

The Business of Furniture | April 29, 2020

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Italian Design Doesn't Give Up



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The Business of Furniture

April 29, 2020

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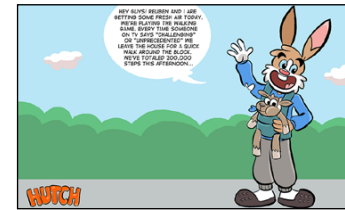
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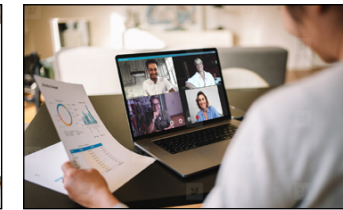
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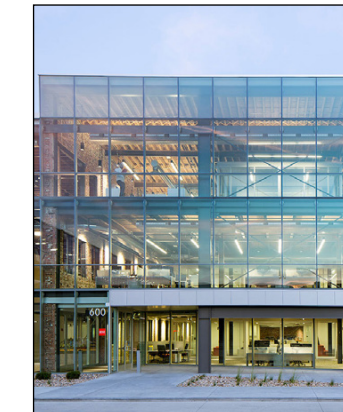
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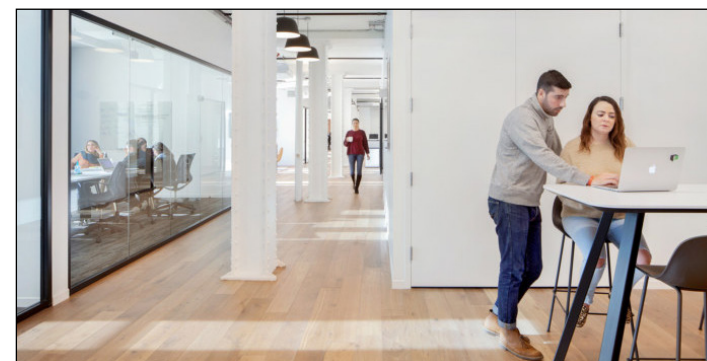
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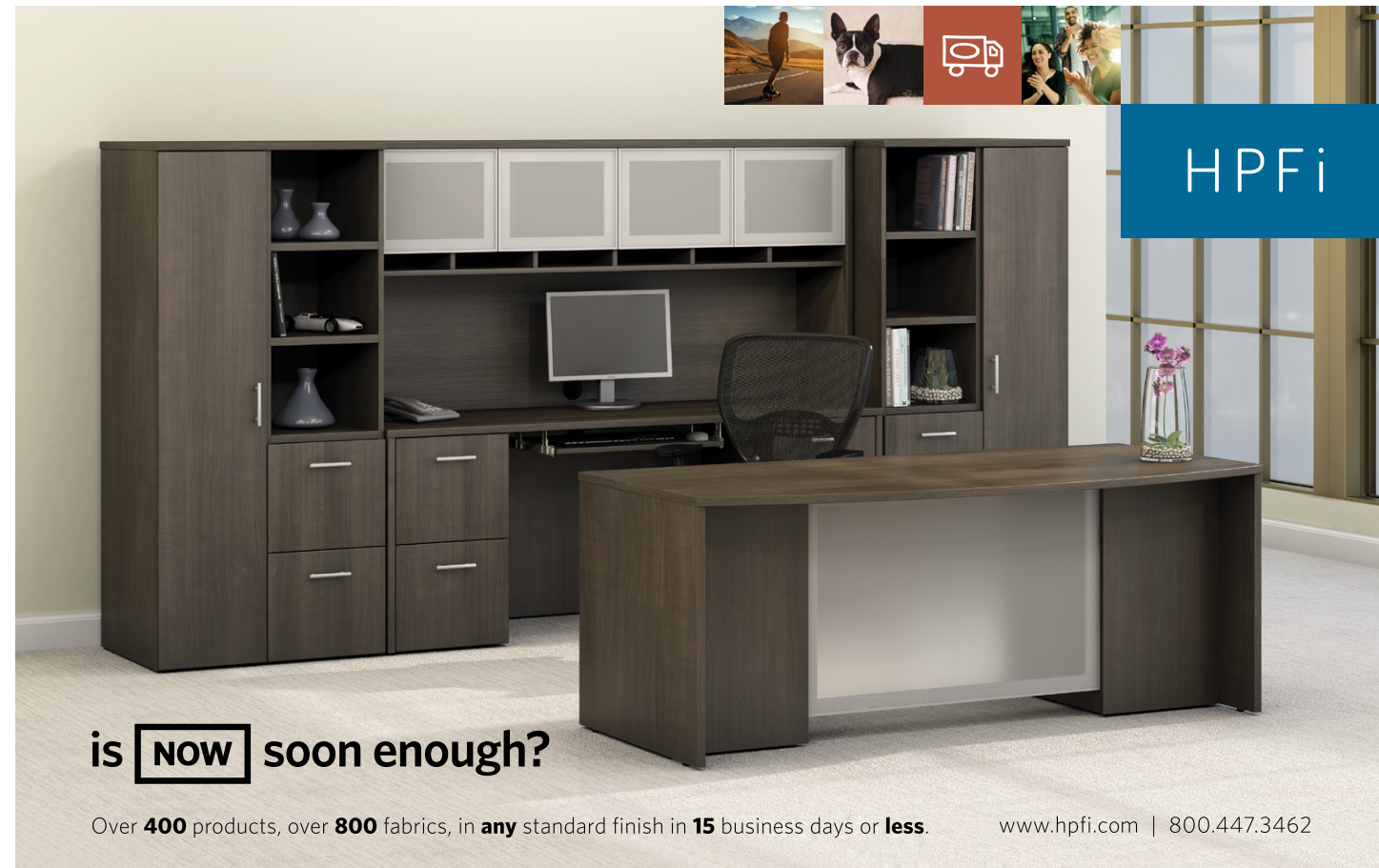
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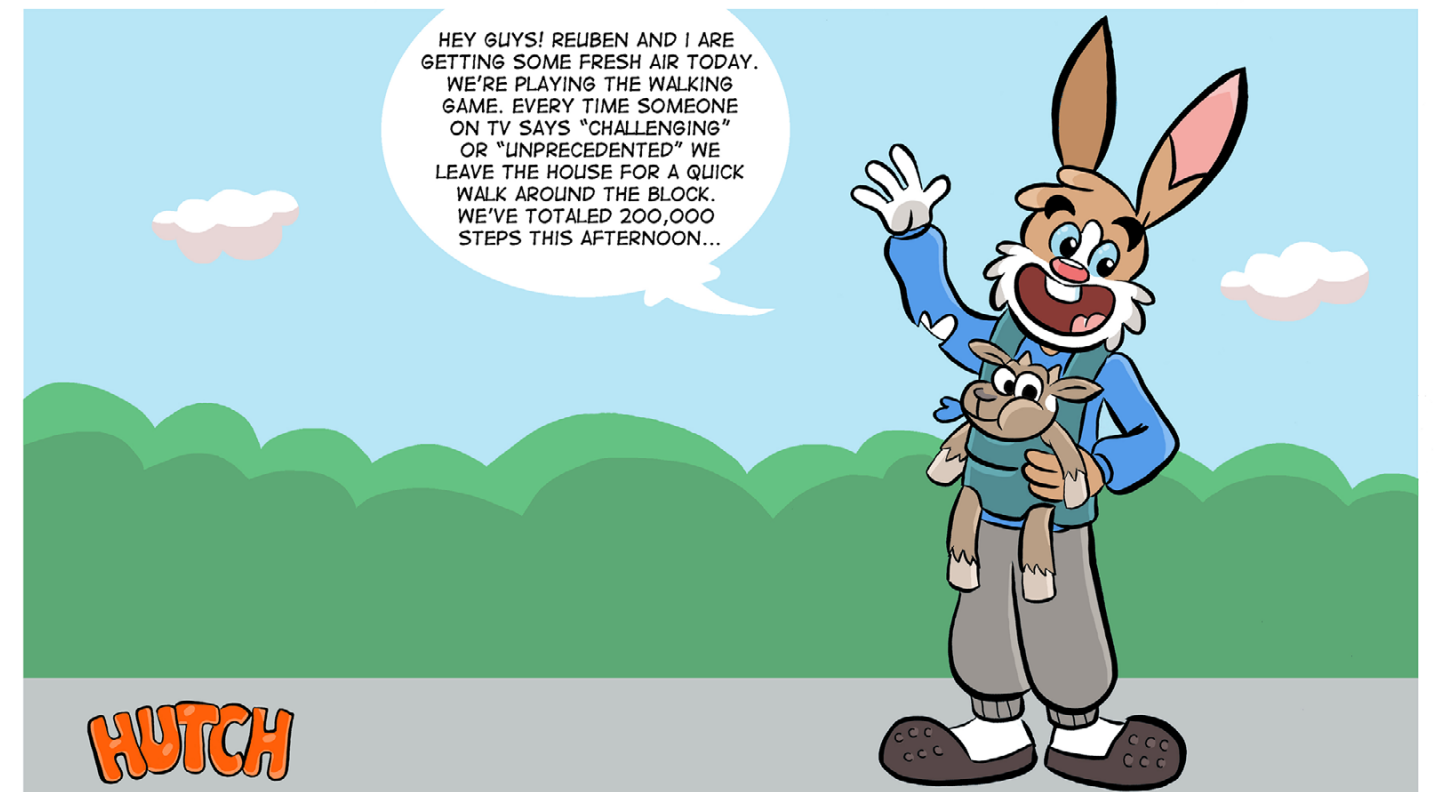
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Business of Furniture and *Workplaces* magazine are the go-to sources for keeping you informed about everything that is happening in the industry. From trends that affect your bottom line, to new products that will help your customers work better, to stories that will help you run a better, more informed company.

ROB KIRKBRIDE, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



HEY GUYS! RELIBEN AND I ARE GETTING SOME FRESH AIR TODAY. WE'RE PLAYING THE WALKING GAME. EVERY TIME SOMEONE ON TV SAYS "CHALLENGING" OR "UNPRECEDENTED" WE LEAVE THE HOUSE FOR A QUICK WALK AROUND THE BLOCK. WE'VE TOTALED 200,000 STEPS THIS AFTERNOON...

HUTCH

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COVID-19 Industry Bulletin Board

Editor's Note:

Information during the Coronavirus outbreak is at a premium. Business of Furniture is dedicated to getting you the latest industry information. This is a new section that will run throughout the crisis. Feel free to send me your company's information at rob@bellow.press. It can be news (as you can see below), simply a shout out to the industry or a friend in the industry or something funny, uplifting or inspiring that you are seeing.

From BIFMA

“Economics of a Pandemic” will be the subject of a BIFMA seminar tomorrow by economist Chris Kuel. He will speak about the impacts of COVID-19 and forecast what the future might look like for manufacturing and commercial real estate. A Q&A session will follow.

Kuehl is a manager director of Armada Corporate Intelligence. He is the chief economist for several national and international organizations and the economic analyst for several state accounting societies.

The webinar is from 11 a.m. to noon. Register at <https://www.bifma.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=1369710>

From theMART and NeoCon

Plans are underway to unite the commercial interiors industry in June through a resource and content-rich interactive online platform. On June 1, NeoCon will launch NeoConnect 2020 — a series of online resources, programming and events hosted on neocon.com and designed to virtually connect the NeoCon community.

For the month of June, NeoConnect will feature product and company details from NeoCon 2020 tenants and exhibitors and a full roster of complimentary NeoCon CEU webinars, online panel discussions and virtual social events. Also serving as a community portal, NeoConnect will share editorial features, digital issues and special online programming from NeoCon partners and host a “From the Community” blog series. A robust social media program beginning in May will complement the NeoConnect hub and feature product spotlights, exhibitor take-overs and engaging interviews on Instagram TV.

“NeoCon has brought the commercial design industry together every June since 1969,” said Byron Morton, vice president of sales for NeoCon. “Even though we can’t be together physically this year, it remains important for us to continue to conduct our businesses, share ideas, introduce new product concepts, learn from one another, support our community and celebrate when and where possible. We hope the industry will join us this year via NeoConnect.”

NeoConnect will remain active with updated content through the fall. Full details, including a schedule of online programming, will be available mid-May.

Access to showroom and exhibitor press releases, as well as NeoConnect press releases and images will be available in the online press room at neocon.com. For additional showroom, exhibitor and general NeoConnect news, images, and real-time information, follow NeoCon Shows on the following: Facebook (@NeoConShows), Twitter (@NeoCon_Shows) and Instagram (@NeoCon_Shows).

NeoCon 2021 will run June 14-16 at theMART in Chicago.

From Moroso

Dear partners,

We would like to share with you some good news.

Finally, the situation in Italy is improving, and we are ready to start again with more enthusiasm and determination than ever.

We are happy to inform you that Moroso (re-opened its production facilities April 28) in full compliance with all norms and regulations aimed at preserving and protecting our employees' health and safety.

We have worked hard in the past weeks to adapt and reinforce all health and safety measures already in place at our factory and HQ. We are now pleased to inform you (we have started) our production again, while logistics and warehouse services will be fully operational from Monday, May 4. For the time being, all other departments, including customer care, customer service, commercial and marketing offices, will continue being available via smart-working. In the upcoming days, we invite you to check the status of your ongoing orders with your point of contact here at Moroso.

As you all know, our work did not entirely stop during this troubled period, as we kept being available working from our homes. We have organized several virtual meetings: Many of you enthusiastically joined us for the official launch of our latest collection “Taba” by Alfredo Häberli on the 15th of April. If you did not have the chance to be a part of it, we invite you to check the collection on our website and on our social media platforms.

Unfortunately, we cannot meet up in person yet and we will continue to be at your side thanks to the now-familiar conf calls and virtual meetings, to make sure we maintain the highest level of service and support.

We are steadily going back to being fully operational again with more passion and dedication than ever.

We shall remain at your disposal, and we hope to see you all soon.

Thank you,

Moroso Team

From La-Z-Boy

La-Z-Boy announced (began to resume) operations at partial production capacity at several U.S.-based plants on April 27, following the temporary closure of its manufacturing facilities and company-owned La-Z-Boy Furniture Galleries stores in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The company is resuming production to work through its existing backlog and to be able to service expected demand. Additionally, over the past week, based on various applicable state guidelines, the company opened several retail locations across the U.S. on a reduced schedule and expects to open additional stores in the coming weeks. Regional Distribution Centers remain operational to deliver in-process orders.

