,” says Gensler’s Ron Turner. “It’s a big investment, so they want to get the

maximum use out of it. But they also think it’s important for the stadium to activate Exposition Park and be a catalyst for development on the South Figueroa corridor.”

The stadium design will have a European style, with steep seating decks that extend close to the pitch, or playing field. An overhanging canopy will contain the crowd noise and provide shade. And a reserved section at one end zone will house the rowdy fan clubs—passionate supporters who have been included in design presentations and focus groups.

In addition to the stadium bowl, the facility will feature lounges and clubs that are distinctly themed to reflect L.A.’s diversity—from the artsy, gritty East Side of town to the more refined tastes of Beverly Hills. “That’s been our springboard for the design,” says Gensler’s Elizabeth Pritchett. In addition to their use on game days, some of the clubs will double as revenue-generating special event spaces, while others will operate daily as restaurants and bars.



above: The Star, Frisco, TX
below: FirstEnergy Stadium, Cleveland, OH

Owners want stadium clubs and lounges to be easily converted for events, parties, and receptions for business or pleasure.

Reinventing the rules

No professional franchise has been so intent on leveraging the entertainment value of its brand as the Dallas Cowboys, a \$4 billion enterprise ranked by *Forbes* as the NFL’s most valuable team. So it comes as little surprise that the Cowboys are reinventing the rules with their new practice facility in Frisco, Texas. The 91-acre multi-use development, named The Star, transforms what is typically a stand-alone training center into the anchor of a new planned urban district. “That’s the beauty of this facility,” says Gensler’s Jonathan Emmett. “It creates a completely unique sports-anchored district.”

The cornerstone of the complex is The Ford Center at The Star, an enclosed, 12,000-seat multipurpose events center and training facility. It will be joined with the Cowboys’ new headquarters and a 300-room Omni Hotel, all designed by Gensler. The project is the result of a partnership among the Cowboys, the City of Frisco, and the Frisco Independent

School District. “Part of the agreement is that the Cowboys’ indoor practice facility will be used as the football venue for all eight of Frisco’s high schools,” Emmett says.

The facility will host other community activities, as well as concerts, corporate events, and weddings. “It’s like an entertainment campus, as opposed to a stadium,” says Gensler’s Stacy Bisek. Even the cafeteria was designed to be a multi-use space. More than a place for staff to get meals, the cafeteria can also be staged as a prefunction or banquet space to complement events happening in the adjacent theater.

In planning the development, Gensler was responsible for 25 acres of the site, which also includes a retail/entertainment component and a central events plaza that will connect to a mixed-use retail spine. With so many elements linking sports, hospitality, retail, and office uses, the project required a multidisciplinary approach. “What we brought to the table was not only great expertise in sports,

but also in commercial office buildings, workplace interiors, hospitality, planning, and branding,” says Emmett. “It was a huge team effort.”

From tired to energized

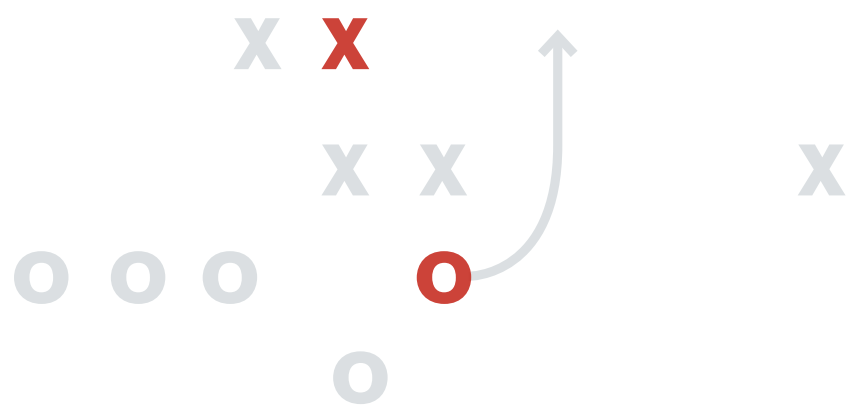
Upgraded amenities and a more engaging fan experience were key goals in the renovation of FirstEnergy Stadium, home of the Cleveland Browns. Begun in 1997 before Cleveland officially had a team to lend it an identity, the stadium always had a generic quality and already felt very old and tired, says Emmett. “It was important to the owners, Jimmy and Dee Haslam, to imprint the stadium with both the team’s brand and the personality of Cleveland.”

