The Place Report:
Five-Year Retrospective
Welcome

*The Place Report* gathers the most progressive property examples to determine the trends that are defining how we shop, live, work and play and showcases them within annual reports.

In *The Place Report: Five-Year Retrospective* we return to some of the foremost examples of retail, residential, commercial and lifestyle destination marketing that have featured in *The Place Report* since 2012 and explore how they have developed over time.
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Over the past five years we have seen the traditional edges of retail blur as developers, operators and brands continue to search for ever more dynamic and relevant means of connecting with customers.

While technological interventions have definitely played their part here (see: iBeacon p.11, Rebecca Minkoff p.12 and Starship Robot p.13), the rise of concept malls, retail micro-clusters and temporary developments has perhaps had the greatest impact on the global retail landscape.
Re:START Container Mall
CHRISTCHURCH, NEW ZEALAND //PR 2012

Following a series of earthquakes which devastated Christchurch in 2011, one of the early signs of the city’s resurgence was the pop-up shopping precinct Re:START at Cashel Mall, which used a series of eye-catching shipping containers, painted in bright colours, to re-establish the main retail area.

An initiative of Christchurch’s Property and Building Owners Group, this temporary solution allowed retail to take place in the CBD area well ahead of the significant extended phase of construction that was necessary after the quakes.

The Re:START Container Mall was immediately welcomed by locals looking to congregate during a fairly bleak period. It has grown steadily and now boasts more than 50 retailers, including fashion boutiques, gift stores, food and beverage providers and other service offers.

There are also market stalls and street performers, creating a vibrant atmosphere. Re:START has become a hub for locals and visitors.

“This temporary solution allowed retail to take place in the CBD area well ahead of the significant extended phase of construction that was necessary after the quakes”
Garage Sale Trail
AUSTRALIA //PR2012

The Garage Sale Trail is an annual Australia-wide event, promoting reuse and sustainability and bringing communities together through thousands of garage sales held on the same day. Sellers can list their garage sale or stall on the Garage Sale Trail site and buyers can create their own Treasure Trail.

Since its inception in 2010, the program has expanded rapidly, thanks to the support of 164 councils across the country. In October 2015 the event boasted more than 13,000 garage sales and stalls and over 350,000 participants.
**Bikini Berlin**

**BERLIN, GERMANY**

//PR 2015

Described as the world’s first concept mall, Bikini Berlin is an innovative marketplace in Berlin’s west, which provides a dynamic combination of retail, leisure and commercial spaces. The site was developed by Bayerische Hausbau, one of Germany’s largest integrated real estate companies, which has invested hundreds of millions of euros into the revitalisation of the area.

Anchored by the trendy 25 Hours Hotel, the mall — located in the city’s west — offers a mix of boutique and flagship stores, exclusive office spaces and the Zoo Palast cinema.

Bikini Berlin’s success is pinned to the careful curation of stores, presented in modular timber systems coined ‘Bikini Berlin Boxes’. These spaces allow retailers to display smart ideas and products at a low cost. The modular structures are flexible, understated and specifically reserved for one-off operators or brand extensions that cannot be found anywhere else in Berlin. The ever-changing offers keep visitors returning to experience new installations. Bikini Berlin also contains ‘Supernova’, a Future Lab where retail brands can create unique and memorable product experiences.

Visitors to the centre are engaged through various events, such as art and design talks, exhibitions, tastings, live music shows and VIP shopping nights. There is also a green rooftop terrace, covering an area of approximately 7000 square metres, where shoppers and workers can relax and unwind – an oasis for the city’s workers and residents.

“Bikini Berlin’s success is pinned to the careful curation of stores, presented in modular timber systems coined ‘Bikini Berlin Boxes’”
Miami Design District  
MIAMI, USA  
//PR2013, 2016

The Miami Design District is a high-profile development transforming a centrally located, under-utilised low-income area into an aspirational destination for shopping, culture and dining.

Owned by Miami Design District Associates, the Miami Design District is a partnership between real estate development company Dacra and investment fund L Real Estate, which is backed by luxury conglomerate Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy. Led by Craig Robins, president of Dacra, the $312 million project includes the renovation of existing buildings and 540,000 square feet of new construction.

The precinct has attracted an impressive list of luxury retail tenants, including the Louis Vuitton flagship store, shifting the core of Miami’s luxury market away from the prestigious Bal Harbour Shops in North Beach. An ever-increasing range of art galleries, showrooms and dining experiences complete the offer. The district is so outstanding that it now draws local and global visitors.