Kurt L. Darrow, chairman, president and chief executive officer of La-Z-Boy Incorporated, said: “We are monitoring the COVID-19 situation daily, with the health, safety and well-being of our employees, customers and communities our highest priority. We are reviewing data from across the country, as well as the applicable federal, state and local requirements and guidelines where we do business. Initially, we will open several La-Z-Boy branded manufacturing facilities at partial production capacity. The products produced will serve to address the backlog we had when we closed our

plants at the end of March and to satisfy orders that we expect to see as many states begin to allow our retail customers to re-open on a limited basis over the next several weeks. Moving forward, we will operate the business as customer demand dictates and are hopeful that as more retailers re-open, we will be able to increase production accordingly and bring additional employees back to work.”

Darrow added: “Last week, several La-Z-Boy Furniture Galleries stores in a few markets opened, based on applicable state and local guidelines, and we were pleased with consumer response. The stores are operating with strict health, safety and social distancing guidelines in place for the safety and comfort of our employees and customers. We plan to continue to open stores over the next several weeks when it is deemed safe by various states to do so and state closure orders in the respective markets permit.”

The company continues to prioritize the health and safety of its employees and customers by building upon the health, sanitation, and safety practices it already had in place across all facilities, and is following guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The company remains focused on managing the business to preserve cash and to ensure the continued liquidity of the company.

From NEXT Events

➤ NEXT Events announced the launch of a new matchmaking event. Beginning in May, NEXT Virtual Meetings will bring together respected design professionals and highly regarded suppliers from the safety and convenience of their home.

Transcending the challenges of the current economy, NEXT Virtual Meetings will invite a hand-selected group of decision-making buyers in the interior design industry to forge new relationships and intimate connections via Zoom video conferencing. From the comfort and safety of home, design professionals will connect with suppliers and manufacturers within a two-hour conference session, divided into four one-to-one matchmaking meetings for each participant. All pre-qualified buyers will be compensated \$100 for their participation. The pre-qualified buyers will include interior designers and architects responsible for specifying and purchasing products as well as purchasing companies responsible for furniture, fixtures and equipment (FF&E).

“Given the current circumstances to practice social distancing, NEXT Virtual Meetings opens a new door for the design industry to network and stay connected,” said Michael Schneider, president and CEO of NEXT Events. “We will bring together design professionals as well as suppliers and manufacturers to connect and develop relationships despite the stay-at-home orders. Each virtual meeting will allow participants to share creative ideas and solutions for continuing momentum.”

NEXT Virtual Meetings has scheduled three upcoming match dates: Wednesday, May 13 (1 to 3 p.m. p.m. EDT); Wednesday, May 27 (to 3 p.m. EDT), and Wednesday, June 10 (1 to 3 p.m.). Interested buyers and sellers can apply through the online portal. The cost for sellers to participate is \$995 per company with a portion of the proceeds benefiting Hospitality Cares Coronavirus Fund to assist hospitality professionals who have experienced financial challenges as a result of the pandemic. To learn more about NEXT Virtuals Meetings or to apply, please visit: <https://nextvirtualmeetings.com/>

From SurfaceWorks

➤ To our valued customers and partners,
As events unfold surrounding the COVID-19 situation, I wanted to share our commitments to you, our customers and partners across the globe.

Our highest priority is the health and safety of our employees, customers and supplier partners. At SurfaceWorks, we are keeping abreast of all the latest developments and taking appropriate actions with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and local government officials to minimize the risk of spread.

This includes proactively suspending all international and domestic air travel, monitoring vehicle travel into designated “hot spots” and implementation of CDC self-quarantine protocols for employees who may have come in contact with the virus. Additionally, we are deploying a work-from-home strategy in our corporate office to optimize social distancing.

Concurrently, we remain fully engaged in the business of the day. Internal operations, as well as our U.S.-based supply chain, remains strong and stable. Our SurfaceWorks Sales Team is prepared to engage with you via your choice of audio/visual technology platform. Furthermore, our customer service team is fully staffed and ready to assist you. You can reach them by calling (414) 570-2677 or email Sales@SurfaceWorks.us

Thank you for your continued support and patience as we work through this unique challenge. We will keep you up-to-date on any new information regarding our operations amidst COVID-19. For more information and additional resources, such as our online order status, visit www.surfaceworks.us

Sincerely,
Chris Gnadt, General Manager, SurfaceWorks

From UL

➤ UL is committed to providing solutions that help make life safer and more secure during this unusual time. Most of UL’s services are deemed essential and the majority of UL laboratories remain open around the world to help ensure that products and services can continue to be delivered safely and securely.

While the evolving COVID-19 situation presents new challenges, UL strives to bring critical solutions that meet emerging demands and evolving conditions in today’s environment. From advisory services to remote witness viewing to temporary field hospital inspections, UL helps to ensure you continue to operate under unprecedented circumstances. And we are here to help you get your products to market and understand the regulatory landscape if you are shifting your operations into new products. Just a few examples of how we can help are:

- Expedited support for launching new or altered products to help combat COVID-19.
 - Compliance services for personal protective equipment (PPE) products used by health care providers.
 - Pandemic response plans and re-opening plans for buildings
- Visit <https://www.UL.com/ul-covid-19-support-services> to learn more about how UL can help you get to market or contact us at furniturena@ul.com.

Shout Out: To Herman Miller for Giving Essential Workers a Break

☛ The first thing we can tell you about is that Herman Miller is saying thank you by offering essential workers 25% off and free shipping for a selection of their task chairs — Aeron, Embody, Setu, Sayl, Mirra 2 and Cosm. The sale is for a limited time. Essential workers can use the code THANKYOU25.

Shout Out: To Nurus for Designing Open Source COVID-19 Test Unit

☛ In order to contribute to the fight against COVID-19, animated by the social responsibility embedded in its company values, Nurus has made its know-how in the design and creation of innovative professional furniture solutions available to everyone. This is to design and engineer a mobile unit in which to perform swab testing in absolute safety, in full compliance with the necessary health and privacy regulations.



The complete project with all the construction details, calculations and all the necessary information for its assembly is made available by Nurus free of charge for all those who intend to produce the COVID-19 Mobile Test Unit in any country in the world. The complete project can be [downloaded here](#).

The metal and glass structure was designed by Renan Gökyay, partner of Nurus, and developed by Serhat Ünlü with the support of the whole team of the Nurus Design Lab, to be made and assembled in a simple, fast and cost-effective way.

Each unit consists of two booths to be alternately used for carrying out tests and an area reserved for health care professionals who can work safely in a totally separate environment.

Each unit, pressurized and sterilized thanks to continuous disinfecting, is able to guarantee the carrying out of over 400 test processes per day.

Shout Out: To Louis Poulsen for Donating Masks to the Cleveland Clinic Weston

Louis Poulsen, the Danish lighting brand with its U.S. headquarters in Weston, Florida, is donating 1,000 KN95 masks to the Cleveland Clinic Weston and other local health professionals and first responders in South Florida.

“We are immensely grateful to our community partners and companies such as Louis Poulsen,” said Dr. Rodolfo Blandon, president of Cleveland Clinic Weston. “We are humbled by their generosity and willingness to provide support during the COVID-19 pandemic. This donation will allow us to continue meeting the needs of our patients and our community safely and effectively.”

As the COVID-19 crisis evolves, Louis Poulsen is committed to protecting the health and safety of its workers and community. The KN95 masks are in demand by local and state authorities across the country. This donation of personal protective equipment (PPE) provides the caregivers at Cleveland Clinic Weston with the tools they need to protect themselves while living up to the clinic’s guiding principle of “patients first” health care.

“In this unprecedented crisis, Louis Poulsen is concentrating on not only keeping our staff safe, but also the heroes of our community who are on the frontlines fighting this virus.” said Kent Pedersen, president & CEO, Louis Poulsen USA. “Since its inception, Louis Poulsen has always sought to design lighting and enhance lives, and this meaningful donation is an extension of our philosophy and aims to save human lives.”



Shout Out: To Brentano for Supporting Meals for Heroes

Hosted by Brentano, Savory Salads and Binge Worthy Bites, Meals for Heroes created a unique opportunity to give back. Now more than ever, health care workers across the globe are risking their lives to protect our families. Meals for Heroes was created to help bring joy and alleviate the need for our health care workers to worry about additional daily tasks other than fighting this virus on the front lines. Local restaurant, Savory Salads created tailored, healthy meals to hospitals in Chicago and the surrounding suburbs as a means to say thank you to our health care heroes. Not only does Meals for Heroes provide healthy meal options for health care workers who are unable to work from home, but it also supports initiatives to shop small and local to support family-owned companies during these unique times.

The interactive virtual cooking show featured Brentano staff, including National East Coast Sales Manager Daniel Ortiz, Global VP of Sales and Marketing Paul Templeman-Holmes and Marketing and PR Manager Laura Dzugan. Savory Salads head chef Stephanie Dzugan, and talented food blogger Callie Quinn from Binge Worthy Bites provided the cooking entertainment. Together they shared the recipe for their one-of-a-kind Huli Huli Chicken with fried rice and a side salad. Huli Huli Chicken is one of the delicious meals being delivered to health care workers in our area! Stephanie and Laura are sister-in-laws who designed the evening together to benefit health care workers in need.

Throughout the evening's cooking demonstration, attendees had access to a donation link for Meals for Heroes. Interested parties were able to donate meals for local health care heroes. Meals for Heroes are \$10 per meal, and your donation goes directly to the food cost associated with providing a local health care hero a meal during their shift. Before the cooking demonstration, Meals for Heroes had delivered 350+ meals to health care workers in our area.

Fast forward, 60 minutes into the evening, Brentano is thrilled to announce that the Chicago Dharma Drum Buddhist Association has donated \$50,000 to Meals for Heroes, a total of 5,000 meals! The evening ended on a high note with a total of \$51,160 being raised, 5,116 meals to be provided for local health care heroes on the front lines. In these unprecedented times, Meals for Heroes provided the dose of "good news" we all needed!



Shout Out: To Room & Board's Partners for Helping Out

Room & Board is known for partnering with companies whose values align with leading sustainability efforts and helping local communities. During the COVID-19 crisis, Room & Board's many U.S. manufacturing partners have reopened as essential businesses to keep producing PPE for donation.

We are proud to share these stories of compassion and creativity.

Open Works, part of Room & Board's Urban Wood Project -- think the Hanneman stool, Henson table lamp and Montford picture ledge products -- has converted its facility to the emergency production of face shields using 3D printers.

American Leather, which makes many of Room & Board's recliners and sleeper sofas, is producing masks and gowns for health care workers in its Dallas facilities.

Precedent Furniture, which makes dozens of the brand's accent chairs, beds and sofas has switched its production over to protective masks.

ADF of Ladywood, Wisconsin, which makes the Arcana hooks and magazine stand, is producing safety shields and separation barriers for service counters in order to protect workers interacting with patients.

Redland Cotton of Moulton, Alabama, whose material is used for the Sommerville bedding collection, is producing masks for the University of Alabama Medical Center.

Valdese Weavers, maker of many popular Room & Board pillows, is sewing masks for hospitals in North Carolina.

McCreary Modern, manufacturer of the Metro sofa, has researched and developed two types of masks. One to cover an N95 mask that extends the life of the mask and another mask with a disposable pleated design. The company is making these for Hospice of Catawba County and offers its services to the nation as needed.

Facture Goods, known for the Everly bowls, raised more than \$10,000 for food and protective equipment for health care workers in the Chicago area through a raffle. This is a personal effort for Aron Fischer of Facture Goods. "My husband is a doctor and many of our friends are nurses, support staff, other doctors and nurses," says Aron. "I am so worried about health care providers. I would like to use that energy to help."

What I'm Hearing from the Industry



Happy Wednesday friends,

I've decided to use my column this week to run through some of the things I'm hearing out there. I'm going to start with a disclaimer: Most of this is anecdotal or my opinion about what is happening and what might happen as we begin to reopen after the coronavirus crisis.

Let me start with where I am geographically: Michigan. It remains on one of the tightest lockdowns in the country, though Gov. Gretchen Whitmer (you might know her from President Trump's description of her as "that woman from Michigan") eased up the restrictions slightly on Friday, while at the same time extending them through mid-May and mandating we wear masks in enclosed public buildings.

This, of course, has an impact on a large part of the office furniture industry. According to information on their websites, Steelcase, Herman Miller, Haworth and others remain open, but only producing for essential businesses — hospitals, government, pharmacy, food, transportation, education, etc. All three of these majors continue to take orders, but are prioritizing those from essential businesses.

I am hearing about layoffs at dealerships across the country, but most of those jobs are expected to come back once restrictions are lifted and businesses reopen. I listened to a very interesting presentation by Amanda Schneider (ThinkLab's CEO and a fantastic Business of Furniture contributor)

and her team titled, "Moving Forward: Preparing Your Business for the Unpause."

According to her research and findings from the ThinkLab Industry Impact Survey, there is cause for alarm and cause for hope. The survey tracks employment, project health, bid activity and weekly highlights. ThinkLab is adding a recovery indicator dashboard to its findings as well.

Employment is a cause for concern as the industry continues to implement layoffs, furloughs and pay cuts at a growing rate. Still, most of those jobs are expected to come back after the worst is over. More jobs are being put on hold and cancelled, but after the initial shock, the numbers appear to be stabilizing, Schneider said. Many projects in the design phase are continuing, she said, though budgets are being looked at carefully.

If you want more information, go to thinklab.design. If you participate in the survey, you'll receive the results.

In tough times, leaders emerge. Schneider and her team are definitely emerging as industry leaders during the crisis. Thank you Amanda!

I am also hearing from a number of dealers, though the concerns being voiced by them differ depending on where they are. I spoke to a large dealer in New York this week who said his business will face logistical difficulties as we come out of the crisis. The projects that were immediately put on hold will need to immediately restart. The projects scheduled to start during the shutdown will need to start right away as well. And the projects on the

board to start soon will need to get underway. That will create some logistical nightmares, especially in a city like New York, where things like elevator time (to get product on the floor) is at a premium in the best of times. When things reopen, dealers and manufacturers are going to have a lot of juggling to do.

Immediate needs that will have to be considered include barriers, screens and other space dividers that will be in high demand as businesses reopen. Some are saying hand sanitizer stations will be the new trash cans.

Designers I spoke to are concerned some manufacturers are spending too much time chasing these instant-gratification products and losing focus on the bigger picture. The manufacturers who will succeed coming out of this are the ones who stay the course, designers believe. As for product launch dates, it appears the majority of manufacturers are still going to introduce new products around the same schedule as NeoCon, though some are choosing to go even earlier with their releases. That being said, don't expect major, game-changing products to be released this year.

