



## PLANET architects

Taking New Working Environments to the next level: PLANET architects implement an overall architectural, design, & interior design concept for the company Dynatrace

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## PLANET architects meets Dynatrace – the start of a design process

In 2016, Gerhard Abel of the Vienna architectural office PLANET architects received a call from the globally active IT company Dynatrace: Dynatrace was looking for the support of an architectural office, which would rapidly develop an architectural concept and, above all, an interior design solution for its Development Headquarters in Linz that was based on the needs of its employees. This marked the start of an intense, cooperative process.

The outcome of this process is a fascinating seven-story spatial landscape, a place of transparency and colors and of zones for exchange and communication, but also of retreat and concentration. A dynamic and inspiring place for 500 people from around the globe; a multicultural, multifunctional working cosmos.

“This project offered us an opportunity to do what we like doing best: developing an overall concept: from the design of the building via the office concept, the entire interior, and the furniture design, to the guidance system and the graphics. We see ourselves as facilitators, who make it possible to create bespoke spaces; but we also always consider options for potential future changes.” *PLANET architects*

“Communication and cooperation are key criteria for success in our sector. So it was obvious that these should also be taken into account in any design.”

*Dynatrace-Gründer und CTO Bernd Greifeneder*

In addition to the Dynatrace Development Headquarters in Linz, PLANET architects have also supported the company in the conception and design of its facilities in Klagenfurt, Graz, and Hagenberg as well as Barcelona (Spain) and Gdansk (Poland). The team from PLANET architects is currently working on further development offices in Barcelona, Gdansk, and Vienna. The headquarters of Dynatrace are located in Boston, USA.

# Needs and challenges – the office as a place of communication

The fascinating challenge in developing this overall project for Dynatrace was not just the development of the architecture of the building but, in particular, the planning of every aspect of the interior, including the guidance systems and the settings for all the dynamic interactions and encounters between employees. Because even before “New Working Environments” became a subject of major studies it was already clear: We need spatial settings that facilitate and support **movement, exchange, and communication** and provide an appropriate environment for creative processes.

Dynatrace, which is the global market leader in the area of ‘software intelligence’ and reported a turnover of 545.8 million US dollars in the last financial year, employs highly-specialized software developers in its Development Headquarters in Linz, who should be able to navigate smoothly between concentrated work, creative exchange, and periods of quiet. However, the spaces and zones must function for every team. The client’s core demand was that we should see the office as a place of communication.

*„It was our wish that places of concentration and interaction should combine perfectly in order to offer our employees optimal working conditions. For the office is ultimately a social place, in which unplanned encounters and the smooth flow of information should be possible on a daily basis.“ Bernd Greifeneder, Founder and CTO*

The key challenge faced by PLANET architects was to create intelligent spaces, in which communication and team and individual work can all take place in an efficient and networked manner. It was also clear from the very start that the workplace should be designed to encourage **both concentration and interaction** – a daily rhythm in which creative retreat alternates with productive encounters. At the same time, it was essential to design offices that authentically reflect the corporate culture of Dynatrace.

In addition to this, Dynatrace – like many other companies – faces the challenge of providing attractive workplaces that meet the high expectations of its knowledge workers and inspire and encourage them to make a long-term commitment to the company.

For PLANET architects, listening is a key success factor:

*“The most important thing is to listen carefully to the client: What are their wishes and ideas? The next step is the implementation phase, which is constantly accompanied by feedback loops. For me, design is often comparable with an evolutionary process. And how does evolution work? Through variation and selection. The most suitable answer to any challenge is one that brings further evolution. The most important message is: Address the entire process.”*

This is how the vision of a vertical campus rapidly emerged as the basis for shaping Dynatrace’s new working environment:

*“We had visions of miniature urban landscapes: with different zones and areas, spaces and places, which provide the right surroundings for working and exchanging, creativity or retreat.”*

# The project in detail – the creation of a vertical campus

The Development Headquarters of Dynatrace, which overlooks the Donaulände on the waterfront in Linz, can be seen from far and wide: While the exterior of the generously organic and elegantly L-shaped building is somewhat reserved, the interior reveals an **enormous range of spaces, colors, functions, and lighting moods**. The lobby opens onto a bright, spacious stairwell that reaches to the roof. This impressive central circulation is surrounded on every floor by a variety of semi-open spaces consisting of rooms for team sessions and meeting zones and niches around which the offices and the developer teams are arranged, many of which enjoy spectacular views across the city. **A finely-tuned color scheme and guidance system provides orientation within this huge interior space.**

*“During the design process, we developed a vision not of a typical office building, but of a vertical campus, whose rich variety of spaces and uses recall a compact, well-organized urban district.”*

## The employees as co-designers

It was clear from the very start that the employees of Dynatrace not only could, but also should make known their wishes and ideas during the design of their office spaces. PLANET architects established small units with representatives of every department in order to be able to better align the spatial concepts with their specific needs. This made it possible to generate shared **spatial concepts for every target group** that respond to the needs of not only the developers, but also the product managers and the marketing and human resources departments, etc.

