

Microsoft Briefing Center: HI-MACS® used in interactive showroom

New design ideas for progressive product performance



Photo credits: ©David Franck Photography

Pure product presentation in the showroom was yesterday. Today communication is the magic word for modern product performance that involves and entuses the customers. It stands to reason that a corporation such as Microsoft is progressive in this area too, and this is impressively demonstrated by the new Microsoft Briefing Center in Wallisellen, Switzerland. The presentation content is not merely exhibited here but rather – with the help of in-house Microsoft technology such as KINECT, X-BOX, SURFACE, etc. – it also enters into interactive dialog with the customers whose physical movements control the software, turning them into an active part of what is going on.

New presentation concepts of this kind cannot be achieved with conventional design and the old, familiar materials. There is demand for creative thinkers who understand how to integrate forward-looking materials into their designs. The architects from the interdisciplinary design team at Stuttgart-based **COASToffice**, for example, have discovered **HI-MACS®** as their material of choice and, in keeping with the HI-MACS® slogan, “**The New Generation. Inspired by Architecture**”, have created refreshingly new spaces that are extraordinary in terms of both function and design.

Thanks to its versatility HI-MACS® is virtually predestined for new challenges like the design of a dynamic, technological space such as was required in Wallisellen. The acrylic stone’s specific material properties make it shapeable, rendering it ideal for three-dimensional design. The tactile qualities of HI-MACS®’s pliable, smooth surface are no obstacle to its use in rooms with high footfall: The non-porous, watertight and low-maintenance material is also extremely robust.

HI-MACS® Media contact for Europe:

Mariana Fredes – LG Hausys Europe - +41 (0) 22 879 54 83 – mfredes@himacs.eu
High resolution photos available at www.himacs.eu/press

Flowing forms – effective communication



The new **Microsoft Briefing Center** is on the first floor of the **Microsoft Schweiz GmbH head office**. The so-called **“Product Lounge”** at the front, and two conference and presentation rooms of different sizes to the rear, are arranged around a spacious courtyard.

At the heart of the Product Lounge is a sculptural piece of furniture made of HI-MACS® – for lounge purposes and communication – that is broken down into various zones over an area of around 100 square meters. Both the **“Microsoft Kinect Welcome Zone”** and the **“Microsoft Surface Bar”** use touch and motion sensor technology to enable multifaceted interaction between the media screens and the customer.

The design of the central counter and lounge piece is based on the idea of seamlessly dovetailing communication forms – and HI-MACS® proved to be precisely the right material for realising this cloud thinking: this translucent, solid surface material can be used to model and fit together energy-laden, vibrant shapes.

The result is furnishing elements that seem to have been poured from a mould – seamless, homogeneous and extraordinary.

When it comes to high-end design, the choice of colour is also crucial. In order to produce contrasts without being overwhelmed by colour, the table surfaces of the otherwise white interior sculpture were fitted with thin black layers of HI-MACS®. They provide an impressive example of the filigree results that can be produced with this material and help to give proportion to the quite large, two-section lounge piece.

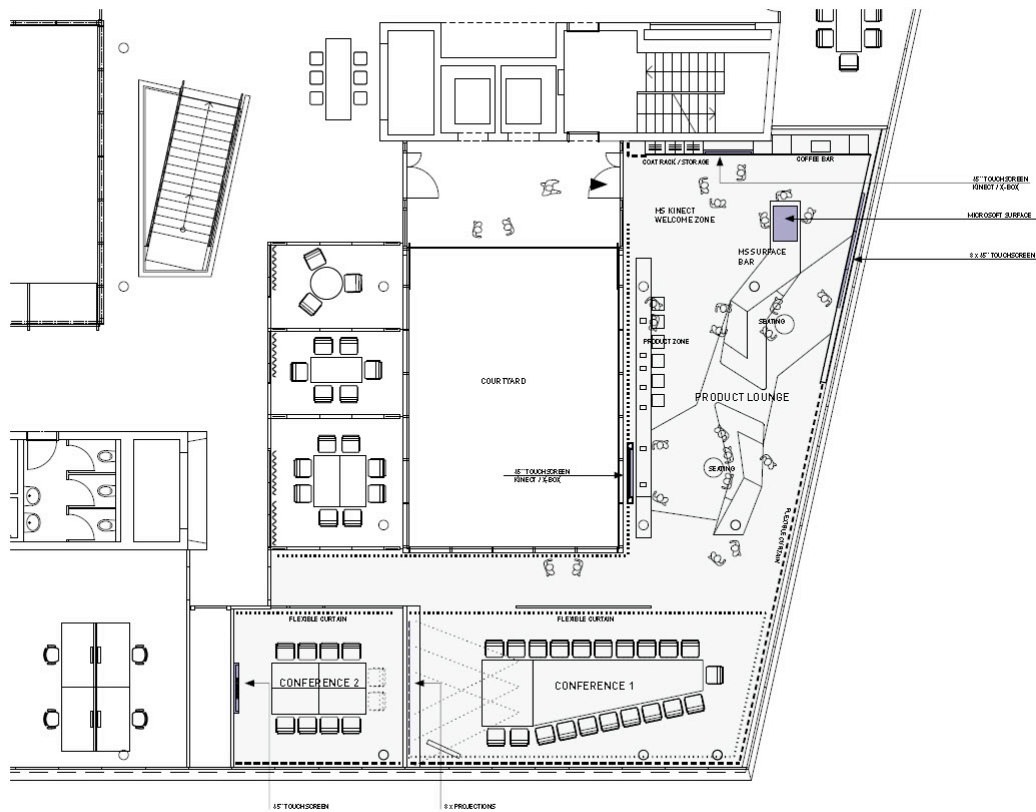
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Different communication scenarios are possible at the curving counters: A product presentation can be given, standing up or sitting down, or one can move from group presentation to one-on-one dialog immediately. The flowing transition between standing conversation and hands-on seated presentation makes it easy for the Microsoft advisor team to respond individually to different customers, products, group sizes or types of presentation. The media and technology integrated into the piece of furniture form the basis for this kind of direct product presentation.

