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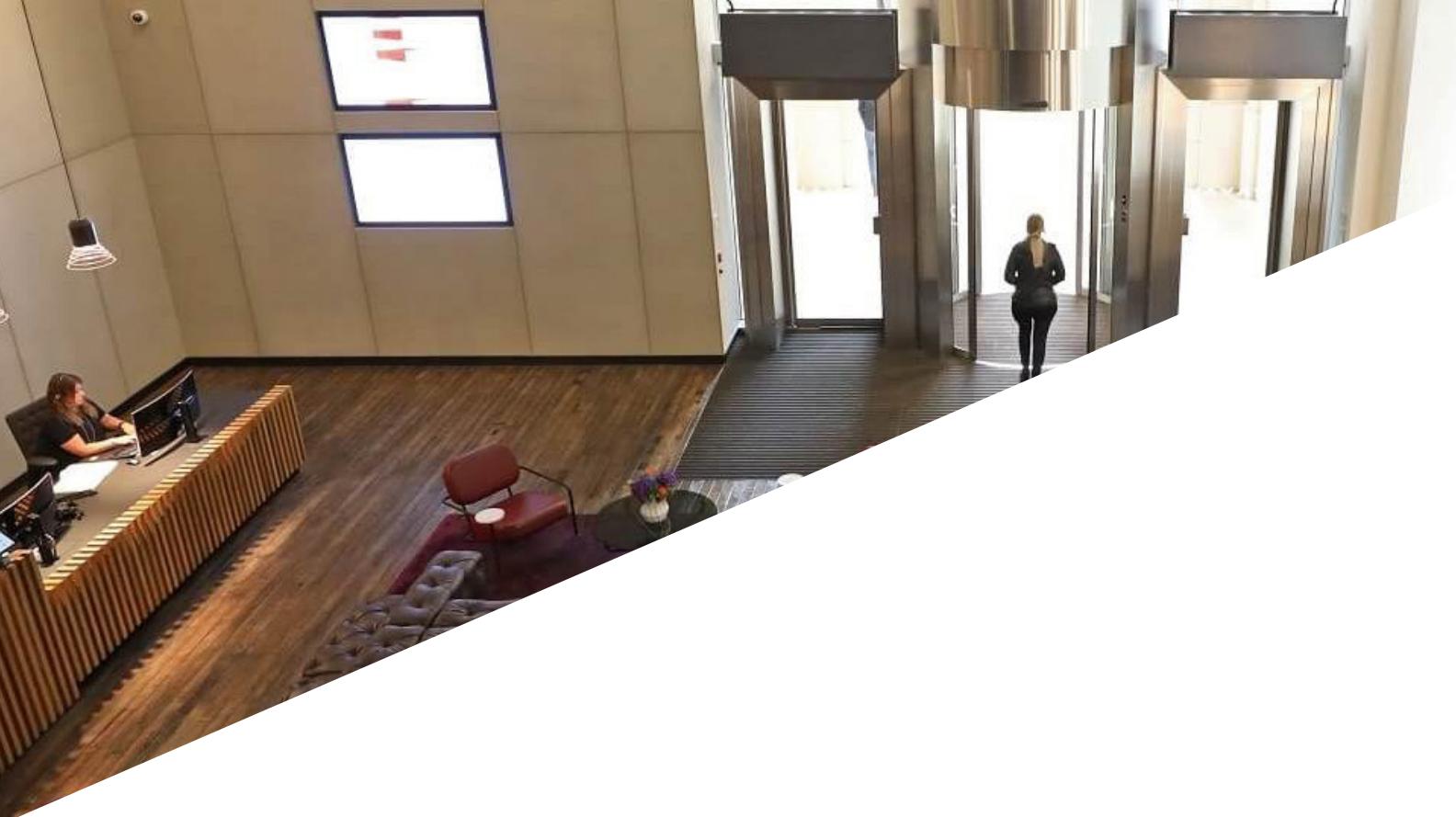
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# How to make a reception area more inviting

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Your guide to creating a reception area  
that people won't want to leave.



