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## Turning traditional workspace upside down

XtraSpace

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A South African company has developed a unique office space solution in Melrose Arch that taps into the emerging trend of workplace flexibility and mobility.

Abri Schneider, managing director of XtraSpace, a national provider of flexible space solutions, says technology, coupled with fallout from the global economic meltdown, has had a dramatic impact on the way in which people work.

“The mobile workforce is rapidly gaining momentum due to technological advances. At the same time, many companies need less physical office space, as their workforce is mobile and connected. Others are outsourcing work to contractors, who either work from home or in ‘coffee offices’ but actually need access to an upmarket space where they can hold formal meetings and have access to business and concierge services,” he says.

“In South Africa we’ve seen a sharp increase in demand over the last year or so for flexible workspace. This is essentially the office of the future,” Schneider says.

Creating the office of the future was exactly what XtraSpace had in mind when it set up its FlexiOffice offering at Melrose Arch. And although 44 Melrose Boulevard has just launched, it has clearly struck a chord. Amongst its first tenants are aspiring entrepreneurs, international executives and a film crew.

“Anyone needing instant, flexible and hassle-free access to work space will find this offering attractive. The offices are serviced (furnished and IT enabled), so all you need to do is choose your office size, plug in and off you go.”

“The uniqueness of Melrose Arch as a destination is a big drawcard, with restaurants, hotels, post offices, banks and a gym within the same precinct,” says Schneider.

XtraSpace tasked contemporary workspace designers Giant Leap with developing the layout of the offices. Account executive, Tandi Jacobs, says there is a growing trend towards flexible workspaces particularly in high-end commercial areas where micro entrepreneurs and small businesses might not normally be able to afford the rent per square metre.

“I was on site at Melrose Arch recently when a young lawyer popped in to ask if she could have a six-month lease. For her, the space is in an upmarket area, and is close to the Gautrain. It has all the facilities she needs to launch her practice,” Jacobs says.

Jacobs says her brief was to optimise the space for flexibility, while catering for potential tenants’ needs. “There are offices for between one and six people. There are meeting rooms and boardrooms. There is a pause area with coffee facilities for informal meetings. And touch down stations for those who need to drop in quickly. Then there’s open spaces for creative collaboration,” she says.

Of course, the entire space is fitted with state-of-the art IT infrastructure, flatscreen televisions, projectors and teleconferencing facilities.

FlexiOffice at Melrose Arch is XtraSpace’s first premier, standalone offering in a high-end commercial area. The company is currently developing more premium, flexible work spaces, focusing exclusively on the main metropolises.

“We are also busy with serviced offices developments in Sunninghill and Durban. We see ourselves establishing a further three sites over the next two years,” says Schneider.

The FlexiOffice facilities at Melrose Arch are located at 44 Melrose Boulevard and offer:

Reception, secretarial and concierge services, with booking and reservation team on hand.

Fully-serviced single and shared offices on flexible terms.

Virtual offices, offering controlled access to work stations and meeting rooms, ideal for entrepreneurs and start-ups.

Quality IT, telecoms and business services.

Contemporary pause areas for informal business meetings and networking.

Fully-equipped boardrooms and meeting rooms on a pay-as-you-need basis.

Conference-call and videocall facilities plus audiovisual equipment, with IT support on hand.

Courier service

Kitchens and catering service

### *About XtraSpace*

XtraSpace is a national provider of flexible space solutions. The company currently operates 22 self-storage facilities with business centres across the country. FlexiOffice is a division of XtraSpace. [www.xtraspace.co.za](http://www.xtraspace.co.za)

### **Media enquiries**

Colleen Hunter

**Chief Operating Officer**

**Tel:** +27 11 262 4224

**Cell:** +27 72 659 1353

**E-mail:** [colleen@xtraspace.co.za](mailto:colleen@xtraspace.co.za)



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XtraSpace is a national provider of flexible space solutions. The company currently operates 22 self-storage facilities with business centres across the country. Next to self-storage XtraSpace also offers flexible office space for rent and courier services.

Website: [www.xtraspace.co.za](http://www.xtraspace.co.za) Email [buzz@xtraspace.co.za](mailto:buzz@xtraspace.co.za)