

The 10 Best Workplaces in Europe 2007

The 10 Best Workplaces in Europe 2007 are highlighted on page 4 of this report. We now present a brief profile of each of these unique companies - shown in alphabetical order.

Andarr		Netherlands	
Industry	Management consulting		
European list recognitions	2007		
63 employees	Women	14%	Men
			86%



ANDARR

When the members of this management consulting company faced an economic downturn in 2003, they were determined to maintain their employee-centric culture. They hired an external consultant to help the organization's members to talk to each other, and formed a cross-divisional team dedicated to organizational development.

Since then, Andarr has seen its revenues increase by seventy percent, and the company enjoys a low rate of voluntary turnover (3% during the past two years).

The company more recently developed a "five-year plan" by forming cross-divisional project teams of employees. Senior managers gathered ideas together, shaped them into a strategy, and presented the results to the employees, who in turn were given a chance to provide still more feedback.

- Ninety five percent of employees surveyed in the Great Place to Work Trust Index© survey said that they "plan on working at Andarr for a long time," while 100% agreed that "Andarr is a friendly place to work."
- Employees get 36 paid vacation days, and also can take unpaid sabbaticals (one employee recently left for two years to go cycling from Alaska to Argentina).

Andarr's Great Place to Work Trust Index© survey scores serve as evidence of the culture of collaboration, trust, and respect: 98% of the employees responded positively that "management trusts people to do a good job without watching over their shoulders"; 100% agreed that "management recognizes honest



mistakes as part of doing business”; and 95% of employees responded in the survey that “people are encouraged to balance their work life and their personal life.”

Please read the full case story on Andarr later in this report.

Beaverbrooks the Jewellers		UK
Industry	Retail jewellery	
European list recognitions	2005, 2006 and 2007	
718 employees	Women	85%
	Men	15%



A family-owned High Street retail jeweller with 59 retail stores across the U.K., Beaverbrooks

attributes its success to a culture of employee development. Executives stay informed through regular store visits (at least four per year) to garner input directly from the “front lines”; the Managing Director conducts 11 focus groups around the country every year. All store personnel receive training on a weekly basis. The payoff: with the exception of an employment law specialist, all of the company’s managers were promoted from within.

Beaverbrook’s employees also take pride in their company’s external initiatives. The company doubles charitable contributions by its people, and recently pledged to give at least 20% of post-tax profits to charity. The jeweller is also “going green,” having more than doubled the amount of

waste it recycles in the last two years and used energy-efficient lighting in its new stores.

- Beaverbrooks pays for an employee assistance program for individuals and their whole families; provides five weeks of fully paid holidays (plus bank holidays); and offers maternity pay of 50% of salary to employees with one week’s service, in addition to a “return to work” bonus of six weeks salary for new moms.
- The company’s mission statement includes such commitments as “Celebrate our Success” and “Be energetic, create fun and smile”.
- The company spends more than £100K per year on rewards, not counting sales bonuses. Every Manager has an incentive pool to reward employees an ad hoc basis.
- Competitions run regionally throughout the year with assorted prizes, including weekends away, wine, meals out, cinema tickets, adventure days, and more.
- Six out of the top 10 paid store managers are female, as are seven of the top 10 assistant managers.
- Through a new initiative called “Tell the Total Truth Faster,” people are trained on how to give feedback to each other and their managers and are openly encouraged to speak out when they are not happy.

The company pays for 59 different Christmas party nights, one for every team throughout the company.



Cisco Systems		Germany
Industry	Information technology	
European list recognitions	2006 and 2007	
641 employees	Women	15%
	Men	85%

CISCO SYSTEMS



A 641-employee subsidiary of the large U.S.-based networking technology firm, Cisco Systems Germany

takes advantage of all the latest digital technologies to keep their employee “network” strong.

The company’s intranet delivers both Germany-specific and international company news, includes “Videos on Demand” and “Cisco Cast”, company news and updates presented by executives. Leaders from German Cisco use “Deutschland TV,” based on IPTV (Internet Protocol Television), to present news to all employees. Employees can get training online, too; Cisco University offers e-learning tools developed in collaboration with Harvard University.

