



Gensler Offices
Newport Beach, CA

Frameless glass office fronts foster collaboration,
connectivity at Gensler Newport Beach

EXTENDO

Architect:
James Young, Gensler

Photograph:
Ian Britt

Installer:
System Source

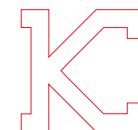
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Synchronized sliding glass door system results in bright, wide-open spaces with expansive views

A mobile, engaged and highly motivated workforce is essential to the success of professional service firms, so their office environments have become increasingly light and open to promote socializing and interaction, while also enabling them to build culture, mentor talent, and create and share knowledge.

According to the recent 2013 U.S. Workplace Survey by global design firm Gensler, organizations that offer flexible, “balanced” workplace options that enable collaboration in open spaces without sacrificing one’s ability to focus in private areas are seen as more innovative and have higher-performing employees.

Unique and visually stimulating environmental factors, including natural lighting, spatial layout and even décor, are also important to improving employee experience, productivity, engagement and motivation.

The abundant use of glass, including frameless interior sliding doors as office fronts, allows employers to integrate a variety of work settings into balanced workplaces that impart a sense of flow and openness between spaces, drawing upon plenty of natural daylight and visual transparency.

Gensler’s New Creative Workspace

When Gensler Newport Beach decided to relocate from the third floor to the bottom two levels of a former bank building, the firm undertook a dramatic renovation of the new space to create a “workplace of the future” for engaging employees, clients and the community.

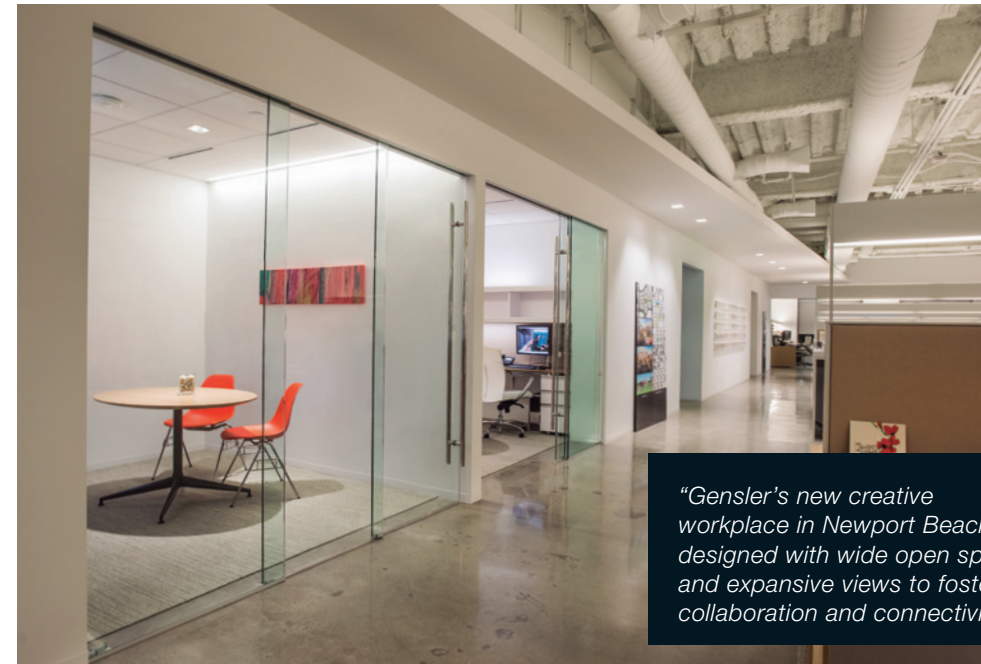
The design philosophy for the new 23,000-square-foot office was based on extensive workplace analysis and an envisioning process with the firm’s staff, who favored wide-open spaces and transparency to foster collaboration and socialization while building stronger connections with the surrounding Newport Beach community and environment.