The development preserves the district’s character and increases density by closing down four blocks to car traffic, creating facilities for dining, entertainment, accommodation and retail. Striking architecture and artworks appear throughout, including pieces from Craig Robins’ own private art collection.
James Street
BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA
//PR2015

A former disused Coca-Cola bottling plant, Brisbane's James Street precinct has expanded rapidly to become the city's leading retail and lifestyle precinct and a shining example of Fortitude Valley's urban renewal.

The area evolved somewhat organically but is now marketed as a singular proposition with two main anchors: 19 James St, a 1990s commercial building transformation owned by developer Centro 1&2 Partnership, and the James St Market and Cooking School concept, courtesy of The Standard Market Company.

The 19 James St development provides high-end designer fashion, homewares and dining as well as art galleries and the Monocle magazine pop-up shop. This is complemented by James St Market, which provides fresh, good-quality produce and food theatre through its retail outlet and cooking school, creating a destination for Brisbane's growing number of urbanites.

Leasing and marketing are conducted by a central management body that gives a united voice to the precinct, allowing for scheduled events, such as the popular James Street Food and Wine Trail, a weekend of culinary experiences, now in its fifth year.

“A former disused Coca-Cola bottling plant, Brisbane’s James Street precinct has expanded rapidly to become the city’s leading retail and lifestyle precinct”
Im Viadukt
ZURICH, SWITZERLAND // PR 2014

In West Zurich’s undeveloped old industry quarter, District 5, boutique shops and a covered fresh-produce market have been established beneath the stone arches of a 19th-century railway viaduct. Known as Im Viadukt, the development opened in 2010, and since then owner the PWG Foundation has leased 46 spaces within the historic viaduct, attracting a vibrant mix of local food and retail tenants.

Im Viadukt has become a popular place to meet, shop, eat and relax. Regular programming, including live music, performance art, classes and workshops, add to the neighbourhood-friendly feel of the site. There are also promotional retailer events that connect the local businesses to the community.
For example, immediately after checking in, a passenger will automatically receive a terminal map to their phone, with directions and the estimated walking time to their boarding gate. This technological investment by Miami Airport2 is a large step forwards for the widespread adoption of beacon technology and will encourage other airports and other large facilities to follow.

“The cost-effective technology allows owners of iPhones or iPads to be sent information relevant to their physical location”
The San Francisco Rebecca Minkoff boutique has partnered with eBay Inc. to provide an innovative and engaging customer experience that merges online and physical shopping.

The store has a mirror which functions as an interactive interface displaying the season range and style pairings. Customers can digitally browse and select their desired items from the mirror display. Their selection is received by the store assistants who proceed to set up a fitting room with the chosen items.

Fitting rooms are also equipped with an interactive mirror which displays the selected items and allows customers to call a store assistant, populate a ‘cart’ of items which can be purchased via PayPal, and to save a digital record of their visit (in case they are feeling indecisive).

The mirror also has customisable environmental lighting allowing the customer to view their outfit in different scenarios, including ‘North Beach Morning’, ‘Golden Gate Sunset’ and ‘Mission After Dark’ – a customer consideration, which had not previously been accommodated within a retail setting.
While Amazon and Google are pursuing the idea of using airborne drones to deliver packages in urban areas, Starship Technologies believes that a ground-based approach is more practical and possible. The company’s vision is that a customer will order online before the Starship (autonomous delivery vehicle) is automatically loaded at a compact warehouse.

Unlike other large-scale dispatch facilities, the Starship storage hubs will be made from a converted cargo container located in a parking lot or under-utilised suburban area. After loading the products, the Starship robot will set out on footpaths at a top speed of six kilometres an hour. According to early testing, the automated delivery unit will have a range of up to three kilometres and be able to deliver packages in less than half an hour.

Although still in an early prototyping phase, the Starship robot provides a glimpse into a future that is reliant on automated machines for the movement of goods between locations.

“While Amazon and Google are pursuing the idea of using airborne drones to deliver packages in urban areas, Starship Technologies believes that a ground-based approach is more practical and possible”
Selfridges’ Silence Room
LONDON, UK  // PR 2016

In 1909, when Selfridges opened in London, Mr Selfridge built a silence room as part of the store. Shoppers could visit the room for a moment of peace away from the bustling emporium. As part of the 2013 ‘No Noise’ Campaign at Selfridges, Alex Cochrane Architects built a modern interpretation of the original silence room.