The revitalization was staged over two years. Renovations in the first phase included a 40-by-192-foot HD video board that is nearly triple the size of the original one. Other improvements included ribbon-board displays, communal viewing decks, improved circulation, and an enhanced sound system. While overall seating capacity was reduced, about 1,000

new seats were added to the lower tier to provide premium seats closer to the action.

An extensive interiors renovation and branding upgrade were completed in phase two. The uninviting corridors were brightened with new LED lights and enlivened with large graphics, including murals of downtown Cleveland and tributes to Hall of Fame players. In addition to renovating the casual upper-level clubs, Gensler designed three other clubs for an upscale market. The most exclusive one, Club 46, is a cozy lounge repurposed from the old groundskeeper’s space. “The driver behind the club is it gives ticket holders a backstage pass,” says Pritchett. “The members feel like VIPs—as though they’re rubbing elbows with the team as they rush onto the field.”

In addition, the three new clubs were designed to be adaptable for non-game-day events, says Pritchett. “They can easily be converted for corporate events or receptions. That’s an important requirement now for a lot of our stadium projects.”



Sports teams value their loyal fans. They’re always looking for new ways to deepen the relationship. Every touchpoint with their fans is an opportunity for engagement.

Staying competitive

Other recent stadium renovations have addressed similar demands from team owners, who are often competing with other local pro teams for audiences and corporate sponsorship dollars. At Lincoln Financial Field, where the Philadelphia Eagles play, Gensler added 1,600 seats; new HD video boards; refreshed club, suite, and marketplace spaces; and a new Touchdown Club. At Staples Center in Los Angeles—home to NBA, WNBA, and NHL teams—the firm renovated underused space with luxury banquettes and 1,000 square feet of programmable lighting.

In San Diego, Gensler was brought in by Delaware North to overhaul the food and beverage concessions at Petco Park, home of Major League Baseball’s Padres. “Our goal was to capture the San Diego culture and vibe to make the ballpark a local destination,” says Gensler’s Kirstie Acevedo. Five major concessions were introduced, including a brewery, an organic market, and a barbecue joint. “We reinforced the concept of ‘home’ with communal tables and living room-type furniture,” she notes.

Fans also gather in Park at the Park, a grassy area that encourages people to enjoy conversation and linger awhile. The concessions play off the idea of food-as-theater, where fans see their meat being carved or salsa being made—creating a more personal experience.

Brand matters

In all these projects, brand plays an important role, not only for the team identities, but also as owners look to boost sponsorship revenues. Currently

in the works are nearly a dozen brand-focused retail spaces or sponsored viewing decks for Anheuser-Busch, mostly in sports venues. All are building on creative concepts first developed for Anheuser-Busch at Beer Park, a rooftop bar and grill on the Las Vegas Strip.

“Here the ballpark concept was applied to a non-stadium venue,” says Gensler’s Derek Sola. “The components that make for an exhilarating sports experience are being reinvented in projects that aren’t even within a ballpark.” This is giving brands like Anheuser-Busch greater visibility by bringing the stadium experience to their customers.

“We’re also mindful that sports teams are brands—probably the brands with the most loyal customers,” says Gensler’s Deanna Siller. “Like all brands today, they are looking for ways to have greater engagement with their fans. And all touchpoints matter, so they are asking their retailers to heighten the brand experience too.”

That’s the common ground in sports venues today. While the athletes in action may change from place to place, the emphasis on the spectator keeps blurring the lines between the arenas of sports, hospitality, entertainment, and retail. “It’s a trend we’ve seen developing throughout the industry,” says Emmett. “And it’s only going to continue in every project we do.”

Vernon Mays is a senior editor at Gensler and a contributing editor at *Architect* magazine.



Petco Park, San Diego

LIVING THE TRANSITIONAL LIFESTYLE

By EVA HAGBERG FISHER

As people embrace their iHumanity, categories like luxury come into question. Not everyone’s ready to exchange old for new, but the new is not to be denied. As brands, makers, and consumers try to finesse this transition, they’re asking: **Where’s lifestyle headed next?**

KEVIN ROCHE

Roche is senior vice president, global design and construction, of DFS Group, an LVMH company and leading luxury travel retailer, headquartered in Hong Kong.