# INTRODUCTION

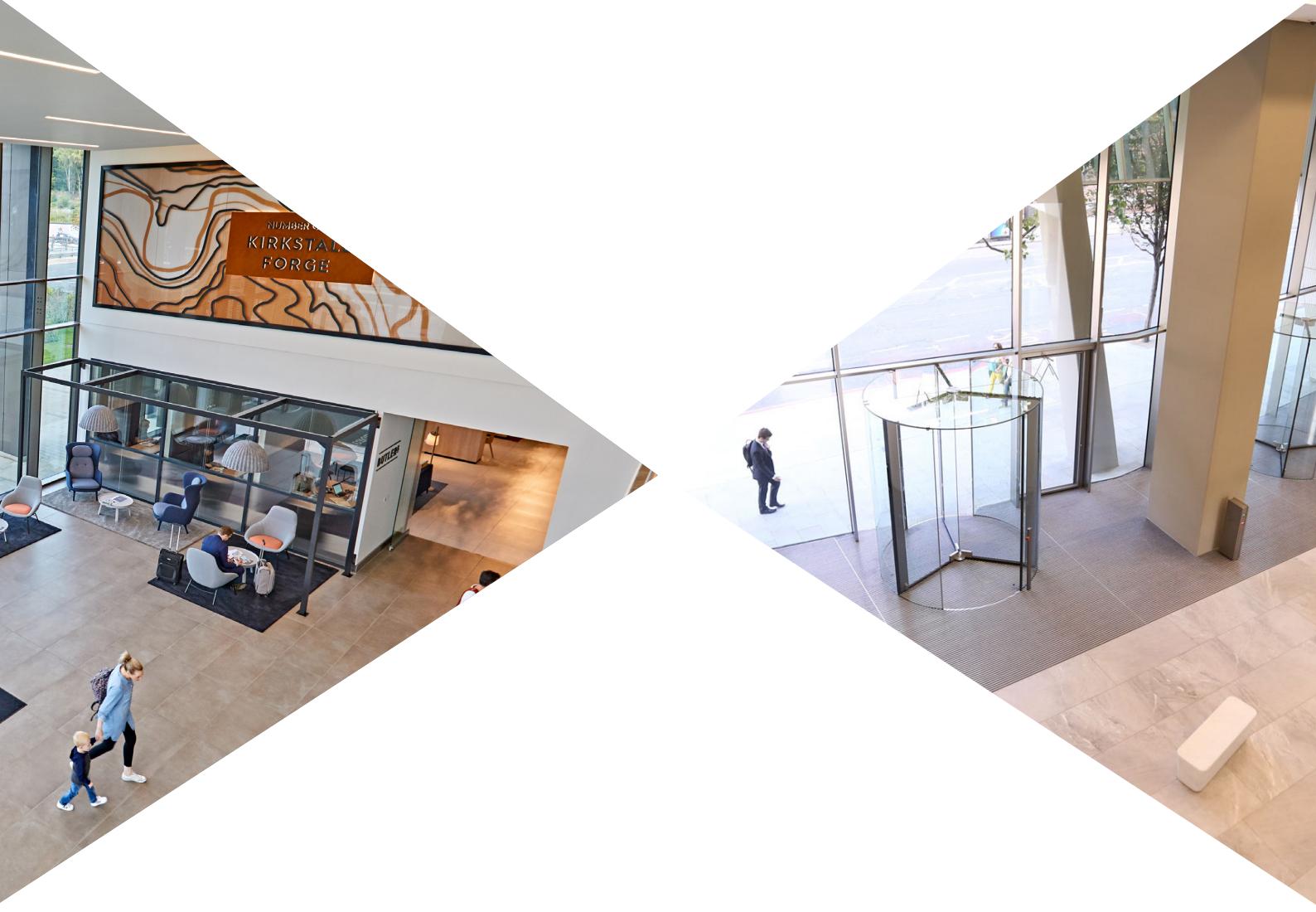
You will never get a second chance to make a good first impression on your visitors, so your reception area is key to showing off your company and reflecting what it is all about. The reception area is the first physical space your visitors interact with, so ensuring it communicates your company values is vital.

