



"Our brief was to design a space where staff could hang out," says group CEO, Fraser Lamb, accompanied by the group's chief creative officer, Mick Blore. "This way people can come together, share ideas and take a break from sitting at a desk, which we feel doesn't always result in the most creative outcome." Y&R wanted a home that would impact on visitors and staff alike, a place that would be welcoming and comfortable.

The company had originally come from an office environment where individuals sat in small offices, but with the open plan office environment here, the spirit of the company seems to have been lifted even further.

Pure Deziqn, a leading Cape Town interior design company headed up by one of the founding members, Maria Cowie, was appointed to design and manage this mammoth installation.

The building existed but the interior was a completely new installation and had to represent the tenant's ideal to "resist the usual". The shell is young and only about a year old, allowing the interior to be versatile. Originally the company had been split among different addresses in the Sandton area, but as the company needed to grow together as a team, it seemed fitting to move everyone into one building to encourage interaction and stimulate collaboration.

Every relationship starts around a cup of coffee and cleverly the open atrium in the centre of the building, called "The Diner" has been scattered with tables, chairs and booths to sit in, while enjoying a cup of coffee made from fair trade African coffee beans. It is a large space, but very comforting at the same time.

"The Diner" is designed as an interactive public space, while the offices are idiosyncratic but functional. The space is quirky with oversized, custom designed elements, giving it an "Alice in Wonderland" feel.

The inspiration for this project came from a lot of brainstorming with the client, says Maria, as the group of companies wanted to be involved as much as possible by advising, rather than dictating.

"I loved this project," says Maria. "It was a complete blank canvass and every idea I brought to the client was exactly what they had envisioned for their new home."

The energy is evident in the spaces and one experiences a vibe as soon as one walks through the door. Any client would feel comfortable knowing their campaign is in the hands of these professionals and any employee could easily mistaken this as a happy home. )

## Y&R moves house

By Clare Matthes



Young & Rubicam (Y&R) Johannesburg recently took up space at the Softline building in Woodmead and gave us a tour of the company's new home.