Visitors to the Silence Room, located in the Ultralounge of the LG level of Selfridges, are required to store shoes, mobile phones and other twenty-first century distractions in lockers. Visitors then walk down a low-lit corridor towards a large, low-lit felt-covered room with a long bench around the edge for sitting or reclining. Ceiling pipes and fixtures are left exposed but painted black and faint noise from the nearby Dolly’s Cafe is audible as the architects want shoppers to remember that they are still in Selfridges while finding some Zen.

The No Noise Campaign ran from January to February 2013 in conjunction with Headspace, an online urban meditation company. The campaign celebrated minimalist design with a selection of limited-edition products sold in a concept store called Quiet Shop. There were No Noise window displays, in-store meditation sessions, Headspace meditation pods, Idle Sunday talks around quiet and thoughtful contemplation and Food For Thought, which looked at uncomplicated food and organic or raw ingredients.
Modularity, mobility and scale have all played a leading role in the Live (and Stay) trends we’ve featured over the past five years, as developers, operators and architects have responded to the growing needs of densely populated urban environments or sought to capitalise on the needs of an increasingly mobile consumer (geographically speaking).

Interestingly, solutions have spanned the full gamut of price points, from the very sleek Vipp Shelter (p. 17) to the more democratic Snoozebox (p. 18).
citizenM
GLOBAL
// PR 2013

Since launching its first location in Amsterdam in 2008, transformative small-format hotel chain citizenM has expanded rapidly, now with hotels in central locations in Schiphol Airport, Rotterdam, Paris, London, Glasgow, New York and with more on the way. CitizenM aims to make stylish accommodation affordable for ‘mobile citizens of the world’ — the M in the name stands for ‘mobile’ — leisure or business travellers on a budget.

The hotel chain creates compact yet luxurious rooms with smart design and vibrant common spaces — ‘living rooms’, furnished stylishly and comfortably with eye-catching artworks and well-stocked libraries, and ‘canteens’, providing with freshly made food from local purveyors, in which to relax, socialise or snack — while offering great value. CitizenM is known for its streamlined operating models. Every room at citizenM is the same, and the rooms are prefabricated off-site, ensuring a small carbon footprint and greater efficiency.

“CitizenM aims to make stylish accommodation affordable for ‘mobile citizens of the world’ ”

Guests check themselves in using a kiosk in the lobby and there is no concierge or room service, keeping costs low.
The Vipp Shelter – a sleek, modular, residential product from Danish company Vipp – intends to increase efficiency and reduce costs for the customer by removing complicated design decisions. Although not customisable, everything within a Vipp Shelter, from the bed to the toilet brush, has been specified. The only decision left for the customer is where they would like their Vipp Shelter to be installed. While the Vipp Shelter is not designed by architects, the company has 75 years of experience with steel processing. Made of glass and black steel the finished result is a stunning minimalist piece of workmanship.
Snoozebox

Repurposing shipping containers, Snoozebox offers fast, flexible accommodation options for sporting events, music festivals, production locations and disaster relief.

The portable pop-up hotel is available in configurations ranging from 40 to 400 rooms. Rooms contain a comfortable bed, air conditioning, a flatscreen TV, power points, free Wi-Fi and storage, and an en-suite wet room with shower, basin and toilet.

Rooms are serviced daily and towels and toiletries are provided. Snoozebox also includes power, water and waste extraction. Snoozebox can be transported by rail, road or sea to any location in the world and, once on-site, it can be constructed within 48 hours.

“The portable pop-up hotel is available in configurations ranging from 40 to 400 rooms”
Muji began its extension into property development in 2007 with a partnership with Mitsubishi Estate on a housing development in Chiba Prefecture. This was followed up by a second development in Tsudanuma. Muji Village units reflect the Muji brand, of course: they are light-filled, simple and functional. Unit sizes within the housing complex range from 70 to 80 square metres and are competitively priced with developments in the area.

The company began the project by creating a research centre and engaging 700,000 customers through an online survey. The Muji research team then spent time in people’s homes, observing how families addressed the everyday challenges of domestic life. The ethnographic research informed key design decisions, resulting in a built environment that is highly user-centric and undeniably Muji.
Muji Vertical House

JAPAN // PR 2016

Vertical House is one of the flat pack homes available from Muji. In total there are three styles available: the Wooden House (US$150,000), the Window House (US$160,000) and finally the Vertical House (US$210,000). While the 4.4-metre-wide, three-storey Vertical House adheres more to the idea of building up rather than out, the other two prefab houses are wider two-storey buildings that do not necessarily focus on space saving in the same way. Currently these homes are only available to those living in Japan.

