

How Workplace Design Helped La-Z-Boy Boost Employee Engagement

The name La-Z-Boy is synonymous with comfort. The Monroe, Michigan-based company has been bringing relaxing settings into homes since 1927. Fast-forward 90 years and you'll find a company with a worldwide reach, more than \$1 billion in revenue, and a portfolio stretching well-beyond the iconic recliner.

Leadership recognized the need for an extensive public makeover. It turned out their well-known brand image still meant recliners to most customers even though the recliner was no longer their largest line. While La-Z-Boy worked on its brand identity and updated stores, it also turned its attention to its headquarters.

The building just south of Detroit went back to the company's founding days. In addition to feeling dated, it didn't support the way people work today. The environment didn't deliver what people needed: open communication and collaboration, and it took away from La-Z-Boy's efforts to attract and retain employees while boosting [employee engagement](#).

Read how a new [workplace design](#) helped change La-Z-Boy culture from the inside out.

THE NEW LA-Z-BOY

The new La-Z-Boy headquarters gives people who work there more choice and control over how and where they get their work done. People have a range of spaces to choose from depending on what they need to get done each day. The new headquarters includes: unassigned individual desks, a wide variety of open and enclosed workspaces for small and large groups, a soaring central atrium, a [work café](#), and several outdoor spaces.

BY THE NUMBERS

- 200,000 square feet: The new La-Z-Boy headquarters
 - 20%: How much smaller the footprint is than La-Z-Boy's former office
 - 500: Employees who now have access to a wider range of spaces
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"We're in the home furnishings business. We wanted a residential feel to our office," says Mark Bacon, president of La-Z-Boy branded business.

La-Z-Boy's makeover is more than just an attractive, warm and welcoming space. Elements throughout the workplace are designed to help address people's physical health, provide them with a sense of purpose and belonging and enhance their ability to think and solve problems.

DRIVING CHANGE

Leadership credits the new work environment with driving important changes at La-Z-Boy: greater employee enthusiasm, more communication and more frequent collaboration. And, the new space is helping attract top-tier talent.

“Getting people to come to a small town used to be a challenge. Now, we have people saying, ‘This is an unbelievably cool office!’ ‘I want to work in this space!’ We’re attracting the rock stars to come here now,” says Susan Vanisacker, director of community relations and talent acquisition for La-Z-Boy.

To see more photos from La-Z-Boy’s makeover, read the complete [case study](#) and in [La-Z-Boy Part II](#) learn more about the company’s culture change.

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Rebecca, an Emmy-winning journalist, reports on global research impacting the places where people work, learn and heal. Over her career, Rebecca spent 17 years covering local and national news events on television and a variety of digital platforms. She directed a digital news group in Kansas City for three years before becoming news director in Grand Rapids, Michigan for more than five years. Prior to Steelcase, Rebecca worked with one of the four largest media groups in the United States to coordinate news coverage among 48 newsrooms from the east to west coast.

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