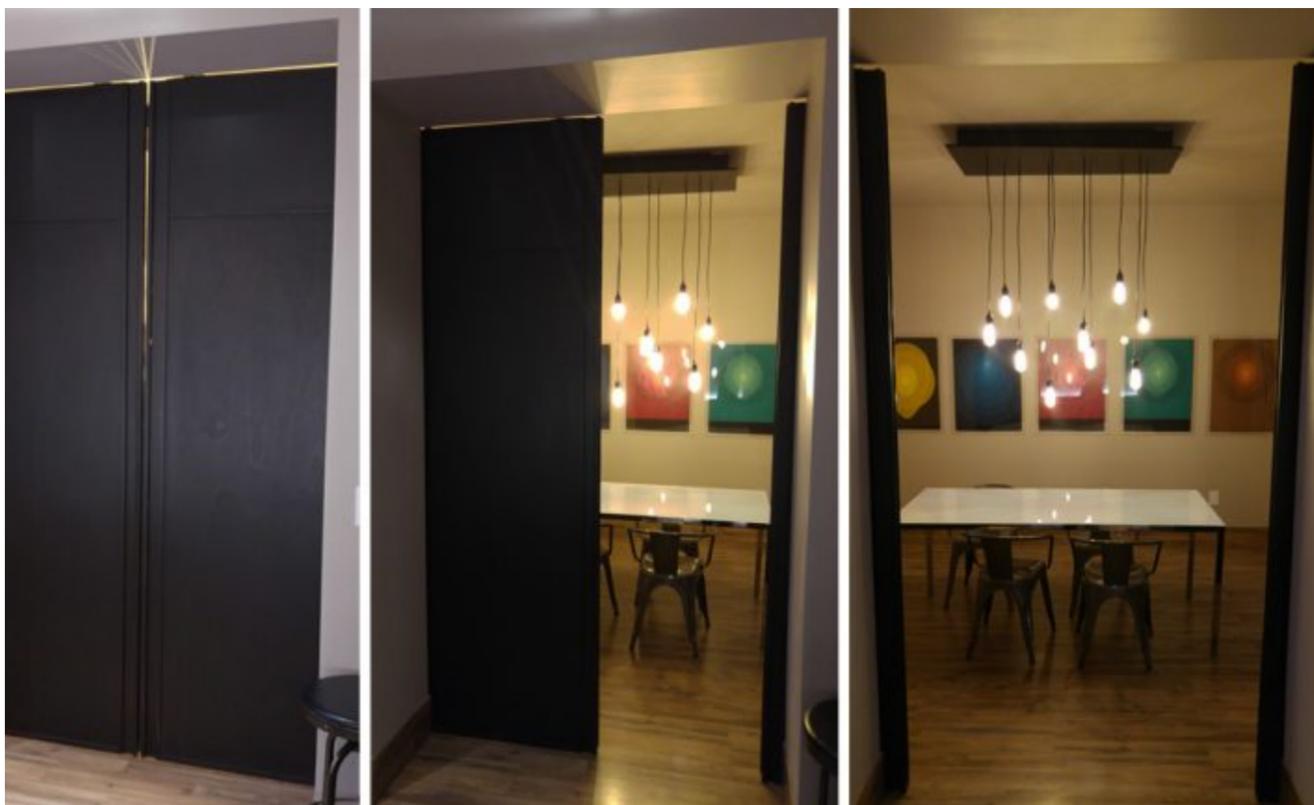


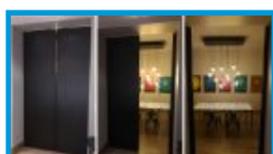
HOW SUITE IT IS: Our picks for 2019's Coolest Offices in the Lehigh Valley

By: *Stacy Wescoe*

September 23, 2019 8:39 am



2 / 6



From fire-breathing dragons to cozy resting spots, Lehigh Valley companies show they have the creativity to make an office space something more fun and exciting than your standard cubicle farm.