Although Muji’s house comes flat-packed, customers need not worry about DIY set-up as professionals are sent out to assemble the houses. Muji homes also allow limited customisations of both the exterior and interior.

Customers are also able to personalise their interiors using another Muji product, Muji Infill+3, which offers a variety of kitchen and bathroom components along with wall and floor finishes. There is even an innovative option for those who own a non-Muji house but wish to update their interiors in the Muji style. Muji Infill 04 provides professionals to gut the house before customising their newly blank canvas with Muji Infill+. 
A Room for London

A Room for London is a one-room, boat-shaped living space perched above the Queen Elizabeth Hall at the South Bank Centre. In exchange for staying in this unique single-room hotel, guests are asked to record and share their thoughts on art, life and London via an online radio station, blog and video series.

The distinctive installation was commissioned by Living Architecture, a social enterprise that invites leading architectural practices to create holiday homes that feature the best contemporary materials, design and technology. Alain de Botton is the organisation’s creative director. Created by David Kohn Architects and artist Fiona Banner, A Room for London was selected from more than 500 entries in a competition to activate the site during the 2012 Olympic Games.

Initially only intended to operate for one year, the hotel has received several extensions, allowing it to remain open. The constant threat of closure has meant that a ballot competition, held every two months, is used for guests to secure a night’s stay.

Decorated like a country cabin, A Room for London includes a small dining area and kitchenette, a room with a double bed, a separate shower and toilet, and shelves piled with books about London.

“In exchange for staying in this unique single-room hotel, guests are asked to record and share their thoughts on art, life and London via an online radio station, blog and video series”
The Spontaneity Suite

The Spontaneity Suite is a pop-up hotel room made of two six-metre shipping containers including a rooftop Jacuzzi and terrace. This activation is a collaboration between hotel booking app HotelTonight (launched in Australia in June 2015) and Ovolo Hotels, with all of the proceeds put towards the OzHarvest3 food rescue charity.

The suite is worth AU$32,000 and the interiors, designed by luxe homewares group Coco Republic, include a freestanding stone bath, rain shower, Apple TV, a fully stocked cocktail station, Egyptian cotton robes, lambskin recliners and a floor-to-ceiling glass window wall, and yet one night’s stay costs only AU$99. The Spontaneity Suite is dropped into scenic locations around Australia, including the Yarra Valley and Sydney, where it floated on the harbour.
St Jerome’s — The Hotel

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA // PR 2016

At St Jerome’s — The Hotel, Melbourne, guests can experience five-star, or limited edition, camping in luxury safari-style tents.

A 2200-square-metre space on the roof of the Melbourne Central shopping centre in Swanston Street sat empty for several years. Jerome Borazio — known for his involvement in the laneway scene and for transforming numerous unused spaces in the city — learned of this space and set out to install 20 luxury tents at the site. St Jerome’s — The Hotel opened in May 2015.

Originally it was planned that the hotel would be available for around six months, but remains open. Tents come in two sizes, four by four metres and five by five metres, and include a bed, heating, a portable en-suite and external native planting for privacy.

The hotel has teamed up with some of Melbourne Central’s tenants, allowing the guests to access amenities including a gym, hair and nail salons, cafes and bars. Guests can also call the concierge to arrange to have items brought to their tent.

“A 2200-square-metre space on the roof of the Melbourne Central shopping centre”
YOTEL
GLOBAL // PR2016

For the weary traveller, YOTEL is the perfect place to relax and refresh. Conveniently located within airports, rooms can be booked for a minimum of four hours or overnight, allowing travellers a private space for rest or work between flights while remaining just minutes away from their departure or arrival gate.

At the New York location there are 46 Japanese-style cabins available, ranging from 75 square feet (7 square metres) to 108 square feet (10 square metres). Each type of cabin has a bed, a workstation, its own bathroom and shower, a flatscreen TV and comes with free wi-fi, tea, coffee and hot chocolate 24 hours a day. Currently there are YOTELs in Amsterdam Schiphol Airport, London Gatwick Airport and London Heathrow Airport, Paris Charles de Gaulle and midtown Manhattan.
Breather App

Breather is a downloadable app that lists publicly available, bookable short-term private spaces. Breather offers its users peaceful, practical spaces that are available when you need them for anything from reading, a meeting, a quiet place to eat your lunch or possibly to do some yoga. Users can book a space for 30 minutes, a few hours, or a full day, and once inside the room users can also extend their stay if required.