The feedback process consisted of multiple loops and was never regarded as being finished.

*“Rather than ending with the occupation of the building, this fine-tuning is a long-term interaction between designers and users. The key thing about this design process was to identify future needs and provide Dynatrace with functional spaces that have the maximum possible adaptability.”*

## A playful spatial dramaturgy for interaction and concentration

On all seven stories, fixed workplaces meet open communication zones; **spaces and uses merge together playfully**. A wide range of functions combine with such diverse atmospheres as small seating niches, a working café, smaller and larger meeting units, a spacious canteen, and open niches with special acoustic qualities. Each setting has a specific form that meets a concrete need – by supporting communication or concentration, interaction or retreat. **Mobile walls and the various** transparent solutions offered by glass partitions enhance the range of spatial options for the employees.

The centerpiece and the connecting element at the heart of the building is the bright, open atrium, which ensures that the lighting mood in the building changes throughout the day and connects the ground-floor hall with all the other levels. Attractive, structuring highlights define the different color schemes that characterize each story.

**A central concern during the development of the spatial dramaturgy was the design of the areas in which encounters take place:** Where should the cafeteria be located in order to function as a meeting place for as many people as possible? How should this vertical campus be organized in order to subtly and simply encourage both concentration and interaction?

*“Urban districts vary, each works according to a different set of rules and has its own aura – just like different corporate cultures. We went to great lengths to design these meeting zones in such a way that they work as places for encounters and exchange. Rather than little tea kitchens on every floor, there is ONE cafeteria with a barista station at the heart of the building. The key question was: How far are you prepared to go for a good coffee?”*

### **Navigational aid: A finely-tuned guidance system**

Navigation is supported by a **color-coordinated guidance system** that works on every level of the building. The starting point of this color scheme was the design of the large wall in the central open space that connects every story. A signal color that accentuates the walls and spaces was then chosen for each of these stories. This color concept continues throughout the entire building. And PLANET architects also created a finely-tuned **language of pictograms and graphics**, which includes such elements as doorplates, pinboards, photo galleries, and large-scale science fictions (Star Wars, Star Trek,...) graphics. The result is a color-coordinated, finely detailed, and playful range of navigational options.

### **Looking to the future: The office as ‘both and’**

The starting point was quite clear: All employees have their own, fixed workplaces, but options for other ways of working should also be available. ‘Both and’ – rather than ‘either or’. This led to the creation of **variable individual and/or group workplaces that also offer employees the opportunity to have some privacy**. Calls can be taken and other work carried out undisturbed in attractive niches with excellent acoustics, while partitions can be shifted as required within the office. A top-floor library with stunning views offers an additional extra quiet zone. The large breakfast and lunch lounge that includes a community kitchen on the ground floor and the working café on the fourth floor are boldly designed and, at the same time, comfortable meeting and relaxation zones that are used intensively. In the warmer months, the terraces provide extra space for work and recreation.

*“If one is to be productive, there must be a perfect balance between concentration and interaction. Our role is to optimize the opportunity for creatively realizing the client’s wishes. In doing this, neither Dynatrace nor we want to simply follow a trend but, rather, find the right, bespoke solutions for the employees.”*

### **Acoustics & light as feel-good factors**

A central feature of the design process from the very start was the creation of optimal acoustics and lighting conditions.

One key element of all projects by PLANET architects cannot be seen: the spatial acoustics. As many studies have confirmed, this is one of the key feel-good criteria for both residential and office space. An acoustical engineer was also involved from day one of the design process for the Dynatrace Headquarters in Linz.



**An ingenious overall concept involving suspended heating/cooling/and acoustic sails, creatively designed sound-insulating acoustic panels,** and niches ensure that people feel good and can concentrate in calm surroundings. The acoustic fleece pads are made from recycled PET bottles, while the carpet tiles are also not only produced from recycled materials, but can also then be recycled again.

