

# ARCHITECTURAL RECORD

10 1997

\$7.00 A PUBLICATION OF THE MCGRAW-HILL COMPANIES

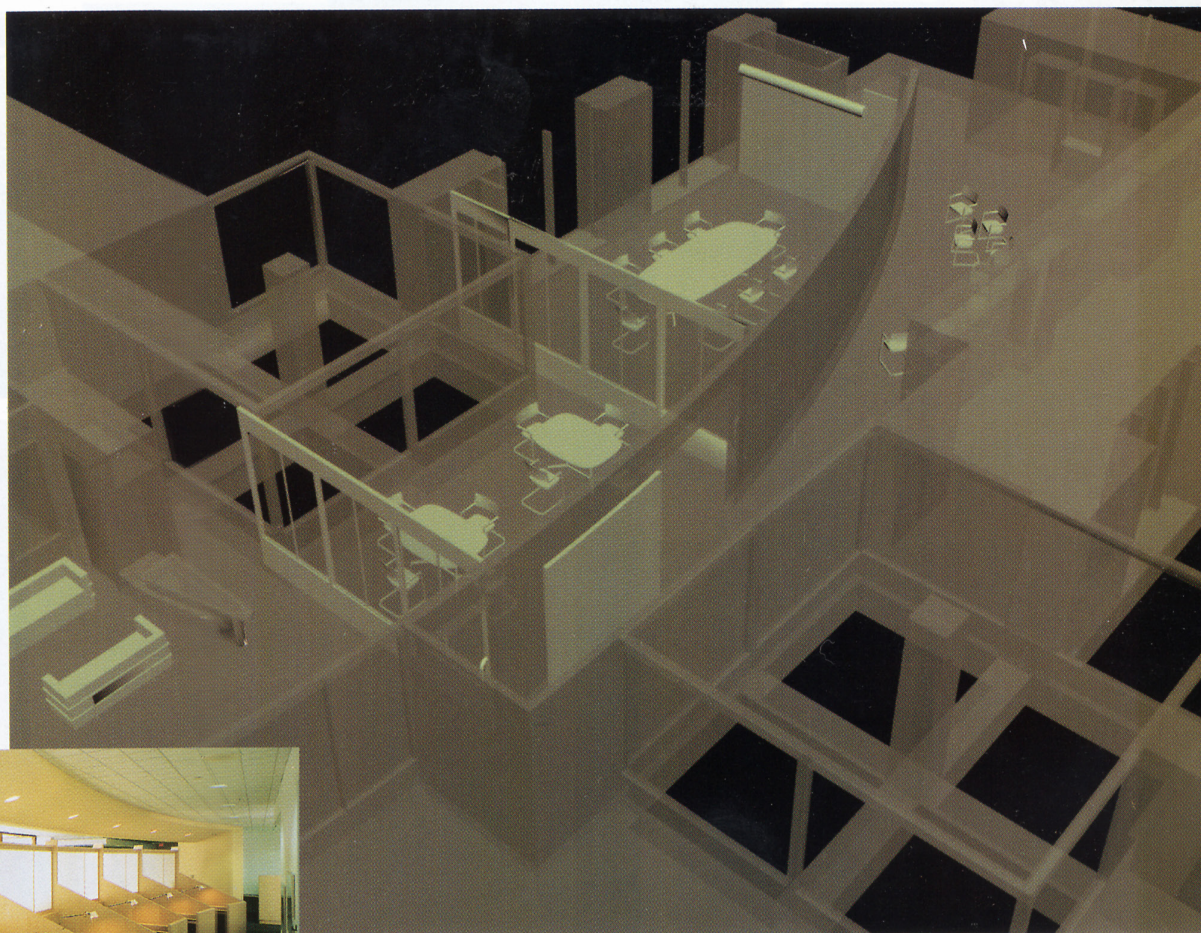
Good Design is Good Business  
Business Week/  
Architectural Record Awards

National Airport Terminal opens  
in Washington, D.C.

GUGGENHEIM  
MUSEUM  
BILBAO







**Project:** Gemini Consulting  
Cambridge, Massachusetts  
**Client:** Gemini Consulting  
**Building Type:** Headquarters offices  
**Award Category:** Private sector, under  
\$5 million  
**Key Players:** Gemini Consulting—

Richard Strickland, James Monk, David  
Teiger; Thompson and Rose Architects,  
Reiter & Reiter, a joint venture—  
Charles B. Rose, Michael Grant,  
Wellington Reiter, AIA; Shawmut  
Design and Construction—Tom  
Gomat, Charlie Mann

## CONSULTANT DOES FOR ITSELF WHAT IT PRESCRIBES TO OTHERS

Akin to what the company does for other businesses, Gemini, a management consulting firm, sought in the design of its own headquarters to “transform the way work is accomplished, encourage creative solutions to business problems, improve communication within the organization, and capitalize on information technology.” Gemini began this project as a means to develop a prototype for the firm’s 22 offices worldwide.

The client selected two firms from among those it interviewed and proposed that they work together. Conventional programming was augmented by focus groups and a review of relevant studies in order to devise optimum working methods for the company. The company evolved as the space was designed, which meant that some participants who began the project had left before it was completed.

The architects and the construction manager analyzed possible sites for suitability and for both fit-out and operating costs. Once the site selection was made, the team held a series of day-long design workshops to define a common design vision for the project. “Everything had to be

done in ‘out-of-the-box’ kinds of ways,” commented Thompson and Rose partner Charles Rose. By doing so much work up front, the final design and construction of the project was completed in only four months.

The project reflects the company’s nomadic working method. There are few private offices or personal cubicles. Rooms are devoted to projects rather than personnel. “Just-in-time” space—temporary homes for consultants who usually work at clients’ locations—is placed at the center of office circulation (above left), where catching up with home-office news is easiest. A café and kitchen area offer other opportunities for casual interaction. Movable walls transform smaller rooms (above right) into a place where the entire staff can meet. “I rated this one fairly high,” commented juror Frances Halsband, “because [the design team] has really gotten into designing special little places for specialized activities.... They really have fitted the environment around a person.”

According to a post-occupancy evaluation, the project-oriented spaces please clients, whose projects now have visible “real estate” within the firm. The nonterritorial nature of the space has made change and expansion easier, since there are no longer fixed business units to uproot. By visibly conveying Gemini’s outlook, the offices help recruiting. *J.S.R.*