What does luxury mean today?

Kevin Roche: Luxury is a state of mind. It is very individual and personal, which makes it so elusive. Its complexity and diversity reflect the accessibility of information, how technology has influenced that accessibility, and how marketing communications has made more things accessible to more people, more readily. They’re better informed, and more visually intelligent.

How do you plan for a common thread of visual intelligence, for a luxury that is both global and also deeply personal?

KR: The common thread is that it has to be authentic, well designed, and executed without compromise. Real luxury comes from those authentic roots and ways of making. It’s the opposite of toxic, creeping, all-the-time sameness!

How does conscientious consumption impact the luxury market?

KR: Luxury has gone beyond the consumption of high-design products or experiences. It’s also very personal. There’s a whole industry of taking care of yourself physically, emotionally, and

spiritually that has tapped this luxury way of thinking. Having a place where you have quiet, where you have solitude, is a luxury, whether it’s going to spas and retreats where you talk about diet, fitness, and well-being, or spiritual development and enhancement. As generations of consumers become better educated, their access to knowledge creates a bigger market for luxury—leading in turn to more products, more places, and more services. That has fueled luxury. I think health and wellness are part of this, as people become more aware. Being fit is a smart thing, and it requires a certain amount of awareness, even education, a certain amount of resources. That puts health and wellness into the luxury category.

Some consider luxury to be frivolous, even irresponsible. What’s your view?

KR: You must keep it in perspective and understand that luxury is a privilege. The luxury industry creates jobs, contributes to social enhancement, helps families send kids to school, provides healthcare, and takes care of aging parents and grandparents. In Siem Reap, Cambodia, we are building a new Galleria that will employ 400 people in a market where jobs with benefits are very much in

demand. We will educate and train the local staff in retailing and in the service industry. We’re teaching language skills. We’re creating 400 good jobs in a place where most people earn the equivalent of a few dollars a week—a place where most families are just subsisting and education is hard to obtain. We’ll pay our employees more in a month than some might earn in a year. That will build houses, educate the youth, and pay for healthcare. We’re also doing this in Vietnam, with a focus on cultural destinations, and in other new markets around the world.

Do you translate everything you do behind the scenes into a narrative of authenticity? How do you get clients to recognize that something is luxurious?

KR: There are things you don’t have to translate. They’re more luxurious if you don’t try. They just are, and you understand, you feel it. It’s more emotive, and you just get it. You’re supposed to recognize luxury, but this requires a degree of grounding. You don’t need a Ph.D., but you have to be educated in a visual way, in a well-rounded way—aware of arts of all types, of the humanities, and sensitive to the

details. That knowledge gives luxury a broader meaning. I live a pretty luxurious lifestyle, and I like it, but one of the happiest times of my life was living in Paris in an apartment not much bigger than a room. It was a beautiful place, but it was tiny. It had no lift. I had to climb up four flights. I went to the market with my canvas bag. I could walk to the museums, to little neighborhood restaurants and bakeries. Not everyone in Paris lives like that. For me, it was a luxury.



If we could give luxury to everybody, would it still be luxury?

KR: The fact that it’s not accessible is often what makes luxury feel like luxury, but part of its elusiveness is that it’s also about having access to something desirable. Consider how Steve Jobs revolutionized the music industry, for example. Being able to hear my playlist anywhere, anytime, through the cloud has improved the quality of my life. It makes me feel better, makes me happy.

“RECOGNIZING LUXURY REQUIRES A DEGREE OF GROUNDING.”

That’s a real luxury, yet it’s something that’s widely available. So if we’re talking about affordable mass housing or inexpensive carbon-free cars, they will need to be designed with the same care and attention that Steve Jobs displayed when he transformed the music industry. Design is at the center of that. When you have access to something so desirable, accessible, and beautifully thought out, you understand it as luxury. I come back to education, to a humanity that’s growing steadily more aware, more dialed into these things. If that’s not there, then it’s not luxury; it’s just consumption.

CARLA DIANA

Diana is a New York–based designer, author, and educator whose work focuses on the impact of future technologies on products and interactivity.

How is technology helping us to be better humans?