Within milliseconds, your visitors have formed an opinion of your company and its personality, the atmosphere and the type of employees that work there, so businesses need to create a memorable experience to stay within visitors' minds.

Whether you're an ad agency, financial institution, hotel, university or medical practice, your reception space should have as much thought put into it as any other area of the business. Creating the perfect first impression with your reception area could be a huge contributing factor in winning your dream client, attracting the best talent or building the best possible reputation for your business.

# RECEPTION AREA DESIGN

Your reception area is a functional space, where visitors are greeted and met by the person they are looking to see. It is important to consider the message you are trying to portray to your visitors and your reception space should reflect this. Consider the meaning of your brand and the values it has so that you can apply these to creating a reception space that truly mirrors what your business is all about.





## RECEPTION AREA DESIGN

# Create a Focal Point

Arguably the most important thing for your company to portray is professionalism and expertise within your industry, and that starts the moment they enter your building. In most cases, the desk is the focal point in any reception area, so think about what message your desk is sending across. Is it cluttered? Tired-looking? In need of a refurb? Your reception desk can say a lot about your business, so make sure that you keep it tidy, presentable and ensure it is a true reflection of your business.

Focal lighting can also be used to create a welcoming reception area by drawing attention to the best areas of the workspace. If you have awards to show off or unique design features to display, you can use focal lighting to attract attention. Harsh lighting should be replaced with softer LED illumination, which is similar to natural light and creates less harsh tones. The perfect focal lighting in your reception space will help to create a comforting environment for your visitors and will add to that all important first impression.



## RECEPTION AREA DESIGN

# Importance of Natural Lighting

Light has a big influence on our mood and emotions, so the lighting in your reception area has an important role to play.

Natural lighting is much more welcoming and gentler on the eyes compared to artificial lighting and has a proven benefit to human wellbeing, so altering your space to allow as much natural light in as possible will make a huge impact on how visitors and employees perceive your workspace. Try to arrange your furniture to maximise the natural light entering your space or if you lack natural lighting, you could bring the outside in by incorporating natural finishes, fresh tones and biophilic elements.

The ideal reception environment should have a welcoming, comfortable atmosphere, which can be greatly influenced by the mood you create with your lighting.



## RECEPTION AREA DESIGN

# Utilising the Space

One of the most important elements of the reception area is its functionality; it has to successfully provide the perfect entrance space where visitors can be met and also serve as the front door to the business.

Your reception desk should be clearly labelled and ideally branded so visitors know exactly where to go as soon as they enter the building; or if your desk is a little harder to find, ensure you have signs to direct your visitors to the correct area. Signage should also be used to show visitors to other areas in the office to make their visit go as smoothly as possible.

Entrance Matting can also help direct visitors by creating clear pathways to key areas such as the reception desk, escalators or stairwells. These visual cues can help direct the footfall through your business whilst also performing their primary function of keeping your space clean and safe.

Consider the disabled access both into your building and throughout the rest of your office space as well as the seating arrangement for guests whilst they wait. Your seating area needs to be comfortable and should offer some sort of distraction for your visitors while they wait, such as industry-related magazines or a TV with a business-related slide show on the wall.

In a smaller reception area, you can make improvements to maximise the space available and improve its functionality. You could downsize your furniture so that it is less bulky and more practical, or you could use digital sign-in screens to remove the need for a large reception desk. Keeping the space as bright and airy as possible will assist in creating a pleasant experience for your visitors and will allow them to get a feel for your business straight away.