The iOS app is used to view, book and unlock the door with a simple tap of the user’s phone. Currently spaces are listed in Boston, New York City, San Francisco, Montreal and Ottawa. Spaces come in a variety of forms, some resembling living rooms, home offices or dining rooms. Users are only charged for the length of their stay and rooms range in price from US$25–45 per hour.

“Breather is a downloadable app that lists publicly available, bookable short-term private spaces.”
As commercial office supply has peaked over the past five years we have seen planning bodies, developers and architects work harder than ever before to create precincts, developments and workplaces that deliver well-rounded — and often unique — work-life experiences.

More often than not, success in this regard has been achieved by imbuing places with their own unique cultural identity, be that by offering low-rent accommodation to artist collectives (p.27), creating a world-class philharmonic hall (p.29) or even cultivating a farm within a nine-story Tokyo office tower (p.37).
In the 1980s developer David Walentas, founder of the Two Trees Management Company, devised a strategy to attract residents who would pay a premium to live in the industrial area. From the disused factories and warehouses he created a mixed-use residential and commercial district. He drew stand-out local retailers and restaurants to the neighbourhood and also made sure to prioritise space for galleries and cultural activities to entice more affluent residents. Strategies included offering low or no rent to cultural organisations, such as live performance space St Ann’s Warehouse, in order to help them flourish.

DUMBO has also profited from the rise of the tech industry. In the 1990s the large industrial spaces in DUMBO appealed to the tech start-ups. The Two Trees Management Company helped sustain their interest by offering leases of two to four years, as opposed to the usual ten-year leases, lowering credit requirements, leaving the...
"Only 30 years ago DUMBO was a desolate post-industrial suburb; these days, it's known for its cobblestone streets lined with hipster boutiques, cafes, bars and art galleries."

spaces unpolished, and by allowing pets in the buildings. Recent strategies to continue this interest, led by Walentas and others, have included offering free public wi-fi – DUMBO was the first neighbourhood in New York to provide it – beautifying the streets, tackling homelessness and addiction and creating better infrastructure.

Effective collaboration has benefited DUMBO enormously. Initially the collaboration between Walentas and local artists helped support and grow the local art community. Later, once DUMBO had become more established, it became a Business Improvement District, and also joined the Brooklyn Triangle Tech force. This allowed local members of all different industries to have a say in shaping and improving the future of the local area. The Business Improvement District’s website offers visitors access to DUMBO public transport information, event listings and featured businesses, giving the impression that the neighbourhood is a bustling hub of activity.
HafenCity
Hamburg, Germany // PR2013

HafenCity is currently Europe’s largest inner-city development project and among the largest development projects in the world. The former port area, located in the middle of Hamburg on the banks of the Elbe River, is being redeveloped into a dense, multi-layered residential, commercial and retail district.

Swiss architects Herzog and de Meuron have been commissioned to create the stunning Elbe Philharmonic Hall. To avoid creating a limited-use example of ‘starchitecture’, the building includes an on-site hotel, exclusive residential apartments and an elevated public viewing plaza. The entire project is scheduled for completion in 2025, at which time an estimated 50,000 people will live and work there.
The Navy Yard shows the potential of using creative companies as early adopters to entice larger, mainstream tenants to post-industrial sites. Retailer Urban Outfitters was the catalyst for transforming the decommissioned Philadelphia Naval Shipyard into a dynamic waterfront office park with more than 11,000 employees and 143 companies.

In 2006 Urban Outfitters purchased four buildings and leased a fifth building from the City of Philadelphia for one dollar. It then invested $140 million over two years to renovate and fit out five buildings to house 600 staff. The adaptive re-use headquarters is a perfect expression of the brand, which has become synonymous with placing stores in idiosyncratic locations, such as former car dealerships, factories, churches and mansions. Clothing, accessories and homewares are displayed among antiques and authentic vintage decor.

Since relocating to the new site, Urban Outfitters has doubled its workforce, posted record sales increases, reduced staff turnover and shortened hiring times for senior positions. Its pioneering relocation led the way for the migration of more than 140 companies, such as pharmaceutical giant GlaxoSmithKline, which has signed a 15.5-year lease.

Described as a ‘business campus’, the Navy Yard’s historic buildings, waterfront setting and advanced trees give the sense of a college campus rather than a traditional office park.

