



**FORTUNE 500 STRATEGIES
FOR OPTIMIZING
WORKPLACE SOUND**

—

**THREE APPROACHES
FROM THREE COMPANIES**

A NEW APPROACH TO WORKPLACE SOUND

Historically, sound in workplaces has been addressed from a one-dimensional, functional standpoint: Noise mitigation.

NOISE MITIGATION

Noise usually stems from man-made sources and is a leading cause of stress and distraction in workplaces. Common culprits include conversations, loud air conditioning, construction and device notifications.

Efforts in the workplace normally focus on reducing or masking this noise. While this is very important, noise has persistently remained a top complaint in workplaces for decades, indicating that mitigation is only part of the solution.

SOUND FOR GOOD

Not all sound is detrimental or unwelcome.

The three companies in this report adopt a holistic approach to workplace sound. They not only mitigate negative noise but also introduce positive experiential sound – a practice known as “soundscaping”.

Scientific evidence shows that certain sounds, particularly those from the natural world, can significantly improve employee wellbeing in many ways. Incorporating this understanding into a workplace is essential for creating a productive and pleasant work environment.

FUNCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

- Reduce distractions
- Increase acoustic privacy



EXPERIENTIAL OBJECTIVES

- Create diverse spaces
- Reduce stress
- Evoke positive emotions
- Design for neurodiversity
- Connect to place
- Connect to nature

THIS REPORT

We'll take you through three soundscaping strategies implemented by different Fortune 500 companies.

Whether you choose to integrate all of these approaches, selectively adopt certain elements or chart your own course, our goal is to inspire you with the design opportunities that soundscaping brings to a workplace and provide you with a better understanding of its potential and inherent flexibility.

WHAT IS SOUNDSCAPING?

Soundscaping is the act of bringing positive, scientifically designed sound into a building.

Soundscaping systems typically use generative and responsive technology to introduce beneficial sounds in a way that is intelligent and sensitive. The goal is to create spaces that are not only functional but also improve human health and experience.

COMPANY 1

Strategy: A research-led pilot

COMPANY 2

Strategy: Cultural soundscaping

COMPANY 3

Strategy: A scalable rollout



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A RESEARCH-LED PILOT

INTRODUCTION

If soundscaping is uncharted territory, a research-led pilot can demonstrate its impact and help organizations learn more about their employees' needs.

This company undertook a very comprehensive testing program. For others, it may be more practical to choose on one or two metrics that align most closely with key workplace objectives.

HOW THEY DID IT

The organization selected one floor of a building on their campus and installed six soundscaping zones. These zones encompassed various environments including open work areas, meeting rooms, transition spaces and restrooms.

Different nature-based soundscaping was selected for each zone. It performed functional roles, like improving privacy and reducing speech distraction, and also varied from zone-to-zone in its stimulation level and content characteristics.

Over sixteen weeks, a specialist research team carried out a rigorous testing program including surveys, canvassing, focus groups and technical acoustic measurements.

OBJECTIVE MEASURES OF PRIVACY AND DISTRACTION

The Speech Transmission Index was used to assess speech intelligibility and acoustic privacy. Measurements were taken both with and without the soundscaping. Results showed that the new soundscaping reduced speech distraction by 84%, thereby also enhancing privacy for those who were speaking.

TASK PERFORMANCE

The research team also evaluated task performance with and without the soundscaping. Cognitive performance was assessed through puzzle questions. Employees' cognitive performance improved by 31% with the soundscaping.

Employees also rated their ability to collaborate with and without Moodsonic. The initiative improved people's perceived ability to collaborate by 19%.

SPEECH DISTRACTION

-84%

COGNITIVE PERFORMANCE

+31%

ABILITY TO COLLABORATE

+19%

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A RESEARCH-LED PILOT



QUALITATIVE FEEDBACK

The qualitative feedback, gathered through focus groups and canvassing, gave depth and nuance to the other findings. The researchers could understand how soundscaping was affecting stress and restoration...

“It makes me feel at peace.”

“I like it. It’s relaxing.”

Employees spoke the sound’s ability to minimize distractions.

“It helps to tune people out.”

“It neutralise other sounds. It means that others don’t need to hear me speaking when whispering, and I don’t hear aspects of background noise.”

“It gives more privacy.”

And simultaneously bring new life to the space.

“The space doesn’t feel as cold and empty. It feels like the building is filled up with people.

“It feels like I’m sitting somewhere else. Moodsonic goes well with my beautiful, green view. I felt like I was sitting outside.”

