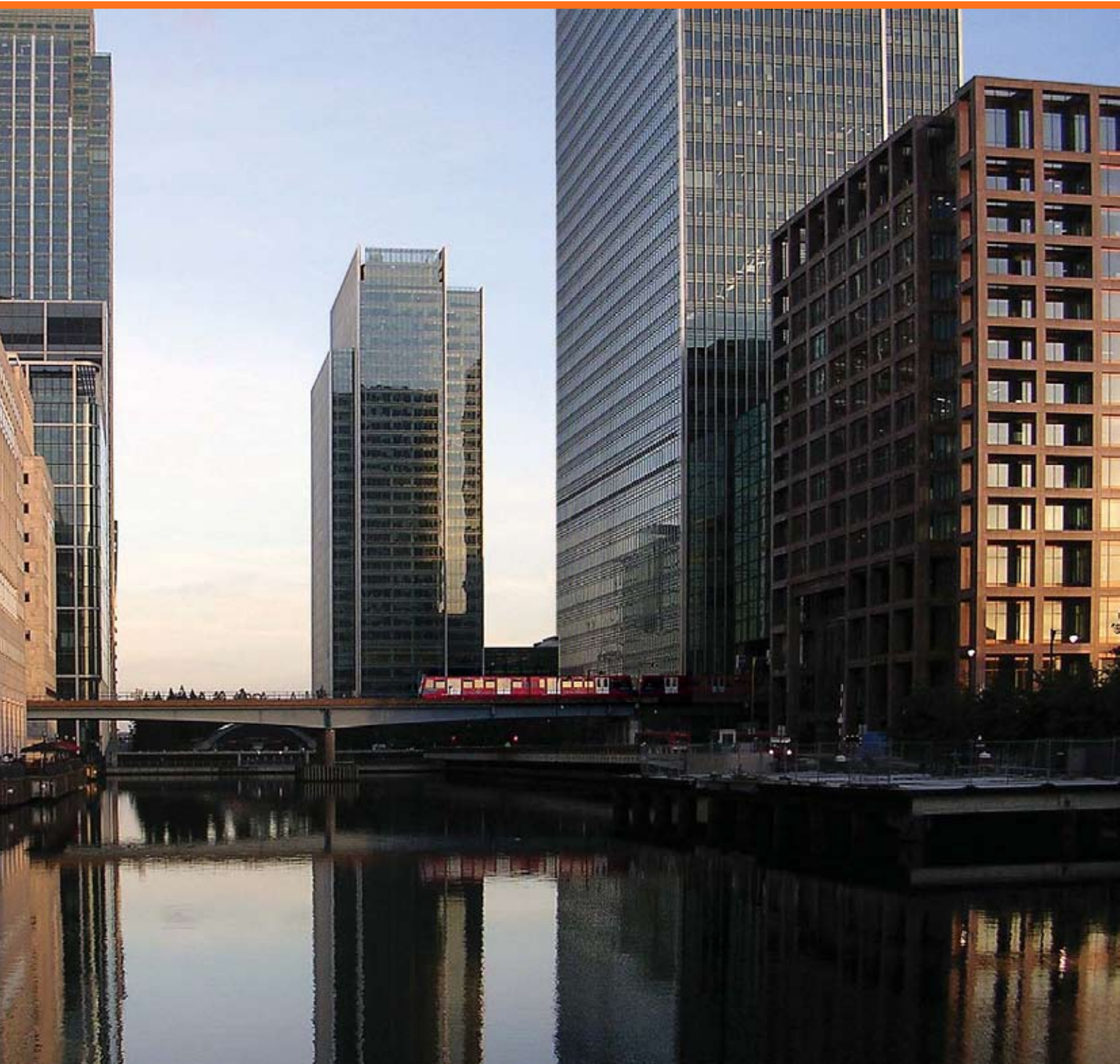


Setting-up across the Pond

Increased deregulation of UK financial markets has seen many companies setting-up in London. In this article, we examine ways in which financial companies which do not have the necessary London resources can streamline the pin-pointing and fitting out of new premises in and around the UK capital.





