



Did you know...

Noisy open plan office? Reduce the noise with plants.

Most of us these days work in open spaces divided with partitions or ranks of filing cabinets. Few would deny that they are usually very noisy places. The hum of computers, the ringing of telephones and the buzz of conversation all add up to a surprisingly noisy environment. Ambius Regional Director for the Asia Pacific Region, Ray Borg recommends some practical, fresh and especially green ways to help reduce the noise in busy offices.

"To start with, workplaces should consider the use of plant screens and plants grouped together as barrier arrangements to help reduce the noise. The tops of filing cabinets can also be used to place plants. Small bushy plants in narrow troughs take up little space, but they can still be beneficial to help reduce noise," suggests Ray.

"Offices that use screen plants instead of office partitions tell us that aside from



helping to reduce noise, they have a number of other psychological benefits – helping to reduce stress and improve the well being of office workers".

This is backed up by research from the US, the Netherlands and the UK that has shown positive effects in reducing stress and sickness absence, increasing productivity and improving well-being, particularly in office environments where people are using computers.

A study at Surrey University in the UK¹ showed that not only were stress levels lower in a planted office, people recovered from stress more quickly than those in the unplanted office. The study authors also reported that where the task was less complex, even boring, the soothing effects of plants may be even more noticeable.

Ray offers noise sensitive workers his top tips for making open plan a more productive space:

- Use large plant containers. These have a greater area of top dressing, which will have a significant effect on noise reduction, so it follows that it may also make a larger impact on the room acoustics.
- Experiments have shown that arrangements of different plants in groups appear to work better than individual plants. Several small arrangements are better than one big one.
- Positioning several arrangements around a space works better than concentrating the plants in one location. In this way the surface area of the plants exposed to noise may be maximised and individual work areas in an office space will all benefit from a localised effect.

Interested in this area? For more information ask your **Ambius Interior Plantscape Technician** for our free information sheet on **space management with indoor plants**, or go to our websites.

¹ "The effect of interior planting on stress", Ms Helen Russell, University of Surrey, UK





Greener on the inside



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- Edges and corners are better than the centre. Plants placed near the edges and corners of a space are better than plants in the middle. This is because sound is reflected from the walls straight into the foliage.
- Troughs and barrier planters should be placed a few centimetres away from the wall, so that they can absorb reflected sound from the wall as well as sound reaching them directly.
- Angling them slightly away from being parallel with the wall will also help to disperse reflected sound.
- Leave it to the experts – rather than getting office workers to bring in their own plants that are heavy, hard to move and too easy to forget... leave it to the experts. **Ambius** will recommend the right type of plant for your conditions, will install them and maintain them so they stay healthy and help improve the total workplace environment.

New 'designer' plants from Ambius

Ambius offer a stunning new range of indoor plants that proudly flaunt their funky lines and beautiful colour and texture. One of the hottest new "designer" plants at the moment, is called *Sansevieria cylindrica*. These are from the same family of plants as the well known "Mother-in-law's tongue" but offer a fun, new look...

These stunning, new plants, when combined with an eye-catching container such as the **Ambius** Delta, will lift interior environments and add

a splash of colour and drama, without breaking the budget. They make excellent reception displays – one is all you need for people to notice!

These plants are suitable for all interior applications including offices, shopping plazas, cafes and restaurants. And remember, plants don't just look good, they're good for the interior environment as well and will help make you greener on the inside...

Call now for a quote for one of these in your work space or reception.



Ask the Plant Guru...

Top tips

- You can still have plants where space is at a premium: some of the latest designs use tall containers to show off the plants whilst not using much floor space.



- In research overseas, office workers have shown they prefer indoor plants to other forms of ornamentation in their offices and that they perceive an indoor space as more welcoming, cheerful, relaxing and comfortable when surrounded by plants. Ask your **Ambius** Interior Plantscape Technician for ideas for sprucing up your space!
- Don't forget your plants at home – regularly prune your indoor plants at home to stop them becoming 'leggy'. Once they've lost the foliage on their lower branches it is very difficult to get it to return.

For more information contact **Ambius**:

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