## RECEPTION AREA DESIGN

# Finding Balance

Colours are notorious for creating a vibrant and exciting environment and are perfect for showcasing your corporate identity. Well thought out colours, furnishings, floor coverings and wall treatments can all aid in creating the right first impression.

Keep in mind your brand colours, but also consider the meaning of the colours you are using and how they have an impact on your visitors' mood and emotions. Blue and green shades are known to represent calm and imply security, honesty and loyalty, making them ideal colours to use in a reception space. Natural and neutral tones can help make an area feel brighter and airier, so it may be best to incorporate this colour palette if your reception area is relatively small.

Using different textures and finishes throughout the reception area can help the room feel more inviting and comfortable. Having plants in your workplace will help soften the space, create a more natural environment and will also improve air quality and lower stress; Biophilic design in the workplace has been shown to improve wellbeing and increase productivity, making it an important design consideration in any office environment.



## RECEPTION AREA DESIGN

# Patterns, Rhythm and Layout

Patterns can be used to add personality and visual energy to a space and can amplify your business values. They can be applied to the furniture design, flooring design or wall coverings in your reception area to create the illusion of a larger space, create a sense of movement or mimic the patterns found in nature.

The reception area can have heavy footfall throughout the day, so a durable entrance matting system is beneficial for both practical and aesthetic purposes. Utilising a product such as INTRAShape allows you to transform your reception to leave a lasting impression by combining the five polygonal shapes and coloured fibre inserts to create endless design possibilities. INTRAShape floor tiles not only form an effective entrance mat to protect the flooring throughout the rest of the workplace, but also create a unique pattern and design that is representative of your business.

The layout of your reception area also says a lot about your business. Are you making the best use of your space? Are you putting the comfort of your visitors first? Little things such as positioning your seating area away from drafty doors or windows can go a long way for visitor satisfaction. Having a well-utilised, professionally presented space makes it clear that you are a well-organised business that cares about making the right first impression.

# FIRST IMPRESSIONS & THE HALO EFFECT

First impressions can be highly accurate, and studies have found that we make a relatively good assessment about a situation within just a few seconds\*. The importance of creating a good first impression for your business can be paramount to its success and these critical judgements about your values and capabilities are being made in your reception area.

First impressions have a direct link with the Halo Effect, whereby if something is perceived to be good at one thing, it is perceived to be good at another. This theory implies that an attractive appearance can raise the perceived value, thus suggesting that an attractive office space will improve your perception of the business. Conversely, if a building isn't well presented, clean or looked after in a professional manner, it may indicate that the service provided will be of less value. If your reception area is cluttered, unorganised or tired, it implies that the quality of your offerings is likely to be the same.



**I enter a building, see a room, and – in the fraction of a second – have this feeling about it."**

Peter Zumthor, 2009 Pritzker Prize winner and 2013 RIBA Royal Gold Medallist



\* <https://www.businessinsider.com/only-7-seconds-to-make-first-impression-2013-4?IR=T>



