

Where the world offsets risks

Probably the world's oldest and best known specialist insurance market, Lloyd's of London has long believed in using its offices as a vibrant and highly visible expression of its brand ethos. When planning its entry into the rapidly expanding China market, Lloyd's commissioned M Moser Associates to create a workspace that would dramatize its centuries-old reputation for integrity and innovation.



The embodiment of 300 years of “constant originality”

Since its beginning more than three centuries ago in a London coffee house, Lloyd's is a highly distinctive establishment, known for its traditions, its unique way of doing business, and its ability to meet highly specialised insurance requirements. Lloyd's is also renowned for its strong sense of ethicality and fairness. Following the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, Lloyd's won many admirers for its decision to “pay all policyholders in full irrespective of the terms of their policies”.

Lloyd's first genuine standalone presence in Asia and largest office outside London, the new Shanghai flagship premises will play a vital role in underlining Lloyd's commitment to both China and the region as a whole. In setting up operations in Shanghai, Lloyd's felt it vital to reiterate its unrivalled reputation for expertise and intuition in each individual element of the finished design.

An environment totally free from clutter

Focused on delivering an uncluttered workspace of the utmost transparency and simplicity, the M Moser team worked with their Lloyd's counterparts at every stage of the design and construction process. The biggest challenge facing the design team was the total concealment of the sophisticated communication technologies that are so essential for Lloyd's way of doing business.

In designing a genuinely paper-free office, M Moser Technology, the in-house engineering team, had to secrete all wiring and AV equipment inside walls and floors. The state-of-the-art PC in the office's conference room, for example, is located





under the carpeting. In order to enable ease of central command, the Technology team implemented a handheld touch-screen control panel which operates everything from the drawing of curtains to laptop connections. The impressive end result is a minimalist environment whose Spartan simplicity perfectly mirrors the open and transparent manner in which Lloyd's and its underwriters manage risk.

Individual workspaces where design seems to disappear

As in Lloyd's world-renowned London HQ, the syndication area is the heart of activity at Lloyd's Shanghai. High levels of both privacy and autonomy were created, by providing an independent workspace for each underwriting syndicate. The ingenious use of transparent, semi-closed glass partitions to link syndicates to both their neighbors and the outside world helped to add to the overall feeling of uniformity. Visual depth and the seamless flow of information within the office were further enhanced by the ground-breaking use of a large, window-sided lounge.

To walk around the finished Lloyd's Shanghai office is to experience understated elegance at every twist and turn. Unconstrained by convention, this is a workspace that eagerly relishes the challenge of taking traditional values into a dynamic new era.

A seamless integration of past, present and future

The second challenge M Moser faced was demonstrating Lloyd's commitment to China in a credible yet understated way. Rather than use super-graphics which would have detracted from the office's overall simplicity, the team elected to use the spectacular views of Shanghai available through its 33rd floor windows of the very prestigious Azia Building. The result is simply sensational: staff and visitors find themselves surrounded by a constantly shifting "living wallpaper" that changes as the city itself changes.

The large-format windows dramatize the way in which the sun interacts with furniture and the people who work inside the office and emphasizes Lloyd's commitment to transparency. There are no doors or non-essential elements here to hinder movement or the interplay of shadows and reflections. The tranquil ambience speaks volumes about the confident, unfussy professionalism clients in Shanghai can expect from Lloyd's. The views over "The Bund" and the "Pearl Tower" represent Shanghai's past and present; Lloyd's becomes the gateway to the city's future. Ultimately this seamless blending of one of the world's most prestigious brands with one of the world's most futuristic cities is the latest example of how Lloyd's is delivering on its promise of constant originality. ■



For further information, www.mmoser.com.

GLOBAL

E: Enquiry@mmoser.com | Communications@mmoser.com
W: www.mmoser.com

