Whatsapp And How It Reached 1.3 Without Stopping.

Three and a half years ago, Facebook [announced its plan to acquire messaging phenom WhatsApp](https://www.fastcompany.com/3026678/facebook-is-buying-whatsapp-for-16-billion) for $19 billion—a price tag that was a head-snapper at the time, and remains one today. But it was only in January of this year that the WhatsApp team, which has worked out of a succession of Silicon Valley offices, moved onto the Facebook campus in Menlo Park. It occupies a wing of Building 10, where its new workspace sits behind doors with a sign making a request I can’t remember seeing at any other tech company: “Please keep noise to a minimum.” Once you get inside, the message is reinforced with additional library-esque signage such as “Loud Zone.”  
  
When I ask WhatsApp CEO Jan Koum about the unexpected emphasis on quietude, he tells me that the company has found that its engineers get their best work done in a distraction-free environment. “We’re not a typical bunch,” explains Koum, who cofounded the company with his friend and fellow Yahoo alum Brian Acton in 2009. “We’re a little bit older and a little bit crankier than probably a typical college graduate. So we’ve always preferred to have a very quiet office environment.”  
  
WhatsApp’s space was indeed strikingly tranquil on the day I visited. But the company’s belief in the value of concentrated effort runs far deeper than a mere desire to discourage unnecessary chatter. It’s embraced the mantra “Focus is the new ‘F’ word” and emblazoned it on refrigerator-style magnets that employees have stuck on surfaces throughout the office. And a WhatsApp staffer informs me that a colorful mural by Bay Area artist Ian Ross, which looks pleasantly abstract to me, actually has focus as its theme.  
  
Most important, it’s easy to see how WhatsApp’s dedication to focus is expressed in the app itself, which made its name as a free, approachable alternative to paying a wireless carrier for text messages and has added only a handful of new features—such as voice and video calling—since.   
  
Sources: Fastcompany.com