

Tips for a quieter workplace

In the eighth of a series of articles relating to the workplace, PAM BRENNER suggests eight ways to promote a more tranquil working environment



RECENT RESEARCH by the Centre for the Built Environment (CEB) in the United States reports that more 40 per cent of respondents indicate that workplace acoustics makes it harder for them to do their jobs.

The American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) supports this finding, reporting that more than 70 per cent of workers believe noise is their most significant workplace distraction.

So what can be done? How can noise be reduced in the workplace – especially when considering that most people usually work in open planned spaces?

- Here are some tips to consider:
- Channel foot traffic and subsequent noise away from areas where people need to concentrate.
 - Encourage people to turn down the ringer on their phones. When they are not at their desk, have them send calls to the voice mail system on the first ring.
 - Ask people to position themselves so they speak into sound-absorbing panels when on a desk phone as opposed to talking freely into the surrounding environment.
 - Discuss the personal use of speakerphones, mobile phones, radios and other items that create noise.
 - Consider inconsistent ceiling



A QUIETER workplace is more productive

levels and hard surfaces like large windows that will reflect and deflect sound into other areas of the work setting.

• Build in private spaces for people to retreat to when acoustical privacy is needed.

• Evaluate the use of a sound-masking white noise system to help 'muffle' noise in the workplace.

• Encourage people to stop, look and listen before interrupting someone who is working.

Steelcase Inc is represented locally by Messrs Domestica Ltd of Valley Road, Birkirkara. More information on Steelcase solutions can be found at www.steelcase-europe.com. For enquiries or presentations, call 2144-7604.

AX Holdings unveil Verdala Mansions

ONE of Malta's most outstanding residential projects, Verdala Mansions, was unveiled last week by its proprietors, AX Holdings. This luxurious block of residences was unveiled during an exclusive sunset cocktail party held on the grounds of this unique site.

The reception, which was attended by a selected number of high networked clients, was jointly hosted by AX Holdings and Dhalia Real Estate Services.

While welcoming guests, Dhalia's chairman and CEO Franco Valletta said that "this activity forms part of Dhalia's alternative marketing programme, whereby the company will be partnering with leading developers on the island with the aim of promoting and selling luxurious development projects. We are proud and feel privileged to be associated with Verdala Mansions as the first project on our agenda."

Mr Valletta added: "Dhalia would like to take the opportunity to congratulate Angelo Xuereb, chairman of AX Holdings Ltd, for his vision, quality of design and high standards of finish so typical of this wonderful destination. Needless to mention, the spectacular 180-degree panoramic views of Malta, coupled with the romantic, historical

backdrop of Rabat and Mdina, make Verdala Mansions an outstanding development."

In his address Mr Xuereb said that "these exclusive residences, which enjoy a freehold title, have been planned with the taste of extraordinary lifestyle people in mind. The Mansions are built with the highest quality materials and are designed to offer comfort, privacy, space, security, quality and spectacular views."

Mr Xuereb added that "being adjacent to a proposed luxury hotel, residents will be able to enjoy the facilities and services offered by the hotel. Leisure facilities include two external large pools, one a lagoon type, an indoor heated pool, health spa, gymnasium, and more.

"The outdoor ground of the residences will be transformed into a landscaped garden, together with a Belvedere."

The Verdala Mansions consist of 30 luxurious apartments and four penthouses with garages. The Mansions are divided into four blocks, namely the Porta Hompesch, the Porta Vilhena, the Porta Cottoner and the Porta Caraffa. Each apartment's area varies between 230 and 490 square metres. The first residents are expected to move in by October.



THE Verdala Mansions



DHALIA chairman Franco Valletta (left) and AX Holdings Ltd chairman Angelo Xuereb addressing the guests



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