

A photograph of a modern library lounge area. The room features several bright yellow and green armchairs arranged in a semi-circle. A white table is visible in the background. The floor is covered in a grey carpet with a white stripe. The text "University of Birmingham Library Case Study" is overlaid on the image in a bold, sans-serif font. The word "orangebox" is also overlaid in a smaller, orange font.

University of Birmingham Library Case Study

orangebox

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Client: University of Birmingham Library

Project Size: 55,000 sq ft

Designers: Associated Architects

Project Management: Carillion and
Birmingham University Facilities

Dealer: Broadstock

We frequently find that a project dominates on a particular aspect of Smartworking®, such as Air Pods, tabling programme or task seating. In this project for the University of Birmingham Library, where it was essential to provide multiple, relaxed and diverse work settings for students in the main library, the key product range was Away from the Desk (AftD).

A key attribute of AftD is the system's scalability, from individual high back armchairs to large AV-enabled booths with worktables, which made it perfect for the task. Achieving the right balance between the best aspects of busy communal spaces and an individual student's need to concentrate and work in comfort was critical in the large and open plan central spaces. By using the AftD system the University was able to achieve a vibrant mix of individual study spaces and flexible group configurations: this has helped the library become the new hub of the university campus, in continuous use around the clock.

The designers took advantage of the architectural scale of the AftD system to select a vibrant and playful mix of fabrics, giving the space the energy and user engagement the brief demanded without undermining the impression of a coherent and disciplined interior space.

Another key element of the brief was a requirement for one power socket per user. This was easy to achieve within the desked study rooms, but trickier within the atrium spaces where the Network Landscapes Peeps sofa and armchair dominate. The discreet and flexible solution saw a small power unit fixed to the underside of each sofa and armchair, enabling power to be provided wherever they're positioned, simply by connecting to the nearest floor socket.

The success of this project has been proved in the clearest of ways: the spaces are always busy, with fully engaged students displaying a new energy and commitment.

