

## INTERIORS

# Team work plays out perfectly as company expands

Forrester Research, an independent research company serving the business and technology communities, has expanded its New York City office space by taking approximately 15,000 s/f at 160 Fifth Avenue in a building recently upgraded by RFR Realty, its owners.

The offices were designed by Forrester's Boston-based architects, the firm of Margulies Perruzzi Architects.

ACC Construction, a WBE-certified general contracting and construction management firm, built out the new space, which is appropriately organized for a company that conducts much of its business via team collaboration, active brainstorming and teleconferencing and videoconferencing.

Marc Margulies, principal-in-charge of the project, explained that, in the course of designing other Forrester offices, he and his staff learned their client's corporate culture, and the design reflects that.

"We have worked with Forrester for about 10 years, so we really understand the way people work and how the office physically supports the corporate culture. For one thing, the culture is extremely egalitarian — there are no private offices anywhere in the world," he said.

"Employees work in close collaboration in teams, developing industry research, advising clients and actively sharing information."

The office plan is unusual in that there are both work spaces for each of the 50 employees as well as many different break-out rooms scattered throughout the floor; they range in size from a large, interior conference room that seats 24 to a tiny writing room with just a desk and a chair, purposely with no phone; there are small- and medium-sized meeting rooms as well.

"This is a uniquely new paradigm," Margulies said, "where work pods are separated less by walls than by team rooms. There can be a series of work areas for 4, 10 or 15 people that maintain a sense of community."

Not surprisingly, there are large "white boards" with markers in every room, and they are used often.

Given that the designers were in Boston, keeping the lines of communication open between the site and the architects' office was crucially important; both the ACC team and Margulies said that speaking frequently during the eight weeks' of construction was very important.

Michele Medaglia, president and CEO of ACC Construction, was also very pleased, and said, "Forrester was a terrific project for ACC; we were determined to make the job seamless, and we put systems in place so that construction was easy for everyone.

"Very close collaboration and constant communication was key; it was one of those jobs where everything fell into place and we were ahead of schedule for most of the construction. Everyone worked well, we worked hard and we worked together."

Forrester moved to Fifth Avenue in the heart of the Flatiron District. The restaurants and shopping in the immediate area are excellent, and the building was substantially upgraded in early 2010; the owners installed a sleek new lobby and a common rooftop garden, making the building even more attractive. The main work area is a spacious, light-filled corner with eleven-foot ceilings along the east and south sides of the building.



"The New York staff is thrilled with the office," said Jean Baranowski, vice president of corporate services for Forrester.

Baranowski is very happy with the design and functionality of the new office. With responsibility for offices in 19 countries as well as around the United States, she has to trust her teams to make sure that what is designed is what is built. That is exactly what this team delivered.

Forrester Research New York City Offices:  
Designed by Margulies Perruzzi Architects of Boston  
Built by ACC Construction