Carla Diana: We are becoming more individualized. One thing that is changing our lives is the affordability of sensors, which used to be very expensive and difficult to use. Now they’re widely available and cost \$1.99. We’re seeing more companies that are using them to create new consumer products that translate sensor inputs into something meaningful. The Apple Watch tracks heart rate. I don’t know if that’s something that anyone other than athletes and medical professionals really thought about 10 or 15 years ago. Now I can glance at my watch and tell you. Even the phrase “resting heart rate” has entered the vernacular. That type of self-knowledge is really good for the world in a lot of ways. Technology can also enable you to lead a more flexible life. If telepresence lets you have a real experience with someone else, or if robots can take over the repetitive parts of work, then your workday may be shorter and you’ll have more time to be a human being. A lot of people envision a future with dog-walking robots, but I’m wondering if I can get a robot to comb through the spreadsheets I have to analyze so I can actually take my dog for a walk.

Will outsourcing to technology make us dumber?

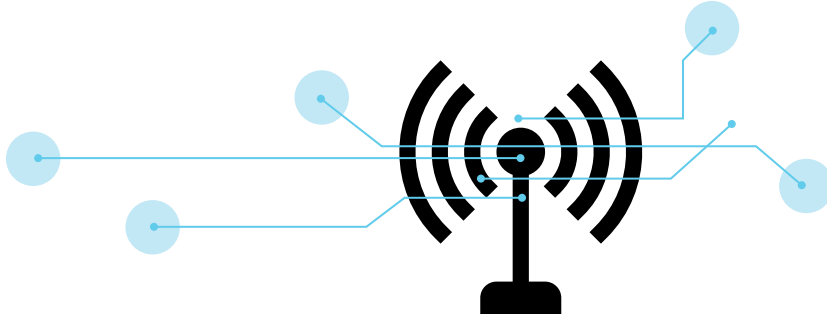
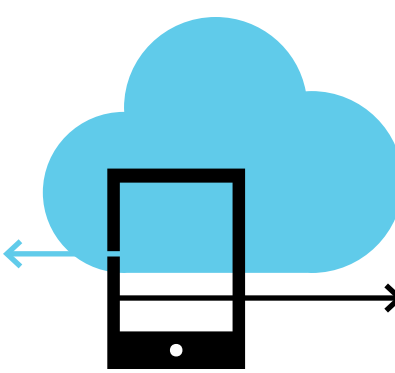
CD: Everyone talks about self-driving cars. It’s not hard to picture that future. The hours that Americans spend driving in traffic are real drudgery. That isn’t something we need in our lives. But technology also encourages us to skip over the hard stuff. I force myself to do mental tasks, like memorizing. I make myself do addition in my head because I feel that I’m losing the ability to do math—something I loved as a kid. At the University of Pennsylvania, where I teach, there are Ph.D. students who are experts in artificial intelligence. They got there by doing arithmetic as kids, and then doing computer programming. Can we skip those steps? That’s where we need to be extremely careful.

Are our analog lives too dependent on digital supports?

CD: Analog versus digital isn’t a black-and-white thing. I love to bike ride. I don’t think that the existence of the self-driving car means that I won’t still do this or that people will stop bringing bicycles into their lives. The future could be a bike with GPS built into it, so the handlebars vibrate and give me turn-by-turn directions. I’m still out there biking, getting the visceral parts of the experience that I want.

What does “responsive technology” mean to you?

CD: Right now, the philosophy about responsive technology is focused on personal devices. This is because we don’t have such a responsive environment.



A group in New York, Breakfast, does a lot of technology experiments. They have a concept for a dynamic street sign. In their vision, you’d push a button to show you where the coffeehouses are, where the bike runs are, where the office spaces are—depending on your needs. The street sign itself would change dynamically so it could point in many different directions.

That’s a philosophy about responsive technology that expects the environment to change physically depending on what you ask of it. The response might take the form of augmented reality—environments where invisible cues are built into the three-dimensional space. Or the space might morph in some way—the doors opening and closing, for example, depending on what you need or where you’re going. These are two ends of a continuum of possible responses.

Is this responsiveness a luxury?

CD: Luxury boils down to control. We have this human illusion, feeling that we can control the world when we really can’t. I walk into a room, switch on the light, and adjust the temperature. I take this control for granted, but something could happen at any moment that could take it away. So it’s an illusion, but we revel in it. I think technology will give us more of that. I see information becoming absorbed into our environment—a recipe we can summon up at the kitchen counter, for example, just by asking for it. It will arrive when we need it, in the right place and form. It won’t come through mobile devices. They drive us bananas because they provide “everything always”—too much at once. The future will run on a different philosophy.

