



Nokia

Customer Name:
Nokia

Region:
United Kingdom

Product:
Mellopolis

Sustainable Services:
Cool Carpet®

Design Services:

Interface®



Thirteen years ago, former Genesis frontman Peter Gabriel co-founded UK online music distributor On Demand Distribution (OD2). Based in Bristol, the company was one of the first online music download services and quickly gained a reputation as a market leader in Europe.

Though initially ahead of its time, OD2 found it difficult to compete as big players such as Sony and Apple joined the game. In 2004, the company was bought by US digital music distributor Loudeye and then acquired by Finnish mobile giant Nokia two years later.

It is this unique heritage that has helped to shape Nokia's music and entertainment operation today. Although OD2 no longer exists, its vision and creativity live on at Nokia's UK offices, still in Bristol, where a team of music specialists scour millions of songs to create a huge library of tracks and customised playlists for users of the Nokia Lumia smartphone around the world.

Nokia moved into the top three floors of its Wine Street offices in the heart of the city centre in 2007. While the company has global teams of music experts to curate its music channels and keep the playlists fresh, a large chunk of the creative and development work is done in Bristol where 230 staff are employed.

With a predominantly young workforce – the average age of employees is 30 – and the fast moving pace of the business, it is critical that the work environment provides the right backdrop to inspire creativity and collaboration. As many of the employees are highly skilled and therefore valued in the industry, making sure they are happy at work is important.

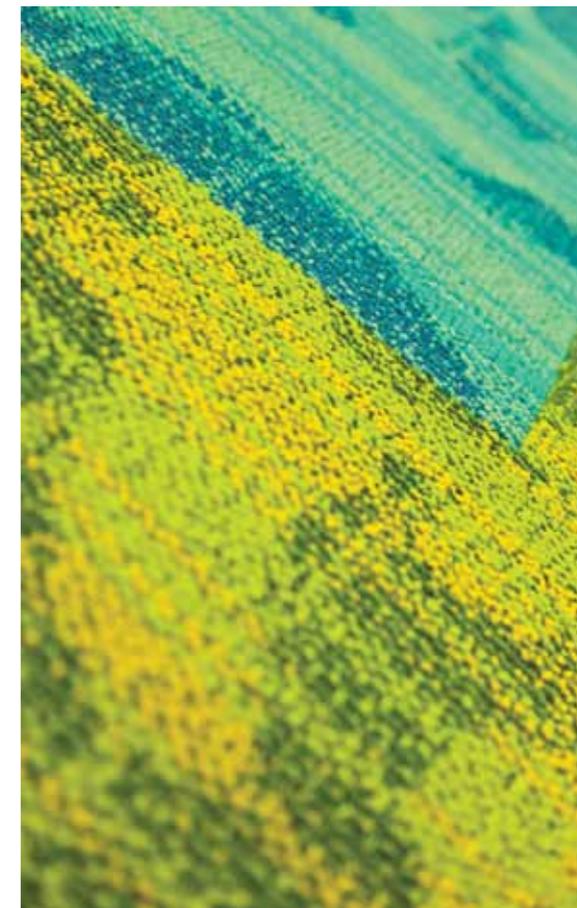
Tasked with the job of making the Nokia environment an exciting place to work is Office Manager Suzanne Ducat, who is responsible for the smooth running of the building.

“We have a lot of high level developers and music experts working here who we want to retain so one of the main parts of my job is to make people want to come to work here,” she explains. “The dress code is very casual. There are no suits or even shoes sometimes and to keep things fun and fresh there are lots of extras from hula-hoop and pilates classes to massages and social events. Everyone works very hard but the culture is informal and relaxed. We all look forward to Monday after the weekend!”

Achieving the right environment to support the R&D side of the business, which is more technical, while at the same time encouraging creativity for the specialist teams who need to keep ahead of the music tastes of consumers from around the world, is a challenge.

As a result, Suzanne is allowed more freedom when it comes to designing the office interior.

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It's not surprising to discover that music features heavily throughout the Nokia premises. All meeting rooms have a musical connection and have been named after famous bands or singers such as Oasis, Gabriel, Meatloaf and Nirvana. Bristol is also a predominant theme with photographs of well-known local sites displayed throughout the building.

But it is the large boardroom on the fifth floor – Pavarotti – which has become the most sought after space in the building. Located on the fifth floor close to the Nokia reception area, the 40m² room has undergone a major refurbishment programme carried out by design specialists Claremont Group Interiors.

Leading the project was Pippa Davie, Design Manager from Claremont's Bristol office. Having worked with her before on other projects, Suzanne had every confidence the designer could transform the room into the vibrant space she was looking for.

“Pavarotti is our largest room and is used for meetings with all our main clients, partners and Nokia leadership teams sometimes from 8am to 8pm. It hasn't been refurbished for five years and was looking a little tired and dated. We wanted to create an area which is relevant to us and would excite and stimulate people,” Suzanne recalls. The first step was to select the colour scheme for the room. The decision was taken to keep the walls plain with a pale green and gold fleck paper but inject colour by selecting products from Interface's ultra modern Mellopolis range, part of the Metropolis Collection, for the floor. Pippa also wanted to extend the Bristol and music themes and commissioned local photographer Heff Heathcote to take images within a five-mile radius of the city.

“Bristol is renowned for its music and graffiti art. We wanted Heff to capture the urban cool of the city but also to illustrate the beautiful countryside we have close by,” she explains. “The photographs are fantastic and we have hung an assortment of different shaped and sized images in colour and black and white around the walls featuring graffiti art, local music haunts, Bristol musicians and beauty spots - there is even a meerkat from the

city zoo. Whoever is in the room now has plenty to look at!”

However, it is the dramatic colour scheme selected for the flooring that has really brought Pavarotti to life. The exploding shapes in the Interface Mellopolis collection imitate the movement of lava lamps and the neon colours available in the range bring a sense of liveliness and fun, which was just what Suzanne was looking for to inject energy into the room. Design manager Pippa mocked up a selection from the collection – Mellopolis offers six florescent shades – and after much deliberation Suzanne chose three different colours – green, purple and blue to carpet the room.

“We loved the pop-art neon colours in the range, the problem was we couldn't decide on which to choose,” Suzanne says laughing. “Green worked best as the predominant colour and we have diagonal stripes of purple and blue running across the floor. There is a texture to the tiles that create

more depth and the multitude of colour makes the whole room seem bigger and more vibrant. The flooring is hugely important and has completely transformed the overall look and feel of the room.”

Employees and non Nokians alike have given the thumbs up to the bold colours and the dramatic design of the new-look Pavarotti, and there is now a rush to book the room for meetings. Suzanne hopes to be able to bring the same design scheme to the reception area and surrounding space in the coming months.

“We mostly get wows when people see the room because it is so striking and not what you would expect. Everyone loves it and we are hoping to install the same Interface tiles throughout the fifth floor for maximum impact,” she adds.

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