“It’s cool to go from one zone to another.”

This feedback also helped the company to fine-tune their approach in each zone.

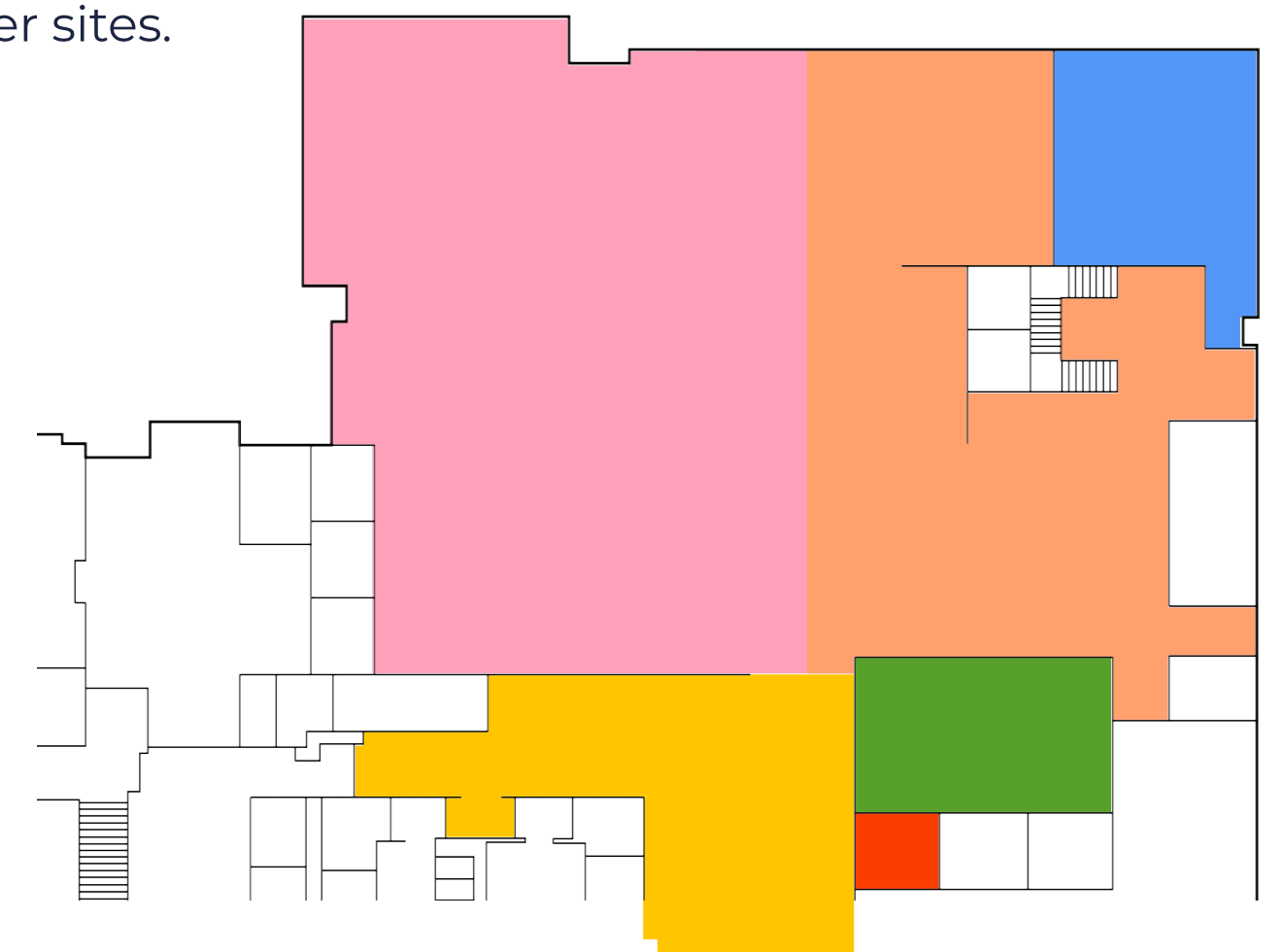
“We like the variety that the birdsong brings.”

“The more energizing content is useful after lunch because we’re often tired and sleepy.”

“There’s a lot of office noise at the end of the day, so that’s when it’s most useful.”

“I like to know what’s playing and where so I can choose my own experience.”

Overall, the in-depth research program gave the workplace team useful next steps for fine-tuning the installation and scaling to other sites.