“TECHNOLOGY ENCOURAGES US TO SKIP OVER THE HARD STUFF. CAN WE SKIP THOSE STEPS? THAT’S WHERE WE NEED TO BE EXTREMELY CAREFUL.”

“IN FACT, THE WHOLE NOTION OF CONVENIENCE DOESN'T HAVE MUCH RELEVANCE ANYMORE. WHAT'S RELEVANT IS FLOW.”

KARINA MARSHALL

Marshall is a vice president on the trends and futures team at The Futures Company in Silicon Valley. Her focus is on consumer trends and macro forces of change.

As a futurist who considers how human nature and technology intersect, what big changes to that intersection have you observed?

Karina Marshall: The typical, conventional structure of a day just doesn't exist now. It's being disrupted from every angle. We think of leisure occurring after work hours or on vacation, but it can happen at any time, at any moment. In the past 10 years, there's been a lot of conversation about mixed-use spaces. We're moving beyond that as work and leisure converge. We're remixing our days. Morning Gloryville's drug- and alcohol-free rave parties help urbanites wake up in cities around the world. There's a boom in outdoor sports in Korea, and now there's a word for it, "naports"—people beating the summer heat by playing sports at night. So we have to design cities and settings to support that fluidity.

How does blending work with leisure influence daily life? Can we still turn it off?

KM: Being able to turn it off is not something that most people can afford to do. It's interesting to think of how technology gives us a little bit more time here and there, allows us to do more; but the more that we do, the more expectation there is that we'll do more and more and more.

In today's anxiety-driven, busyness-as-status culture, can we elevate rest and play? Leisure will have to come together with our culture of accomplishment. One way this is happening is through bite-size leisure moments and experiences. But we may see more leisure that is tied to personal measures of success, like learning a new language or exploring a place that's off the map, versus buying some shiny new thing or going somewhere fancy.

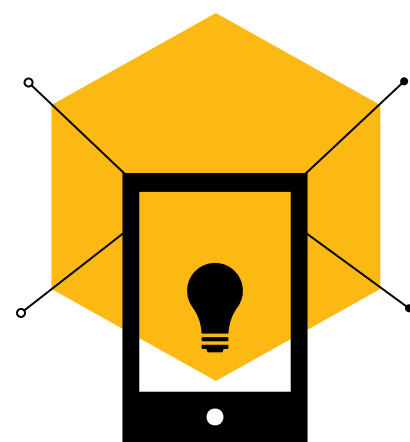
Will responsive spaces and products help us out?

KM: The way that physical spaces can help encourage behavior is fascinating. I like the social experiment of using musical stairs to encourage people to take the stairs—as you walk up or down them, you can make music. Another example is how Google influences its employees' eating habits by fine-tuning the food environment. It can be low-tech or high-tech. With artificial intelligence, AI, you're connected to these personal systems that know everything about you. Imagine now that the spaces you're in or move through are interacting with AI elements to guide you—guide your behavior and even change it. That could be quite powerful.

This is a big question in healthcare too: Can technology help save us from ourselves? It will have a massive impact,

but only if it can be integrated. We have apps and devices that monitor our activities. When will they start suggesting solutions, actually changing our behavior? That's going to be really critical. Let's say my monitor finds that I've had my fair share of sugar for the day, so it locks me out of my pantry. Or it sees that I've been sitting too long, so it turns off the TV. Or maybe it books a car to take me to a spin class, knowing from my schedule that I've got enough time to take it and knowing from my heart rate that I need to get moving.

It's exciting what AI and these personal technologies can do to free up space in our minds to focus on what we care about. There's a reason why the app that tracks and shares your meditation is called "Headspace."



Is having that space a luxury? Time feels like a scarce resource.

KM: It's interesting that time used to be thought of as the most critical resource—everything was about saving us time. But once we had the time to do more, we found that we didn't have the energy to make full use of it, so all these energy-enhancing tools came on the market—place. This got us the culture of busyness that we're all deploring. So the next resource we're after is mind space, head-space. There's already an app for that!

Convenience used to be about making things faster and easier, but I don't think that's the case now. In fact, the whole notion of convenience doesn't have any real relevance to our world anymore. What's relevant is the concept of flow—a flow that facilitates consumers' lives.

