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Less Grind More Hustle

by [Lisa Dawson](#) in [Business](#)[Bookmark](#)

Do you remember the movie “Office Space,” where a young worker is chronicled in a miserable job at a software company? One of the funnier aspects of the movie is the bland, colorless office space he works in. He is constantly heckled by his moronic boss and forced to follow soul-sucking, tedious company rules while toiling away all day in a sterile white cube with fluorescent lights buzzing overhead. Even if you never saw the movie, you might be able to relate to the setting.

In case you did not get the memo, office space is nothing like it used to be. Bland walls, beige carpet, windowless conference rooms and square ceiling tiles are being replaced with floor-to-ceiling windows with park views, hardwood floors and pendant-style light fixtures. Instead of walking into an office that looks sterile and unwelcoming, picture yourself arriving to work each day in an Instagram-worthy, Restoration Hardware catalog-style environment.

Flexible workspaces are to business what Starbucks® is to coffee drinkers: ubiquitous, plentiful and trendy. Designers, architects, real estate agents, financial representatives and even teachers offering after-school tutoring programs are all flocking to new shared office spaces. From nomadic entrepreneurs and independent contractors to small companies, many do not want the hassle of complex commercial leases or the responsibility of owning and operating office space.

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Enter the co-working space – the flexibility starts with booking space for a single meeting to paying rent by the month. With these spaces, the list of amenities is long, including fully-furnished offices, single-work desks and conference rooms, Wi-Fi, mail service, daily coffee service, fitness studio memberships and even happy hours with top-shelf margaritas. It is all part of the start-up ecosystem, where business blends with life outside the office. Longer hours, working nights and weekends and concierge services make these spaces appealing yet affordable to anyone looking to go beyond the 9-5 grind.

With its convenient location, Serendipity Labs in HALL Office Park encourages people who rent space to “refute the commute.” It is nestled in the 16-building park with art installations, lots of green space and winding walking trails. The colorful, open space looks slightly more like an art museum than an office. It is so artsy, that even the Frisco Association for the Arts is calling Serendipity Labs their new home. With abundant options like space for one or team rooms that can fit larger groups, the memberships are flexible and reasonably priced. “When we were considering office space for the Frisco Association for the Arts, we looked no further than Serendipity Labs. The impressive space is one thing, but the central location and atmosphere of HALL Park was the obvious choice for us. It made perfect sense for us to be in the most artistic office park in Frisco, and specifically at Serendipity Labs, which is themed with beautiful local art, light and color. We wanted a space that reflected who we are as an organization, and this was where we belong. We could not be happier with our choice,” says Tammy Meinershagen, the executive director of the Frisco Association for the Arts.

For Cowboys fans, or any type of sports fan, and for those who love The Star in Frisco, Formation is a co-working space that checks every box. When you walk in, the space is so new it still has that freshly-cut wood/new car smell. The 18,000-square-foot space overlooks the turf at The Ford Center. Even if the space was not Cowboys and NFL football themed, you would only have to look out the window to remember where you are. You can “Work the Cowboys Way” in their luxurious space, take the elevator down one floor at lunchtime for a Cowboys Fit workout



organization and Formation is a place where the Frisco community can also find those opportunities. “Just as we built a shared football field to better connect with our students and schools, we built Formation as a way to support professionals and entrepreneurs who share in our passion for pursuing excellence. We also recognized a working space was the next step for The Star in creating a destination where our community can truly live, work and play,” he says.



Venture X, one of the largest co-working franchises in the U.S., has a new location on Stonebrook Parkway. In the first half of 2018, the company added eight new locations in Texas alone (one of which is the Plano location at 7950 Legacy Drive). They are also opening in Colo., Va., Ind., Ohio and several other states. The sleek office designs, flexible leasing options, high-speed Internet, café and lounge areas and dedicated hospitality staff are drawing entrepreneurs and workers by the hundreds. “Many companies, large to small, are seeking space where they do not have daunting corporate leases. Our agreements are short and allow yearly or month-to-month leases, so as a business grows, it can easily upgrade or downgrade based on the market. Our mission is to help local Frisco companies scale their business with high-quality office space and an option for collaboration with like-minded companies. We also host high-end corporate networking events at no cost to attendees, which provides another way for local business to increase revenue,” says Kimberly Stepchinski, the community manager for Venture X in Frisco. “We have helped many tech, marketing and financial services companies by connecting them with Venture X USA, where they have grown from small Frisco shops to nationwide companies; growing their revenue by more than four times their prior amount annually. We also help share our contact base and provide introductions.”