“ Like all major strategic decisions, setting-up operations in London is a step that involves much careful consideration. The fact that key decision makers cannot be on hand to oversee every step of a **office design and delivery** project may make such moves seem even more daunting. Help can come from a specialist whose expertise spans everything from building analysis, design, planning and project management to final delivery thus eliminating many of the potential headaches involved. ”

If you are planning to set-up or redesign an office in the UK or Europe, here are some key issues your company will probably need to address:

Pre-Lease Checklist:

- How do we go about comparing alternative buildings for appropriateness and suitability?
- What are the respective advantages of historic and contemporary buildings?
- What facilities does the rentable area include? How will this impact our space requirements?
- What are the local health and safety regulations regarding disabled people and how will they affect our project?
- How can we identify the right location and understand whether an existing building will meet our specific technical needs?
- What technical or design information will we need to provide to the landlord before he'll commit to the lease?

Risk, Budget and Schedule:

- Setting-up new operations, especially across continents, can be a major risk. How can we mitigate the risk involved in such a move?
- How do we go about deciding upon a budget for our project?
- How can we estimate the overall length of time the relocation or refurbishment will take?

Technology Requirements:

- Trading Floors are essential to our business. How can we make sure that our Trading Floor meets our organizational benchmarks in terms of functionality and reliability?
- How quickly can we get our telecommunications systems up and running?

Design and Delivery Requirements:

- How can we be sure that the design will be applied correctly during construction?
- How can we be sure that the quality of the delivery is up to our standards?

The following pages discuss these points in more detail, and will reveal insights into how client's needs are being addressed to achieve the highest quality within specific budgets. Value is also created through integrated services and the subsequent reduction of a clients' need for involvement during the delivery process. Faster overall project delivery is achieved and risk mitigated. Objective case studies have been used to illustrate the conclusions reached.





Identifying the Right Building

The convenience or prestigiousness of address, its external views and styling, internal ambience and technical considerations such as M&E provisions can all add greatly to a building's desirability. These factors provide vital indicators as to how effectively the various essential elements can be combined during the interior design phase.

A major mainstay of the US reinsurance industry recently decided to launch a new European flagship operation in London. The company's ultimate aim was to generate optimum awareness of its arrival and intention to make a lasting impression in Europe.

MMoser Associates prepared a strategic pre-lease study which set the tone for the entire project. Four City buildings were short listed and

compared using a score sheet devised to incorporate client preferences. As openness and fluidity of space had been highlighted as major workspace themes in the client's brief, buildings with high ceilings and natural lighting scored higher marks. The client's heavy reliance on comprehensive and easily accessible computerized records meant that the two buildings which came pre-equipped with emergency generators also received more favorable ratings.

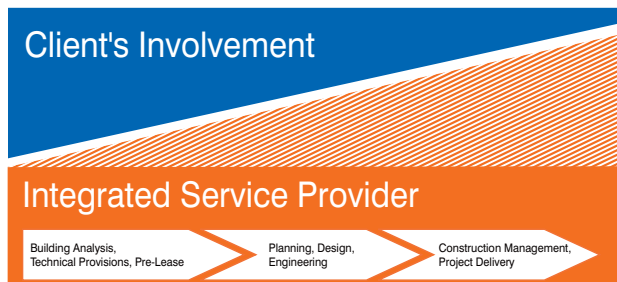
A building that offered both high ceilings and a reliable source of back up power was recommended which ensured that the premises were able to satisfy the client's needs. Ultimately, working with an experienced, on-the-ground London partner greatly simplified the client's final choice of new premises.

Design-Manage-Deliver your Project

How Integrated Design and Delivery Solutions help to offset risk and help you to concentrate on your business

The delivery of top quality interiors to often tight time and budget limitations means that the client people running the project need to be prepared to face high risk levels and numerous issues.