Cool offices show off the personality of the companies that inhabit them, give staff a chance to embrace a culture and give clients an inside look into the talents of those who work there.

As always, Lehigh Valley Business received many nominations for offices that stand out from the crowd, we picked five of what we thought were the Coolest Offices in the Lehigh Valley.

Breaking the Mold! Lower Macungie manufacturer has dragon fire and star power

Smooth-On, Lower Macungie

- **Location:** 5600 Lower Macungie Rd., Lower Macungie
- **Type of Business:** Manufactures mold-making materials
- **Designed by:** Using own products

Do you have a fire-breathing dragon that greets visitors as they enter your office?

No?

Well, the folks at Smooth-on in Lower Macungie do. It's why it's one of the Coolest Offices in the Lehigh Valley, and it's just one of the examples of the company's artistry on display.

The company makes molds and molding materials that can be used in art and industry, but most folks would probably recognize the company best for some of the creatures created using Smooth-On products that have been featured in major motion pictures.

Perhaps you've heard of Star Wars, or Harry Potter or X-Men?

Smooth-On's products have been used in special effects in those and many more blockbuster movies.

The 120-year-old company employs more than 200 people in its 400,000-square-foot factory and retail store front.

One of the coolest things about it, is that the wild décor isn't just for employees, with the retail store open to the public, and regular classes where people can learn mold-making techniques for their own projects, anyone can stop by and say "hello" to C3P0.

Factor in the flavor: Food-industry business incubator throws in a dash of creative design

The Factory, Bethlehem

- **Location:** 315 Colombia St., Bethlehem
- **Type of Business:** Food industry manufacturing incubator
- **Designed by:** Richard Thompson

Founded in 2018, The Factory was designed to be a space for start-ups in the food, beverage and pet industry that modeled the kind of tech-incubator space found in Silicon Valley.

Since the focus is on food, the kitchen at the Factory isn't the typical dirty microwave and over-stuffed mini-fridge you can find in some offices. Instead it has a full chef's kitchen where the Factory's two-chefs provide breakfast and lunch and plenty of snacks. That foodie focus makes The Factory one of the Coolest Offices in the Lehigh Valley.

Looking for a place to eat that food? Those working at the Factory can enjoy their meals at an indoor sidewalk café.

Developers of the property didn't just work on the design of the food. The property itself is designed to be eye-popping and fun.

The Factory is comprised of 11 shiny red and yellow shipping containers that have been upcycled into offices and museum-quality vintage decor, including a 1959 Series II Land Rover and a retired ski gondola from Steamboat Springs, Colorado.

Looking for more action than that? Work off lunch on one of the bikes on site, or take a turn on the rock-climbing wall.

Cool comfort: Screen printer shows off its style and substance

Rutler Screen Printing, Palmer Township

- **Location:** 1000 S. 27th, Palmer Township
- **Type of Business:** Screen printing and embroidery
- **Designed by:** Staff

Sure, Rutler Screen Printing in Palmer Township has the basic "cool" office vibe down with its industrial chic design.

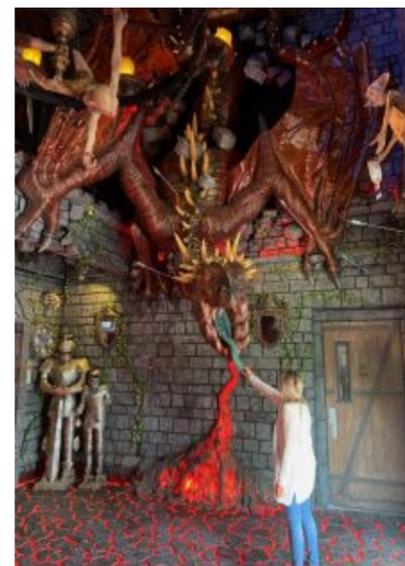
For example, all of the light fixtures were custom made, with Edison lights hanging from a custom, hand-made fixture on the ceiling and the other lighting in the office custom made from roofing materials from Home Depot.