*"In the best-case scenario, design, technical form, and function interact productively, and this occurred here in the interior design thanks to the cooperation with the building services specialists.*

*It was this that led to the idea of the heating/cooling/acoustic sails, which replaced an often invasive air conditioning system as well as leading to fantastic acoustics."*

## **Meeting zones and oases in the office: Cooking and eating as a place for communication – A good coffee in a special setting rather than a tea kitchen on every floor**

Our client Dynatrace expressed a clear objective to the architecture team: "We want to bump into each other more often!" Or, in other words: people need places for meeting and exchanging ideas. In the context of the corporate philosophy of Dynatrace it was vital, from the beginning, to create spaces for eating together and enjoying some time after work. **The task for PLANET architects was to create attractive spaces for these established rituals.**

Hence – in an analogy with an efficiently working urban district and its public square – we created a central, generous, and inviting eating/cooking/canteen/bar area at ground floor level, which opens every morning with a large breakfast buffet and is then used throughout the day for the [canteen] lunch and short meetings or as a café-station or chill out area in the evening.

This area, with its range of blue tones, is notable for its **intelligently employed visual and color-based zoning**: Plants separate areas of seating from the **buffet and canteen zone** and long, light-colored wooden tables act as dining tables or bars depending upon their height and position. Inspired by the remark by the founder of Apple Steve Jobs, the neon message "Stay hungry" dominates the large area of blue tiles. Those who want to can also cook for themselves just round the corner – where the generous **community cooking corner** invites them to cook together. This is another example of the design philosophy of PLANET architects: We provide options and offer "both and".

The ground floor is also home to a large **gathering and presentation space**, which is directly adjacent to the lobby, whose comfortable lounge seating recalls a hotel lobby.

A further space for casual encounters is the fourth floor cafeteria – being smaller than the food lounge on the ground floor, this offers a more intimate atmosphere based on creatively integrated miniature groups of sofas and a range of types of seating.

And one can also drink one's cappuccino on the terrace next to this **cafeteria**. With its yellow and green color scheme, underlined by some cool and expansive graphic street art, this is an ideal area for a break, a casual meeting or for working on one's laptop. A barista often offers their skills with freshly-ground coffee here and in the ground-floor lounge.

*"Curiosity is unbelievably important. Here, we're not just architects or designers. We're people driven by curiosity, shaping the world around us."*

## Furniture design and finishes

The company Dynatrace is a global player that is also keen to use interior design to differentiate itself from startups. PLANET architects attached great importance to creatively shaping the interiors, but without necessarily designing “playgrounds for employees”. Hence, alongside all the creative ideas, there is also a certain sense of seriousness, which is also reflected in the choice of materials and the quality of the furnishings. This takes the form of **a collection of variably deployable furniture and building elements**, which can be combined and altered as required. The result is a surprisingly large **variety of individual working landscapes** for different situations. A wide range of functions combined with the appropriate atmosphere. However, the specific form of each setting also meets specific requirements – and thus supports communication or concentration, interaction or retreat. With the help of local crafts-based businesses as well as Spanish suppliers of glass partitions, flexible screens, and textiles, PLANET architects found partners, with whom they could implement their ideas for the design of the interiors.

*“It’s overwhelming to see how positively the employees react to the spaces, the seating areas, the lounge, the cafeteria – and fill them with life and energy!”*

## Goodies for sports fans

As many Dynatrace employees cycle to work, showers and changing rooms are situated right next to the large cycle store (which has special bicycle hangers from South Africa). The lockers are even heated in order to dry their sports gear.





## About PLANET architects / In conversation

PLANET architects has been designing buildings, spaces, and products since 2001. An interdisciplinary approach enables the heterogeneous team from PLANET architects to overcome any content-related barriers to the success of its projects.

The founders and heads of the office are Gerhard Abel and Paul Linsbauer. "Buildings or products must be created from within. On the basis of the brief – enhanced by new opportunities. The ideal form then usually emerges automatically."

### A conversation with the founders Gerhard Abel and Paul Linsbauer:

**PLANET architects can point to a long list of projects. Would you describe yourselves as architects or designers?**

**Paul:** "Curiosity is unbelievably important. Here, we're not just architects or designers. We're people driven by curiosity, shaping the world around us."

**Gerhard:** Design has always fascinated me, and I never wanted to give it up. Then, in connection with architecture, we were able to expand in the direction of exhibition, interior, and product design.

**How would you describe the way you work today?**

**Gerhard:** We believe in teamwork and an interdisciplinary approach. If we all did the same thing, how could this lead to good outcome? You need to share a lowest common denominator, which we do, but apart from this we are all very different.