M Moser's Design-Manage-Deliver approach was conceived to mitigate the client's risk, enhance overall project quality and reduce project related headaches by providing an integrated end-to-end solution. This special variant of Design-Led, Design-and-Build integrates all elements of the project delivery into a single point of accountability and assumes full responsibility for all elements in the project delivery process, from



initial building analysis and strategic planning right through to design and construction.

The Various stages are executed by experienced professionals who work within one project team. At every step of the way, the workplace specialist's design teams will work closely with the client to oversee concept design, engineering, building services and cost management. Such a seamless, systematic approach is of enormous benefit for clients, helping them to concentrate on their day-to-day business rather than the intricacies involved in finding, designing and moving to new premises.

Ultimately, this approach fully mitigates the client's risk. Issues such as "buck-passing" between contractors and inconsistent quality are reduced to the minimum.

Also, full compliance with all necessary building regulations and Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) guidelines when overseeing procurement, production design, construction and fit-out are ensured. A specialist team to successfully migrate IT equipment is part of the Design-Manage-Deliver approach, as well as full project management, warranty and supervision of the actual office move itself, thereby providing a genuinely end-to-end solution.

Minimizing Disruptions during Refurbishment

A rapidly expanding global private equity specialist recently reaped the rewards of an holistic approach when expanding and refurbishing their existing London premises. The client had outgrown its 6th floor home and had annexed supplementary space three floors below. The project was awarded on the basis that the client's staff would continue to work normally while the new design took shape.

M Moser Associates handled the refurbishment and integrated all aspects of the overall design, project management, planning and even the actual construction itself within a single team. Once work on the newly acquired - and still empty - 3rd floor unit had been successfully completed, refurbishment of the client's existing - and still very much occupied - 6th floor office unit began. To this end the area of work was sealed off to staff and noisy works were carried out 'out of hours'.



Ensuring a Reliable, Flexible and Ergonomic Trading Environment

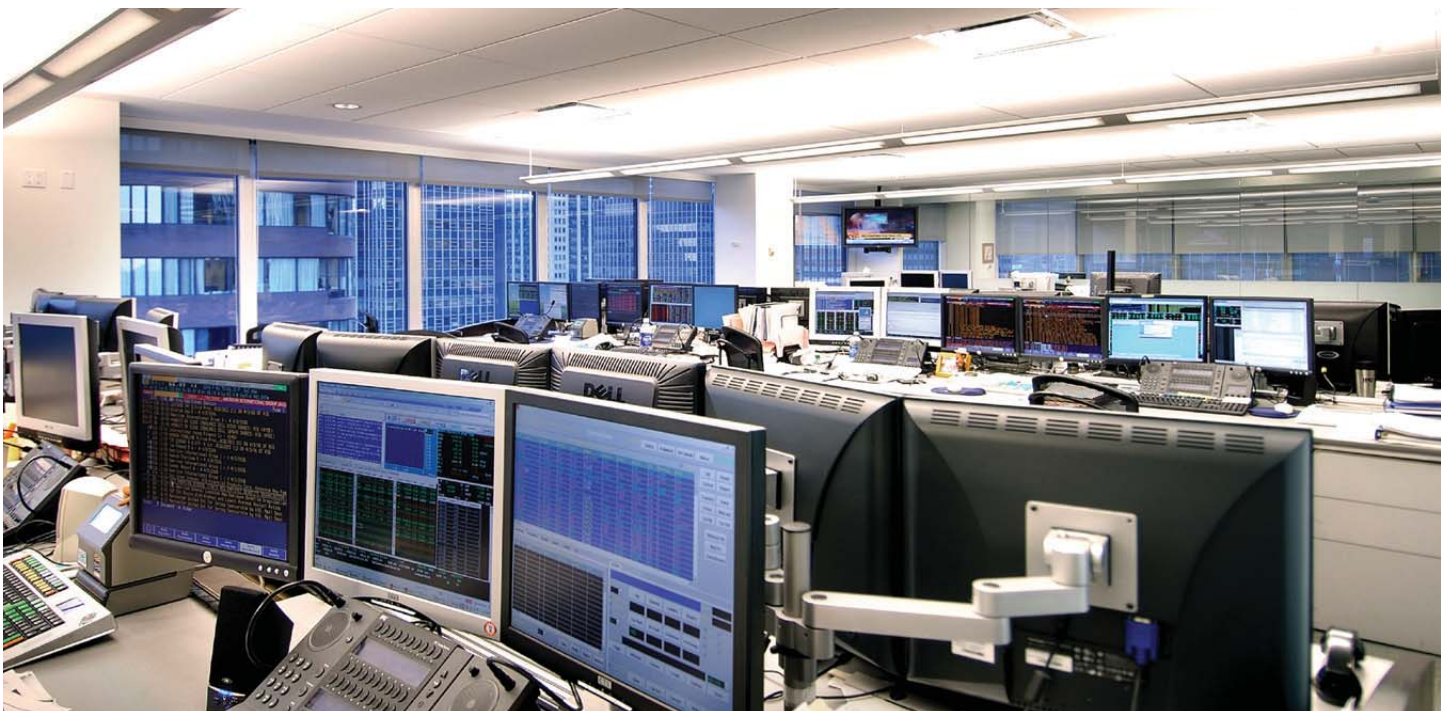
The integration of design and technology is crucial to delivering the right quality of trading floor. In such high-risk and high-density environments, even a minor error can lead to heavy losses. Planning, design and technology must all combine seamlessly together, to ensure that the end result will not be compromised.