“Retailer Urban Outfitters was the catalyst for transforming the decommissioned Philadelphia Naval Shipyard into a dynamic waterfront office park”
MOV is a membership-based co-working space located in the Shibuya Hikarie Building, a mixed-use upscale commercial tower in Shibuya, Tokyo. It doesn’t look anything like an office, with the design taking cues from restaurants, libraries and airport lounges.

It features shared tables and booths with low partitions to encourage interaction between workers, stylish meeting rooms suitable for even the most fickle clients and showcase areas. Shibuya Hikarie contains the ShinQs department store, four floors of dining offers, the Orb Theatre, galleries and event space.
Rote Fabrik
ZURICH, SWITZERLAND // PR2014, 2015

In Zurich, an economic downturn of the local silk industry created an opportunity for the local creative industry. In the 1970s a former silk factory in a striking nineteenth-century red-brick building next to Lake Zurich was designated as a cultural centre. By 1980 Rote Fabrik (Red Fabric) officially opened. Today it provides about 80 studios for musicians, actors, media designers and artists.

The mixed-use space has contributed to the bustling cultural life on the premises, with approximately 80 permanent employees and up to 200 freelance contributors involved. About 200,000 people per year attend the visual and performing arts events, schools and workshops, the restaurant or the exhibition hall. Rote Fabrik is considered one of the largest cultural centres in Europe.

Boasting around 200,000 visitors per year, Rote Fabric is considered one of the largest cultural centres of its kind in Europe.
NeueHouse Madison Square, in New York City, is a ‘private work collective’ that caters exclusively for the creative community. Entrepreneurs and boutique firms of up to ten people from creative industries, including film, design, fashion, publishing and the arts, who are deemed to be ‘ambitious innovators’, are invited into the luxurious space.

Designed by award-winning architect David Rockwell, NeueHouse Madison Square is in a restored multistorey century-old building, featuring an industrial-chic style. It offers a co-working area, members’ club and cultural centre. There are several tiers of membership allowing increasing levels of access to the workspaces, common spaces and events. The highest tier of membership enables individuals or teams to have their own dedicated desk or private office.

The concept has been so successful that an additional locations has opened in Los Angeles – NeueHouse Hollywood – and another will open in London – NeueHouse Covent Garden – this year. The collective even has its own magazine, NeueJournal, inspired by cultural conversations that have taken place at NeueHouse.
City Works Depot
AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND
// PR 2015

Once a collection of abandoned 1960s council sheds, City Works Depot is now an edgy and sophisticated precinct housing creative enterprises and a select offering of retail and hospitality. The industrial heritage of the site is clearly celebrated in this development: the old structures have been repurposed while new materials have been seamlessly incorporated for a raw but upmarket feel.

The site has brought together many of Auckland’s creatives, promoting new collaborations. The retailers at City Works Depot provide bespoke or distinctive products and are already local favourites.

“The site has brought together many of Auckland’s creatives, promoting new collaborations”

Some stand-outs of the precinct include The Botanist, a cafe, bar and florist; Tea & Dry, a hairdresser and boutique tea retailer; and craft beer specialists Brothers Beer, a bar and on-site brewery.
In November 2010, the Hong Kong government announced the plan to transform the Police Married Quarters site – a site that previously housed married police – with the goal of making it a hub for creative talent. Since opening in late 2014, PMQ’s tenants have collectively showcased Hong Kong’s high-quality brands in studios, pop-ups and permanent spaces, elevating the appreciation of design and innovation.

Operated by PMQ Management Co. Ltd, the not-for-profit social enterprise was established by the Musketeers Education and Culture Charitable Foundation, in collaboration with the Hong Kong Design Centre, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University and the Hong Kong Design Institute of the Vocational Training Council.
Boston Innovation District

BOSTON, USA // PR 2015

An initiative of Mayor Thomas M Menino, the Boston Innovation District aims to revitalise 1000 acres of underdeveloped waterfront in South Boston, establishing a district that fosters innovation, collaboration and entrepreneurship.

Since its opening three years ago, the area has added more than 5000 new jobs in over 200 new companies, with many more on the way. The district is grounded by a community-based centre called the District Hall – a place to gather to share ideas and knowledge.

This destination offers a full complement of workspaces, classrooms, an assembly space and ‘flexible-use pods’ as well as an on-site cafe. The investment in this facility has led to Boston becoming one of the country’s leading start-up cities.

“Since its opening three years ago, the area has added more than 5000 new jobs in over 200 new companies, with many more on the way”
On paper, the Pasona Group headquarters, located in the heart of Tokyo, is a nine-storey, 20,000-square-metre inauspicious commercial building. However, inside the building there is more than 4000 square metres of green growing space with 200 species, including fruits, vegetables and rice that are harvested, prepared and served at the cafeterias within the building.

