THE NEW YORK TIMES

New York, USA

In June of the year 2000, the New York Times Company, which owns several newspapers, decided to build a new editorial building for the historic American newspaper, The New York Times.
It was to be the newspaper's seventh headquarters since its founding in 1851, and would replace the historical editorial building of 1904, for which Times Square was named.
A competition by invitation was established for the project, and saw the participation of Frank Gehry, Norman Foster, Cesar Pelli, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill and Renzo Piano.
On October 12th of the same year, The Renzo Piano Building Workshop was selected as the winner.

The New York Times building occupies nearly half a block between West 40th and 41st, overlooking 8th Avenue. It's made up of a shorter building, as well as a tower; today, the new editorial offices occupy the lower half, while Forest City Ratner Companies rent the upper floors.

The building had to meet a requirement for uniform spaces extending in an upward direction (52 storeys, for a total height of 238 meters, plus the antenna, which measures 79) and also had to fit in with the structural grid of the surrounding area. The shorter building is four storeys high and is connected to the surrounding buildings to the east, which are rather short.
These early indications suggested a rather linear design: the basic shape of the building is simple and elementary, and is well suited to the checkerboard grid of Manhattan.
It's thin and does not make use of tinted or mirrored glass, which tend to transform towers into mysterious and hermetic subjects: on the contrary, the use of transparent glass, combined with ceramics, allows the building to adapt to the colours of its surrounding environment.
The building has a cruciform floor plan, and the main plot measures approximately 13.5 x 9 metres.
The emergency stairwell, the equipment rooms and 28 lifts are located at the centre.

In the words of Renzo Piano "the building speaks to the road." In keeping with the spirit of the project, the building's entrance on the ground floor is open, transparent and permeable. It houses a large internal garden that can be seen from the street and is open to the public.
The atrium also houses a semi-public auditorium with 378 seats, as well as a number of restaurants and shops.

Its vertical circulation is ensured by the lifts, as well as by stairwells on the lateral facades, which are visible from the outside.
“The building and the city study each other and interact together”, explained Renzo Piano in an interview with Corriere della Sera. “To me, this seemed like a good metaphor for the concept of an editorial building and a newspaper – it’s a space that feeds upon the city itself.”

The steel frame, which acts and the support structure for the entire building, is visible on the south and north sides, where it’s positioned on the external portion of the glass wall. The thickness of the beams gradually decreases vertically, thus lightening the tower’s image.
On the other façades, then again, a glass wall, screened by horizontal bars in extruded ceramic in order to shield against the direct sunlight, covers the frame. This second skin is made up of 175,000 ceramic rods and acts as a parasol, reflecting the colour of the sky. It’s the first of its kind to have been built in the United States. By harnessing half of the solar energy, it’s possible to obtain a floor to ceiling glass element that illuminates the floors with incredible amounts of natural light.
The “factory”, which is comprised of the editorial office and the newsroom, is located in the lower part of the building. The editorial office has a height of 3.30 metres, occasionally opening up onto spaces of twice that height, and overlooks the internal garden.
On the 14th and 15th floors, where the cafeteria and conference room are located, the spacing between the ceramic bars increases; on top of the building, beyond the limit of the tower itself, the “second skin” continues for and additional 27 metres.
The antenna on top of the roof has a base diameter of 2.40 meters and is gradually tapered down to a minimum diameter of 20 cm. The blinds automatically descend to block any excessive light and glare. This sophisticated system maximizes the amount of natural light that is collected, while at the same time saving energy. The design of this Class A office building offers a new standard of comfort and efficiency: it integrates innovative eco-friendly features, materials, mechanical systems and advanced lighting technologies to create a structure that gracefully blends into its natural environment and meets the needs of a twenty-first century communications enterprise.

The building was inaugurated on November 17th, 2007.