



Connect people with nature indoors

Ambius highlights the implications of biophilia on design

To mark this week's designEX event in Sydney, indoor plant specialist Ambius is highlighting the implication that 'biophilia' can have on interior design. "Biophilia refers to one's innate need to connect with nature," explains Anne Briggs, Ambius marketing manager. "According to a recent Ambius survey¹ of Australian workers, 92 per cent of respondents believe it is important to be somehow connected to nature. With two thirds of respondents spending less than an hour outdoors on a typical work day, it is vital that we bring nature indoors. Indoor plants are an easy, cost effective way of doing this", added Briggs.

"By considering the principles of biophilia, those responsible for interior design and fit outs can create a more comforting, productive work environment with a connection to nature. Incorporating plants as a design element maximises the benefits of being close to nature."

"Educate employees on the principles of biophilia and allow them some input into the design of their workspace. Ambius led research has shown that giving staff a say in the design of their working environment has many benefits including improved wellbeing, productivity and job satisfaction" said Briggs.

The different principles of biophilia are outlined below, together with some simple suggestions of how to introduce these into any workplace.

Nature is random

Instead of laying out plants in a regular, even fashion, try grouping them together in small clusters and placing them at irregular intervals to allow a degree of randomness and informality. Using mixtures of plant species, varieties and forms will appear far more natural. Ensure everyone has a view of some foliage.

Refuge in a modern world

People choose to sit among the shelter of indoor plants due to an instinctive need for security. Introduce tall palms which lend themselves perfectly as a place to shelter. Trailing or climbing plants can be trained around a structure such as an arbour or pergola while a green wall makes a great natural space divider.

Look across your space

Studies show that when people are asked to describe the ideal location for their home or work place, being able to look out over a landscape features as one of the top three most important factors. Recreate the illusion of overlooking a landscape by placing tall plants near to the observer and progressively using shorter plants the further away you get.

Connect with the outside

Blur the boundaries of the interior and exterior by designing planting to draw the eyes beyond the window. By creating a focal point somewhere in the distance, the artificial boundary of the window can vanish. This will help people feel more connected to nature.

Ambius, one of the leading suppliers of indoor plants in Australia, will be incorporating the principles of biophilia in their interior landscaping display at the designEX exhibition.

¹ The survey of 280 workers was carried out by Ambius in May 2012.

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