The New York Times Building

Overview

Goals
The New York Times Building at 620 Eighth Avenue was developed and constructed with three goals in mind:

- To enhance the way we work by creating a comfortable and efficient workspace for Times Company employees.
- To serve the Times Company’s long-term operational needs as an owner/user.
- To reflect the Company’s values and make a meaningful contribution to New York City.

The building was designed by Pritzker Prize–winning architect Renzo Piano in association with FXFOWLE Architects. The New York Times Company interior office space was designed by Gensler.

Architecture and Design
Mr. Piano was chosen by The New York Times Company and its development partner, Forest City Ratner Companies, in a competitive selection process. The owners believed that his interpretation of the program and the nature of The New York Times came closest to realizing their goals. The 52-story glass and steel structure reinforces the values of the Times Company and its culture of transparency. With floor to ceiling water-white glass windows, exposed steel columns and accents of red and marigold, the building is a fitting home for a 21st-century media company.

The New York Times Building incorporates many of the transcendental themes in Mr. Piano’s architecture—volume, views, light, respect for context, relationship to the street—with a design that is open and inviting, providing its occupants with a sense of the city around them.

The challenge of a skyscraper is reducing the heat from the sun, and the two typical methods are smaller windows or heavily coated glass, methods that, in the words of Mr. Piano, produce “selfish buildings,” where the views and light are compromised for both pedestrians looking into the building and occupants looking out. In contrast, Mr. Piano designed the building with a dramatic double-skin curtain wall with ceramic rods that act as a sun screen, and an inner wall of floor-to-ceiling, water-white glass. The New York Times Building enhances the city’s skyline by reflecting the ambient light, changing color throughout the day, and allowing the interior space to be seen from the streets below. This same dedication to transparency and animated spaces is evident in the lobby. In contrast to the typical cold, forbidding corporate lobby, Mr. Piano has opened the lobby space by spreading the elevator shafts so that one can see more than 350 feet through the space. Standing on Eighth Avenue, people will see “layers of transparency” from the hustle and bustle of the lobby through to the quiet of the interior garden to activity in TheTimesCenter auditorium.

Guided by the idea that it is important to see how the structure is constructed and held up, Mr. Piano has revealed the structural steel, beams and columns that are normally hidden from view. These structural members serve as essential elements of the design, adding visual interest to the façade and a solid counterpoint to the lightness of the ceramic rods.
Throughout the space, the consistent use of design details reinforces the deliberate use of specific shapes and materials.

Color also plays an important role throughout the space, from the marigold Marmarino (layers of Venetian plaster) walls in the public spaces and the red walls at the core of the building to the elegant cherry wood furniture and the white oak floors throughout the building.

The Times Company work space is designed to be very flexible to accommodate a rapidly changing media environment. It is a largely open plan, with lots of meeting space to encourage collaboration both within departments and across them. Stairs, located at the corners of the building, foster communication between departments and animate the building from the outside.

The ease of communication is consistent with the Times Company’s culture of collaboration and transparency. The dazzling design represents its commitment to constant innovation.

TheTimesCenter
As part of its commitment to the Times Square neighborhood that bears its name, The New York Times Company created a new state-of-the-art cultural center and performance space housed within The New York Times Building known as TheTimesCenter. Acoustically tuned and with cherry wood walls and red velvet seating for 378, TheTimesCenter is suitable for a wide variety of performances and events including lectures, small stage plays, film and video presentations, live broadcasts and music recitals. This public amenity features an abundance of natural light and rich colors and textures, making it an ideal and welcoming location for events. For more information, visit www.TheTimesCenter.com.

Innovative Use of Technology
In addition to the innovative lighting and shading systems and the other environmentally sustainable elements, the building includes many technologies that enable employees to work comfortably and efficiently in the space.

- An advanced dispatch elevator system that uses 24 passenger elevators (32 elevators total, including service) for faster, more efficient service. The passenger indicates on the touchpad in the elevator lobby to which floor he wishes to go. The elevator system directs the passenger to a particular elevator, which picks up the passenger and drops him off on the correct floor.
- Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP) telephone technology, which allows employees more options for communicating, even when away from their desks.
- Wi-Fi access throughout the Times Company space to ensure that employees can access information throughout the building (i.e., in conference rooms, colleagues’ offices or the cafeteria).
Building Art and Signage Programs
Artwork and signage selected from the vast archives of The New York Times accent the Times Company space.

- The walls are adorned with a collection of color and black-and-white images from The New York Times’s extensive photo archives. Many of the color photographs are being displayed as artwork for the first time. In all, the wall art collection includes approximately 560 prints.
- Interior signs throughout the space combine room names with images from The Times’s photo archive, with a different image for each room, selected to complement the room’s function. One conference room, for instance, might have pictures of Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin at Yalta, and another might have Casey Stengel arguing with an umpire. The extensive inventory of The Times’s photo archives provided the right images for countless electrical closets, mechanical rooms, and even mens’ and women’s bathrooms. In total, the interior signs used nearly 750 different photographs. The photographs firmly connect the space with The Times, as well as offer a whimsical and personal touch missing in most corporate offices.
- The elevator lobbies on each floor feature 10 video screens that show a stream of images that appeared that day in the newspaper or on NYTimes.com. Each elevator lobby also features a unique piece of contemporary furniture, which adds a touch of whimsy to the space and helps to identify the floor.

Factoids
- 186,000 ceramic rods create the second skin of the curtain wall, with each rod measuring 4 feet 10 inches; there is a total of 894,000 feet of ceramic tubing on the exterior of the building. That is the approximate distance from New York City to Providence, R.I.
- The building contains 23,500 tons of steel, nearly as much as the U.S.S. Intrepid.
- More than 95% of the structural steel contains recycled material.
- The Times Company’s space includes 18,000 light fixtures, which can be individually programmed to meet the varying lighting needs of departments or groups.
- Measuring 110 feet long by 15 feet high, the sign on The New York Times Building is made up of almost 1,000 individual pieces of aluminum placed on the ceramic rods.