

Evolution of the office

Preparations are all already underway to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the introduction of the cubicle into the American office scene. The man called the father of the cubicle — Bob — was asked to characterize the legacy of his brainchild and he said, “It seemed like a good idea at the time.”

The week-long festivities which some are calling the “Super Bowl of Office Furniture” will be held in Toledo, Ohio, which has the largest concentration of Red Roof Inns in the nation. Events will include workshops on cube art, hospitality cubes, a tradeshow showing the latest cubicle designs with a sneak preview of the industry’s new experimental models. The week ends with a gala dinner/dance hosted by once-good-golfer David Duval.

Not everyone is happy with the cubicle, though, and the discontent has sparked a revolution among office thought leaders promoting fresh ideas, such as: (a) telecommuting, the “second office”; (b) sprawling out your papers and laptop and muffin with bits of cream cheese on your table while talking annoyingly loud on your cell phone in a Starbucks, the “third office”; and now (3) the “fourth office,” TBD.

The “fourth office”

Just what the hell is it? It’s just out of our reach, but visionaries have theories as to how the “fourth” will manifest itself.

“I see it as an office of the mind,” explains Dart Maxn, head curator of miscellaneous things at Milan’s Museum of Heavy Industrial Objects. “No paper, no calendars, no nothing! You carry everything around in your head. If it’s important you will remember it; if not, then you won’t remember it. It’s nature’s perfect system of filtering and prioritization.”

“For instance, if you miss an important meeting with your top client, then you won’t get the sale. So in the *fourth*, companies will have smaller revenues but there will be no need for wastebaskets.”

One radical idea has been developed by Jason Calpt, parking lot security guard at a Fortune 500 corporation, in charge of fixing the lift-gates when they break.

“It dawned on me one day that all those cars in the corporate parking lot were sitting empty all day and then *whammo*, it came to me: every car in the lot is an office! Think about it. You’ve got space, privacy, HVAC, tunes, and adjustable leather seats.”



Make a statement where you work by being that person always first to arrive and last to leave the office.

Tickets to the 40th anniversary of the cubicle will be available soon.