Furniture fairs remain on hold, and I don't expect a major event to be held for the remainder of the year. We all know about NeoCon and Salone in Milan being canceled, but other shows are falling as well. The China International Furniture fair — the world's largest — was the first to be postponed. It is held annually in March and September. The March show in Guangzhou was postponed to late July. It remains to be seen whether China will roll out the red carpet for North American and European attendees. The July version of CIFF will likely be by the Chinese, for the Chinese. Clerkenwell Design Week in London was rescheduled from early May to late July, though everyone I speak to in London thinks that date remains too early for the show to go on. Orgatec is scheduled for October, and as of now, show organizers say it's a go, but on April 21 Germany canceled Oktoberfest, which happens mostly in September. The Geneva Auto Show was canceled for the first time since WWII. With those

major events cancelled, it is hard to believe Orgatec can go on as scheduled, but as of now, it will.

So what's going to happen coming out of this? I'm split on how it will change things in the long run. Part of me feels the office we know is going to change dramatically. Private offices, larger workstations, dividers, wider halls and staggered work shifts will be needed immediately. The other part of me believes absolutely nothing will change. Once we get back to work, it will be business as usual. We have very short-term memories in the U.S., and we don't like dwelling on the negative. We will forget about the whole thing, and offices will be just as they were before the virus. It will likely be a combination of both. Some things will change dramatically. Other aspects like the importance of collaboration will remain.

There is cause for hope. Economists are split on what the long-term effects will be, though most best-case models are based on opening up the economy fairly quickly. If the shelter-in-place orders remain though the summer it could take years — or even decades — for the economy to recover. If it happens sooner, we can flatten the curve on the economic pain as well. Since the cause of this economic downturn is so different from anything we've seen in the past — a virus that literally shut off the valve of commerce — I think a recovery will happen quickly. There is a lot of pent-up demand. And as long as furloughed jobs don't become permanent job cuts, the economy should bounce back.

Most of all, I want to say I am heartened by the industry's response, though not at all surprised. We created the Industry Bulletin Board that has covered pages and pages in our publication over the last few weeks and tells a few of the stories about our industry helping out. The response has been incredible from the industry. I also want to say: Don't give up. Have faith. Though it seems bleak now, things will improve, and there will be a day soon where we can all gather in person and celebrate the industry we love.

Rob Kirkbride and the Business of Furniture team

Bringing Elements of Home into the Workplace

By now, employees around the world have spent weeks working from home. For some office workers, this social distancing may stretch into months. Nearly everyone has had to adjust to new demands, new distractions and a new work environment.

Like it or not, says the folks at Coalesse, this is the time of the mandatory, if temporary, home office.

Adjusting to working from home

Though working from home under these conditions is less than ideal, the situation has brought out people's resiliency, creativity and adaptability.

Employees working from home are also experimenting with new spaces and postures in which to accomplish their tasks. Though many at-home workers find value in setting aside a dedicated workspace, others feel more comfortable moving from spot to spot in response to the task at hand.

Adjusting to being back in the office

Those who are suddenly working from home likely miss the predictability of the office and the social connections they can make with co-workers over a cup of coffee. Yet they may find, when the office doors reopen, that they've grown attached to some of their at-home routines.

Although they may miss using an ergonomic office chair or gathering in a spacious work café while at home, they may miss a few of the warm, familiar elements of home once they return to the workplace.

This is a good time to reflect on what those comfortable physical elements of home might be — and how designers can help introduce them to the workplace when employees are back in the office. Here are three elements to consider:

Lounge seating: No one would recommend sitting on a sofa or lounge for the entire workday, yet the relaxed postures lounge seating allows can provide a welcome change of pace. Employees who've become accustomed to using a comfortable chair or sofa at home may welcome the same options back at the office.

Area rugs: The warm, soft feel of an area rug is an easy fix for an office workspace that might feel a bit cool and bare after this work-from-home interlude.

Gathering table: For many at-home workers, the dining room table serves as the nucleus. It's a large, communal space where housemates can work side by side, each on their own projects. The camaraderie of the dining table translates well to the workplace, where team members gather to problem-solve and collaborate.

CLUMSILY ADJUSTING TO THE NEW ERA OF ONLINE MEETINGS

When it comes to that annual announcement the publishers of dictionaries like to make about their Word of the Year, 2020 will have only one candidate. But if there were a shortlist, you can bet that Zoom would be on it. The uptake of Zoom and other apps to help people connect during the lockdown has been remarkable. Numbers emerge each week of the scale of growth, but they're instantly out of date and probably meaningless anyway.

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE](#)



THE HOME WORKING EXPERIMENT: HOW OFFICE USE MAY CHANGE POST COVID-19

In addition to the tragic toll on human life, the onset of COVID-19 has forced many of us to quickly adapt to remote working.

Although working from home is not a new phenomenon, as the advent of phones and computers brought with it an ability to work from home, recent technological shifts have enabled it at greater scale and efficiency. If we look back only 10 years ago, fax machines were still frequently used and video calls were in their infancy. Over the past decade, technological advancements and decentralised management practices fostered some flexibility in working — although many industries still held out and preferred office work.

The rapid impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has brought with it forced adaption to a new normal: one rooted in communication tools — such as Zoom, Slack and Hangouts — and productivity tools — such as Miro — which have rendered many organisations much more functional during this time.

Post-pandemic, it seems inevitable that remote working will increase as flexibility will be demanded by employees and will be better understood by senior managers. Three-quarters of chief financial officers surveyed by global research firm Gartner recently said they expect to move previously on-site employees to remote working post-COVID-19.

Remote working is not, however, a panacea — it will offer more flexibility and options but will still be a tool rather than a complete solution. The role of the office will continue to evolve — providing space facilitating emotional connection and fostering company culture rather than just a place to work. Technology will be key in providing this flexibility going forward. While there will always be a market for well-priced buildings, any new build will have to meet high standards of sustainability and connectivity. There are opportunities for refurbishment of old buildings to provide the requisite infrastructure to service these buildings.

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE](#)

BIG NUMBER

52 percent

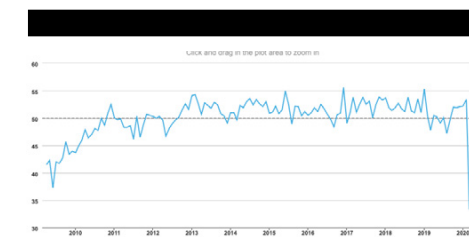
A new internet study says the number of Canadians working from home has skyrocketed during the coronavirus crisis, leading to a rise in everything from teleconferencing to internet slowdowns. The study, conducted by the Canadian Internet Registration Authority earlier this month, found that the number of Canadians working from home has grown from just 7% before the pandemic to 52%. And nearly half of households (44%) report having two or more people working at home.

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE](#)

WILL CORONAVIRUS BRING BACK THE CUBICLE?

About 70% of U.S. offices are open-plan workspaces, designed to encourage colleagues to bump into each other and share ideas — and, unwittingly, droplets of spit, mucus, and phlegm that can carry pestilential pathogens. Health experts are beginning to suggest that might need to change. Even before the pandemic, open offices faced a sustained assault from researchers and op-ed writers who argued the design trend has counterintuitively reduced face-to-face interaction among workers, cranked up distractions, and lowered productivity. If companies heed the call for more physical barriers at work, one of the many lasting impacts of this crisis could be a shift away from open-plan designs and a revival of some incarnation of their dreaded predecessor: the cubicle.

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE](#)



AIA: BILLINGS FELL DRAMATICALLY IN MARCH

AIA's monthly Architecture Billings Index for March came in at a score of 33.3, a dramatic 20.1-point decrease from February's score of 53.4, reflecting the deteriorating economic conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The ABI is a leading economic indicator of construction activity in the U.S. and reflects a nine- to 12-month lead time between architecture billings and construction spending nationally, regionally, and by project type. A score above 50 represents an increase in billings from the previous month, while a score below 50 represents a contraction.

"Though most architecture firms have made quick transitions to remote operations, the complete shutdown of business activity is severely impacting architects," said AIA chief economist Kermit Baker, Hon. AIA, in a press release. "The dramatic pullback in new and ongoing design projects reflects just how quickly and fundamentally business conditions have changed across the country and around the world in the last month as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic." Design contracts also fell precipitously last month, with a 24.9-point decrease to a score of 27.1.

The scores for regional billings—which, unlike the national score, are calculated as three-month moving averages—fell in the four regions in March with all regions reporting scores below the threshold of 50. Billings in the Midwest fell 9.4 points to a score of 44.2, while billings in the South fell 13.8 points to a score of 44.2. Billings in the West fell 4.5 points to a score of 45.3, while billings in the Northeast fell 11 points to a score of 38.4.

Billings scores also fell in all four individual industry sectors, with all sectors falling below the threshold of 50.



HNI Posts Loss in Latest Quarter as Virus Cuts into Finances

"WE ARE TAKING AN AGGRESSIVE, YET BALANCED APPROACH TO OUR PANDEMIC RESPONSE."

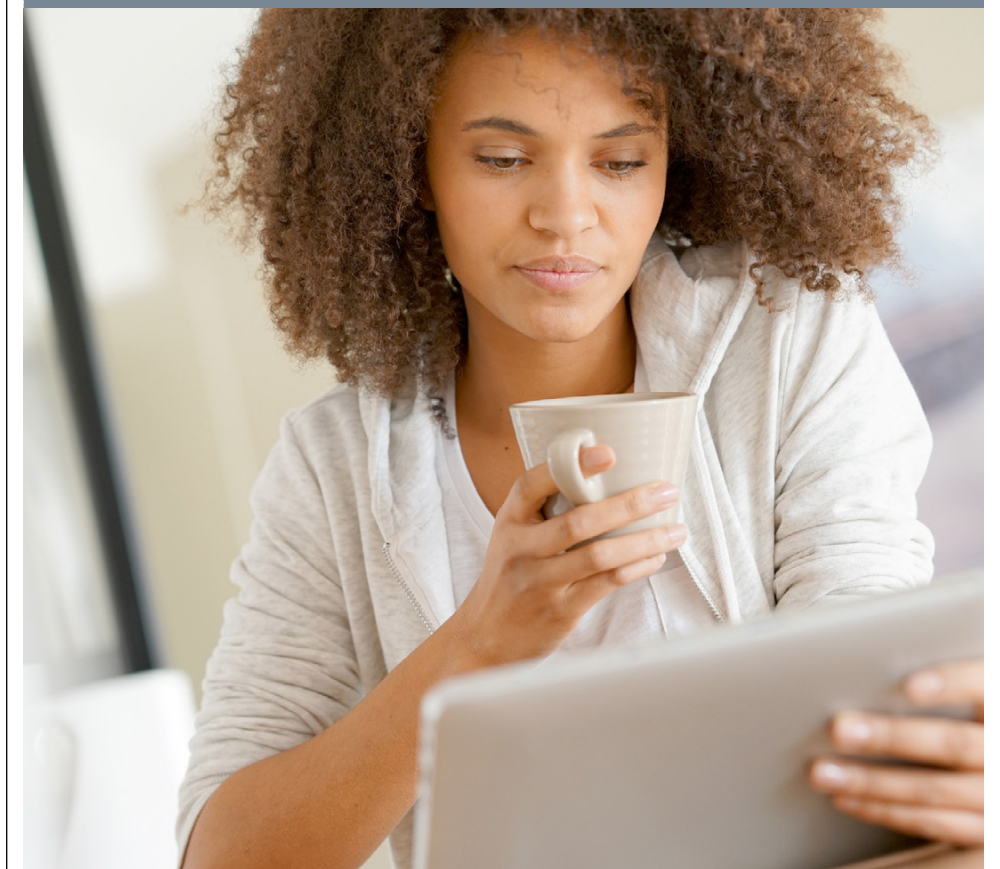
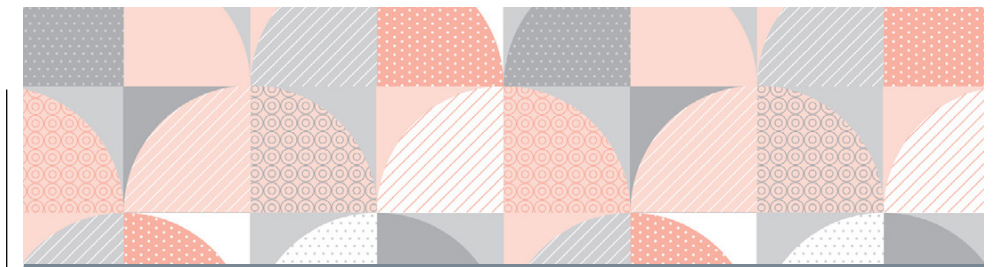
HNI Corp. announced sales for the first quarter ending March 28 of \$468.7 million and a net loss of \$23.9 million.

GAAP net income (loss) per diluted share was (\$0.56), compared to \$0.02 in the prior year. GAAP operating profit was impacted by intangible impairments and one-time charges related to the COVID-19 crisis of \$37.7 million. Non-GAAP net income per diluted share was \$0.21, compared to \$0.02 in the prior year.

Pandemic response update

Earlier this month, the corporation announced the implementation of workplace health and safety measures consistent with guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The corporation is taking strong measures to create social distancing and keep members safe. All members able to work remotely are doing so. In addition, the corporation has reorganized production facilities to protect members and increased the frequency and depth of cleanings, among other measures.

To support local communities and health providers, the corporation is producing, donating and supporting the production of personal protective equipment (PPE) to first responders, health care systems and hospitals using HNI's facilities in Iowa, New York and North Carolina. These efforts include the manufacture of washable cloth face masks, washable cloth face mask coverings and washable and dis-



SUPPORT

As we all adapt to a new way of doing business, INDEAL provides dealer members with a Support Package of enhanced tools and services to help eliminate some of the challenges they're currently facing. #INthistogether!

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INDEAL

posable protective gowns. The corporation is also loaning equipment processing time to support local vendors' PPE production efforts.

Cost savings and cash flow support

In its COVID-19 response update on April 6, the corporation provided details around its debt and liquidity levels and withdrew its fiscal 2020 sales and earnings guidance. The corporation also announced plans to reduce operating costs, lower capital expenditures and temporarily suspend share repurchase activity to support free cash flow. Additional actions include:

- Salary reductions: Base salaries for salaried exempt members were reduced by 10%; executive salaries were reduced by 15%; and CEO Jeff Lorenger's salary was reduced by 25%. These measures will be reassessed in six months.
- Board retainer reductions: The corporation's board of directors reduced its cash and equity retainers by 25%. This action will also be reassessed in six months.
- Member furloughs: Members have been furloughed to better match staffing levels with demand activity. The corporation will pay all health insurance premiums for these members during furlough.
- Capital plan reduction: The corporation reduced its capital expenditure budget for 2020 from approximately \$65 million to \$35 million.

