



Did you know...?

Now's the time to improve your plant life balance...

This month the seeds have been sown for more plants in the workplace. It starts with **Plant Life Balance Day** on 2 March to build recognition of all of the benefits that indoor plants bring to office workers.

This day recognises the important role that plants play in our lives with office workers being encouraged to incorporate plants into their desk space to help create harmony and promote better health and productivity.

Plants don't just bring freshness and colour to an office, but also help to elevate mood, productivity and performance while improving overall health and wellbeing.

This is reinforced by a recent Newspoll survey of office workers that showed that two thirds would prefer to work in an office that has plants. More than half the workforce surveyed felt that offices with



plants have cleaner air and that they feel more positive at work with plants around them.

One in three went so far as saying they have more energy at work when plants are around and they're certain plants help them work more productively.

Ray Borg, Regional Director **Ambius Pacific** comments that the results are not surprising. "We have been noticing the trend towards workplaces designing creative plantscaping into corporate fit out for some time now, as employers become more informed about the health and wellness benefits that indoor plants bring to workplace productivity."

"New plant selections and arrangements, as well as an emphasis on aesthetics in container design and innovative planting arrangements such as green walls, have overcome some of the earlier, traditional

barriers for some employers. Recent studies have also proven the emotional and physical well-being associated with workplace greenery"; said Mr. Borg.

Professor Margaret Burchett and her colleagues at the University of Technology Sydney, Australia have measured how effective plants are at removing pollutants from the air and give foliage "two green thumbs up".

"Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) emitted from plastic or synthetic materials in office furniture, fittings, computers and printers can cause headaches, loss of concentration and eye, nose and throat problems, while carbon dioxide (CO₂) has been linked to drowsiness," Professor Burchett said.

"Our research has proved that office plants can reduce VOCs by 80% and CO₂ by up to 25%, so the health benefits are significant".



Greener on the inside



Employers take note. Cleaner air leads to happier workers with clearer thinking, promoting greater productivity and efficiency. Office plants can cut down staff sick leave by up to 60%.

Professor Burchett said a leafy office relieves stress and reduces negative mood states by up to 60% and just one plant is enough to make a positive difference in the workplace.

Summary of the recent Plants in Office Newspann survey findings:

- About 400 office workers were surveyed in an online Newspann survey
- Among office workers surveyed, there is an overwhelming positive sentiment towards the benefits of having plants in the office.
- Eight in ten office workers believe plants make the office look much better. Only 3% disagree.

- 74% agree that plants give the office a more relaxed feel
- 65% agree that plants make the office feel more natural
- 64% say they would prefer to work in an office that has plants.
- More than half of office workers agree that offices generally don't have enough plants in them, that offices with plants have cleaner air and that they feel more positive at work with plants around them.
- Around one in three go so far as saying that they have more energy at work when they have plants around, that plants help them work more productively and that they'd even like to choose the types of plants they have at work.
- Results across different groups were fairly similar, with women and Gen Y a little more likely to have a positive attitude towards plants.

Want to get more Plant Life Balance – become a fan on facebook!

The Nursery and Garden Industry Association (NGIA) has responded to the recent Newspann survey on workplace plants, by creating a new facebook page launched on Plant Life Balance Day, March 2nd 2011.

Ideas for top performing workplace plants, how to keep them alive, games, and a host of relevant information can be found on a new fan page at: www.facebook.com/plantlifebalance



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