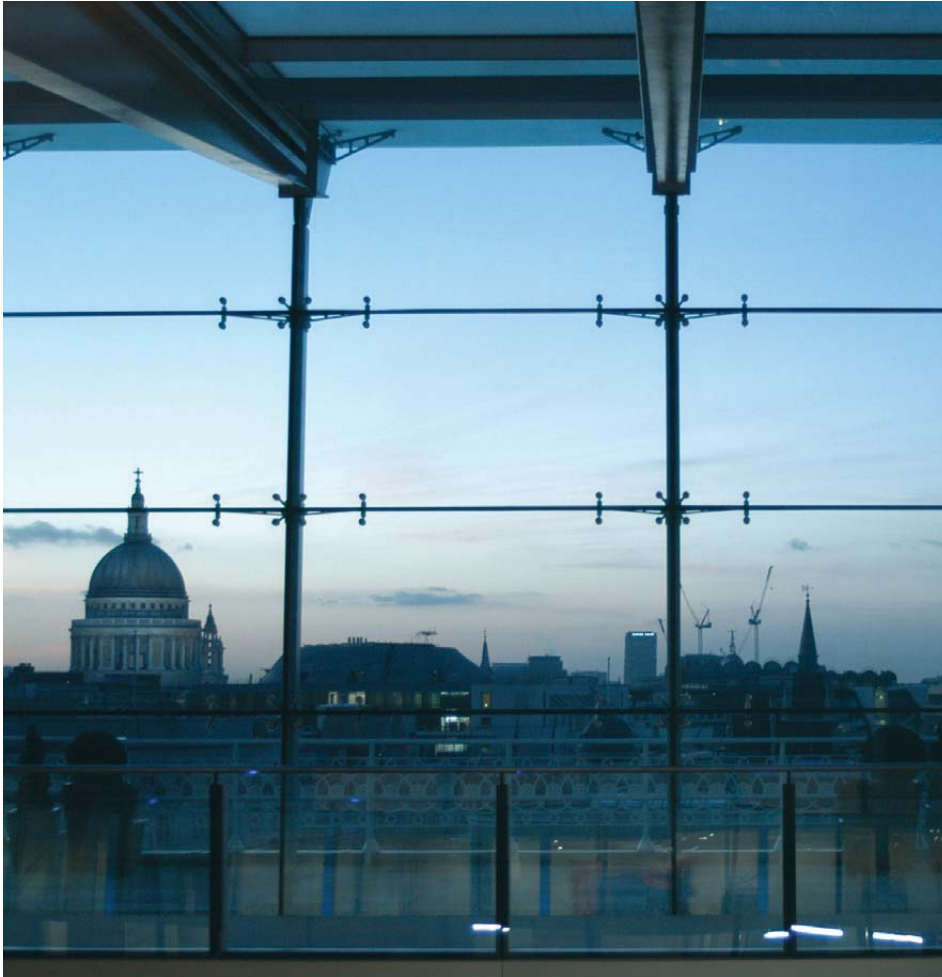
From a design perspective, planners must cater for the enormous potential variation in scale involved in a trading environment, where even small organizations can become big in next to no time. The need to urgently adapt teams and workstations to evolving markets means that workplaces must also incorporate a high level of flexibility. Such flexibility will enable fast and easy reconfigurations of teams in line with rapidly evolving market dynamics. Another issue trading organizations must address at the design stage is that of an existing infrastructure's ability to be upgraded to incorporate future technological enhancements that will prolong the life of the design solution.