"We are taking an aggressive, yet balanced approach to our pandemic response," said Jeff Lorenger, HNI Corporation chairman, president and CEO. "Our primary focus is on the health and safety of our members, and we have implemented measures accordingly. Financially, we entered this crisis from a position of strength with modest debt levels, strong liquidity, and earnings momentum. To maintain that strength and ensure the long-term health of the organization, we are taking aggressive cost actions and other measures to support cash flow."

First quarter highlights

- GAAP operating profit was impacted by intangible impairments and one-time charges related to the COVID-19 crisis. Non-GAAP operating profit expanded 279% from the prior-year quarter.
- Gross margin and non-GAAP operating margin expanded 220 bps from the prior-year quarter. Both segments generated year-over-year non-GAAP operating margin expansion.
- The hearth products segment revenue increased 2.6% organically from the prior-year quarter and strengthened through the quarter.
- Quarter-ending debt levels were \$230 million, equal to a gross leverage ratio of approximately 1.0x. Liquidity, as measured by cash and borrowing availability at the end of Q1, was \$356 million.

"Our first quarter results demonstrate the strength of our operating platform as our annual productivity and cost savings initiatives again drove improved profitability," Lorenger said. "Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has derailed what began as another strong year. While our continued focus is on the safety of our members and on managing through the near-term revenue pressure associated with the crisis, I remain confident in our long-term strategic direction."

First quarter summary

- Consolidated net sales decreased 2.2% from the prior-year quarter to \$468.7 million. On an organic basis, sales decreased 2.5%. The impact of acquiring small hearth companies increased sales \$1.1 million compared to the prior year quarter.
- Gross profit margin expanded 220 basis points compared to the prior year quarter. This increase was primarily driven by price realization and net productivity, partially offset by lower office volume and increased tariff expense.
- Selling and administrative expenses as a percent of sales increased 100 basis points compared to prior year, due to \$5 million one-time costs related to the COVID-19 pandemic (of which \$1.6 million was recorded as a corporate charge). Lower office volume was fully offset by lower core SG&A spending and reduced variable compensation.
- The corporation recorded

charges of \$32.7 million in the first quarter related to the impairment of goodwill and intangible assets.

- Non-GAAP net income per diluted share was \$0.21 compared to \$0.02 in the prior-year quarter. The \$0.19 increase was primarily due to price realization, net productivity and lower core SG&A spend, partially offset by lower office volume and increased tariff expense.
- Office furniture net sales decreased 4.3% from the prior-year quarter to \$338.4 million.
- Office furniture GAAP operating profit margin decreased 930 basis points versus the prior-

year quarter. On a non-GAAP basis, segment operating margin expanded 130 basis points year-over-year, driven by price realization, net productivity and lower core SG&A spending, partially offset by lower volume and higher tariff expense.

- The office furniture segment recorded charges of \$32.7 million in the first quarter related to the impairment of goodwill and intangible assets, as well as \$3.4 million related to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Hearth products net sales increased 3.5% from the prior-year quarter to \$130.3 million. On an organic basis, sales grew 2.6%.

"Although volumes and profit levels will be adversely impacted by the pandemic, we will adjust our business, maintain our long-term focus and utilize our strong balance sheet to successfully weather this crisis," Lorenger said. "The HNI culture shines in times like these. Together, our members, dealers, suppliers and communities will overcome the challenges presented by this crisis. Our business is strong, our leadership is seasoned, our members are capable and dedicated, and I am confident in our ability to effectively navigate this difficult period." **BoF**

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Real Issues
Real Conversations

Let's Chat!

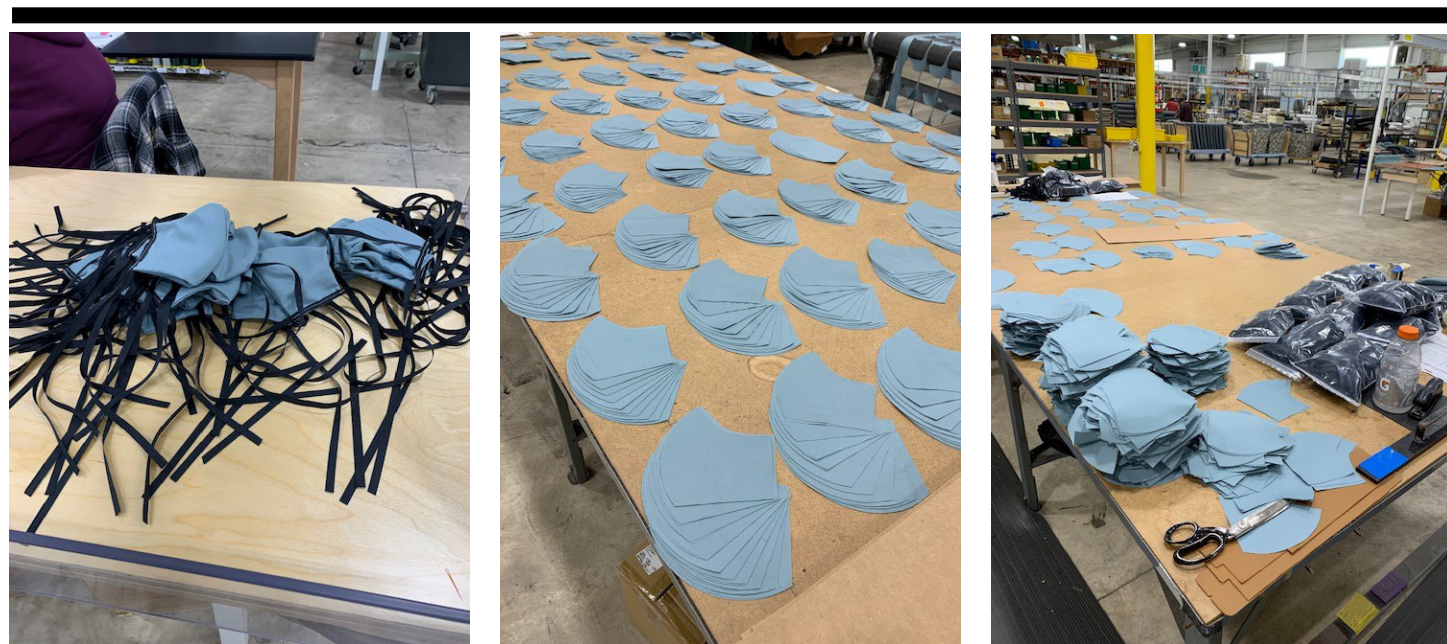
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Integra Seating Making Face Covering Kits for Employees, Healthcare Workers and Communities

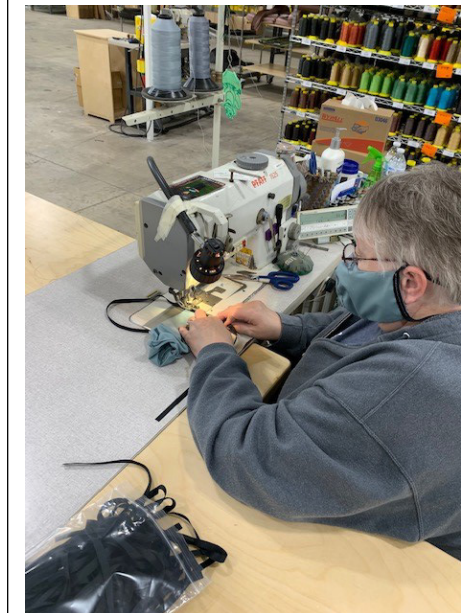
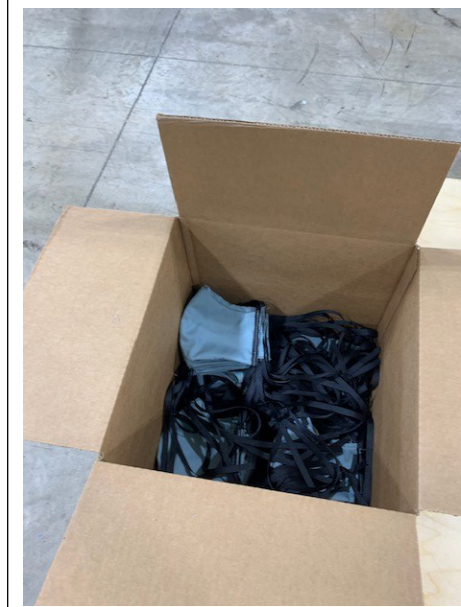
SINCE THE EFFORT BEGAN IN LATE MARCH, ABOUT FIVE INTEGRA EMPLOYEES HAVE BEEN DEDICATING TIME TO THE PROJECT

Integra Seating is spearheading an effort to make approximately 12,000 face coverings for its employees and their families, as well as health care workers and communities across the country to combat the spread of COVID-19.

Through the use of its Zund machine, the company is cutting individual pieces of a poly/cotton blend fabric to serve as a face covering. The face coverings are being provided as part of the CDC's recommendation for wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where social distancing measures are hard to maintain, especially in areas of significant community-based transmission. In accordance with CDC guidelines, all components in the kit are machine washable using standard laundry detergent and machine dryable.

The coverings are part of a kit which is being supplied to local and national partners in the effort. These partners, which include churches and other organizations, are recruiting volunteers to sew the face coverings and ensure they get to those most at need — local hospitals, senior homes and other high-risk facilities. Each kit contains sewing directions, a fully assembled face covering for use as a guide, and enough fabric pieces and straps for 50 face coverings. All kits are being donated and shipped free of charge.

Since the effort began in late March, about five Integra em-



ployees have been dedicating time to the project. Several churches in Southern Wisconsin have partnered with Integra to receive the kits, sew and distribute the completed face coverings. These churches include Lakeland Community Church in Williams Bay; Sugar Creek Lutheran in Elkhorn; St. John's Baptist in Delavan; Williams Bay Lutheran; and Christ Lutheran in Sharon. In addition, 1,000 face-covering kits have been sent to Banner Health in Phoenix, Arizona, to assist in their efforts to supply more PPE where it's needed most.

"Like everyone, we are very concerned about the health of our employees, families, friends and our community as a whole," said Integra Seating CEO Deena Putnam, who is coordinating the company's efforts. "We want everyone in our company and in our community to be safe and healthy, and we hope our efforts help. We are grateful for our partners and all the volunteers. We truly are all in this together."

Integra is offering the kits to any organization or individual throughout the country that would like to contribute and has the volunteers to sew and distribute the face coverings where they are needed.

Organizations or individuals interested in partnering with Integra can contact Putnam at dputnam@integraseating.com or call 1-800-235-0234. **BoF**



Design doesn't Give Up: Italian Manufacturers Ask for Progressive and Safe Reopening Process

TODAY THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE GROUP, AND OF THE ENTIRE SECTOR, IS TO ENSURE PRODUCTION WILL RECOMMENCE.

The recent outbreak of COVID-19 on a worldwide scale is forcing the global economy to face a serious and unexpected phenomenon.

The impact the virus will have on the planet's economy is almost impossible to assess at the moment as it is influenced by several

variables that are difficult to predict: the duration of the epidemic in Italy, the extent of the remedial measures that will be taken and the spread of the virus in the rest of the world.

At such a time of great uncertainty, initiatives to collaborate and safeguard the situation are

developing among companies which are usually engaged in healthy competition but who know how to interpret the delicacy of the moment and feel a strong desire to federate their efforts in shared objectives.

It is in this spirit that a group of companies in the furniture and

design sector have established a new level of dialogue over recent weeks. An initial chat between a few individuals in just a few weeks has turned into a fervent digital round table involving some of the most important companies in the sector: B&B Italia, Bisazza, Boffi, Cappellini, Cassina, Flexform, Giorgetti, Molteni Group and Poltrona Frau.

The group's first tangible result was a document drawn up two weeks ago to request a rent moratorium for all commercial properties that are currently closed. The companies proposed to reach an agreement that would reduce the cost of rent by 50% from April to December 2020. The request was immediately sent to all landlords of rented

properties throughout the world, and today constitutes an important tool and an effective basis for discussion.

Today the main objective of the group, and of the entire sector, is to ensure production will recommence.

Why it is important to start producing again

The trend of the number of cases of infection is finally giving some positive and encouraging signs. Therefore, the time has come to start thinking about a new phase that foresees Italians returning to their social and productive life while respecting all the countermeasures that will have to be taken due to COVID-19.

One of the most urgent decisions to be taken in the coming days concerns the expected resumption of production in the country.

It is a very important, almost decisive choice that will have a profound impact on the industrial, economic and social future of our country.

We continue to support the manufacturing sector as central to Italy, but it is important to remember that in 2017 in the European ranking we lost the long-maintained second position, following Germany, to France.

It is therefore fundamental that together we address the issue of returning to work and recognize the importance this decision will have in preventing a great human



and social tragedy transforming into an industrial and economic catastrophe that would destroy thousands of businesses, meaning hundreds of thousands of jobs lost.

The furniture and design sector constitutes one of the three strategic sectors of Italian production. With the strength of its 20,000 active companies and 130,000 employees, the sector generates 23 billion in turnover with an export level that exceeds 60%.

If we considered the entire Legno-Arredo wood and furniture industry, then we would be talking about 75,000 active companies with 315,000 employees and a turnover of \$43 billion. Several reasons exist for why the entrepreneurs in this important sector request to reopen the currently closed plants as soon as possible:

Health comes first.

The fact that factories are safe places should be reiterated. Following, and often exceeding, safety protocols, today our plants are safe places thanks to the layout of the production areas that respects social distancing, the possibility to measure temperatures through modern thermal scanners, meals distributed and consumed individually to temporarily avoid attending canteens, the use of appropriate and certified masks and overalls and gloves when required, as well as the regular sanitization of each environment with the most modern systems available.

The companies in this sector are in constant dialogue with the authorities and are attentive and available to evaluate the introduction of regulations and protection that go beyond what is required by law.

When workers go to the factory today, they know they are entering a controlled and safe place such as, and perhaps even more than, their home or the supermarket where they shop regularly.

It is also worth mentioning our factories are located in suburban areas, in towns that allow our workforce to reach the workplace independently, often on foot or by bicycle, without having to use public transport.

The need to work

Our companies have been competing for decades in a global market, populated by global competitors. This month of necessary closure has made it impossible for our companies to respect signed orders and delivery terms of goods expected for orders and projects.

We can still make up for this delay by reopening April 14 and working hard in the next months. Our customers choose us for the beauty and quality of our products, they will be understanding and wait.

But if the closure continues further the endurance of the industrial system will be severely tested. Many of our competitors, for example in Germany and Scandinavia, continue to operate regularly in these weeks. Solic-

ited by large developers or international customers, they can certainly guarantee production and delivery times by obtaining commissions and orders that would have otherwise been ours.

