

SHOP APOTHEKE EUROPE Puts Employee Wellbeing First

One of Europe's Leading Online Pharmacies Leverages Space to Foster Collaboration.

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Caring is more than just a word at SHOP APOTHEKE EUROPE – it's a key part of their customer philosophy. Founded in 2001 as the online shop of a Cologne-based bricks-and mortar pharmacy, shop-apotheke.com was born. The goal: to better serve its customers beyond regular opening hours and offer better service and a broader selection. Since then, SHOP APOTHEKE EUROPE has become one of Europe's leading online pharmacies with more than 5.5 million active customers in seven countries. In 2018, the company outgrew its old offices in Venlo and was looking for a larger space with room to expand and the ability to adapt it to their future needs. They wanted employee well-being and collaboration to be in the spotlight in their new workplace, leading to a design that balanced the needs of the individual and the team.

“We feel, it's very important that we have a space where people want to come in to work so that we can unlock their potential and attract future employees.”

CLAUDIA MANTHEY | Advisor to the Board and project manager for the move to and equipment of the new offices

CHOICE AND CONTROL

The new workplace is a big shift from the more traditional high-density office building with eight meeting rooms and assigned offices in Venlo. Now, an open office plan creates more transparency and gives employees the opportunity to find the right space for the type of work they're doing each day. While every employee has a dedicated workstation, a range of spaces gives them the flexibility to find the optimal spot to collaborate, socialize or recharge their batteries. An owned workstation gives everyone a sense of territory, a place to call their own and a way to add personality to their space. The diverse collection of spaces encourages movement and a variety of postures throughout the day, adding a welcoming energizing vibe.

The thoughtfully planned new office provides outside views from most workstations and conference rooms. Employees also have access to 45 meeting rooms in different sizes that offer more options for informal meetings or quick exchanges. The broader selection includes classic conference rooms as well as more agile spaces such as lounge settings. These spaces support social exchanges and collaboration while also encouraging people to be mobile throughout the day rather than just sitting at a desk.

A recent 2019 Steelcase study found that two-thirds of people say they spend 70% of their day at their desk while at work. Seating doesn't just impact how people feel physically; it also affects their cognitive and emotional health. Comfortable seating and chairs offer ergonomics and foster new postures that make us feel different at the desk and during meetings. As caring is part of SHOP APOTHEKE EUROPE's DNA, they decided to bring ergonomic chairs to the workstations and the meeting rooms. Height-adjustable desks provide additional flexibility and allow employees to transition between different seated to standing postures quickly throughout the day, stimulating mental and physical activity.

“Our new offices foster teamwork and team spirit without sacrificing individual focus work.”

CLAUDIA MANTHEY, ADVISOR TO THE BOARD

A FLUID MULTIPURPOSE SPACE

When the company was getting ready to move into the new space in the early summer of 2020, employees worldwide were working from home due to COVID-19 lockdowns. When SHOP APOTHEKE EUROPE started to bring employees back, the flexible design of the new space made it easier to adapt quickly to new safety and distance requirements. The ecosystem of places combined with technology, e. g. a touchless room booking system and flexible furniture, could be adapted quickly to the new requirement, making it easier to let employees return to work safely.

As adaptable as this workplace is today, the Sevenum office was designed to be flexible and resilient to support employee wellbeing and collaboration. Click [here](#) to learn more about well-being at work and how space impacts people.