To facilitate the right flow, the AI will need to know the context that I'm living through on that particular day, that specific moment in time: where I've been and where my schedule says I'm headed, what the weather is and what it's forecast to be, what I ate, what my fitness profile looks like. The AI will need to take all this information and its unfolding contexts—who I am, where I am, what I'm doing, understood in a much more dynamic way. It has to run with me.

TATJANA DZAMBAZOVA

Dzambazova is a "technology whisperer" at Autodesk in San Francisco, helping to democratize reality capture and digital fabrication technology.

Your title suggests an untamed beast in need of gentle handling. Can you elaborate?

Tatjana Dzambazova: One of the biggest impediments to technology adoption is the fear of change. There are two ways to make technology or software. The first is that you have a known group of people or an industry with a certain problem, and you find the solution. Whispering is needed in such cases, when you're offering new ways of doing old things. You have to be empathetic about their fears and, at the same time, excite them about the opportunities these new ways offer.

The second approach is that you see scientific or technological advancements, you connect the dots, and you come up with a new idea for something that people never did before. Did they have a problem? Not necessarily. Instead, you're creating a desire. Would they love to do it? Oh my God, yes!

Let's go back to the untamed beast. Is technology always beneficial?

TD: My opinion is bipolar. How technology impacts our lives has a very dichotomous nature. On one hand, we live in an era of fantastic technological advancements that enable us to be connected, to be aware of what is going on, to have fundamentally new experiences, and to do unbelievable things. But those very same tools, in the hands of the dark side of people, can also create a lot of damage, unfortunately.

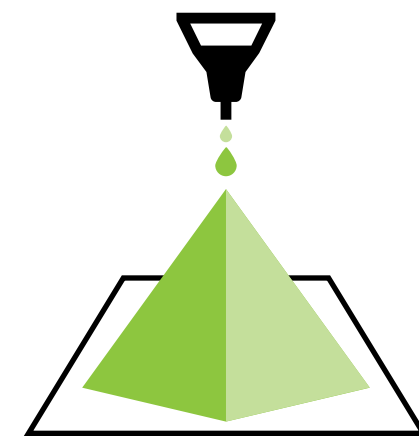
I'm often asked if smart devices are good or bad for kids. Is a knife a good tool or a bad tool? In the hands of a cook, a knife can make a great meal. An artist can use it to carve a beautiful sculpture. But a murderer can kill someone with it, right? Technology is just a tool. What we make with it is up to us—it reflects our values and our humanity.

You're working on Memento, a product that makes 3D models of almost anything from 2D photos. What prompted its development?

TD: Behind Memento are two new concepts. One is "Rip, Fix, Burn": you rip the original, fix it, mix it, and then re-burn it back into the real world using 3D printing or computer numerical control—CNC—machines. The other is "Rip, Mix, Learn": you rip the original, fix it, mix it, re-burn it, and then use it pedagogically so people can learn from it.

My team and I have been working on democratizing the process of digitizing the analog world. We are applying Memento to the digital archiving of anything that is in museums, of any scientific artifacts. You can make 3D-printed or CNC-machined replicas that allow you to teach in a much more tactile way. An example is the paleontologist Dr. Louise Leakey, who is digitizing the entire fossil collection of three generations of her family's discoveries in Kenya and Tanzania. This will make it possible not only to learn about our ancestors and our origins online with the digitized fossils,

but also to download and 3D-print skulls and other fossils for use in classrooms and in hands-on learning. And we have a huge opportunity to preserve our natural heritage. For example, we can capture coral reefs and document their change over time. We are also creating replicas of rare tortoises to distract the ravens that threaten them with extinction.



Will this sate our desire to see or own the originals? What happens to exclusivity?

TD: The exclusivity we associate with luxury items is usually about their uniqueness, their being made from rare or precious materials, and the artist's or maker's interest in pushing the limits of what was possible given the technology of that time. That is often only available to those with the money to commission it. This is the exact opposite.

When the Smithsonian set out to digitize its collections, 98 percent of them were not on display because there isn't enough space. By digitizing them and putting them online, the Smithsonian makes the collections available in their entirety both to visitors and to the many, many more who want to learn from them, whether they visit or not.

