

RZAPS Designs New Industrial and Energetic Midtown Manhattan Office for CB Insights



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By Quinn Halman



The blues in the exterior lobby set the tone for the color theme throughout. Photography by Ty Cole Studio.

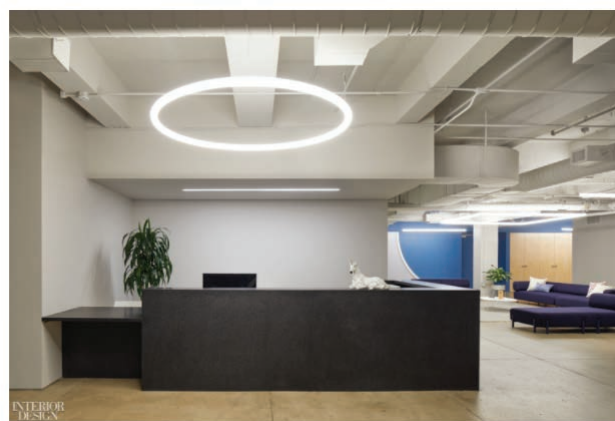
Growth is good. When it leads to an office upgrade, it's great. **CB Insights**, a data-research firm founded in 2008 that assists businesses in trend forecasting, recently relocated their 300 employees into a Midtown Manhattan building with the help of **Ricardo Zurita Architecture & Planning**. CBI is a repeat client for RZAPS, which conceived the company's previous workplace in 2016, when the team was half its current size. For this project, RZAPS transformed a 40,000-square-foot full floor into a headquarters that's not only flexible and modern but also reflective of the young staff

and urban surroundings—and that's full of resolute spirit.



One of the freestanding, soundproof glass "pods." Photography by Ty Cole Studio.

With the sprawling footprint, RZAPS principal Ricardo Zurita saw the opportunity to create a microcosm of the city itself, one that is diverse and dynamic and stimulates spontaneity and creativity among CBI employees. Zurita achieved this by populating the office with various freestanding structures that function as meeting rooms and to demarcate zones. Inside the volumes, felt paneling on walls and ceilings optimize acoustics. Elsewhere, Zurita and his team mapped out two main work areas: a large open one for the 220 employees involved in sales, marketing, and administration, plus a quieter, more tranquil environment for the 80-person engineering and programming team. The two are connected by a long main corridor that bisects the entire floor and features the cafeteria at one end and the briefing room, a large multipurpose all-hands space, at the other.



The CBI office is layered with design elements from the past and present. Photography by Ty Cole Studio.



Angular neon lights continue from the cafeteria into Main Street. Photography by Ty Cole Studio.

Born out of necessity as well as intent, with a streamlined budget, the aesthetics of the new CBI HQ were more strategic rather than extravagant. Moving away from typical commercial interiors, RZAPS kept the mechanical ducts, pipes, and data raceways systems exposed as well as the terrazzo flooring unearthed during demolition, all working together to yield an industrial, energetic character—just like CBI itself.



Casual furniture and booths for single occupancy are placed in the work spaces creating separation between zones. Photography by Ty Cole Studio.



INTERIOR
DESIGN

The flexibility of the office layout and the variety of spaces allow it to be adaptable and friendly to social distancing. Photography by Ty Cole Studio.



The carpets and panels create optimal acoustics for both open and closed spaces. Photography by Ty Cole Studio.