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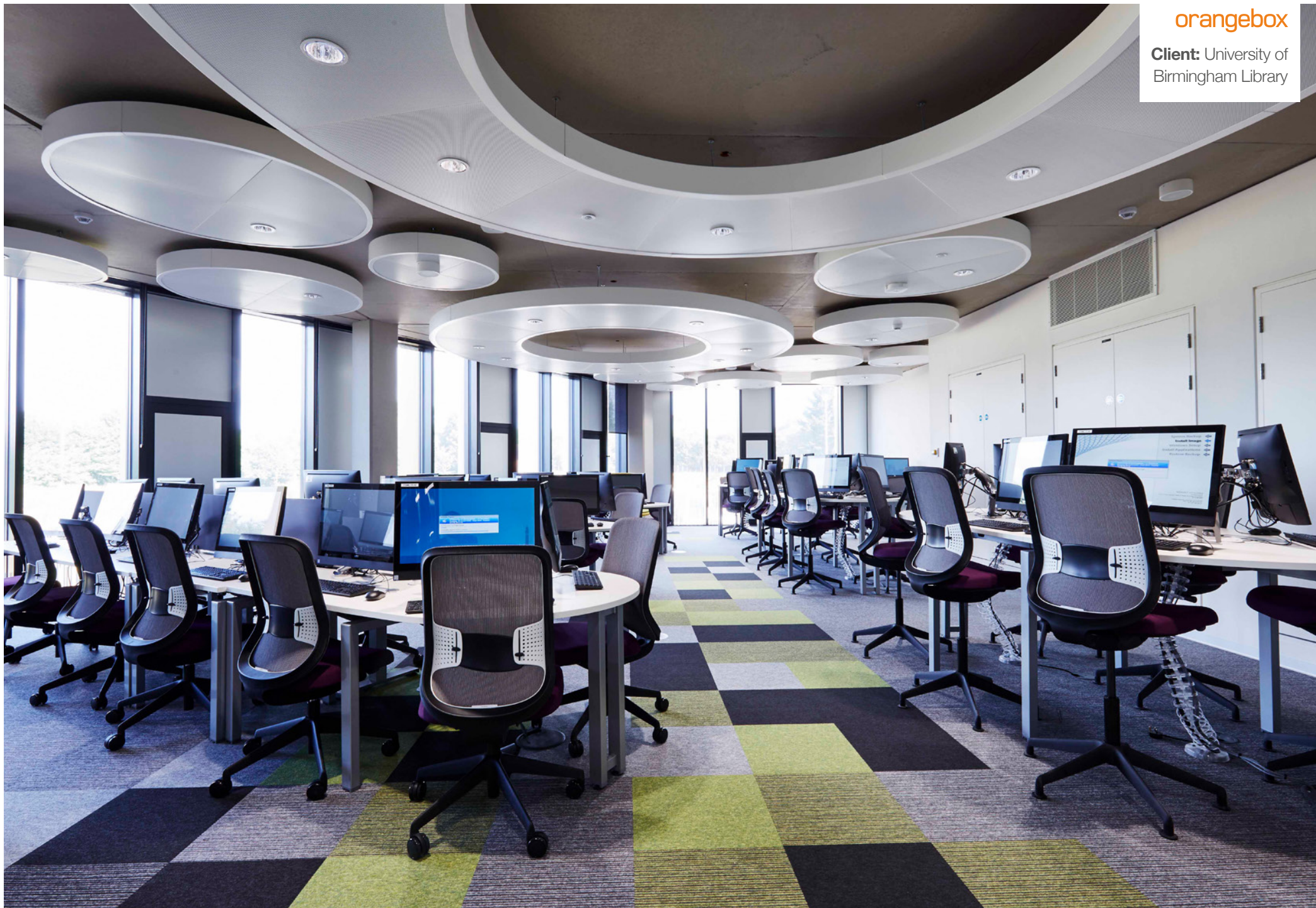
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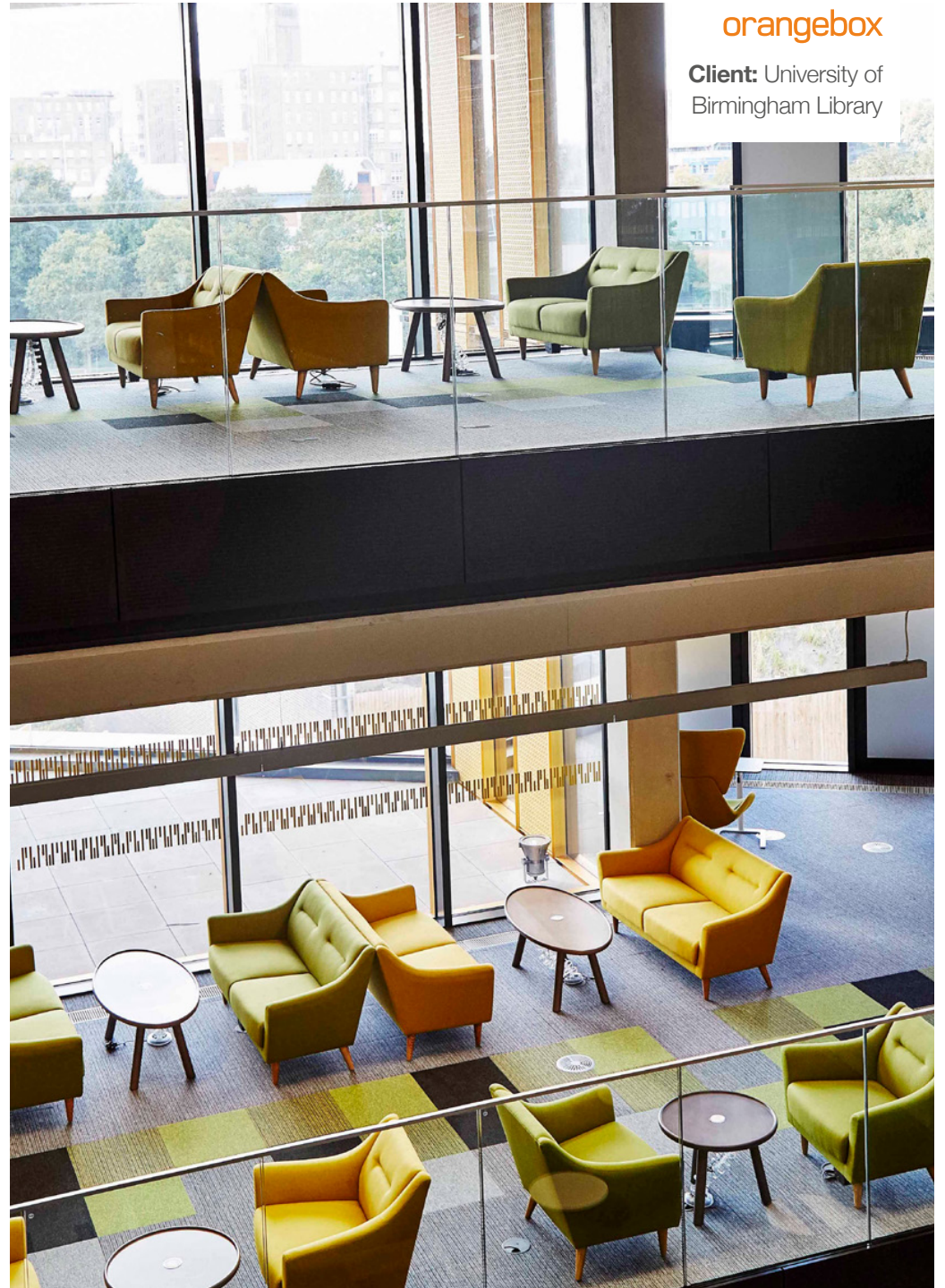
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