



“SUBSCRIPTION” ARCHITECTURE

A Look at Multi-Use Buildings Through the Lens of the Membership Business Model

The success of companies like WeWork, Netflix, Zipcar, Airbnb, Blue Apron and Ipsy is proof that subscription-based businesses provide an ideal mix of convenience, quality, and value. While the services they offer are different, all of these companies have figured out how to give people the flexibility they need in times of unpredictability and instability. This studio will study how today’s constantly changing lifestyle and business needs can point to a new definition of “multi-use” architecture. We will explore building typologies rooted in a different understanding of the word “flexibility”. One that sees buildings as **ecosystems of experiences rather than ownership or fixed resources**.

‘The most important reason for subscription/membership companies’ growth is that tastes have changed. It’s not enough anymore just to give consumers what they’re looking for, if they know what they want they can get it with a click any time. To get a consumer excited, you have to offer something they’re not expecting and subscriptions are an ideal instrument for surprise.’ (Forbes Magazine)

We will begin this studio by understanding how the membership model works and how it can be implemented in a multi-use building. While many of the subscription services students will include in their buildings already exist (e.g. food, workspace, clothing, cars, bikes, exercise, medicine), you won’t find them all under one roof. **Our job will be to push the concept of “Subscription Architecture” to its limit by designing “pay-as-you-go” buildings that have yet to be seen anywhere in the world.**

Once students have a good grasp of the business concepts and how they apply to architectural design, they will work with a PDX developer to identify viable sites for their projects. We will seek advice of industry experts throughout the term in order to make sure each student’s building proposal is grounded in reality, both technically and programmatically. Our goal will be to open a path for new ways of thinking about materials, space planning, environmental systems, sustainability, utility, real-estate development and program. **Thinking that embraces the changing (and evolving) nature of human existence rather than aspiring for permanence.**