Having a digital replica of an original doesn't sate your desire to see the real thing, but you can learn from it. And the digital replicas can be augmented with information. It's not just a curator or docent talking. You can access video and cross-referencing to get the whole story of where the real thing came from, how it was made, and where it fits in human history.

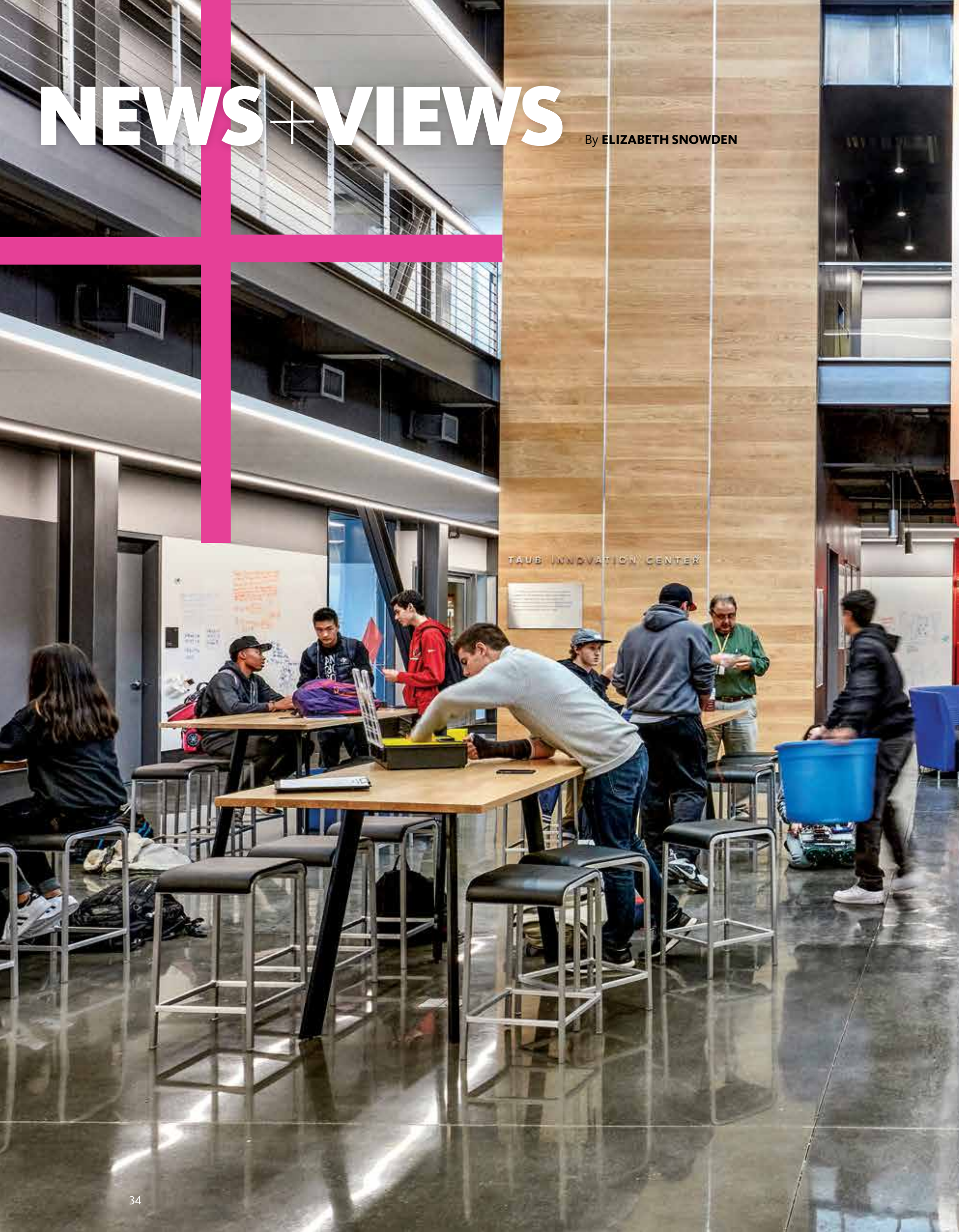
Nothing replaces the originals, but people lose them and sometimes destroy them. Memento and the digitization projects it enables are our collective backup drive.