## FIRST IMPRESSIONS & THE HALO EFFECT

# Maximising First Impressions with Entrance Matting

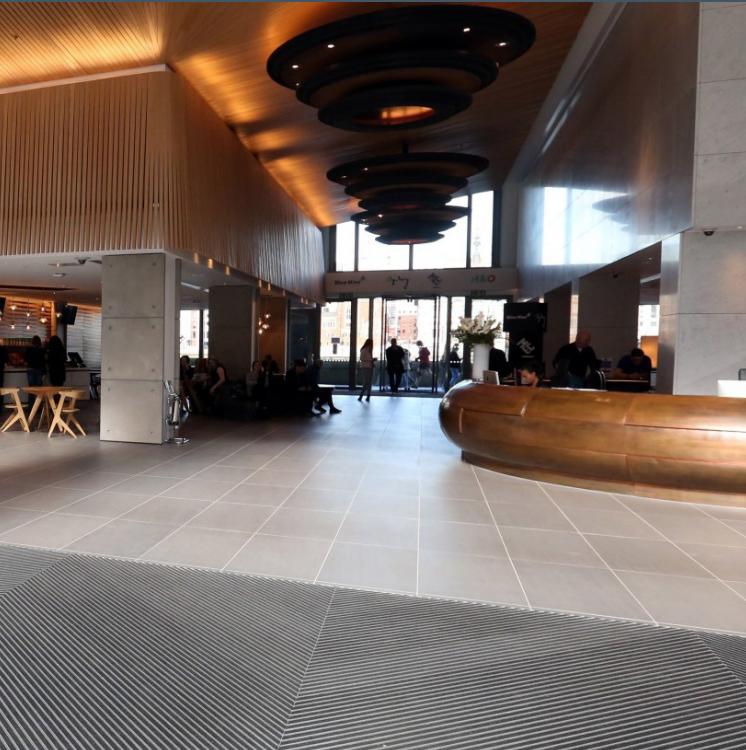
As well as having a welcoming and pleasing appearance, your reception area provides a key function in the transition from outdoors to inside.

With high footfall throughout the day, your reception area should have appropriate flooring that looks good and keeps the high traffic area between the outdoors and indoors clean, tidy and safe. The flooring you choose at your entrance should be functional in removing dirt and debris from visitors' shoes so that it is not carried through to other areas of the office space, but it can also be used to add an element of design to the work space.

INTRAShape entrance matting allows you to create your own matting design with a choice of various shapes and colours, and is ideal for entrances with multi-directional traffic. With infinite design permutations, INTRAShape is a unique flooring option that uses stunning polygon shapes to enhance your entrance area. The nature of this flooring system allows you to create endless unique patterns to reflect the brand personality of your business.

# RECEPTION AREA INSPIRATION

To get you inspired, see how others are creating a great first impression with their reception area design, encapsulating their culture and utilising the space to their best ability.





#### RECEPTION AREA INSPIRATION

## The Buckley Building Clerkenwell

Working with INTRAsystems designers, the unique INTRAdisc system was developed to create a subtle yet distinctive feature, complimenting the whole reception design at the Buckley Building in Clerkenwell. The disc system adds to the modern design of the reception area and creates a unique pathway to the reception's focal point.