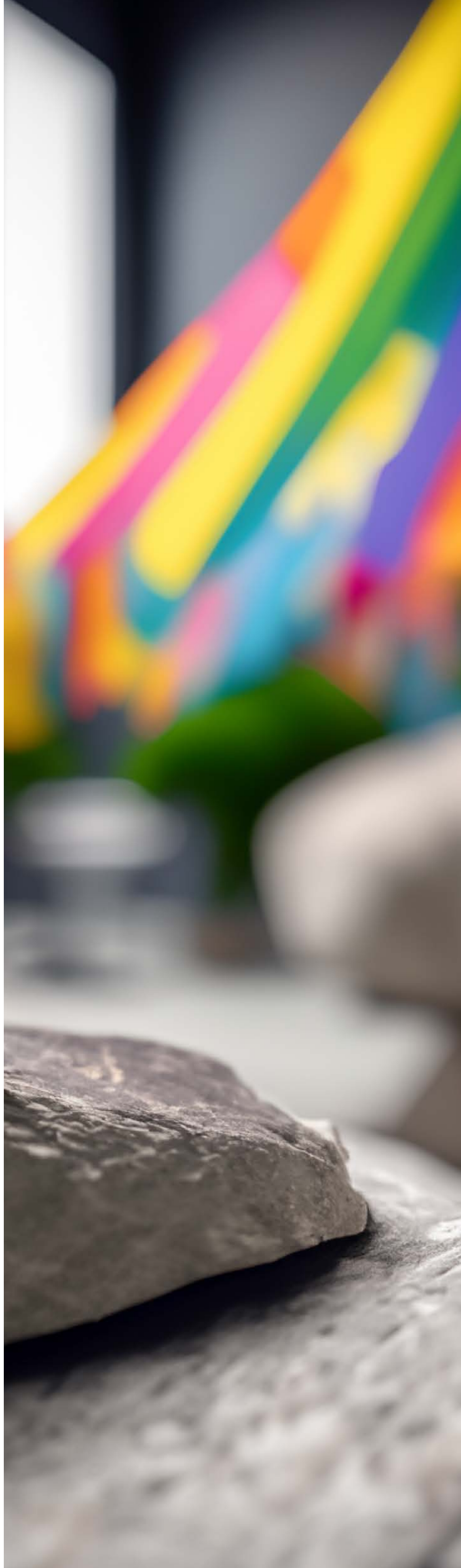


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CULTURAL SOUNDSCAPING

INTRODUCTION

Others companies undertake more intuitive, emotional approaches. By integrating local culture and surroundings, companies can foster a deeper connection between employees and their environment.



HOW THEY DID IT

A CELEBRATION OF PLACE AND CULTURE

The interior design concepts in this workplace are inspired by North Indian culture and the Himalayan landscapes. Inside, employees encounter mountain peaks, forest trails, monsoon rains, icy lakes and mountain villages.

These spaces are brought to life with soundscaping that reflects and amplifies the visual design. It combines natural sounds from the Himalayas with traditional musical instruments from the region — like the tanpura (a long, stringed instrument) and the bansuri flute.

IT FEELS LIKE HOME

Employee feedback



As we all know, employees often complain about sound in offices. Soundscaping came into the picture when we were exploring ways to minimize this problem and create the best and most peaceful experiences for employees.

The entire floor plate was divided into sections, with each playing different bespoke soundscaping themes, tuned to help employees easily focus and work.

It was much appreciated by employees, who told us that they had never experienced anything like this before.

Moodsonic and their team are the best in soundscaping. The way it improved the office vibe is unmatched.



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CULTURAL SOUNDSCAPING

**IN THE QUIET
HUM OF THE
OFFICE SPACE,
WHERE SILENCE
AND SOUND
INTERLACE.**

**MOODSONIC'S
WHISPERS
SOFTLY PLAY,
A SOUNDSCAPE
TO BRIGHTEN
THE WORKDAY.**

A poem, written by the workplace
project manager

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A SCALABLE ROLLOUT

INTRODUCTION

Moodsonic's soundscaping is a scalable technology, which companies have delivered in global rollouts across sites and continents. We've developed specific tools to centrally monitor sites and support teams locally.

HOW THEY DID IT

For this organization, scaling combined a centralized testing program with a strong focus on local change management.

CENTRALIZED TESTING

The company has validated the effectiveness of Moodsonic's soundscaping through various research initiatives in three continents. This includes biometric data collection from wearables, subjective preferences and productivity data.

LOCAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Moodsonic works closely with GSK's local teams to prioritize communication so that employees understand the purpose of the initiative and the options available to them.