Apart from information racks, the surrounding black glass wall also has other uses such as cloakroom, tea galley, catering and storage space. In addition the flat, black surface is used as a projection screen. Graphic patterns have been affixed to the glass walls to provide privacy screens – especially important for the room-dividing elements of the conference rooms. As decorations, however, they also transport the design thematic of reflection and absorption, breaking apart and coming together. Sensual atmosphere and cutting-edge technology enter into a highly effective symbiosis at the Microsoft Briefing Center.

FLOORPLAN



MICROSOFT BRIEFING CENTER by **COAST** OFFICE ARCHITECTURE

PROJECT INFORMATION

- Project:** Microsoft Briefing Center, Switzerland
- Architects:** COASToffice architecture, Germany - www.coastoffice.de
- Construction supervision:** RBSgroup
- Photographer:** ©David Franck Photography
- Material:** HI-MACS®, S22 Black – www.himacs.eu



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WHAT IS HI-MACS®?

A new generation acrylic stone, **HI-MACS®** is a material that is designed and produced by **LG HAUSYS**, a world leader in the technology sector, and distributed by **LG HAUSYS EUROPE**, based in Geneva (Switzerland).

Due to its thermoformable properties, its wide range of colours, its translucency and the invisible joins, HI-MACS® is able to provide an infinite number of designs and exclusive finishings. Moreover, this material can be worked as easily as wood as it is easy to handle and to cut.

As regards hygiene, HI-MACS® does not absorb humidity and is highly resistant to stains. Its smooth and non-porous surface means that it is not penetrated by liquids. Completely sterile, this material is easy to clean and to repair: small scratches can be removed simply by using a sponge or a soft cloth.

Unlike other similar materials on the market, HI-MACS® is the only Solid Surface to enjoy official **European Technical Approval (ETA) for façades** – for Alpine White S728 colour – which was awarded by the European Organisation for Technical Approvals (EOTA).

During the manufacturing process, HI-MACS® is heated to very high temperatures by means of an advanced firing heat treatment. This procedure makes HI-MACS® different from other types of acrylic stone, giving it better uniformity and making it more resistant to shocks and UV rays.

Acrylic stone provides infinite possibilities for personalised designs and inspires professionals from all over the world. **Zaha Hadid, Jean Nouvel, Rafael Moneo, Karim Rashid** and **David Chipperfield**, among others, have completed fabulous projects using HI-MACS®, from kitchens to bathrooms, including decorative items, in hotels as well as in museums, shopping centres and on external façades.

HI-MACS® is available in around 100 different colours in various ranges; **Solids, Granite, Sand, Pearl & Quartz, Volcanics, Lucent, Eden, Galaxy** and **Marmo**, in different thicknesses of 3, 6, 9 and 12 mm, depending on the shade. HI-MACS® holds a number of international certifications with regard to the environment, hygiene and fire resistance, such as **ISO 9001** and **14001, Greenguard, NSF, LGA** and **IMO MED** certification (Modules B and D), among others.

HI-MACS® stands out for its excellent quality service, guaranteed by its **Quality Club** programme, consisting of a network of expert manufacturers and approved distributors across Europe. HI-MACS® offers the longest guarantee service on the market: 15 years.

For more information:

www.himacs.eu

HI-MACS® The New Generation

Inspired by Architecture

You can take advantage of the HI-MACS® [newsletter](#) and [Press service](#) to upload all your press releases and visuals of your latest news.

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