



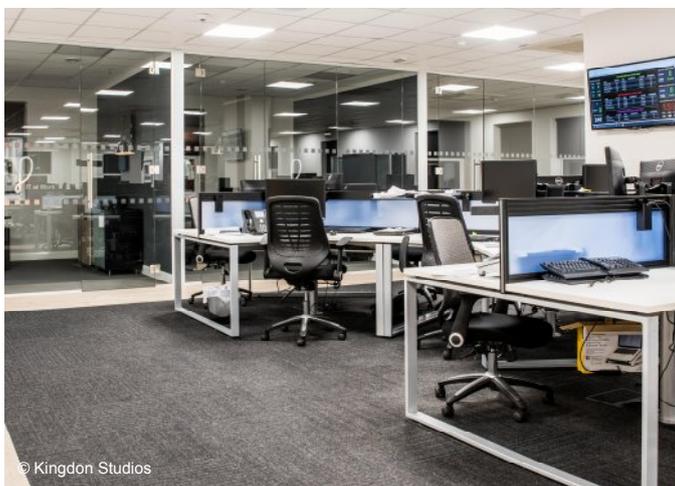
Technology Barn – Creating the Millennial Office

Years in the planning and months in the preparation, Prism Solutions' Technology Barn, at 20 John Bradshaw Court on Alexandria Way in Congleton, is reshaping the high tech industry for the future, and is keep to attracting the Millennial workforce.

Gary David Smith, Co-Founder, Prism Solutions

As I sit thinking about serving both clients and employees alike from my desk in the 10,000 square feet of new office space, a few things become visible very quickly. Having taken the time to plan how we intend to live and work together in our “little Prism family” we have made sure the obvious boxes are ticked.

The Technology Barn at John Bradshaw Court on Alexandria Way in Congleton, Cheshire provides us with dedicated high-speed connectivity; tablet-controlled audio-visual, lighting and climate; and more screens than Manchester Airport*. We also have a wonderful Avaya phone system with both on-premise and hosted applications. These allow voice and data to follow us seamlessly around the building, car park, local business park and beyond.



That said, the real eye-opener is the use of the collaboration spaces on the middle floor. On Day One in our new space, they were inhabited all day by different groups, displaying Prezi's and joining video conferences with our satellite offices in London and Manchester.

As I have said before, despite us being a high tech company, people are at the heart of our business. We need people to create the technology that our customers want and need. As an early adopter of BYOD and mobile working – a true digital nomad – I cannot stress enough the importance of people being together.

So when we were looking to expand our business, we knew we needed more than just more space; we needed a different kind of space. I believe we have created that here, and visitors are already telling us how inspiring they find the environment. Collaboration and sharing is essential to attracting Millennials and our larger space allows us to do just that.