Their products will first take our place in projects that cannot be postponed over time, then perhaps even in multi-brand stores around the world. Thousands of orders would be lost or cancelled. The recovery, when it occurs, will be characterized by a very low backlog and a severely deteriorated financial situation.

For many companies in the sector, this would mean they would no longer be able to open again. We could lose 20% to 30% of our industrial heritage and witness serious damage to the industry. All of this would inevitably result in the loss of tens of thousands of jobs.

It could take 20 to 30 years to recover what we would lose in a few weeks.

A return to normal

A diligent and prosperous social belonging is also based on the fruitful participation in working life and the consequent industrial progress of the country.

Mankind is the fundamental element behind this process. Through active participation in the productive life of the system, not only family well-being is ensured but also the social and psychological fulfillment of one's own existence.

In particular, the Italian manufacturing system thrives internationally thanks to the



extraordinary nature of its workforce. Especially in the furniture/design industry, production takes place mainly thanks to the extraordinary contribution of women and men who everyday conceive and create superior products in form and content customers all over the world aspire to.

This immense human and professional capital now lies temporarily idle in apartments and places often do adapt to endure such long and forced confinement.

Bringing this lifeblood back to its natural veins constitutes a moral and social duty rather than economic obligation to our society.

What we ask of our country today

Today, furniture and design companies are asking to be able to begin a progressive and safe reopening process.

It is our workforce who ask us, together with customers from all over the world with whom we are in constant daily contact.

The factories are ready and safe, the rules clear and perfectly enforceable.

Financial aids and measures for credit are important but if production does not start we will no longer have companies that are able to take those measures once available.

Together with the production it is also important to be able to open the furniture stores again soon.

In our sector, we usually have very large shop floors with a small and distributed influx of people, not at all concentrated at the same time. The risk of overcrowding is practically non-existent. In any case, a temporary regulation to control access or by appointment only could be easily implemented.

What we have done so far to counter the crisis

First of all, we activated an internal task force that was formed and trained to manage a crisis of this nature.

After a few days, we transferred the entire operations of our companies to our employees' homes where they worked remotely thanks to their extraordinary spirit and availability to work from home, demonstrating great spirit of sacrifice and maintaining a very high standard of efficiency.

From that moment we started thinking about reopening, working on the plants to guarantee the maximum level of safety that all of our employees are entitled to and that they can always expect

from us.

Great effort is made every day to make us feel close to our many employees around the world, often in "smart working: mode, and to our customers and the large community of architects and designers.

To keep this great family together with the right warmth is the best guarantee to ensure a prompt recovery as soon as we can all start again.

Many companies have voluntarily decided to reduce managers' wages at this time of crisis to compensate for part of the workforce's salary reduction due to the state benefits that have had to be enforced at this time of closure. We are really proud of this gesture which tangibly demonstrates one of the secrets of these strong Italian companies: In great challenges we pull together.

Some of our companies are now centuries old. During this long period of time the world has significantly transformed. New products, new markets, new consumers.

This impressive evolution was only possible thanks to the extraordinary people who honored and supported us with their precious everyday work.

And it is to our craftsmen, workers, office employees and managers that we dedicate our utmost effort to be able to reopen and start again stronger than before, in the knowledge that only united we can continue to thrive in the time to come. **BoF**

PACIFIC WEST

MIXED-USE CHARGES ON



SAN JOSE, Calif. — In this uncertain environment, one company is demonstrating that while some issues are beyond the control of any one entity, others such as the entitlement process can be controlled. KT Urban plans for a project to feature two 20-story office towers housing 6,000 square feet of retail and 30,000 square feet of outdoor terraces within multiple levels located at 280 Woz Way in San Jose. [Globe St.](#)

OFFICE BAN ON TABLE

SAN FRANCISCO — If the San Francisco Planning Commission has its way, the Mission District will soon be off limits to almost all new office development. It's part of a campaign to push big-money business proposals out of areas that many at City Hall would rather see used for housing. If enacted, the zoning changes would mean all office uses are prohibited in the neighborhood, except that a professional service, financial service, or medical service is allowed as a conditional use on the ground floor in most cases. "Without grandfathering, this project is dead," said Commissioner Sue Diamond, who agreed that previously approved buildings should

be exempted from sudden changes to neighborhood zoning. [Curbed San Francisco](#)

MOUNTAIN WEST

CAMPUS TO BE TRANSFORMED

SALT LAKE CITY — A proposal to turn Salt Lake Community College's Meadowbrook campus into a commercial or office development and possibly affordable housing took another step forward Friday when the Utah State Board of Regents authorized the college to lease the 10.2-acre site to the Boyer Co. The 40-year lease would provide ongoing revenue to the college but the development would not be branded with SLCC signage. Rather, the college would move into a landlord situation. [KSL.com](#)

MIDWEST

VIRUS WON'T HAMPER PROGRESS



PITTSBURGH — One developer isn't letting a pandemic interfere with its plans to build a \$130 million office complex in Moon Township. The Burns Scalo real estate firm announced that it is ready to move ahead with Diamond Ridge, a three-building development featuring more than 500,000 square feet of office space on 41 acres of land off the Parkway West. James Scalo, the

company's president and CEO, is banking on the office market returning stronger than ever once the crisis subsides and people can return to their desks. "If we've learned anything from this pandemic, it's that working from home doesn't work," he said. [Pittsburg Post-Gazette](#)

STREET SHOP STARTS SOON

OKLAHOMA CITY — Construction continues at Wheeler with work transitioning to a more urban mix of housing and commercial space that will link the existing homes to the Ferris wheel overlooking the Oklahoma River. Dubbed the "Spoke Street Shop Homes," construction will start next month on three-story homes with ground floors designed for retail, office, makerspace or workshop. The vision all along with Wheeler is to have a truly urban walkable and bikeable community that has a wide variety of housing and commercial types. [The Oklahoman](#)

JOINT VENTURE HIGH RISE

SKOKIE, Ill. — 8000 North LLC announced a partnership with Murphy Development Group specifically for the ownership and development of a residential tower with luxury apartments, retail and private and public parking at the corner of Lincoln Avenue and Oakton Street in downtown Skokie. Scheduled to be completed in late 2021, the village of Skokie is also partnering in the project, for what will be the village's first new rental apartment development in decades. The \$68 million mixed-use development, designed by architect Lucien Lagrange, will be a 12-story tower with 153 luxury rental residences. [RE Journals](#)

NORTHEAST

NOW HERE'S A LITTLE STORY



NEW YORK — Jeffrey Lam, the son of Lam Group head John Lam, picked up a bankrupt and vacant six-story building located near the base of the Manhattan Bridge for \$29 million. The building at 55-59 Chrystie Street also has a place in music history. Hip-hop group the Beastie Boys rented a full floor of the building in the 1980s and used it as its home, recording studio and party palace. The group gave a shout-out to the property on their song "B-Boy Bouillabaisse" from their legendary album Paul's Boutique. [Commercial Observer V](#)

SEAPORT POISED TO WEATHER DEMAND DROP

BOSTON — Rents in Boston's Seaport District stalled in the first quarter, similar to what transpired across the city, JLL reported. The flipside of the lack of upward or downward movement, though, was that most landlords kept rents stable amid the unfolding COVID-19 crisis, the firm said in its Q1 report on the submarket. The long-term outlook calls for stability as well, especially in view of the pandemic and

its aftermath. "Seaport's tenant base is quite diversified, with equal parts finance, business services, and tech/biotech," JLL said. The submarket also has a relatively low exposure to troubled coworking firms, which represent only 2.4% of Seaport inventory. "With only six blocks of space over 50,000 square feet and an office development pipeline 94% preleased, the Seaport is particularly well-positioned to weather a near-term drop in demand brought on by COVID-19," the report stated. [Connect Boston](#)

SOUTH

MIDTOWN SITE EYED FOR PROJECT



NASHVILLE — The Midtown site needed for construction of the future 15-story mixed-use Moore Building, has sold for \$8 million. The new owner of the 0.72-acre parcel is an LLC affiliated with Atlanta-based Portman Holdings. The groundbreaking for the building has been put on hold due to COVID-19 concerns. Moore Building will rise on at the northwest corner of 19th Avenue North and Chet Atkins Place and could carry a price tag of \$100 million. The tower would contain

227,000 square feet of office space and 8,500 square feet of retail. [Nashville Post](#)

SMALL OFFICE BUILDING PLANNED

NASHVILLE — A boutique office project is planned for Edgehill, with the building to sit next to the soon-to-be-finished residential structure Illume. The three-story building will be located on a 0.85-acre parcel, offering three levels of below-grade garage parking. The office space would cover almost 122,000 square feet. [Nashville Post](#)

NO PLANS TO SUSPEND



JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — VanTrust Real Estate LLC expects to complete its first Park Place One office building in Nocatee in January as it works with prospects for a 552,000-square-foot industrial center in Imeson Park in North Jacksonville. "We are taking a long view," said John Carey, VanTrust executive vice president. "We are going to keep things going and hope that things return to normal sooner rather than later." VanTrust started the four-story, 125,000-square-foot Nocatee office building in March and has no plans to delay construction. [Jacksonville Daily Record](#)

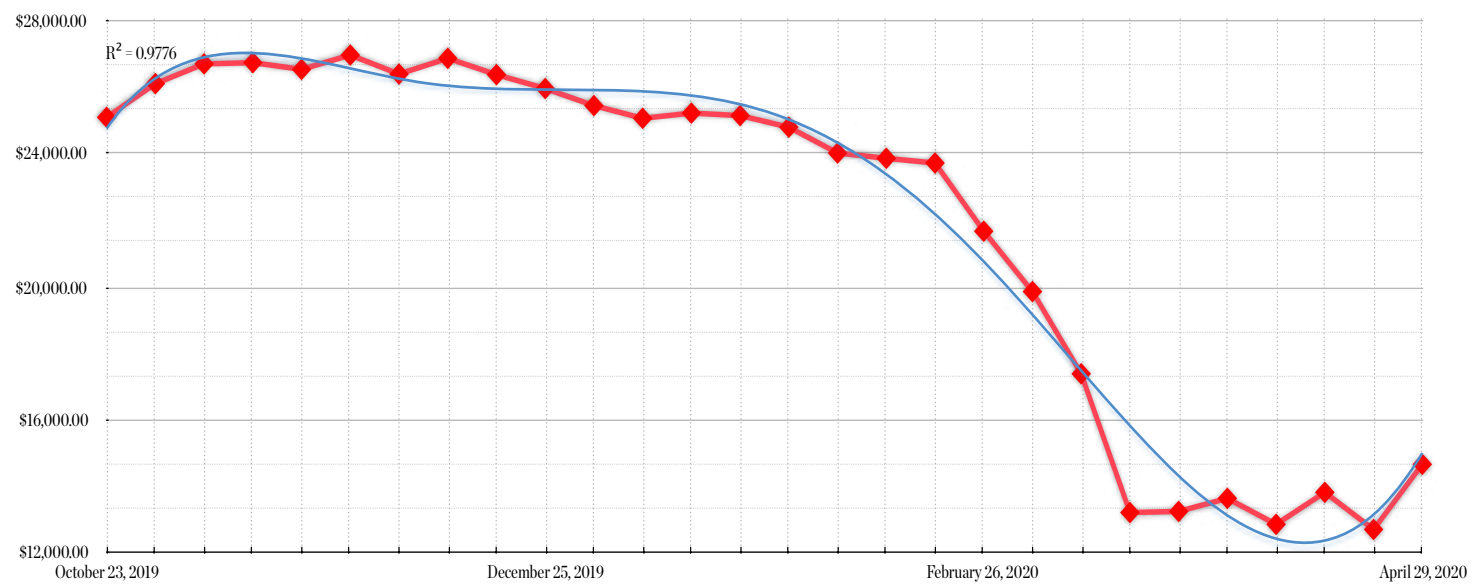
Compiled by Emily Clingman

BoF

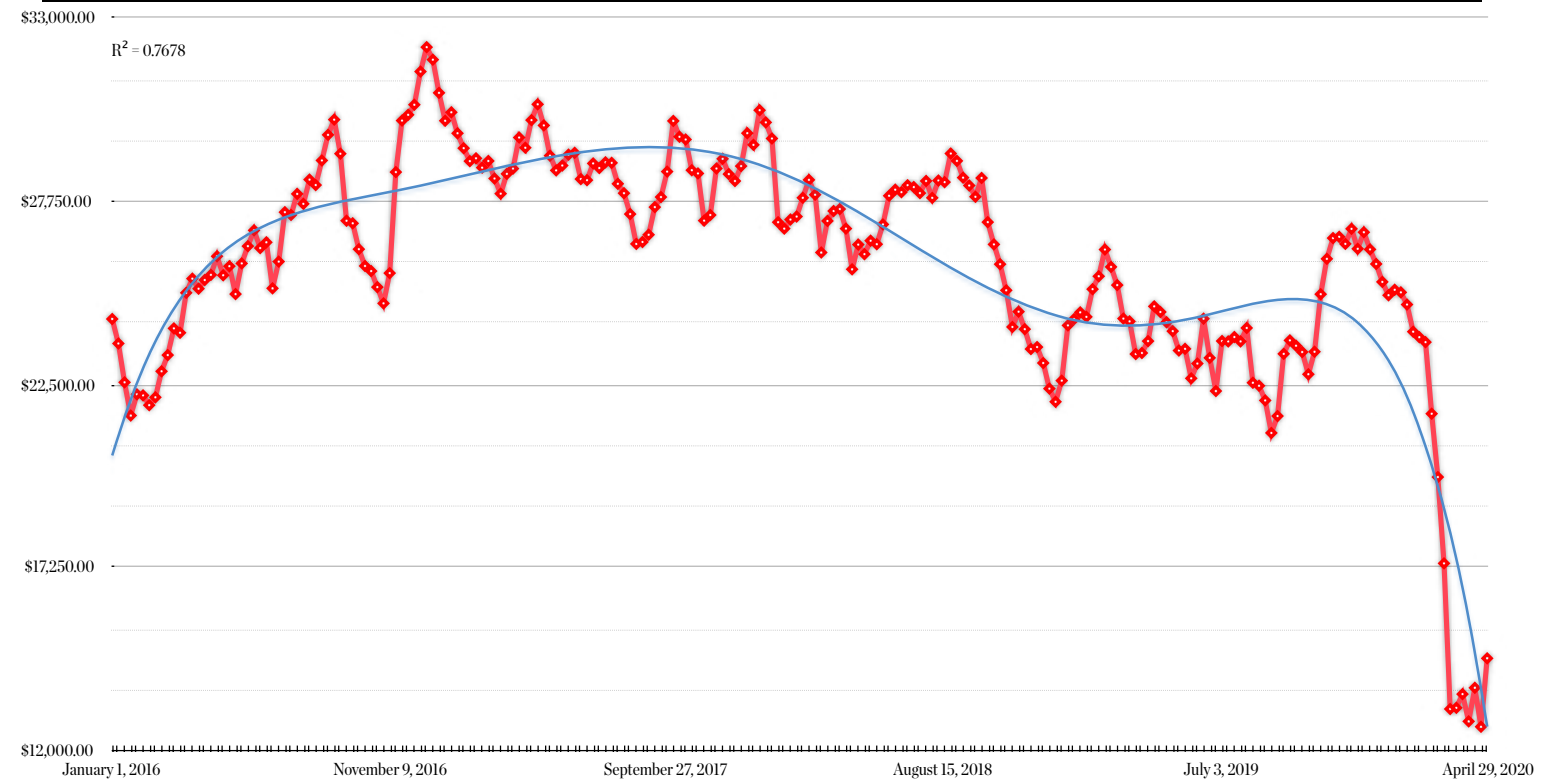
ALL TIME | January 1, 2016 BoF Industry Index Start: \$24,379.54
 YEAR TO DATE | April 29, 2020 Yearly Start: \$25,443.00 (2019 Ended Up +15.31%)