**How would you describe the way you work today?**

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**How is your team structured?**

**Gerhard:** We're a heterogeneous team with a wide range of personalities and you can see this in every part of our company. Our employees have very different professional backgrounds and generally arrived at architecture or design via a roundabout route, and this interdisciplinarity runs through all our work.

**How do your designs emerge?**

**Paul:** Of course intuition is extremely important. There are things with which one doesn't need to experiment much because one knows that they work. In other areas we develop variants or work with rational criteria, but intuition always plays a major role.

**How did you approach this wide-ranging commission for the company Dynatrace?****What was particularly important to you in this project?**

It was particularly important to us to communicate as broadly as possible with our client in order to realize their needs and wishes as precisely as possible. It was fascinating to immerse ourselves in their corporate philosophy and to gradually adapt the design. The slogan "both and" rapidly became the philosophy behind this design – we wanted to offer options to the employees of Dynatrace: retreat or interaction, concentration or exchange, canteen food or community cooking, a quiet telephone niche or a large meeting room. For us, the project wasn't about establishing or following trends, but about designing a social place that meets concrete needs while also being open to future, as-yet unknown, developments and requirements.

# Facts and figures about the project

**Client:** Dynatrace

**Project:** Development Headquarters / Linz, Austria

**Building design, interior architecture, furniture design  
and guidance system:** PLANET architects

**Building design partner:** A&S Bauconsult

**General contractor:** Arge Dywidag – Porr

**Building owner:** Neunteufel GmbH, Linz.

**Project duration:** February 2017-October 2019

**Occupation by client:** November 2019

**Area:** approx. 9,500 m<sup>2</sup>

**Location:** Linz / Austria

## **Team PLANET architects:**

Gerhard Abel, Oliver Cmyral, Waltraud Ertl, Corinna Danninger,  
Christoph Kolbeck, Manuela Patka, Sonja Zlatkov

## **Dynatrace**

The software company Dynatrace was founded in Linz in 2005 and is the global market leader in the area of software intelligence. The company is able to recognize and automatically resolve problems that arise in software or IT infrastructure in real time. Dynatrace employs artificial intelligence and complete automation to ensure that software works smoothly all around the globe. In the age of digitalization, millions of people benefit from this every day: when carrying out banking operations, travelling, shopping, working on the move, or in the health sector.

Dynatrace has been listed in New York since 2019. Its headquarters are in Waltham, Massachusetts, close to Boston in the USA. The technological and creative heart of the software development activities of Dynatrace beats in Austria: Linz is home to the company's global R&D Headquarters and it has further software development offices in Hagenberg, Graz, Klagenfurt, Vienna, Barcelona, Gdansk, and Detroit. A total of more than 2,200 people work for Dynatrace worldwide, including over 550 in Austria. More than 2,300 clients around the globe, including 74 Fortune 100 companies, use Dynatrace to optimize their software. In the financial year to 2020 the company turned over 545.8 million US dollars. More at: **[www.dynatrace.com](http://www.dynatrace.com)**

## **The client Dynatrace about the project:**

*"PLANET architects took note of our needs from the very first second and understood them like no one else. We are completely overwhelmed by the result and coming to work every day is a fantastic experience that fills us with enthusiasm."*

*Veronika Leibetseder (Project Leader at Dynatrace)*

*"Outstanding work by outstanding people." Bernd Greifeneder (CTO Dynatrace)*

## **CONTACT:**

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Dynatrace  
Linz













## Dynatrace Barcelona

At the request of the team in Barcelona, PLANET architects designed an open space office that is located in the 32-story Torre Glòries, which was designed by Jean Nouvel. The client required that everything should be possible in these office spaces, from focused work to spontaneous team meetings. To this end, PLANET architects designed a range of zones: phone booths, 'dynamicals', and workstations. Fascinating graphic wall elements were created together with the street artist Aleix Gordo Hostau.





## Dynatrace Hagenberg

A key central element – a creative space with a huge 'white wall' – was designed by PLANET architects for this special Dynatrace location. Here, teams can develop concepts together. The unique feature of this: a special acoustic curtain that ensures an exclusive working atmosphere. This 'break out room' encourages focused, creative high performances, away from the limitations of everyday office work.





## Dynatrace Graz

PLANET architects also developed an interior concept that strengthens communication and cooperation between employees for this Dynatrace location. At the same time, PLANET architects designed refuges for concentrated work. Teams can get together at the central kitchen bar not only for a coffee or during the lunch break, but also for a drink and a winding-down session after work ...