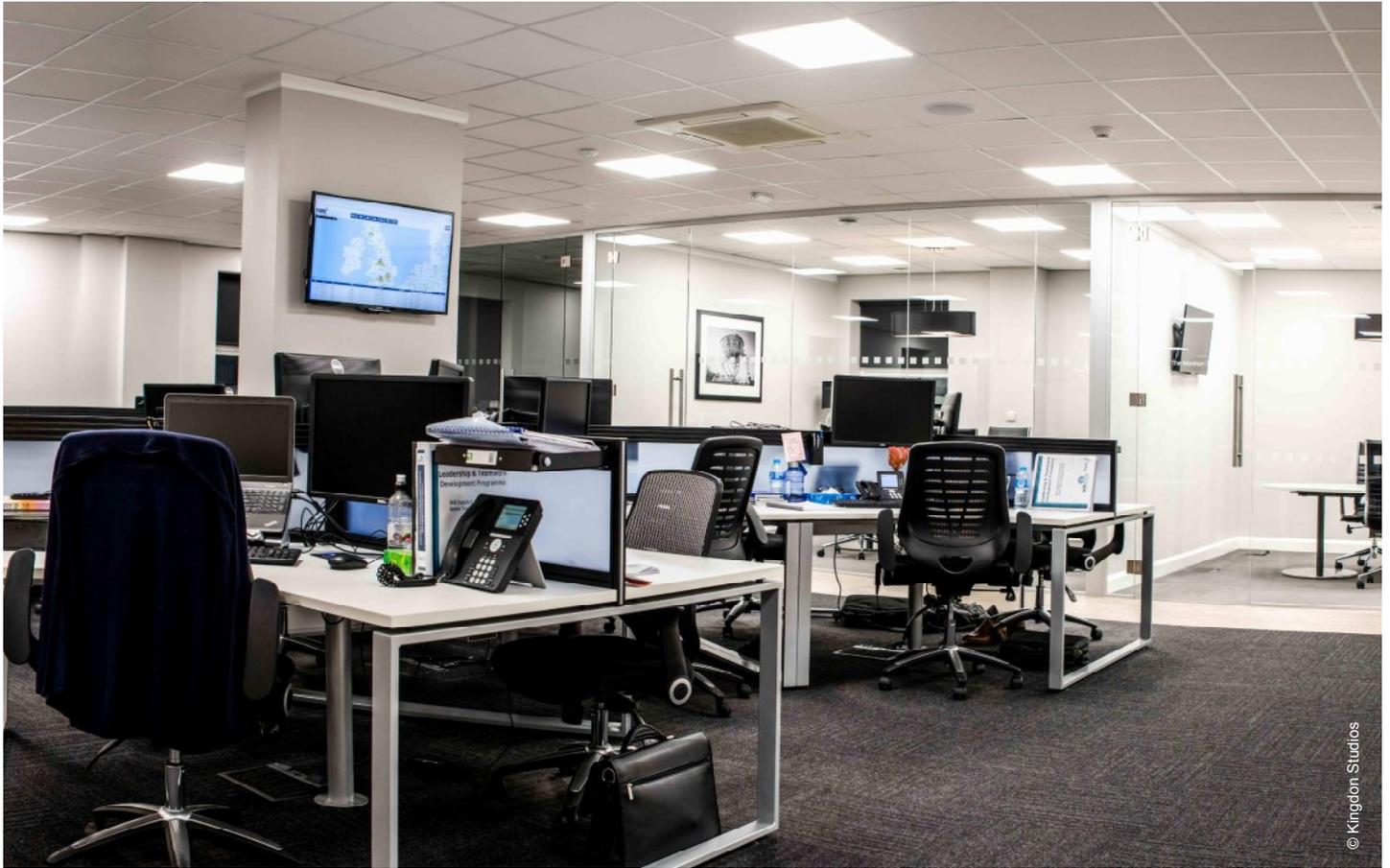
Part of that ‘different kind of space’ is the on-site bistro as it allows for not just a place to relax, but also provides an informal setting in which to brainstorm and share ideas which are so critical in the tech sector. For staff wanting hot meals, the bistro provides fully equipped kitchen facilities with the latest catering equipment for those staff wanting hot meals, and fresh fruit is always available.



Another part is the bike racks (and changing facilities they necessitate), which appeal to Millennials who want to be more environmentally conscious.

Millennials, those born between 1982 and 2000, comprise one-fourth of the UK's population of 65 million and are expected to reach 17 million by 2019. They are becoming an increasing sought-after segment of the workforce, especially in the tech sector. Millennials are the first generation of high tech workers who grew up entirely with high tech. They haven't known a world without Facebook (or even MySpace), iPods, Twitter, YouTube and Snapchat, along with online interactive multi-player video games with high-end sound and graphics.

As a growing Millennial employer in the North West (Prism employees' average age is 28) we knew we had to find out what this new workforce wants to see in a tech sector employer, and seeing these teams comes



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together both on-premise and in the digital world is gratifying.

Other elements appealing to younger workers are ergonomically designed standing spaces with inbuilt air-charging points, collaboration spaces for video conferences and other activities and just generally better ambience than the stereotypical beige “cubical farm” that has become synonymous with tech workers. These will be good selling points when recruiting Millennials as well as helping promote well-being among our employees.

The new office space also allows for a dedicated training facility that gives us the opportunity to attract and train the best people in MSP World as well as interacting with clients around the world. This space is also available for use by the many charities we support.

The additional space also will help the company continue developing its award-winning PETT (Prism Empowering Through Technology) strategy so it can provide more to third-sector organizations through donations, strategic working and training. The programme’s focus on fundraising, community service and recycling will also help us attract Millennials to the workplace.

In conclusion

I do realise that I am biased, but I really like our new space. The lighting, ambience and other unmeasurable factors (such as the bistro, bike racks, changing facilities and our staff wellbeing programmes) just make it the sort of place you look forward to going to work at each day. It is a far cry from the bland, beige-coloured “cubicle farms” that have become the norm during the past 20 years.

We hope that these factors allow us to show Millennials that we are not just another tech firm, but a dynamic place where they want to live, learn and grow.



Gary David Smith
Co-founder
Prism Solutions

www.prism.uk.com
LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/in/gary-d-64563027/>

Gary David Smith is Co-founder of Prism Solutions (www.prism.uk.com). Since its formation in 2001, the Prism team – led by Gary David Smith and Richard Alexander – have worked hard to build an enviable reputation as one of the UK’s premier out-sourced Managed Service IT Providers.

Specializing in the small to medium-sized business market, Prism prides itself on being able to support a broad range of businesses, users, technologies and locations with flexibility and professionalism.

Innovation has always been part of the fabric of the business as early adopters and implementers of technology within the business community through to an award winning CSR strategy.