CURRENT VALUE **\$14,658.00**
TOTAL GAIN / LOSS **-9,721.54 (-39.88%)**
2020 YTD GAIN / LOSS **-10,785.00 (-42.39%)**

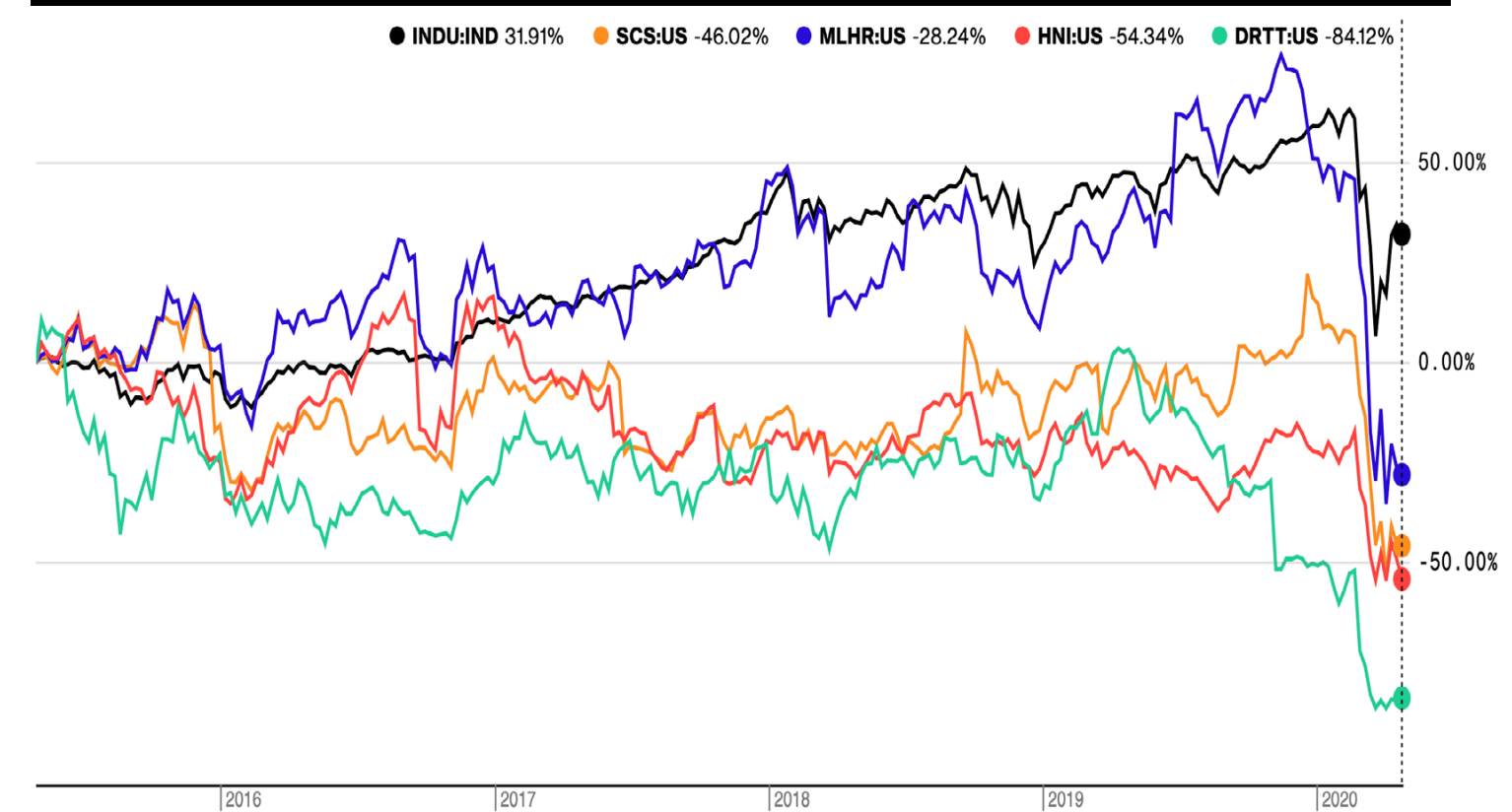
▲ SYMBOL	PRICE	CHANGE	TOTAL GAIN	1D GAIN	OPEN	PREV CLOSE	VOLUME	MARKET CAP	DAY RANGE	52WK RANGE
DRTT:US DIRTT Environm...	1.18 20:00	+9.26% +0.10	-83.00% -576.00	+9.26% +10.00	1.11	1.08	443,636	99.92M	1.09 -1.36	0.71 -6.90
FLXS:US Flexsteel Indust...	9.02 20:00	+1.23% +0.11	-79.58% -3,516.00	+1.23% +11.00	9.17	8.91	40,482	72.08M	9.02 -9.26	8.25 -25.81
HNI:US HNI Corp	24.36 20:04	+5.55% +1.28	-32.45% -1,170.00	+5.55% +128.00	24.00	23.08	231,061	1.04B	23.73 -24.79	16.61 -42.90
INQ:CN Inscape Corp	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-	-
KBAL:US Kimball Internati...	12.03 20:00	+7.22% +0.81	+23.13% +226.00	+7.22% +81.00	11.56	11.22	111,603	442.74M	11.30 -12.19	8.19 -22.40
KEQU:US Kewaunee Scie...	10.75 20:00	+3.27% +0.34	-39.57% -704.00	+3.27% +34.00	10.75	10.41	222	29.57M	10.75 -10.75	6.96 -23.00
KNL:US Knoll Inc	10.92 20:04	+5.10% +0.53	-41.91% -788.00	+5.10% +53.00	11.01	10.39	916,982	553.13M	10.51 -11.67	7.74 -28.30
LEG:US Leggett & Platt L...	33.74 20:04	+4.49% +1.45	-19.70% -828.00	+4.49% +145.00	33.26	32.29	1,494,238	4.46B	32.98 -34.55	22.03 -55.42
MLHR:US Herman Miller Inc	22.62 20:00	+5.53% +1.19	-21.18% -608.00	+5.53% +118.50	22.31	21.44	756,490	1.33B	22.24 -23.58	14.39 -49.87
SCS:US Steelcase Inc	10.50 20:04	+4.27% +0.43	-29.53% -440.00	+4.27% +43.00	10.56	10.07	1,010,401	1.20B	10.46 -10.94	7.02 -23.02
TILE:US Interface Inc	9.06 20:00	+4.50% +0.39	-52.66% -1,008.00	+4.50% +39.00	9.01	8.67	521,113	530.53M	8.74 -9.23	5.06 -17.68
VIRC:US Virco Mfg. Corp	2.40 20:00	-1.49% -0.04	-27.93% -93.00	-1.49% -3.62	2.40	2.44	6,016	37.71M	2.40 -2.41	1.82 -5.00



BoF Industry Index - Since Jan 1, 2016



Five Years - Major Industry Stocks



The Boss is Paying, So I'm Praying: Working for a Privately Owned Company

This column originally appeared July, 19, 2017.



You can send your workplace questions to Stephen at: StephenSays@bellow.press

Questions selected to be answered, will appear in this column. Please use the Subject: Stephen Says for all emails. Stephen Viscusi is a bestselling author, television personality, and CEO of The Viscusi Group, global executive recruiters located in New York. Follow Stephen on Twitter [@stephenviscusi](https://twitter.com/stephenviscusi), Like [Stephen on Facebook](#); and follow him on [LinkedIn](#).

Dear Stephen:

I work for a privately owned carpet company. Every year at our sales meeting our CEO leads a Christian prayer to start the meeting. It's a privately owned company, and a real mix of people work here. I have atheist co-workers, and Muslims, Hindus and Jews make up the majority of our sales force. Of course, no one is forced to pray; it just happens, and that's it. Some people roll their eyes at the beginning of the prayer, but

no one ever said a thing. Until recently, that is.

I am a regional VP, and last month the subject came up in a training meeting. Basically, some of us questioned the practice, and my boss turned to us and said, "It is my company. I'm paying, you're praying." That is an exact quote. Word seems to have gotten out about the prayer practice because occasion-

ally it is dicey with a new hire who asks about it during an interview. We are equal opportunity employer, and I'm worried this will end up hurting us, but my boss is right, it is his company.

I guess I'm wondering how common this is.

Pray for Me

Dear Pray for Me:

These sorts of practices are more common than you think in privately owned companies. Have you ever seen the documentary on Madonna? Like many musicians, before going on stage she has her employees say a group prayer. When do you think was the last time Madonna or any of her troupe was in church?

Some people think of it as good luck, and for others it is tradition. Then there are those, like your boss, who take their prayer more seriously. One way or another, owners of private companies have wide latitude to dictate these sorts of things. It isn't just prayer, of course, there are lots of ways for owners to impose their will — well-intentioned or otherwise — on their employees.

Let me offer a slightly different example. My first year out of college, I was living with my parents and working for Haworth. Just before

Thanksgiving, I got a call from my mom while I was at work. She was very confused to find a large frozen turkey addressed to me sitting on her front porch. She told me there was a note from a man named Jerry Haworth wishing me a happy Thanksgiving and wanted to know who this man was who was sending frozen poultry to her house.

I hadn't heard of this very generous tradition, but I can tell you my mom was very thankful once I filled her in on all the details. I understand this tradition continues at Haworth to this day. Now, what if I was vegetarian or vegan or a card-carrying PETA member committed to ending all of humanity's carnivorous tendencies? Surely, there are people who don't want a dead turkey on their front porch. This doesn't mean that the tradition is in bad taste or that it isn't munificent, nonetheless, there will be employees who are less

than thrilled with the way it impacts them.

When you accept a job at a privately owned company, part of what you are accepting is the policies and whims of the owner. Whether it is prayer before lunch, a nap room or a frozen turkey, the boss is paying and so you either accept it or quit. We all know manufacturers where the owners do not drink for religious reasons and don't even want liquor on their expense accounts. Try closing a deal like that! But they are the ones who pay the checks. Bottom line is a privately owned company is not a democracy. When you accept a job, you should know about the culture and the boss. With that information, you can accept it or not. It's your choice before, but once you're there, they're paying, so you're doing what they want.

Signed,

Stephen

High Performance Hacks

As a Certified High Performance coach, I work with clients on a daily basis and help them move forward into action. During times like these that can be difficult — especially since we are all, including our customers, working from home and business has slowed down, or in some cases, come to a complete stop.

The world around us is in turmoil — but that doesn't mean we, as individuals, have to be in turmoil. It's actually just the opposite — now we have the opportunity to focus on ourselves, our growth, learning and development. Now is your opportunity to step into high performance.

What is High Performance

High performance is defined as reaching and sustaining long-term success while also maintaining well-being and positive relationships. The last part is the most important. People often assume you have to compromise your health, well-being and relationships to succeed at the highest levels — but you don't. The research proves otherwise. The principals of high performance are based on more than 20 years of scientific research conducted by the High Performance Institute and Growth.com.

With the right habits and daily practices, you can achieve the success you want and need, live your dream life, outperform your peers, grow faster than you imagined and strive with true joy and fulfillment.



Have a suggestion for the column? Please email Sid at sid.meadows@embark-cct.com

Sid Meadows is the founder and principal of embark cct, a coaching, consulting and training firm focused in the contract interiors industry. You can follow Sid and embark on Facebook (@embarkcct) and LinkedIn (@sidmeadows) or visit the website at www.embark-cct.com

The Pillars of High Performance

How do you get from where you are to where you want to go? By mastering the pillars of high performance. It all starts with psychology — your mindset and your behavior — which is critical for you, your friends, your family, your coworkers, team members, employees and your company, especially in a time of a global crisis. This is about your thoughts, feelings, actions and why you do the things you do.

Next is physiology and making sure you have the physical energy you need and you're taking care of your body and your health so you can perform at the highest levels.

Then comes productivity and mastering the art of your time to ensure you are the most productive you can be. Then it's about mastering the people skills you need to get people to believe in you, buy from you, support you and invest in you.

It's also about mastering your purpose and understanding what really makes you alive, makes you thrive and keeps you on track. And lastly, it's about presence and showing up each and everyday as your

best self. It's about being fully present for you and those around you.

In this column, I don't have time to dive into the details of each of these, but I wanted to give you a place to start. I wanted to give you some hacks if you will, that can help you get going on the journey of high performance. That's right, it's a journey — not a destination. If you focus on developing and improving one day at a time and keep moving forward, you will give yourself the opportunity to step into your best self and become the person you want to be.

High Performance Hacks

These six hacks are just part of what real high performers do to succeed at the highest levels:

- **Character alarms:** Select three words that characterize what you represent as a person, and write them down. To help you more actively model these in your life, set three alarms on your phone at random times during the day, and title the alarms with one of the traits you selected. When the alarm goes off, refocus on living out the words you selected and being your best self.
- **Breathing:** If your energy is low, try this exercise: Stand up, feet shoulder width apart, start a little bounce (yes, bounce), breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth — in a rhythmic fashion, get a quiet clap going then — bounce, breath and clap for a count of 20. You'll

be amazed how this raises your energy level.

