

**Product**

Planar CarbonLight CLA Series,  
Planar Touch Screen Monitors

**Location**

Seattle, Washington

**Industry**

Exhibit/Public Visitor Center

**Application**

Visitor Engagement

**Partners**

Belle & Wissell  
Graham Baba Architects  
Studio Matthews  
Jill Randerson Exhibit Management  
The Radisch, Co.  
Dillon Works  
Whitlock

**Custom LED Video Wall Application Supports Immersive Visitor Experience at Amazon's Understory Exhibit**

# Understory at The Spheres

Amazon's concept for its new Spheres complex is that people can think and work differently when surrounded by plants. The Spheres is the latest addition to Amazon's downtown Seattle headquarters and includes three giant intersecting domes housing more than 40,000 plants from the cloud forest regions of over 30 countries—creating a lush workplace with a direct link to nature. The innovative building offers employees a work environment that is more like a rainforest than an office. To properly explain this groundbreaking new building, Amazon set out to establish a free, public visitor center at The Spheres, called Understory—the name of which refers to the lush habitat between the rainforest floor and canopy. Amazon assembled an accomplished team of local Seattle companies to design the exhibit space.



The group included Graham Baba Architects, exhibit designer Studio Matthews, media experience designer Belle & Wissell, Jill Randerson Exhibit Management, filmmaker The Radisch, Co., fabricator Dillon Works, and a/v integrator Whitlock. Additionally, Arup provided structural, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, a/v, and acoustics design, and Niteo provided lighting design.

Understory provides a fully immersive, 360-degree experience where visitors can get up close and personal with the science, engineering, and plants behind The Spheres. At a central media installation, visitors can take in sweeping interior views of The Spheres above, as well as stunning macro footage of its world-class plant collection.

The experience is composed of a large, curved LED display, surrounded by LED columns at regular intervals. Interpretive zones within—demarcated by pools of light and featuring directional audio—offer voiceover descriptions of the plants on view. A generative soundscape, composed by Jesse Solomon Clark, enhances the experience.





The 18-foot-long, 10-foot high LED video wall and the LED columns (11 total, each 3-foot-long and 10-foot high) are composed of Planar® CarbonLight™ CLA Series video wall displays with 1.5mm pixel pitches (CLA1.5) from .

A line of fine pitch LED video wall displays, the Planar CarbonLight CLA Series features Planar® PrecisionArc™ alignment technology which enables for creatively curved video wall arrays—stunningly seamless installations with concave, convex or wave formations.

Engineered with a carbon fiber structure, the Planar CarbonLight CLA Series incorporates a thin, lightweight, high-strength carbon fiber casing in a modular design to fit a wide range of simple or complex applications.

Five modular exhibits, situated throughout Understory, offer more information about Amazon, The Spheres, and the world-class plant collection within. Each station features an engaging physical interactive (designed by Studio Matthews) as well as a touchscreen interactive—presenting unique topics through a playful interface, encouraging further discovery.

The modular exhibits are supported with Planar® PT3290PW 32-inch touch screen monitors, which offer bright, widescreen multi-touch displays that are ideal for applications requiring gestures-based support.



# Showcasing Amazon’s Approach to an Urban Office

In designing Understory, the goal was to create a unique, educational exhibit that not only describes the architecture of the Spheres and the incredible botany collection it holds, but also the philosophy behind building such a unique work environment, said Gabe Kean, founder and principal of Belle & Wissell.

“Studies show the benefits of this ‘forest bathing’ concept—where people’s heart rates will lower, and they are able to think more clearly in forested environments,” Kean said. “The Spheres are an extension of Amazon’s experimentation into ways to improve—and reinvent—the workplace.”

At Understory’s central media installation featuring the Planar CarbonLight CLA Series, these themes are conveyed to visitors through impactful visual and audio content. “Sequences were created using macro videography to display close-up footage of the biodiversity, illustrating the most significant plants in the collection,” Kean said. “Short film vignettes, including actual Sphere tours, are also shown to convey the different parts and unique features the building’s environment.”

## A collaborative partner

According to Kean, Planar was chosen for the Understory project not only based on the performance and seamless design of the video wall displays, but also because of Planar’s support and expertise. “Planar has a lot of experience with custom applications that require more creative, integrated solutions,” Kean said. “Their specialists were very accessible and worked closely as part of the project team to ensure that everything was delivered and installed properly. Planar consistently remains not only relevant but a leader in this category.”