#### RECEPTION AREA INSPIRATION

## 240 Blackfriars

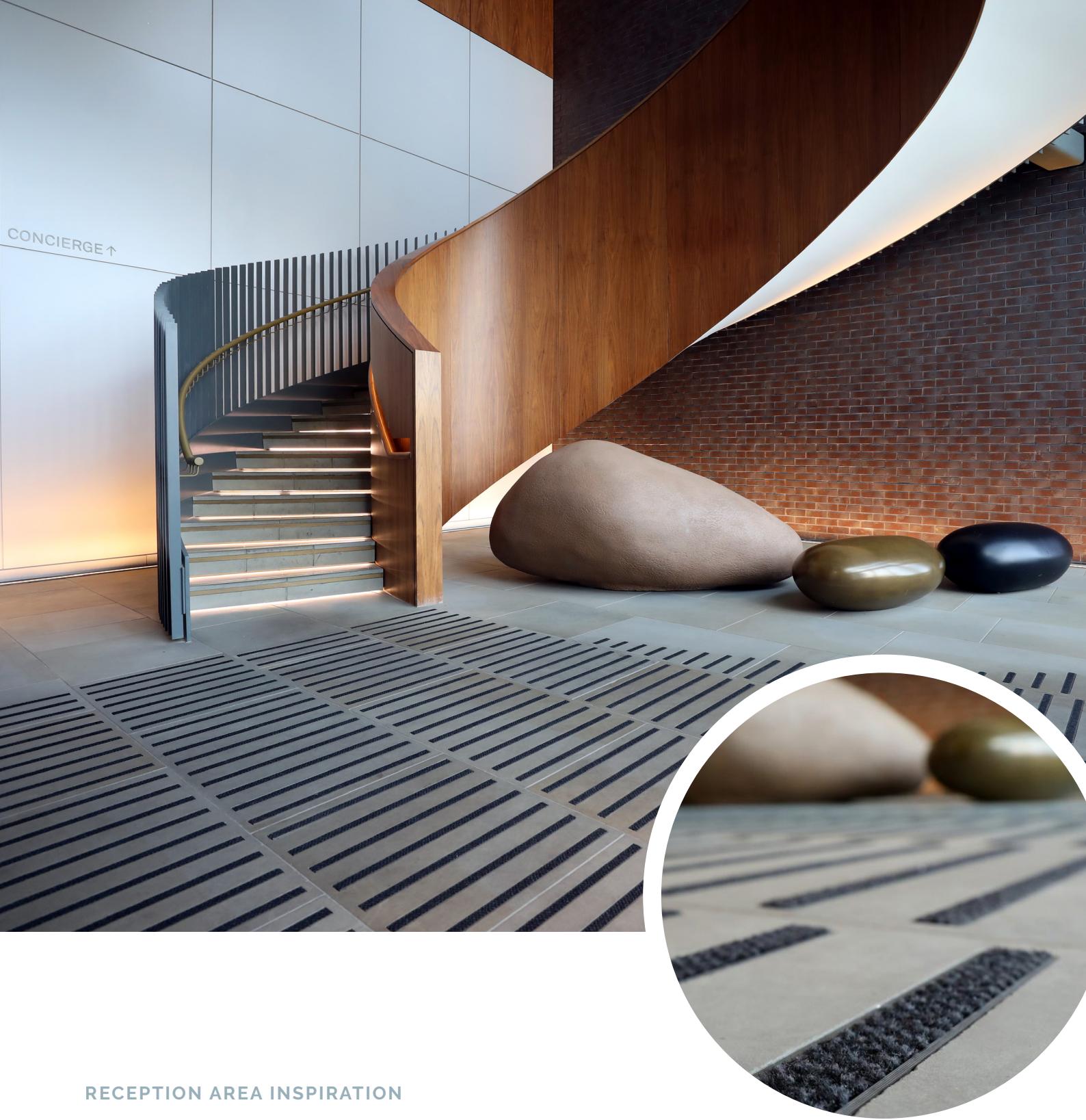
INTRAFlex XT Heavy Duty Entrance Matting was chosen to protect the clean, simple reception design at 240 Blackfriars. Installed in and around the inset revolving doors, the striped pattern of the matting is congruent to the modern features in the reception area and complements the striped pattern throughout. The utilisation of neutral tones along with lots of natural lighting creates a bright and welcoming reception area.



#### RECEPTION AREA INSPIRATION

## Sea Containers House

Working with architects TP Bennett, this unique chevron pattern installation was designed using the INTRAflex XT Heavy Duty Entrance Matting. The resulting entrance mat creates an attractive feature that enhances the modern reception design. The contrast of warm and light tones creates a welcoming atmosphere, with a strong focus on the unique reception desk beyond.



#### RECEPTION AREA INSPIRATION

## Plimsoll Building

A great example of how entrance matting can integrate into the overall reception design and lead people into the building is the architecturally divine 'Plimsoll Building'. When people first enter this building, the reception area does everything it can to put them at ease by guiding them to the right place through the use of an entrance matting pathway. This is a great way to ensure anyone who enters the building feels confident of where they need to go and what they need to do.

# IN SUMMARY

Ultimately, understanding and using reception design to emphasise your business values is key to creating a highly functional space that people really enjoy spending their time in. Remember, everything from the quality of your furniture down to the expression on your face will contribute to that all important first impression, so getting it right can be paramount to your business's reputation and success.

With over 30 years' experience, INTRAsystems has the knowledge and expertise to create stunning entrance matting designs to enhance your reception and create a powerful first impression for your business.

[Contact us](#) today for more information on how we can transform your reception area.

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