Retail Shout Out: L.L.Bean Brings the Workplace Outside

by Sarah Pierson

L.L.Bean gives “Out of Office” a brand new meaning with pop-up outdoor workspaces.

According to a recent study, roughly 95% of our time is spent inside, and nearly half of that time is attributed to work. Yet, research finds that time spent outside improves our productivity, creativity, and happiness. To help put more balance into our work lives and to further L.L Bean’s commitment to help people enjoy the outdoors, they have partnered with Industrious, a coworking start-up, to launch a movement called “Be an Outsider at Work.” Last week in New York City’s Madison Square Park, the first-ever outdoor coworking space opened, featuring wi-fi, cycling desks, and an ultra-open floor plan. The pop-up workspace is free and open to the public, and spaces can be booked online. Additional locations are to be added in Boston, Philadelphia, and Madison, WI, over the summer.

For those unable to visit the workspace, the company offers a handbook on their website with research details and tips on incorporating the outdoors into your workday including: “Al Fresco Feedback”, encouraging workers to share feedback while walking in the fresh air to help keep conversations future-focused, and “Outerviews”, hosting interviews outside to reduce anxiety and encourage open dialogue.

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