- **Block time:** A lot of things can drain you during the day, but email is at the top of the list. This will be hard for all of you — I get a ton of pushback on this because we all feel like we have to respond to email immediately. But we don't! Email is a centralized collection box for everyone else's agenda, not yours. Block off one hour in your calendar, three times a day to check your email. When the hour is up, close it and move on to something more productive or that project that needs your focus. Don't get stuck in your email all day — it's the biggest productivity drain of all time.

- **Connection over networking:** Networking is important, but connecting is powerful. The next time you are networking in person or virtual in today's world, rather than give your pitch, slow down and make a connection with that person — ask them questions, show empathy and ask, with true meaning, how they are doing. Don't pitch them, serve them. Get to know them, and make a real connection. It will pay dividends more than you realize.

- **Shut it down:** Commit yourself to being present in everything you do, not only for yourself, but for those around you and those you are currently engaged with. Fifteen minutes before a call, Zoom meeting, presentation, etc., shut it down — all of it. Put your phone away or on "do not disturb," close your email and give yourself the

mental space to prepare and focus. Give yourself the gift of presence.

- **Purpose:** Having a clear view of your purpose drastically changes how you approach the world. Write out a purpose statement and review it daily. Try this format and see if it helps:

Today I am going to _____ (be something) and _____ (do something) so that _____.

Becoming a high performer takes time, patience, work and effort. Reaching the next level means you have fulfillment in your life and work. It means you are connected to your unique purpose. You are experiencing joy and confidence that your alignment and focus are driven by who you want to become. Be sure to challenge yourself to learn and grow everyday. Take charge, and stop letting the waters rise around you.

Master your mindset and live more fully. Live a life that is less stressed, distracted, overwhelmed and drained. Remember, high performance is a journey. Take one step forward each and every day. You got this, and I'm here to support you — so if you need any help, reach out or visit my blog at www.sidmeadows.com, and I'll respond to your question and more. Let's do this!

LONDON (NEW DATE)

Clerkenwell Design Week
July 14-26, 2020



Clerkenwell is home to more creative businesses and architects per square mile than anywhere else on the planet, making it truly one of the most important design hubs in the world. To celebrate this rich and diverse community, **Clerkenwell Design Week** has created a showcase of leading UK and international brands and companies presented in a series of showroom events, exhibitions and special installations that take place across the area.

www.clerkenwelldesignweek.com

GUANGZHOU, CHINA

CIFF
July 27-30, 2020



Founded in 1998, China International Furniture Fair (Guangzhou/Shanghai) ("CIFF") has been successfully held for 44 sessions. Phase two of CIFF is dedicated to office furniture and seating, hotel furnishings, accessories, metal furniture, and furnishings for public spaces and reception areas, as well as materials and machinery for the furniture industry.

www.ciff.furniture

KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

Export Furniture Exhibition
August 27-29, 2020



Export Furniture Exhibition (EFE) is internationally known to global buyers from all over the world as one of the top furniture fairs in Southeast Asia and the fair continues to attract more and more trade visitors annually. One of the major highlights of EFE2020 is the inauguration of the "Office Furniture Hall" with the latest innovative and modern creative office furniture.

www.efemy

COLOGNE, GERMANY

Orgatec 2020
October 27-31, 2020



ORGATEC is a trade show that is dedicated to innovations and concepts in the working environment and work culture. ORGATEC will gather professionals from various fields that will explore the newest trends and novelties in the industry.

www.orgatec.com

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

EDSPACES
November 11-13, 2020



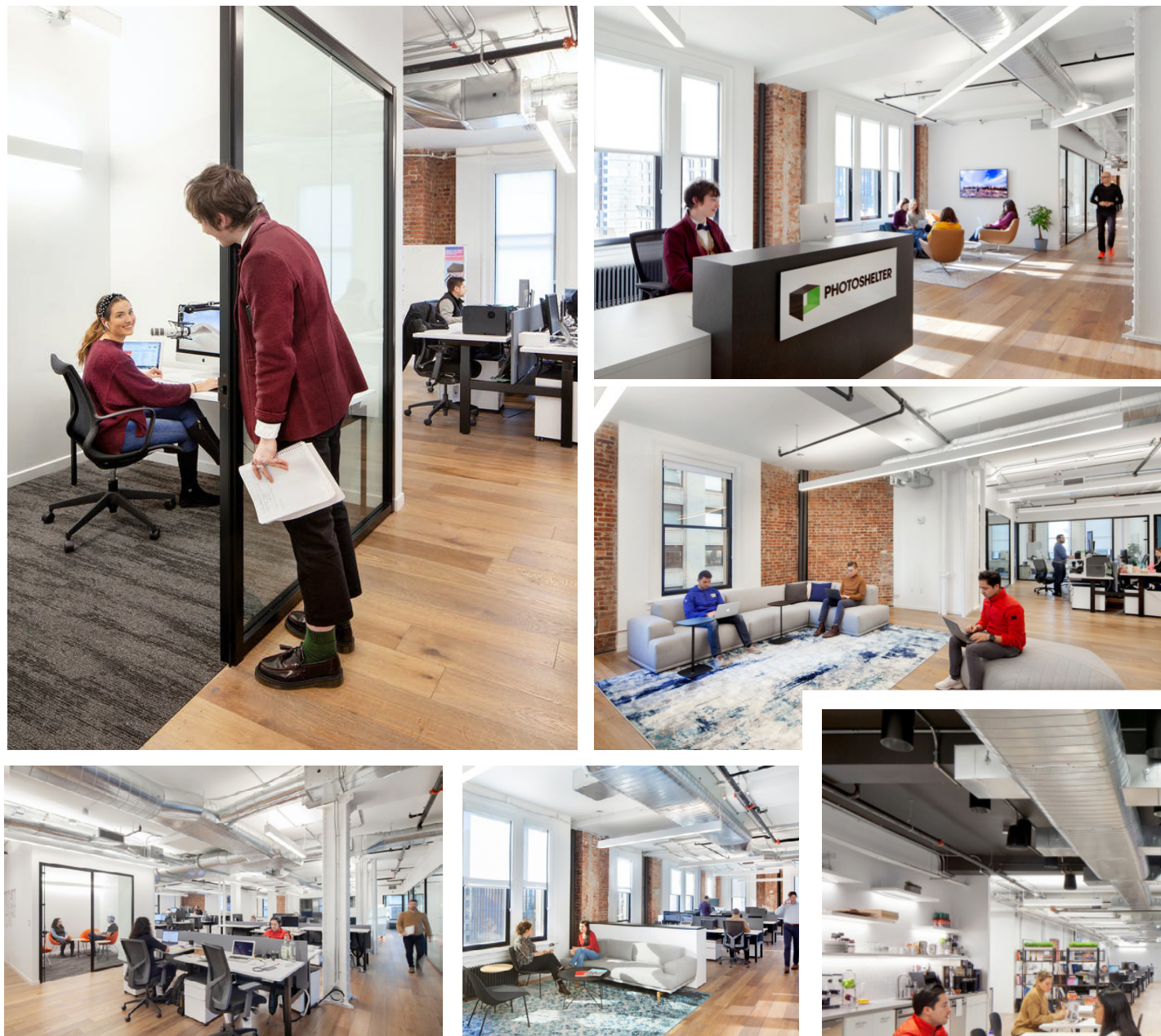
EDspaces is where innovations are unveiled and collaborations form, bringing together education's creative change agents who plan, design and manage innovative learning spaces. Leaders from school districts and colleges, architects, interior designers, distributors and exhibitors will engage and participate in the ongoing transformation of educational environments.

www.ed-spaces.com

EVENT	DATE & LOCATION
HDEXPO HD Expo is designed to take your professional development to the next level. Manufacturers unique to HD Expo debut their latest products; where industry leaders share their insights on the future of the industry; and where networking leads to game-changing collaborations. http://www.hdexpo.com	May 5-7, 2020 Las Vegas
ICFF For over 30 years, ICFF has built a solid reputation as North America's premier international furniture fair. Attracting visitors from over 68 countries, ICFF brings together a cross-section of the industry to showcase what's next and what's best for luxury residential and commercial interiors. http://www.icff.com	May 17-20, 2020 New York City
NEOCON NeoCon is the world's leading platform for commercial design and the annual gathering of over 50,000 design professionals and end-users. Marking its 51st edition, NeoCon continues to be the industry's launch pad for innovation - showcasing game-changing products, services, companies and emerging talent, and providing unparalleled access to the most cutting-edge solutions. http://www.neocon.com	June 8-10, 2020 Chicago
CLERKENWELL DESIGN WEEK (NEW DATE) Clerkenwell is home to more creative businesses and architects per square mile than anywhere else on the planet, making it truly one of the most important design hubs in the world. To celebrate this rich and diverse community, Clerkenwell Design Week has created a showcase of leading UK and international brands and companies presented in a series of showroom events, exhibitions and special installations that take place across the area. http://www.clerkenwelldesignweek.com	July 14-16, 2020 London
CHINA INTERNATIONAL FURNITURE FAIR, CIFF (PHASE TWO) (NEW DATE) Founded in 1998, China International Furniture Fair (Guangzhou/Shanghai) ("CIFF") has been successfully held for 44 sessions. Phase two of CIFF is dedicated to office furniture and seating, hotel furnishings, accessories, metal furniture, and furnishings for public spaces and reception areas, as well as materials and machinery for the furniture industry. Without a doubt, excitement and innovation are the key words of the next edition of CIFF Guangzhou which is completely reinvented. http://www.ciff.furniture	July 27-30, 2020 Guangzhou, China
EXPORT FURNITURE EXHIBITION (NEW DATE) Export Furniture Exhibition (EFE) is internationally known to global buyers from all over the world as one of the top furniture fairs in Southeast Asia and the fair continues to attract more and more trade visitors annually. The exhibition is the signature event of the Malaysian Furniture Council (MFC) and organized by EFE Expo Sdn Bhd., a wholly-owned company of MFC. http://www.efemy/	Aug 27-29 2020 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
DOMOTEX ASIA (NEW DATE) DOMOTEX asia/CHINAFLOOR is the leading flooring trade exhibition in Asian Pacific and the second largest flooring trade exhibition worldwide. As part of the DOMOTEX shows' group, DOMOTEX asia/CHINAFLOOR is mainly targeting the emerging Asian markets. In 2019, the 21st edition of DOMOTEX asia/CHINAFLOOR covered over 175,000sqm of gross exhibition space filled by 1,560 exhibitors from 40 countries. http://www.domotexasiachinafloor.com	Aug 31 - Sept 2, 2020 Shanghai, China
ORGATEC 2020 ORGATEC is a trade show that is dedicated to innovations and concepts in the working environment and work culture. ORGATEC will gather professionals from various fields that will explore the newest trends and novelties in the industry. http://www.orgatec.com	October 27-31, 2020 Cologne, Germany

Cancelled / Postponed Notes:

BoF will provide continuing coverage of Coronavirus related cancellations and postponements, and will provide you with new dates when they are made available.



PhotoShelter Offices – New York City

Montroy DeMarco Architecture recently completed the design and build-out for PhotoShelter, a website with endless resources for photographers, located in New York City, New York.

The build-to-suit office's layout was customized for PhotoShelter to bring to life the work of the photographers and visual storytellers that it supports. The website's user artwork is highlighted throughout the space while the reception and main bank of the conference rooms are deliberately located along the building's south side to incorporate the view of historic Trinity Church and the waterfront.

Utilizing every inch of the space, the kitchen area doubles as an open pantry and gathering space for large company events.

[READ MORE](#)



Peter Dressel/Wilk Marketing Communications

FIRM: Montroy DeMarco Architecture
CLIENT: PhotoShelter
 20,000 sqft
SCOPE: Office
LOCATION: New York City
INDUSTRY: Professional Services



Workplaces | April 2020

Where I'm Working | Remote Working: Report Shows Work is Changing Before Our Eyes (and Likely won't Change Back) | For Many, the Home is Now the Office | Working from Home | When Working from Home, Physical Transition is Just the Tip of the Iceberg | In Uncertain Times, Ease Your Emotions at Work and at Home | Product Matter | Insights From 140+ Remote Teams and Companies on How to Integrate, Manage and Communicate Remotely

Read the April 2020 issue today at: <https://bellow.press>



MAKERS

What's the Future of Height Adjustable Tables? SiS Ergo, the Company Credited with the First-Ever Product, Has Some Answers

FOR THE COMPANY THAT PIONEERED THE FIRST HEIGHT-ADJUSTABLE TABLE 50 YEARS AGO, THE FUTURE LOOKS JUST AS PROMISING TODAY AS IT DID THEN.

by Emily Clingman

Have you ever wondered about the origin of the standing desk? It's a simple concept, yet the height-adjustable table has steered the modern office into a new era.

Danish company SiS Ergo is responsible for that. In 1970, aggravated that workers needed two tables at different heights — lower for seated desk work and higher for typing while standing — SiS came up with one table design to accommodate all the tasks.

“Why not make two in one,”

said Claus Hansson, SiS Ergo principal owner who bought the company in 2008. “It was a simple pin and post adjustment. And at that time, it was not about needing to stand for health.”

For many years, the adjustable table sold exclusively as a typewriter table. Then, at one point, IBM ordered 30 of them for the purpose of giving employees choices for movement at their workstations. In the 1980s, SiS USA was introduced in the states. Since that time, the company has

quietly continued its tradition of developing products with high design, easy customization and quick delivery — three traits noticeably absent, observed SiS, from other manufacturers who offer height-adjustable table products today.

One company taking notice of SiS was Innovative Office Products (IOP). In February, SiS Ergo was acquired by IOP, the parent company to HAT Contract, another leading height-adjustable table provider. IOP's other brands, Innovative, ErgoTech and CompuCaddy, manufacture ergonomic product solutions for office, health care and other specialty workspaces.

SiS Ergo's President Scott McPartlin, a veteran of the office furniture industry for more than 20 years, has been involved with sit-stand products since their very beginning.

“I sold my first height-adjustable table in 1997 for approximately \$2,000,” he said. “I couldn't believe I would ever sell one of those again. The price was more than a typical cubicle station with a desk and chairs. Also, the cubicles weren't really designed for a height-adjustable table — breaking down the electrical, removing the peds and overheads. It was really almost impossible. Fast forward to now, and that's basically all I sell.”

With the office industry's shift to open floor plans, the number of Height Adjustable Table suppliers has exploded and created a “sea of sameness,” McPartlin said. He added SiS's core principles of beautiful design, custom capabilities and fast delivery is not only what sets SiS apart now, but what will be the drivers for growth in the future.



SiS Factory in Rudkøbing, Denmark



Claus Hansson



Scott McPartlin

“Height-adjustability is here to stay, and the winners down the road will be the ones who are innovative in integrating ergonomics all the way around, planned from the inside out, not just an add-on,” he said. “SiS has the widest innovation and availability — not just taking what comes off the boat and slapping a sticker on it. From the ‘80s on, three of the big five companies have worked with SiS to introduce height-adjustability to the world. We’ve kind of been the genie behind the curtains.”