All this makes the Pasona building the largest and most direct farm-to-table of its kind ever realised inside an office building in Japan. The true benefits, of course, are found beyond these sorts of statistics, with the building’s architects, New York-based Kono Designs, stating that Pasona Urban Farm ‘creates a unique workplace environment that promotes workers’ productivity, mental health, and social interaction and engages the wider community of Tokyo by showcasing the benefits and technology of urban agriculture’.
We don’t often think of ‘play’ as having purpose, but over the past five years we’ve observed countless examples of both cities and private developers using play as a strategic catalyst for social, cultural and civic engagement.

On p.42 Paris invigorates civic life with a man-made beach, on p.43 Takeo City redefines the public library and on p.45 San Francisco opens up public space for creative/tech innovation.
The High Line
NEW YORK, USA // PR2014

In New York City, running more than two kilometres from Gansevoort Street in the Meatpacking District to 34th Street on Manhattan’s west side, is the High Line, a public park built on an historic elevated rail line. The park offers its visitors attractive greenery, views of the Hudson River and a full program of events, including art installations and performances.

The initiative has been a major success, attracting close to five million visitors a year.

The High Line has served as a catalyst for gentrification within this part of Manhattan: people want to live near the High Line; restaurants, boutiques and galleries want to be in close proximity to it and rents have risen accordingly. It has also strengthened the local community, which was engaged throughout the project.
Lowline Park
NEW YORK, USA
// PR2016

In 2011, The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) pointed out that the Essex Street Trolley Terminal, located below Delancey Street in Manhattan, had sat unchanged since 1948, when the streetcar closed. After almost 70 years this vast empty space had the opportunity to be transformed. Lowline co-founders James Ramsey and Dan Barasch had started planning an urban underground park in 2008 and were now interested in using their ideas to redesign the vacant trolley terminal into a unique subterranean garden space for public use. The Lowline Park is being called an underground version of Manhattan’s High Line Park. Not due to be completed until 2020, this park will become a permanent addition to New York and will use special technology to pipe sunlight beneath the street’s surface. In October 2015, Ramsey and Barasch opened the Lowline Lab to demonstrate the concept of the Lowline Park to the public.

Located at 140 Essex Street on Manhattan’s Lower East Side, the Lowline Lab is just over 1200 square feet (111 square metres), but it is said to be only about 5 per cent of the Lowline Park’s expansive area when completed. The Lowline website explains:

“This hidden historic site is located in one of the least green areas of New York City — presenting a unique opportunity to reclaim unused space for public good. Our vision is a stunning underground park, providing a beautiful respite and a cultural attraction in one of the world’s most dense, exciting urban environments.”
BMW Guggenheim Lab

NEW YORK, BERLIN, MUMBAI // PR2013, 2014

BMW famously partnered with the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation to produce the BMW Guggenheim Lab, a mobile lab that aimed to promote interdisciplinary discussion about architecture and urban design. From 2011 to 2013 the lab travelled to three major cities — New York, Berlin and Mumbai — providing an opportunity for communities to share insights and opinions on city life.

The objective of the travelling lab was to bring the Guggenheim’s thought leadership and public forums out of its 5th Avenue, New York museum and connect to a broader global audience. Each city hosted free workshops, panel discussions, film screenings and city tours on the topic of understanding and improving urban life. In late 2013, an exhibition was staged at the Guggenheim Museum in New York, Participatory City: 100 Urban Trends from the Guggenheim Lab, which showcased key ideas that emerged from the lab’s global tour.
In Paris, where 80 per cent of residents don’t own cars, the city government has been installing traffic lights along the banks of the Seine to slow traffic and increase accessibility to waterfront public space.

For six weeks each summer, it closes off the Pompidou Expressway to create a mini inner-city holiday resort, with sandy beaches, deckchairs, play areas, refreshments and concerts. There are three Paris Plages sites: Louvre/Pont de Sully, Port de la Gare and Bassin de la Villette.
In Takeo City, Saga Prefecture, Japan, Mayor Keisuke Hiwatashi has offered a revolutionary new concept for the local public library.

Hiwatashi enlisted the support of two public companies — the popular movie rental and bookstore company Culture Convenience Club and Starbucks — to increase the appeal of the library — public assets that, across the world, are losing relevance in the digital age, particularly for younger people.

