

## Intelcom's new employee hub a complement to remote work



If the past few years have taught us anything, it's that people and companies alike have an amazing ability to adapt. When the Covid-19 pandemic threw many of us into remote work overnight, we weren't sure how long it would last.

Fast-forward more than two years later, and offices are adapting once again by making a progressive return to in-person work. But when we think about the term "adaptability", one thing is clear: it's not a linear road. Instead, adaptability is about leaning into the flexibility that is needed to flourish and grow in any given situation.

This flexibility is exactly what Intelcom wants to embrace with the exciting new updates to its state-of-the-art Montréal head office. Instead of rushing our employees back, at Intelcom we're taking a "best of both worlds" approach by offering a collaborative home base to foster a sense of community while also giving employees the option to work remotely. Everyone's work style is different—so why not develop a model that allows all styles to comfortably coexist?

## Comfortably changing with the times

With many companies grappling with the question of whether or not to bring employees back to the office, we're seeing all kinds of approaches. On one hand, some companies are insisting on a 100% in-person work schedule, citing concerns with synchronicity and socialization. On the other hand, some companies have given up their office spaces and have embraced remote work completely as a matter of saving costs or retaining employees. Many more companies are somewhere in the middle, embracing that "hybrid" format that you so often hear about.

Intelcom's approach to an office integration acknowledges that every employee has a different set of needs and preferences. As we welcome our team back to our offices, it's important to note that this does not signify a rejection of remote work—quite the opposite. The office and its common spaces offer an optional social immersion that complements the flexibility offered by remote work. It does not aim to replace it.

This dual approach to working fits with the vision of Jean-Sébastien Joly, Intelcom President. “With the growth of the company and our expansion across the country and internationally, we know remote work is necessary. There's no one way to manage a company. We need to always be open to the new realities of our industry that are now made possible through technology.”

Mélie Matifat, VP, People and Culture, agrees. “With a flexible mindset, we understand that one size does not fit all, which is why this return is not mandatory. We know things will sometimes fail, but a crucial element of our culture is this sense of humility and ability to adapt and improve. This plays a key role in facing this new reality.”



## A new and improved home in Montréal

Intelcom employees who want to jump at the opportunity to meet with their coworkers and get some in-person collaboration time in will be pleased to find a newly renovated office in the city's core. Intelcom's Service Center acts as an important meeting place that will help bridge the gaps between departments.

Found in Montréal's trendy Griffintown neighborhood, Intelcom's main office now offers a brand new dedicated area specifically built to foster that social life that we've all been missing. **The all-new Service Center Hub** serves as a common room for all employees to work, and, more

importantly, have fun. Renowned Montreal artist Félix Marzell ([@worldofmarzell](#)) lead the creation and ideation process.

“I gave Félix complete creative control,” says Jean-Sébastien Joly. “I just knew I wanted a space that was unique and that couldn’t be found in other workplaces. With the help of local artists, we’ve incorporated a lot of creative ideas in the new space but in the end, it’s simply a place to get together and have fun. **I like having fun at work and I want my employees to have fun too. My role is just to lay the foundation and let people take it from there and have fun with it.**”

“Fun” is definitely the theme of the new space, which features a miniature golf course, a mezzanine, a conference room and large open spaces for work and events.



## The importance of team commonality

While the list of the benefits of remote work is long, there’s compelling evidence that speaks to the importance of in-person employee socialization. At Intelcom, this takes on a special level of importance. The company has seen great growth throughout the pandemic, which means that we have many team members who have yet to meet up in-person at all—they only know each other through the screen of a Teams hangout!

“The strength of our teams is built on relationships, which can be hard to develop virtually. We want to build solid relationships across everyone in the organization,” says Mélie Matifat.

Mélie continued, “We know people have all they need at home. [At] the end of the day, we can’t compete based on material things. We want to focus on what you can’t get from a home office.”

The new space was created to fulfill one large need that can't be duplicated in a remote work setting. And while mini golf and open hang out space is a recipe for fun, this need isn't a material thing at all. Instead, it's all about the sense of belonging that only in-person work can provide.

"We have a lot of new faces and we don't really know each other. We need a space where people can work together since Intelcom is a team at its core." Jean-Sébastien adds. "Virtually, you miss out on a lot of those small moments you can have with your colleagues. You don't have the time on Teams to have passing conversations. In person, you have that opportunity to connect on a more personal level. I want to know people's lives, what they're up to, etc. That isn't something back-to-back meetings allow."

At the same time, there's no denying the convenience of remote work—especially for employees with long commute times or various family obligations. It's also important to have remote work as an option in the face of new health regulations in the uncertain future. So don't worry—the days of working from home in your slippers aren't going anywhere. You just now have the option to show up to work in a beautiful new office space instead.