Cisco also supplies its network technology to a wide range of charities (often chosen by employees), and sends out teams of employees to provide on-site expertise.

- Cisco follows the “3 G’s: Grow the business, Grow your team, Grow yourself” - by making sure employees get access to the “3 E’s: Education, Experience, and Exposure.”

- WAN, or Women Access Network, is an internal network to help women to help each other to rise through the ranks. The company has partnered with an external gender networking organization to support this effort. Other networks include the Cisco Black Employee Network, Conexión (Latin network), and Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender Resource group.
- Every new employee gets stock options; an “Employee Stock Purchase Plan” is also available.
- Wellness events include on-site massages, meditation classes, yoga, stress reduction, and more.
- Employees can also participate in the monthly “Birthday Breakfast” with John Chambers, CEO Global, a meeting for employees who had birthday during the previous four weeks.
- Cisco offers language and culture integration classes for foreign employees; spouses are included.
- Through a Crisis Management program, Cisco offers support to employees going through difficult times.
- In addition to the international Cisco Achievement Program, German employees can be recognized as the “German Master of Impact.”

95% of employees surveyed indicate that “there is family feeling” at Cisco.



ConSol Software		Germany
Industry	Information technology	
European list recognitions	2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007	
134 employees	Women	19%
	Men	81%

ConSol

Consulting & Solutions

At this Munich-based IT consulting and software firm,

employees' partners and family members are invited to participate in company events; recent fun "teambuilding" exercises have included a company trip to the Munich Beer Festival, an annual ski weekend in the Alps, and football and chess tournaments.

Employees can't get enough of each other: many arrange their own casual group activities, using mailing lists to invite each other to cinema evenings, squash, board game evenings, bike tours, mountain hikes, and more. ConSol's Intranet has a chat room for people to discuss professional or non-work-related topics.

"I look forward going to work every day," says one employee. "This has been my feeling since I started, and it hasn't faded since then."

- An on-site pinball room keeps lunch breaks fun; a conference room becomes a viewing room during the World Cup, Olympic Games, and other major televised sporting events. People can also bring children and dogs to work as long as co-workers don't mind.

- Everyone gathers at a restaurant monthly; all employees who celebrated their birthday the previous month are treated to a meal.
- Successful projects are celebrated with a barbecue on the company terrace, or in the new on-site garden.
- More than 50% of the profit of the company is "given back" to the employees, even apprentices.

In their Trust Index© comments, 97% agree that "I can be myself around here"; 99% say "People celebrate special events around here," and 99% say, "This is a friendly place to work." 99% indicate, "When you join the company, you are made to feel welcome." 97% agree that they are "treated as a full member here regardless of my position," 95% say they "receive a fair share of the profits made by this organization."



Cushman & Wakefield		Portugal	
Industry	Real Estate		
European list recognitions	2007		
50 employees	Women	40%	
	Men	60%	



CUSHMAN & WAKEFIELD® The Portugal offices of this global real estate

firm offer its 50 employees a chance to jump out of an airplane whenever they want. Employees are trained at the company for two days, and then get a day off for a parachute jump. It's all in keeping with the company's motto, "Have Fun," as well as one of its core values, "Every employee is a team member and contributes to our success".

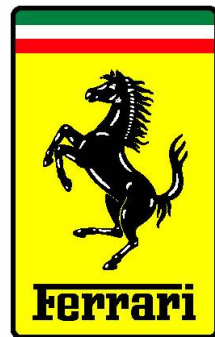
Skydiving isn't the only sponsored adventure. During "Department Days Out," employees have travelled to a spa, taken a tour in a Jeep, and learned how to scuba dive.

When C&W employees celebrate a service anniversary, they receive a congratulatory e-mail early in the morning (and a copy is sent to everyone else in the firm). When employees have a baby, they receive a card in the mail, along with flowers and a gift. When they have a birthday, they are invited (along with other people celebrating that month) to a special lunch with the CEO.