The conference room and art department display prints done by Rutler between the 60's and 80's. The business originally started as a sign printer.

But it's some of the other amenities that make Rutler one of the coolest offices in the Lehigh Valley.

First, it doesn't forget that customers sometimes have kids, who can get bored while waiting for Mom or Dad to place their order.

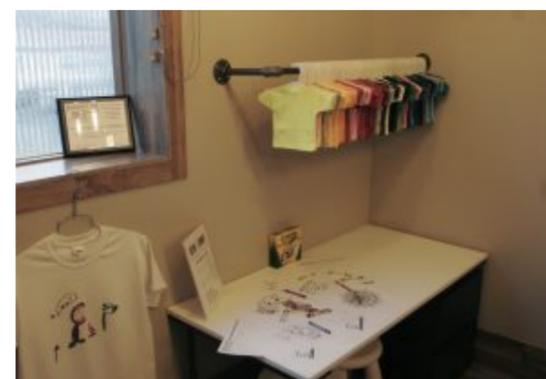
Rutler has a kids' design area where children can draw a design for their own T-shirt, which they are given for free along with their parents' order.



A fire-breathing dragon greets visitors to Smooth-on in Lower Macungie. (Photo: Submitted) –



Tenants of the Factory can dine at an indoor outdoor café in the incubator's common area. (Photo: Submitted) –



A kids' design area lets client's children get creative and design their own shirt while waiting. (Photo: Submitted) –

And all that printing can be tiring, so Rutler has a little rest area; a cozy, but stylish bed with a steam-punk style reading lamp for the employee who wants to catch up on some light reading or catch a couple of Zzzs.

In the swing of things: Marketing firm's lobby pocket park shows its playful side

Lehigh Mining & Navigation, Allentown

Location: 600 Hamilton St., Suite 200, Allentown

Type of Business: Advertising agency

Designed by: Staff

When visitors come into the common area of Lehigh Mining & Navigation in downtown Allentown, they're greeted by a "lawn" and swings instead of more traditional looking office furniture.

Designed with the help of Spillman Farmer Architects, the office in City Center's Tower 6 was designed to project playfulness, movement, freedom, joy, uninhibitedness and kinetic energy to encourage clients to "let ideas fly."

With large windows providing great views of the city and décor built around the mining and navigation in the firm's name, the office provides a creative space for a creative team and that makes it one of the coolest offices in the Lehigh Valley.



The firm's design elements are spread throughout its offices to keep its branding image up throughout. (Photo: Submitted) –

Classic Style! Preserving classic architecture guided financial firm's renovation

Andesa Financial Management, Wescosville

- **Location:** 4905 Hamilton Blvd., Wescosville
- **Type of Business:** Financial planner
- **Designed by:** Sage Design Build

Moving into a building built in the 1800s that had been the home of a landscape architect for many years, Andesa Financial Management, made it a goal of preserve its historic beauty and classic architecture.

It hired Sage Design Build to design the new office space in the old building at 4905 Hamilton Blvd. in Wescosville.

A key element of the renovation was to create a space where clients feel at ease and comfortable, especially since they are talking about highly sensitive information regarding their personal finances and wealth, the firm said.

With the exposed brick and a few other awe-inspiring design elements, Andesa feels the design team created the perfect atmosphere for their services and that makes it one of the coolest offices in the Lehigh Valley.



Exposed brick, polished hardwood floors other design elements give Andesa Financial Management a classic atmosphere. –



Writer Stacy Wescoe has her finger on the pulse of the business community in the Greater Lehigh Valley and keeps you up-to-date with technology and trends, plus what coworkers and competitors are talking about around the water cooler – and on social media. She can be reached at stacyw@lvb.com or 610-807-9619, ext. 4104. Follow her on Twitter and on Facebook.