Eva Hagberg Fisher is a Bay Area writer; the author of two design books, both published by Monacelli; and a contributor to *Metropolis*, *Wallpaper*, and other publications.

“A NEW IDEA CREATES A DESIRE. DID THEY HAVE A PROBLEM? NOT NECESSARILY. WOULD THEY LOVE TO DO IT? OMG, YES!”

NEWS+VIEWS

By ELIZABETH SNOWDEN



LEARNING THAT STICKS

HAJJAR STEM CENTER, DWIGHT-ENGLEWOOD SCHOOL
ENGLEWOOD, NJ

“Most of the walls are windows,” says Gensler’s Mark Thaler, describing the new Hajjar STEM Center at Dwight-Englewood School. STEM—science, technology, engineering, and mathematics—is an important part of this independent college-preparatory day school’s curriculum. All those windows are connective tissue for the STEM Center’s programs.

“We did nothing but put distraction into the design,” jokes Joseph Algrant, principal of Dwight-Englewood’s Upper School. But the new STEM Center’s transparency fulfills its intended purpose of giving students and faculty a greater awareness of what is happening across the space. It reinforces a sense that everyone is working together, with the flexibility to experiment. “The natural and organic communication that occurs is the biggest difference the new building makes,” says Jessica Leiken, Dwight-Englewood’s Science Department chair.

That integrated and collaborative mindset is essential to STEM. Getting the balance right is hard, but the STEM Center does it. The school understands that STEM is an evolving curriculum that will be influenced by the ways that faculty and students approach it. Their collaboration will change to support the students’ futures. “We’re the first generation of adults who don’t quite know what our children will be doing,” says Dr. Rodney de Jarnett, Dwight-Englewood’s head of school. Many of its graduates will be in jobs that don’t exist today, he notes. The skills they’ll need most are the integrative ones like creativity, curiosity, and entrepreneurship.

Creating better learners

While the STEM Center was in design and construction, “we talked a lot about pedagogy and how to create better learners,” Leiken says. “We focused on how students learn, not just on what we’re trying to teach them.” Research shows that students forget as much as 90 percent of what they learn in school. STEM programs are changing that. Their hands-on, just-in-time approach focuses on students learning what they need to solve problems. Experiential relevance makes knowledge stick to long-term memory and makes that knowledge available for creative application in other contexts.

For this shift to happen, the space really matters, Algrant explains. “When you have a STEM curriculum, you put all the academic fiber into one building, one common space, to increase the possibility to connect all of it and pull sources from all those disciplines.”





The new classrooms are designed to allow learning to happen in new ways. The rooms and tables are large, giving a calm to what the students are doing and letting them use the space more freely. Teachers can easily walk around and see what every student is working on and where they are in an assignment, enabling the kind of one-on-one interactions they value.

Students are also encouraged to explore assignments outside of the classrooms—for instance, using the writable glass walls on the second floor to sketch out problems and stories. Physics students might go into the hall to measure wave harmonics or to the stairway to measure fluctuating energy levels in an electric field. And when Math Department chair John King walks by, he can ask them: “Okay, you’ve measured the amplitude, now can you measure the frequency?” This helps students connect what they’re learning in their different classes, then apply it to a range of problems.

The hallways play a role in cultivating that common thread. In the “gallery walks,” for example, student projects are displayed to allow others to attach post-its with comments or questions. “This level of visibility and conversation prompts people to look at things differently,” Algrant says.

Bringing learning alive

The Center is used intensively for both academic and social activities. Every Friday, a student-led robotics group—revived by freshmen after a long lapse—meets in the common area. It’s a sign that student engagement is thriving. And it points to the broader view of education that brings learning alive. Over time, Algrant ventures, the distinction between schoolwork and extracurricular activities will give way to a more fruitful overlap—as is happening already in the school’s STEM curriculum.

Applications for ninth grade were up 40 percent this past year. “The excitement around STEM has grown enormously this year. And a piece of it is this wonderful space to work in,” Algrant says. “The Center has given our teachers a fresh start to do what they have always tried to do. Now they have the facility to pull it off.”

Says Thaler, “Because they were included in the design, none of the faculty was super-surprised when they first walked in—the Hajjar STEM Center exceeded their expectations. That reflects great leadership on the school’s part. I wish we could bottle that!”

Elizabeth Snowden is a writer/editor with Gensler Communications, based in Oakland.

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