In addition to having more than 200,000 titles available for loan, Takeo City Library houses a cafe and, perhaps counterintuitively, a bookshop.

The space is appealing and comfortable. The facility attracted 260,000 visitors — including locals and tourists from all generations — in its first three months, which is no mean feat for a city with a population of only 50,000 people.
In Miami, Florida, there is a car park like no other: 11 11 Lincoln Road, a retail, entertainment and residential complex – with ample car spaces, of course, some 300 spots in all. Designed by renowned Swiss architecture firm Herzog & de Meuron, 11 11 Lincoln Road has attracted much interest for its bold — and aesthetically pleasing — appearance, resembling a house of cards, a radical statement in the design of car parks.

The open-air concrete structure, which offers breathtaking views over Miami’s South Beach, is used for fashion shows, film and photo shoots, weddings, parties and other events. At street level is a collection of premium retailers and dining hotspots. There is further shopping on the fifth floor and a private residence on the top floor.
Living Innovation Zone
SAN FRANCISCO, USA // PR 2015

San Francisco’s Living Innovation Zone (LIZ) program allows technology and creative businesses to utilise city-owned assets to implement urban interventions that facilitate exploration, innovation and play. The program is a partnership between government bodies (the San Francisco Mayor’s Office of Civic Innovation, SF Planning and SF DPW) and creative organisations, which design and manage the intervention. The temporary installations activate public spaces on Market Street in the city’s centre.

A popular intervention is the ‘singing’ bench that plays music when users complete a circuit by touching its armrests, one of two exhibits in the city’s first Living Innovation Zone, Pause on Market.

The San Francisco Mayor’s Office hopes that the project will continue to produce new ideas, creating a collaborative and dynamic city.

“(The) program allows technology and creative businesses to utilise city-owned assets to implement urban interventions that facilitate exploration, innovation and play”
Besides the six-part structure, what makes this private collection stand out is the underlying intent of Messner, who aims to educate visitors on our relationship with mountains: the science of mountains and glaciers, as well as the history of mountaineering and mountain culture. Messner is known across the globe as the first person to scale the world’s 14 mountains that exceed 8000 metres high, and the first to ascend Everest without the aid of supplemental oxygen.
“What makes this private collection stand out is the underlying intent of Messner, who aims to educate visitors on our relationship with mountains.”

MMM Corones sits on top of the summit of Mount Kronplatz, 2275 metres above sea level. The museum showcases Hadid’s striking contemporary glass-and-concrete design. Surrounded by alpine peaks, and partially embedded into Kronplatz itself, it is the perfect setting for a permanent exhibition dedicated to traditional climbing.

The MMM project cost is, of course, vast — estimated at around €30 million — split between Messner and the province of South Tyrol. The regional government footed the bill for the restoration of Sigmundskron Castle, which houses MMM Firmian, the centrepiece of the series, but Messner maintains the exhibitions without public funding.
Since opening in 2011, the Museum of Old and New Art, located 30 minutes’ drive from the Tasmanian capital of Hobart, has succeeded in transforming not only the cultural landscape of the city but its economic fortunes as well.

The collection has been amassed by David Walsh, a professional gambler and art collector. MONA represents the largest privately funded museum in Tasmania and as the eclectic name suggests, it presents a broad range of antiques as well as modern and contemporary art. The philanthropist collector describes it as a ‘subversive adult Disneyland’.

The destination, complete with high-end restaurant, luxury accommodation and on-site brewery, has reinvigorated the tourism industry of this economically challenged part of Australia. Undeniably, MONA is a major tourist drawcard, attracting visitors from all over the world.
The Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton (LVMH) group has been active in funding the arts through the development of cultural institutions. The organisation’s first privately funded facility, located in the 16th arrondissement on the outskirts of Paris, was designed by renowned architect Frank Gehry. Bernard Arnault, chairman and chief executive of LVMH, commissioned the museum to house the contemporary art collection of LVMH as well as pieces from his own personal collection.

LVMH negotiated to build the structure in a public park. An agreement exists with the city for the plot, with ownership of the museum reverted to the city in around 50 years. In this way, the museum is essentially a gift to the city worth US$130 million.

The museum is of course part of a public relations campaign for the LVMH brand and the chance for the world to see the softer side of Mr Arnault and his commitment to culture and heritage. Jean-Paul Claverie, head of LVMH’s philanthropic initiatives, states that the Fondation Louis Vuitton is aimed at achieving ‘not economic returns but emotional ones’.

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