Networking is an important aspect of the co-working model. Co-working space members usually chat and see other business owners and entrepreneurs in the space and naturally refer business to others. At Formation, the atmosphere is cordial, friendly and everyone seems approachable. There are even Thursday night happy hours! Dana Jones Poole, the membership manager, greets guests at the door and knows everyone by name. With her bright smile and outgoing personality, she acts more like a cruise director than an office manager. “I describe it as business match making,” she says. Dimitri Tishlias, the co-owner of Skibell, a high-end jewelry store in Highland Village, occupies space at Formation. He says Formation was the right choice for their business as they branch out and try to attract a younger clientele. “We wanted a presence north of Highland Village, and there is no better place to be seen than The Star,” he says. “Our clientele tends to be older. We wanted to be part of an area that is fresh and new. Frisco is exactly that.”

Meagan Slavin, the managing director of 25N Coworking, located on John W. Elliott Drive, says Frisco was a natural fit for their company when looking to expand from their other locations in Ill. “We auditioned several cities around the country for our next location, but we consider Frisco a ‘best fit’ suburb because of its lifestyle values like flexibility and freedom. We actively seek out vibrant, suburban economic hubs, and Frisco is

and conference rooms that look like they are straight from a design magazine, 25N Coworking is high-end, stylized office space.



What is next in the co-working office world? Some say thematic co-working spaces are the future. Places where like-minded and like-careered people work and network together in a specific industry (like writers, engineers or accountants, for example). Whatever the future holds for co-working spaces, the bar has certainly been set high for all types of companies – big and small – to offer workers the very best in comfort, flexibility and aesthetics. Spending time at the office is changing dramatically, going from drudgery to luxury. Mr. Jones summed it up well when describing their new co-working space and what being in Frisco means to Formation: “We want to revolutionize not only the way we work, but the way we engage with our community.”

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Chelsea and Darrel Neal

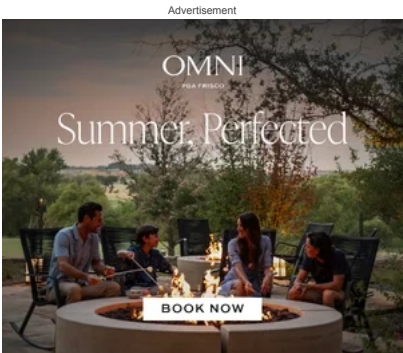
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Chelsea and Darrel Neal, a local dynamic dad and daughter duo, share an undeniable bond and love for competition. A tragic accident in Australia on September 4, 2016, nearly took Darrel’s life, but the incident brought this Frisco family closer and gave them a renewed determination to participate and triumph in the sport of triathlon.

During her dad’s convalescence, Chelsea contemplated the role triathlons played in her life. His injury and recovery rekindled her athletic and competitive spirit. “Even after Dad’s accident, and though he could hardly move from his recliner, his mind was set on getting back into training. That inspired me. And, when I watched him cross the finish line at Ironman Texas, that was a moment I will never forget! I always thought of Dad as being tough, strong and willing to endure anything. It was not until the odds were stacked against him and he persevered that I finally learned success is not achieved through talent or ability – it is achieved through heart, determination and a strong mind. I began doing sprint triathlons on a more regular basis and enjoyed training with Dad. One day, I swam the distance of a half Ironman. I wondered what else I could

This daughter and dad team began training together on a regular basis after Chelsea signed up for Ironman Waco 70.3 and the father and daughter competed in a few more sprint and Olympic races before this Ironman in October 2018. “We crossed the finish line together once again, but it was not easy for me. I realized I needed to spend the next few months strengthening my mind and sharpening my knowledge of endurance training. For the next six months, I spent equal time training and studying the sport to shift my mindset. In April 2019, my dad and I were both at the starting line of Ironman Texas. Fifteen hours later, I finally understood what it took to be an Ironman. All of the characteristics I admired about my dad and was inspired by – I had learned to dig deep and found within myself,” Chelsea says.



Darrel continues to inspire the community with his relentless passion for the sport. He coordinates training rides, runs and swims. He also coaches and puts together training plans. This father and daughter team is a true inspiration to many!

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