

Best Do It So Plaza

One of Extropia's most popular meeting and trade spots. It is located in the business and entertainment cluster at the crossing of More, Zi and Helix. It is surrounded by some of the major corporate headquarters such as Gorgon Defense Systems, Yetinsyny Egobanking and Brooklyn-Bevilacqua Finance Co-op.

The plaza is pentagonal, with each side devoted to one of the extropian virtues (Boundless expansion, self-transformation, dynamic optimism, intelligent technology, spontaneous order). It is surrounded by ten 20 meter shapechanging smart matter statues. Five of these usually depict major historical figures associated with their side's virtue; these ones are selected by the plaza company according to their whims. One week they may be famous transhumanists, the next week economists and the one after that suitable anime characters. Sometimes they are interactive (and for a while Dr Cho Hong himself was actually sleeved in his statue). The shape of the other five is auctioned off, giving the plaza company a steady (and sizeable) income. Occasionally they become advertisements or unpopular characters, triggering others to outbid the shape with something more acceptable. Some of these "shape wars" escalate into major public entertainment as the statues shift, often into insulting parodies.

The main use of the plaza is the marketspace. The physical space is filled with stands where traders hawk their wares. The stands are usually manufactured on the spot by the plaza swarms for a small fee, but some traders like to bring thier own, especially if they want to include anti-eavesdropping functionality, hologram fabrics or other special features. Getting a good spot is tricky, and there is a thriving location market. Some stands are extremely small, just large enough to get AR rights on the shared layer.

What is traded changes day from day. Some patterns are reliable: there is a aquaculture on Fridays, morphs on Sundays and pets on Tuesdays. Others come and go, depending on prizes, online clustering and flash traders - one day a large number of petal traders are around, the next they are gone. Some trades are always around: the Corridor of Bankers, the VC Den, the Alley of Lawyers and the Nanomonger corner are reliably there. Many hypercorps also have stands, if only to show themselves (and to lure visitors, they sometimes offer very good onte-time deals).

Obviously most of the activity could be done online but most visitors agree the marketspace is more entertaining. The whole point is to haggle, debate and gossip in public. Seeing representatives of DirAct and Medusan Shield shout inventive abuse at each other across the street is priceless. The VCs and coolhunters scout the area for ideas. Extropian parents bring their kids to see how freeform trading is done. People sample food and demos. There are usually a few interesting newcomers around or some high-rep people to try to sousveil.

Best Do It So Corporation maintains the plaza nanoswarms (called the invisible hands of the market, of course) that are produced in hives under the surface. They maintain physical security and various forms of assistance (for a fee).