- Teams that complete a project go out for "Tapas & Drinks" at the end of the afternoon.
- On the last Friday of the month, one department organizes a cocktail party for the whole staff; departments serve as "host" on a rotating basis.
- Employees and their partners are invited to the annual holiday dinner, where they may receive a company-sponsored award (including some voted on by their peers).
- All employees are also invited to an annual three-day off-site event in a tourist destination.
- C&W Portugal competes (and often wins) in annual football tournament against other national affiliates.
- Employee comment: "Despite the fact that there are people from many different cultures working in the office, everyone gets on well. We all mix professionally and socially. I feel this creates a more balanced working atmosphere, which leads to a more productive working environment."



Ferrari		Italy	
Industry	Car manufacturer		
European list recognitions	2003 and 2007		
2,850 employees	Women	11%	
	Men	89%	



Since 1947, the year Ferrari's 125 S first triumphed in competition, the Italian auto maker with the prancing horse logo has become one of the world's most respected luxury brands. No one knows this better than the company's 2850 Italian employees. "We are aware

that we are working to perpetuate a myth," says one employee. "Ferrari is unique in the world."

As part of its culture, Ferrari stresses 12 values represented as 12 cylinders of a finely tuned motor. The company's reward programs are also tied to a "racing" metaphor: through the "Grand Prix" program, employees who offer new ideas that are implemented advance around a "track," with anyone passing one of the "pit stops" or the finish line eligible for an award.

Ferrari's innovative training programs include Creativity Club, which brings employees together with artists, theatrical actors, chefs, and other free thinkers; and "Routes of

Knowledge," which draws upon the theme of travelling and exploration; new hires receive orientation through the "Routes of Christopher Columbus," production workers follow the "route" of Marco Polo, and managers' training is tied to Charles Lindbergh.

Of course, employees get to indulge a passion for automobiles. Ferrari's people not only get to see the latest models before they are shown to the public, but they also get two tickets to the Imola and Monza F1 races, and to the GT Championship.

Please read the full case story on Ferrari as The European Workplace of the Year.



Microsoft		Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain and Sweden.
Industry	Information technology	
European list recognitions	2003 (4 countries), 2004 (12 countries), 2005 (12 countries), 2006 (8 countries) and 2007 (12 countries)	
6,843 employees	Women	40%
	Men	60%

Microsoft®

The global software giant made the list in no fewer than 12 countries this year!

Tellingly, the company's mission says nothing about software, or computers, or profits; rather, their goal is "to enable people and businesses throughout the world to realize their full potential."

How Microsoft's employees carry out their mission is shaped by the company's strong values, which begin with the principle, "We strive to develop and maintain a culture and work environment that enables employees to realize their potential and in which great people can do their best work."

The company actively works to help employees to achieve their potential through a variety of training and development tools. For example, Microsoft has two entirely different formal mentoring programs, Career Development Mentoring and Peer Mentoring.

"The internal programs really help us to live the values," says one employee of Microsoft Belgium.

Another explains, "The company is really open and direct. There are no hidden agendas."

- Last year, Lisa Brummel, Senior Vice President of Human Resources, conducted a "Listening Tour" with more than 5000 Microsoft employees around the world prior to the launch of "My Microsoft," an online tool based on five pillars of employee life: performance management, reward opportunity, career development, management excellence, and enhanced workplace.
- The company holds a "Happy Hour" on every second Friday of the month. A different department hosts the happy hour each time; the "host" team talks about their accomplishments and current goals. New employees are introduced at these events, as well.
- In their comments in the Great Place to Work Trust Index© Survey, employees continually cite the company's open, values-driven culture. "Open, honest, and respectful" is how one employee describes the company. "They care about their people and they see us as their most important assets. There are real opportunities to make a difference. Initiative is strongly encouraged and even expected."
- Another says: "I can state that I have never been in the elevator with someone here without starting a conversation."

Please read full case story on Microsoft later in this report.



Piscines Ideales	Greece
Industry	Construction of swimmingpools
European list recognitions	2006 and 2007
99 employees	Women 33% Men 67%



Based in Greece, Piscines Ideales designs, constructs, and maintains swimming pools. The

company embraces its 99 employees as a family, in part by reaching out to take care of people's spouses and children.

Employees who get married receive a month's salary as a bonus. Those who have children get paid time off and a financial bonus. When employees' children start their studies at a university, the company gives them a personal computer. The company also gives no- or low-interest loans to employees for any reason (several employees have managed to buy a house through this program).

