

Wilson Elser

CLIENT STORY

Legal
Las Vegas, NV



14%

Real estate can be a firm's highest expense after salaries, representing 4% to 14% of gross revenue. Implementing hoteling areas into the office layout can help ensure efficient use of the space.¹

The goal of hoteling is to maximize physical space and allow for more flexibility in how people work and where they work through rightsized spaces and integrated technology.

When a company has several locations across the country or globe, standardizing the look through a pre-selected choice of furniture can help not only minimize costs, but relay a strong sense of brand no matter which office someone walks into. However, giving each location the freedom to use the standardized offerings in creative ways that speaks to their own employees and locale can expand that brand image into something truly unique.



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SHERRI THOME

REGIONAL MANAGING
PARTNER, WILSON ELSER



For law firm Wilson Elser, each of their United States-based offices recently underwent redesigns to address the new ways of working. "It started with our Philadelphia office, which was our first to transition to smaller, one-size offices for all attorneys," said R. Douglas Noah, Managing Partner for Wilson Elser. "Our Atlanta office was similar. The Washington, D.C. office combines one-size offices, open workspaces, and micro-offices for attorneys—with everyone having an assigned workspace."

But when given the opportunity, the Las Vegas office decided to push the envelope further under the guide of Sherri Thome, Regional Managing Partner for the Las Vegas Office of Wilson Elser. "Las Vegas is the extreme end of the spectrum," continued Noah, "with a variety of alternative workspace options and with no attorney-assigned stations."

For Thome, breaking from the norm began with understanding how change is happening in the way people are working.

"We wanted to think about what our needs will be in the future," explained Thome. "How will people want to work?"

She continued: "It used to be that legal offices reflected where they believed they were. It was all about having an office, and then having a bigger office as you progress. We worked long hours and we worked them in the office. People always wanted to know whether you were in the office. But today, people want something different. They don't want to spend all that time in the office. They want to be able to do their work from different places."

The main concept for the Las Vegas office centered around removing any individual offices or workspaces. Instead, employees use a hoteling program that allows them to choose the space they would like to work for the day, depending on their workload. "We have about 30 lawyers right now in this office and 15 actual offices to use. Then there are about 22 other types of workspaces."

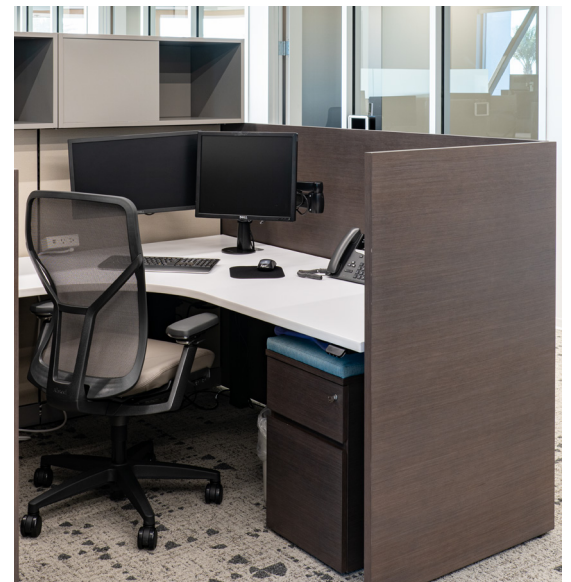
While all the desks are height-adjustable with wide tabletops, employees have a range of workplaces to choose from. They have phone booths and offices for private or small group meetings, or if they need a quiet spot to focus on solo work; lounge seating with privacy panels allow employees to work out in the open office while maintaining a feeling of seclusion; a variety of individual seats give employees a more relaxed space to work with their laptops. However, one of the most popular spots in the office has become the kitchenette that has been outfitted with bench seating and tables. This set up, Thome explained, feels very much like a library study carrel without the dividers.

With open-concept hoteling, the main concern became how to store papers and personal items. While Wilson Elser has moved towards using less paper, there are still private documents that need to be safely filed away. To handle this issue, the team looked at personal filing and locker options.

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Laura Grodoski, the Lead Interior Designer from Nelson who worked on the project, said, "Sherri had mentioned looking at unique solutions to really maximize the growth in the real estate that they have in the Las Vegas location. We hadn't done hoteling in a law firm yet, so we really worked with Wilson Elser to understand what they needed in their space. What do employees need to have with them? How will we store that? Then we worked with Allsteel and Gunlocke to come up with the right type of storage solutions."

By providing employees with their own personal lockers and filing cabinets that can be safely locked, the concern of personal storage became a simple solution.

A vital aspect in creating a positive reaction to the Las Vegas location was educating employees that their success is not contingent upon the size and location of a personal office. Thome's leadership made that a reality.

PROJECT DETAILS

Featured Location

Las Vegas, NV
10,700 sq. ft.
45 Employees

Partnerships

Henricksen
Nelson Worldwide
CBRE Group
Burke Construction

"The process involved showing employees the space as it was being designed and that they would still have ample space," explained Thome. "We're going to create a beautiful, open, energetic space for you to be in. People were hesitant because they were so used to equating their status in the firm or their own status as a lawyer with their space. They had to get used to the fact that it's not about the [private] office; it's about the work and about servicing the clients by doing great work. The actual office space doesn't make you a good lawyer."

The hard efforts paid off with the Las Vegas team taking to the new hoteling system. By doing so, not only are employees more empowered to understand that their work is what matters most, but they have been able to maximize the use of a smaller footprint, saving the office money and creating better rapport between employees.

PRODUCT SOLUTIONS

Seating

Acuity®, Evo™, Retreat™, Gunlocke Tia™

Workspaces

Stride®, Gallery Panels,
Gunlocke Silea™

Tables

Altitude®, Gunlocke Briefing™

Storage

Essentials™, Involve®,
Gunlocke Briefing™, Gunlocke Silea™



¹ www.law360.com