From a technological and engineering perspective, business continuity in the dealing room is the major consideration. As a fundamental requirement on all trading floors, it can include a reliable Disaster Recovery site situated away

from the office location, providing 100% availability and fast recovery from outages. There are normally only two reasons why such outages occur – 9/11 – type disasters, or the failure of existing installations. While force majeure incidents are obviously outside any organization's control, Engineers and Designers can dramatically enhance building and infrastructure reliance. Ultimately, two environments need to be secured: the maintaining of business and trade within the office environment, and the securing of support and data within the Data Center. The risk of the current on-site installation's failure is greatly reduced by ensuring an uninterrupted power supply, the proper cooling of datacenters and trading desks, and the life safety systems such as fire protection.

An Integrated Solution: While Design and Planning deals with "softer" issues such as workplace-related scalability, flexibility and upgradeability, technology must be included in this scenario in order to guarantee business continuity and performance. With holistically integrated design and engineering expertise, organizations such as hedge funds and investment banks can ensure they enjoy the best solution delivered via a dedicated team which merges client requirements into a single concept.





What to look for in an advisor who provides corporate office solutions:

- Provides end-to-end service under one roof
- Has an in-house team of Interior Architects, Engineers, Strategic Planners, Project and Construction Managers
- Works closely with client teams to ensure all goals are met
- Eliminates disputes between consultants and contractors
- Accepts 100% risk for delivering the expected outcome
- Reconciles cost with design and construction options at an early phase
- Integrates Mechanical and Electrical Engineering requirements within the total design
- Accelerates the delivery of inspired office design solutions

Smoothing the Transition from the US to London

US-based organizations who are considering London as a new or second business base will enjoy still more advantages when partnering with a workplace advisor who has offices in both locations. The specialist's London office should be able to offer both a demonstrable track record in project delivery and an in-depth knowledge of the city's building infrastructure. The advisor's New York office, meanwhile, should be able to complement these strengths by providing an excellent understanding of – and a direct point of contact for the US client. Such close co-operation will result in the creation of a significantly stronger link across the Atlantic.

The illustration of a leading US-based private equity firm who commissioned M Moser Associates to deliver the right office design in the right space is a classic case in point. Anticipating a steady growth in leveraged finance markets, the company seized the opportunity to upgrade their investment activities by establishing an on-the-ground presence in London.

M Moser's New York team ensured that the US client's program was clearly understood and conveyed to the London team and that project developments in London were similarly conveyed to the US client.

Key project responsibilities included building analysis, geographical analysis, benchmarking of space and facilities usage and ensuring compliance with technical requirements. In addition to conveying the right vision and value messages to clients and staff, the finished design also had to accommodate sufficient flexibility for future expansion.

As a result, the finished project, subtly echoing the new office's setting close to a park, was a fresh, simple, uncluttered and tranquil working environment which brought the outside in. The client's CEO subsequently wrote: "Virtually every visitor we have had recently has commented on how great the space looks. Gratifyingly, we also have detected some noticeable envy from our partners in New York!" ■

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Cover Photography by David Hendrickx