Employees in the market for a pool or spa get a substantial discount on those too. Meanwhile, the company recently built its own on-site spa and fitness centre (open to employees' families, of course); they are also looking into developing a day care centre for employees' kids.

- On their first day, employees are given the mobile phone numbers of the CEO and other managers.

- All 99 employees get birthday parties, with singing and a company-paid birthday cake.
- Junior-level employees with only a basic education are given training to rise through the ranks; anyone is eligible for paid training, regardless of whether it is related to their job.
- At least once per year, a dinner is scheduled between the Managing Director and the staff of each department to discuss working matters.
- Quote: "I asked to leave work because of my pregnancy and they accepted it. I asked to extend my maternity leave and although it was a busy period, they not only said yes then, but later then extended it again. I feel like it is the company of my parents. I love them and they love me and I feel that they care for me and my family."
- The company pays for 80% of the cost of private health insurance, which covers an annual health check-up, with mammography, PSA, cholesterol and heart exams, and other screenings (the rest of the premium is paid for by the Social Services Department).
- The company offers 2% salary raise to smokers who manage to quit smoking.
- The CEO invites employees to his house to celebrate New Year's Eve, and they go out for dinner and dancing to celebrate his birthday.

Please read full case story on Piscines Ideales later in this report.



SAS Institute		Sweden and Norway	
Industry	Information technology		
European list recognitions	2005 (Sweden) and 2007		
162 employees	Women	42%	
	Men	58%	



**THE
POWER
TO KNOW**

Founded in
1986, SAS
Institute, a

subsidiary of a U.S. software firm, appeared in Best Workplaces lists in Norway and Sweden this year.

The company's employees enjoy a 35-hour work week and follow flexible schedules; the company pays for home internet connections to help employees to work from home.

Compulsory meetings are held toward the middle of the day so anyone can take part, including those who have children to pick up at day-care.

SAS Institute offers what the HR Director describes as a "smorgasbord of health activities": an on-site fitness facility, and a rotating Weight Watchers programme, yoga, Tai Chi, power boxing, and other activities. They also have smoking cessation classes, pay for a personal trainer, and also regularly bring in lecturers to talk about food, stress, work management, and other topics. The company has an on-site restaurant that serves discounted healthy meals (including a daily salad buffet), and SAS also offers free

healthcare through a private insurer, with an unlimited number of medical visits available to employees.

"We have a unique company culture," says one employee of SAS Institute Sweden. "I have a lot of faith in SAS as a whole, both now and in the future."

Please read full case story on SAS Institute later in this report.



Schoenen Torfs		Belgium
Industry	Retail shoes and leatherwear	
European list recognitions	2006 and 2007	
389 employees	Women	94%
	Men	6%



Schoenen met naam

As Wouter Torfs, CEO of this shoe retailer, once said, “If you take care of

the people, the people will take care of the business”. Parties take place frequently, whether for birthdays, retirements, store openings, or just for fun. During one recent gathering, employees were treated with relaxation and “laughing sessions” under the guidance of wellness and relaxation coaches.

To maintain a small-company feel, each retail store is assigned a coach (often a manager) who maintains personal relationships with individuals and offers friendly advice, rather than directives from “on high”. The communication flows in both directions: when deciding whether to sell children’s shoes, managers solicited the opinions of all the company’s employees.

Torfs collaborates with a non-profit organization called ‘Nature Point’ to recycle old, worn shoes. Next year they will be working with CUNINA, which runs various projects in developing countries.

- During the last two years, the company hired 125 new employees; on their first day, employees are introduced to the company’s history, values, and plans for the future.
- The company maintains a diverse workforce by proactively recruiting older employees (job postings say, ‘Your age is of no importance’).
- The company subsidises 450 Euro for employees who purchase a bicycle.
- Shops with the highest sales for the month get a budget to celebrate; some teams save up these “winnings” to go on a bigger team trip, such as a weekend outing.
- Twice each year, the company celebrates a Family Day for employees and their families. At an annual Employee Day celebration last September, everyone got a copy of the TORFS Cookbook, which included recipes from co-workers.