MULTI-SENSORY AND NEURODIVERSE DESIGN

Moodsonic is also used as part of GSK's multi-sensory design strategy in conjunction with visual and scent-based initiatives. And, the soundscaping elevates neurodiverse design strategies, with a thoughtful, zoned approach.



Moodsonic makes the workspace better because of the atmosphere. It makes people more focused and peaceful in the office. We get good feedback from people that when they're at home, they really miss having the sound around them for better focus to do their work.

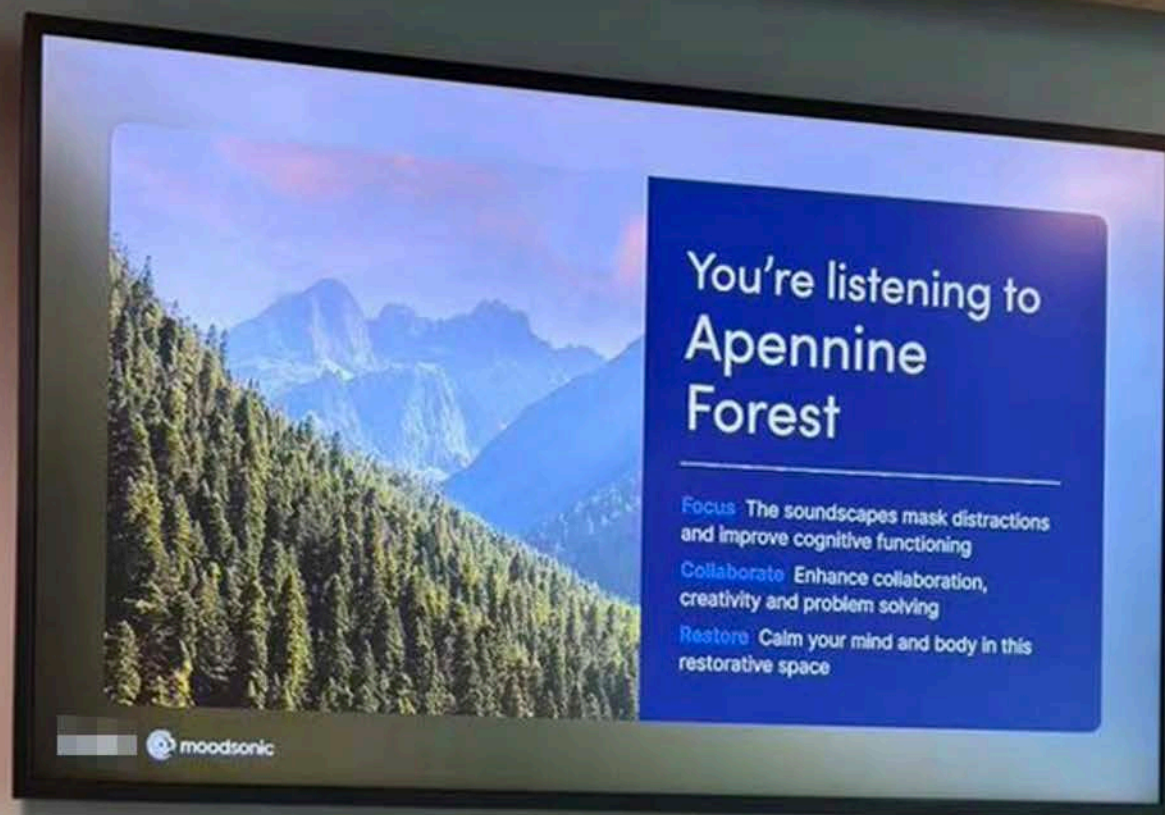
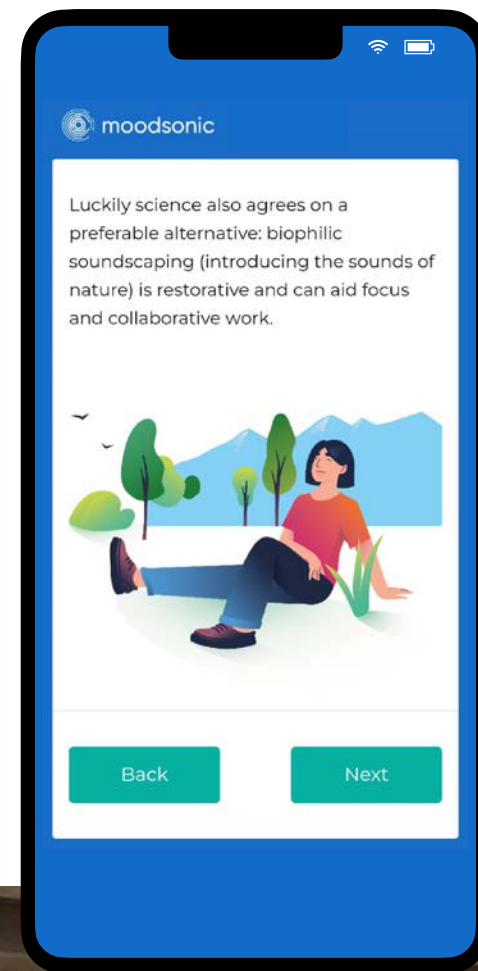
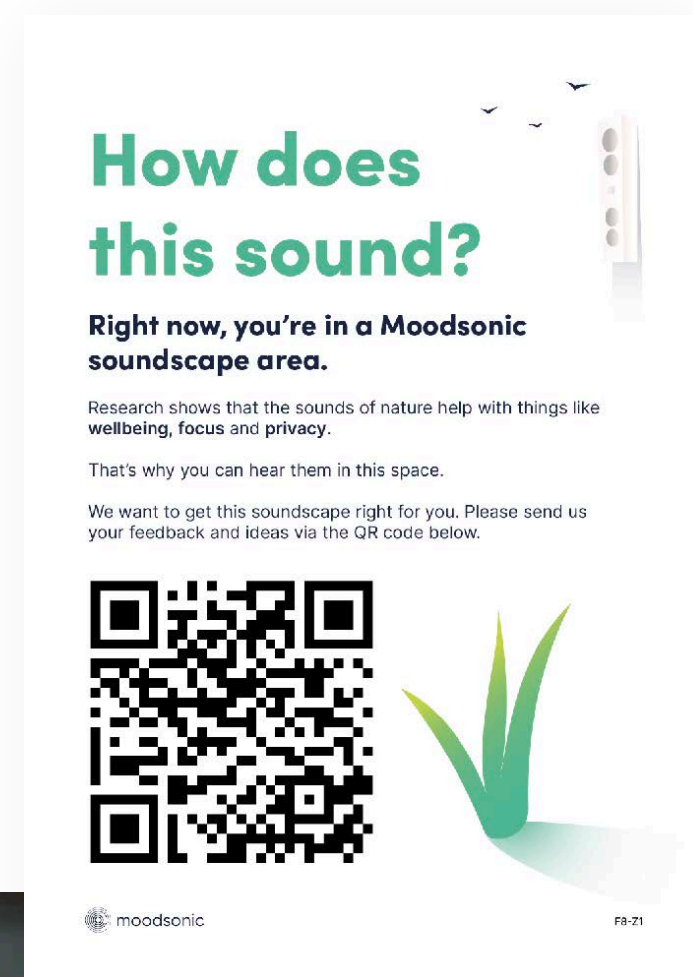
Operations Manager, Europe