“Maximizing transparency and views was very important to us”

The efficient and open-concept floor layout integrates a variety of flexible options for focused work, collaboration, learning and socialization. It includes a design innovation lab, a circular resource library, a public gallery and café, and various informal meeting spaces, drawing upon an abundance of natural daylight. The openness also extends to the open-air plaza, designed as a mobile work area with complimentary WiFi and plug-ins for laptops.

Maximizing Transparency and Views

To create a free-flowing, residential feel in their new home in Newport Beach, Gensler designed a wide-open office layout with social, learning and focused work areas to foster collaboration, inspiration and productivity. The design balances employees’ need for privacy with the benefits of natural light and expansive views to promote connectivity and creativity among the firm’s designers.



“Gensler’s new creative workplace in Newport Beach is designed with wide open spaces and expansive views to foster collaboration and connectivity.”



“The Extendo telescopic frameless sliding glass door system allows for a wider opening by having a clear passageway without the use of a floor track.”

To help achieve its goals, Gensler Newport Beach relied on Extendo frameless sliding glass door systems from Klein USA as partition walls between the open public spaces and nine private focus areas. The specific Extendo frameless glass system selected to divide the interior spaces consisted of one fixed and two synchronized sliding half-inch-thick glass panels, with average widths of 40 inches and average heights of 100 inches.

The telescopic glass door panels have a simple track at the top to provide a minimalist detail at the jambs and floors so that wall and floor planes provide clean continuity between the spaces.

“Maximizing transparency and views was very important to us, and the unseen detail of the Extendo two-door frameless-glass system was really appealing,” said James Young, a principal at Gensler.

The design team considered an alternative system of two fixed panels and one door, but this would have required a series of large stainless steel plates between the two fixed panels to meet the half-inch glass deflection rate specified by California seismic building code CBS 2403.4.

“The big clips really detracted from the clean all-glass aesthetic and visual experience we were looking for,” added Young. “As such, the system with one fixed and two sliding glass doors proved to be the ideal solution, because it required only a very small, unnoticeable support clip at the bottom.”

Imparting Openness, Sense of Flow

While internal doors provide privacy and create separation, glass doors permit natural light to penetrate into rooms, giving a more open appearance. Frameless glass doors also can create the impression of a taller, more spacious doorway than their framed counterparts, and expanses of glass in a room can make small rooms seem larger and more open. In addition, glass sliding doors retract, increasing the accessibility of a room, and take up less space because they are relatively thin and sleek.

Compared to other sliding doors systems on the market, the top-hung Extendo system allows a wider opening by having a clear passageway without the use of a floor track.

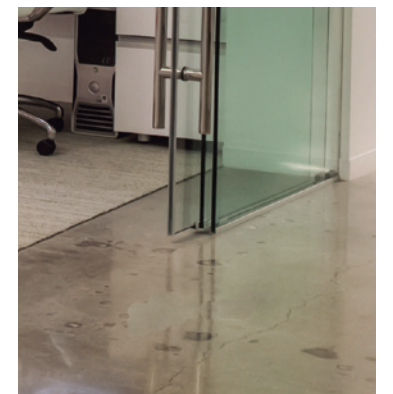
The system used at Gensler Newport Beach features two telescopic frameless glass doors that slide open simultaneously while operating only the lead door, leaving a clear opening of eight feet. “What we love about the Klein system are the very wide openings that make the private spaces open up to the environment outside and create a sense of flow throughout the workplace,” said Young. “It is a very sophisticated and beautiful sliding glass wall that we felt supported the residential kind of atmosphere and feel that this was a big, open home for people to work in.”

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Showcase for Creativity and Sustainability

The use of the Extendo telescopic sliding glass door system has been very successful in helping Gensler Newport Beach create a feeling of openness and transparency in their new creative workspace. It also contributed to the LEED Platinum certification that is being pursued for the building.

“It’s a great product and we receive a lot of comments on the frameless glass look from people who walk through this space,” added Young. “Seeing the glass panel slide back to reveal another open room — similar to what you might find in your home — receives a lot of attention. It’s worked out very well for us.”



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