Operationally, this is a great tool. A lot of things that we do – ensuring that employees are comfortable, that they are working at their optimal abilities – this tool has helped them greatly in terms of adjusting the mood according to the environment.

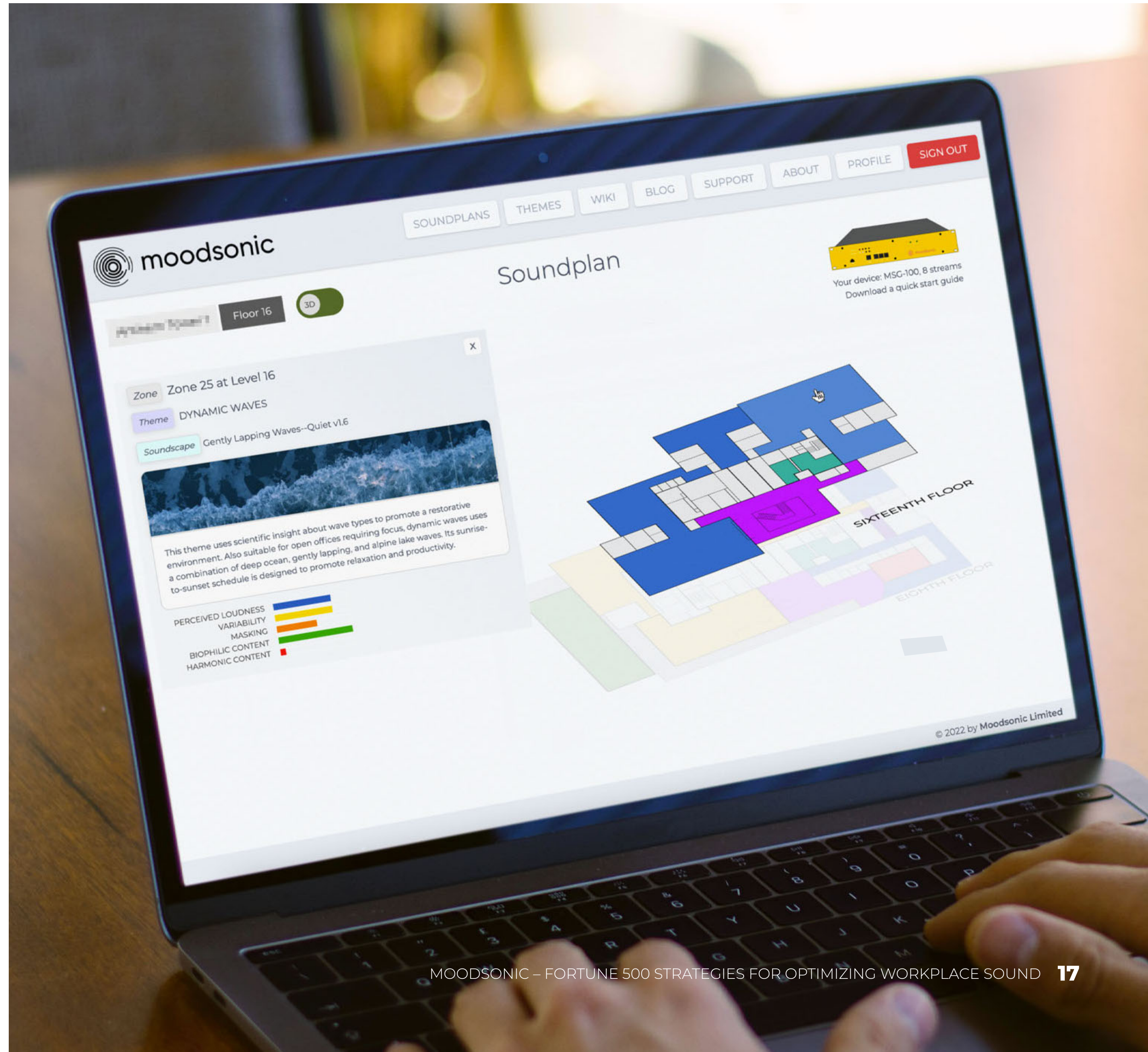
Operations Manager, Asia

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A SCALABLE ROLLOUT



Change management plays a pivotal role in how the company implements soundscaping at scale.



NEXT STEPS

ALIGN SOUND WITH YOUR WORKPLACE GOALS

Some of your objectives might be directly related to sound – things like privacy, distraction or reducing certain troublesome noises.

But be sure to consider all your key objectives through the lens of sound.

Sound impacts virtually every aspect of daily life and workplace experience. Improving people's sonic experiences can significantly contribute to many wider workplace goals.

For a deeper understanding about the science of sound and how it affects people, refer to our report [Soundscaping for Positive Spaces](#) or reach out to us for a free consultation.

CATER TO YOUR DIVERSE EMPLOYEE NEEDS

Recognize that employees have varied needs and responses to their environment. Our report, [Soundscaping for Neurodiversity](#), provides insights into creating more inclusive workplaces through thoughtful sound design.

EVALUATE TO YOUR WORKPLACES

Take the time to consciously listen to your office spaces.

- Evaluate different areas: Move through various zones in your office.
- Observe at different times: Pay attention to how sound varies throughout the day.
- Reflect on characteristics: How would you describe the auditory features of each space? What feelings do they evoke for you?
- Analyze variability: Note how sound characteristics change across spaces and times.
- Differentiate sounds: Identify which sounds are natural and which are man-made.

COMPLEMENTARY SOUNDSCAPING CONSULTANCY AND DESIGN

Interested in optimizing your workplace with soundscaping? We can talk to learn more about your objectives, explain how our technology works and create a complimentary design for your space.

Contact us on info@moodsonic.com or [book a call directly](#).

LEARN MORE ABOUT SOUNDSCAPING

Moodsonic delivers soundscaping to workplaces around the world, along with local partners.

If you'd like to speak with us about your offices, please reach out via the contact details below.

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