A big break for SiS came in 2007 when it collaborated, developed and launched a full line of height-adjustable tables for one of the leading commercial furniture manufacturers in the U.S. According to McPartlin, SiS was the obvious partner because of its core competency in this emerging part of the market.

“There are very few companies that can make, design and/or fabricate every element — we’re talking about the feet, legs, tops, storage components, wire management, privacy screens — everything except for the motors and electrical,” he said.

“With our process, if you want a different foot or wire management system, you can meet with our engineers who will develop what you’re looking for. You won’t get this from any other height-adjustable table manufacturer.”

SiS’s position as a vertically integrated manufacturer was a key reason it began working with Gensler. Gensler’s role was serving as the Product Design Consultant, and SiS was responsible for the engineering and manufacturing of the product. SiS won the opportunity to outfit Gensler’s Chicago office with a custom-made, sit-stand solution for that office’s design team. Shortly thereafter, Gensler initiated extensive research to determine what its global design team wanted in a height-adjustable table. McPartlin said the research revealed three key findings: “They wanted improved space efficiency, better wire management and personalization options.”

Working from this research, Gensler and SiS collaborated on what eventually became SiS’s Fiellø product.

“Fiellø was the first research-based, height-adjustable table solution brought to the U.S. market,” McPartlin said. “It really is the poster child for our holistic design and customization capabilities. Our ability to meet all their needs from A to Z as their single-source manufacturer was a critical factor in their decision. Whenever they asked us for something, they didn’t get a ‘no,’ and they didn’t have to wait six months. It was a great partnership and a great opportunity to put our all of unique capabilities into action.”

According to McPartlin, when Fiellø was launched, it became the trendsetter in what we’re seeing today with a “finished product” — no loose wires hanging from the table and easy accessory integration.

“Fiellø can be ordered and installed with zero interference because we make everything,” McPartlin said. “We have a patented track system that runs below the



1988 - Printer table

table surface which serves as the skeleton of the table. It’s a reinforced set of aluminum rails that allow everything to be integrated in a clean, seamless way — the legs, the bag hook, modesty panels and wire management system — all connect into the track. We intentionally designed every Fiellø work surface with a notch-out feature to accommodate any kind of monitor arm and to allow for privacy panels. This thoughtful design speaks directly to Gensler’s research for space saving, wire management and personalization.”

Now a part of the IOP family of brands, McPartlin said it’ll have the resources to offer its expertise to a wider range of customers — specifically those who need a height-adjustable table with an elevated design aesthetic and easy customization options. He believes these advantages will be even more important in a post-Covid-19 workplace.

“Ergonomics will continue to be a consideration for sure,” he said. “But open office floor plans will need solutions to adapt. I think you’ll see more companies wanting customization options for their workers, whether that’s to improve workspace health, privacy or acoustics. Giving people choices and options to make their spaces more personalized will be important as workers transition from their homes back to their work environments.”

IOP CEO Dave Fox said the future of sit-stand is about choices.

“Customers want options, whether that’s for style and design, price or something else,” he said. “With HAT Contract and SiS, we’re able to provide the market with lots of choices. For customers that need a cost-effective, turnkey sit-stand solution,

our HAT Contract brand fulfills that need beautifully. For others that need higher-level design, holistic thinking and more custom options, that’s where SiS comes in. We’ve built our reputation as a nimble company that can pivot quickly to meet a customer or marketplace need. SiS and its custom-made-easy capabilities continue that for us very nicely.”

McPartlin points out another factor that should not be overlooked when it comes to the future of the height-adjustable table: SiS’s Danish-inspired design roots.



Fiello

“Design trends come and go, but the Danish approach to design — clean lines, a minimalistic look, natural woods — is enduring,” he said. “It’s an inspired level of design and craftsmanship that no one else can really replicate, unless you’re from Denmark. From our work as an OEM, and our work with Gensler and others in the industry, we know this look is appealing to designers who want something eye-catching and a bit more sophisticated. Design is about a story, and we have a great story.”

For the company that pioneered the first height-adjustable table 50 years ago, the future looks just as promising today as it did then. **BoF**



MAKERS

Hard Reset: What's Next for Office Furniture

THE MONOPOLY OFFICE FURNITURE HAS HAD ON WORK CONTINUES TO ERODE.

by Kevin Budelmann, Peopledesign president

In a global health crisis, much is uncertain. What is clear is that the disruption of the global economy is just starting to be felt. It may take years for certain industries to recover, and many will be changed in the process. The office furniture industry is one that appears to be poised for a hard reset.

Many industry players talk about issues beyond furniture — ergonomics, productivity, culture, health and so on. However, the conversation always comes back to furniture. Manufacturing is the engine that built the industry and continues to drive profitability today. We all know the landscape is shifting, but change is hard. People resist change. Today, the coronavirus pandemic has led to mandatory stay-home orders from governments around the world, forcing workers who can work from home to do so. Office furniture has managed to maintain a monopoly on work for decades now. But this may be a tipping point when nascent patterns may reshape how people think about the workplace.

Traditional monopolies have been possible largely due to proximity — think stores, schools or banks. Digital innovators have been disrupting these patterns by rethinking the model and delivering asynchronous services. Historically, nearly all work happened in an office: same time, same place. Even before recent work-from-home mandates, technology and market innovations were enabling people to think differently about the office. Now we're being forced to face the reality that a lot of work can happen in different places and at different times.

The monopoly office furniture has had on work continues to erode. If we compare work between same and different times and places, we can identify four work modes: in-person work, individual work, distance work and asynchronous work. A traditional physical office may be required in only one of these four scenarios.

In-person work

In-person work, or traditional office work, is the most dependent on physical space. Being in the same room can be the best way for group collaboration or to have a one-on-one conversation. Please come in, and close the door. Look someone in the eye. Technology is making this more possible to do this remotely, but hardly anyone would argue a face-to-face meeting isn't the best way for some types of personal exchanges.

A big question for office furniture makers becomes: What kind of work really needs to be done in this mode? What is the requirement for this work? How much open space? How much privacy? Today, manufacturers celebrate the need for a variety of workspaces to accommodate varied user preferences and use cases. The idea is to let people choose where they want to work, and let them float around. This makes sense except that you're building in excess capacity by design — not all spaces will be fully utilized at any given time. How much couch time will be needed? Cost and space utilization studies will lead to decreasing the overall footprint, so not everyone will be able to fit in the building all at once. Workers who float may drift even farther.

Individual work

Heads-down individual work is what happens when you need to get away from distractions. In an office, you'd close the door. What does it take for someone to really concentrate? It's more an issue for psychology than furniture, which is why books about modes for thinking and habits have come to the forefront. While technology has empowered some individual work, the huge volume of notifications from email, chats, texts, messaging services, phones, wearables and desktops have led to the emergence of technological snooze buttons on all major platforms.

What furniture is needed for individual work may be less a mystery than where it's located. The wobbly rise of WeWork and the broader emergence of shared spaces is shaping the office ownership landscape. It's also creating new user expectations for an even greater diversity of workspaces, but those places still need furniture. A question for furniture makers will be where people go for individual work. It will be in offices to some degree, but also coworking spaces, coffee shops, airports, hotel rooms and homes. We might ask ourselves: Where else do we find people in a corner trying to get some work done?

Distance work

Business travelers are used to working from a distance already. Road warriors come to rely on office-like necessities — Wi-Fi on the airplane, airline clubs, hotels with lobbies that double as collaborative spaces, a desk in the room with power or a phone charger at the bar.

Technology continues to offer alternatives for communication, sharing and co-creation. This isn't new — Microsoft Office is 30 years old. However, as the web infrastructure and technology tools have matured, growing players like Zoom and Slack continue to catch on. The new WFH environment has made video conferencing a reality for millions of workers and

messaging services have become the lifeblood of many teams. Today's indispensable smartphone enables instant communication worldwide.

Distance work today is enabled by technology more than furniture. Still, it's important to recognize that technology is simply what we call something invented since we were born. People under 30 don't see smartphones or even the internet as technology at all — like a microwave oven, it's just stuff they use. For many young people, new technology has yet to emerge. If we really aim to support work, not just furniture, how might we innovate differently?

Asynchronous work

The remote work revolution has been underway for several years. Asynchronous work has been championed by technology firms like Automattic (which makes Wordpress, the platform that runs a large percentage of all websites) and Basecamp (an early SaaS pioneer and profit beacon), but there are many who remain unconvinced. There's even been a kind of backlash. High-profile organizations like IBM have recalled their remote workers based on arguments that closer proximity yields better ideas and productivity.

Furniture companies have been targeting home office furniture and remote patterns for decades, but even so, the dust has not yet settled on how to balance the opportunity and challenge of working remotely. Companies may have to pivot. After a month or two at home, even remote work skeptics will have started new habits that may stick. Companies like Asana, which evangelize asynchronous work and build tools to support it, will continue to grow. What work products will people use at home, and where will they get them?

Today's crisis is disruptive, but it may be accelerating changes already underway. In-person, individual, distance or asynchronous, it's likely that among the lasting effects of the coronavirus pandemic will be a change in expectations of how work gets done. Disruption creates opportunity, but that doesn't make the future any more obvious. If the office furniture industry experiences a hard reset, there will be winners and losers. What we do know is that managers manage the known; leaders manage the unknown.

Leaders decide which problems to solve. Furniture has more to offer than supporting work, and work is only partly supported by furniture. The office furniture problem to solve today is how to navigate the changing relationship between furniture and work.

You can read more articles like this one at people.design.com **BoF**



MAKERS

As the Design Industry Faces the Pandemic, Learnings from Previous Recessions Still Apply

IN TERMS OF THE PHYSICAL WORK WE DO BOTH NOW AND IN THE FUTURE, ADAPTATION AND FLEXIBILITY WILL BE KEY.

by Amanda Schneider

If there's one thing we know for sure, it's that history has a funny way of repeating itself. And while most of us haven't experienced a global pandemic in our lifetime, we have experienced many financial downturns.

From those downturns the interiors industry gathered insights and learned lessons to collectively move forward. As a testament to this, we recall just a few short months ago, we were celebrating the highs of one of the longest periods of economic growth in recent history and the inspired design perspectives that came along with it.

So, as a beacon of hope, we remember this, too, shall pass. Looking forward to our industry unpaused, it behooves all of us to reflect on the knowledge and understanding gained from previous downturns as we prepare for a successful return.

Tap into technology — and recognize expectations related to it will shift.

To some, the 9/11 attacks that left many of us working from home temporarily — specifically those in New York and Washington, D.C. — don't seem that far in the past. Yet in technology terms, it was a lifetime ago. So, while the technological offerings today make doing our jobs remotely more convenient than 20 years ago, we must also acknowledge the psychological effects these shifts have on our teams.

“While we stayed home for several days after 9/11, we didn't have the tools we needed to communicate with our team, clients and peers (and it was only a few days),” said Tom Zurowski, AIA, founding principal at Eastlake Studio. “2008 really didn't have the suddenness that 9/11 and COVID presented to us; it kind of crept up on us as a business. I'm convinced that, while it won't be easy, we're in a much better position to respond and keep our practice moving forward as long as we can continue to bring in new work.”

Noting that losing face-to-face communication and check-ins may be unsettling for some managers, Zurowski added, “It takes a certain level of trust to facilitate an effectively remote workforce, but communication is key. I don’t think we could have come anywhere near the efficiency and effectiveness that we’re achieving right now even five years ago. That’s probably what made 9/11 even scarier than it was. We had phones, and we had email, but the ability to look into people’s eyes and gain a glimpse into how they’re feeling is really important to leaders of design firms.”

Take advantage of the work that makes sense now, and plan for the future accordingly.

In terms of the physical work we do both now and in the future, adaptation and flexibility will be key. Understand that today’s work may not be your dream project, and tomorrow’s work may look different than the work we were doing just a few short months ago, but both can be rewarding and impactful, nevertheless.

“WITH EVERY NATIONAL CRISIS, WE CAN USE IT AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO RE-INVENT.”

Tom Polucci, HOK firm-wide director of interiors, explained it this way: “At each downturn, there were a number of projects for corporate clients that were about reuse of space, densify the current environment, demise space to sublease. It wasn’t glamorous work but necessary for organizations to right-size their holdings.”

In relation to future work, he explained how trends may shift as a result of our sudden work-from-home atmosphere: “A lot of individuals were out of work after the last downturn, in design as well as lots of other professions. We saw a generation of folks become self-employed, consulting with different organizations and self-determining their futures. With this trend we saw a rise in coworking environments that changed the way people paid for and occupied space. This became a huge trend as of late when corporations began to ask for the same quality of space to attract those gig workers into their own organizations. I think we are on the back side of this trend in the near future and need to plan accordingly.”

To do this, he said, we must focus on “creating a work environment that is not in a 1:1 ratio of employee to seat. I think an agile environment truly reflects how work is done for most but not all. My concern is that as a re-

sponse to COVID-19 we’ll see a potential for organizations to shy away from managing and maintaining this type of space.”

Keep expectations realistic when we unpause.

At ThinkLab, we’ve talked a lot about how our industry may look different when we [unpause](#). However, in doing this, it’s important to remember economic curves are naturally cyclical, and when history repeats itself we need to be prepared.

One way to do this, according to Christina Brown, Eastlake Studio designer/principal, is through flexible design that, by nature, prepares for change.

“One big thing we learned during past downturns was how to successfully design for endless flexibility, which came from a need to stretch a penny into a dollar,” Brown recalled. “Don’t build all those offices in the middle of the space or you won’t be able to keep teams together as they grow or shrink. Allow for more furniture solutions that can be easily reworked and relocated when you move. Consider demountable walls. Make every space have more than one function. Those big 20-person board rooms sitting empty 90% of the day are a drain on resources.”

With a cautiously optimistic look toward the future, one corporate real estate professional reminds us: “With every national crisis, we can use it as an opportunity to re-invent.” **BoF**

If you’re interested in up-to-date metrics on where the industry stands delivered right to your inbox, ThinkLab has launched a research study that can help. Among other data points, last week’s report shared that the majority of projects are continuing as planned, but slight nuances in Week 3 data may suggest some “on hold” projects could be cancelling, while some “continuing” are beginning to move to “on hold.” If you’d like to receive these metrics, take our survey [here](#), and we’ll email you the results.

Amanda Schneider is President of ThinkLab, the research division of Interior Design Media. At ThinkLab, we combine Interior Design Media’s incredible reach within the architecture and design community with proven market research techniques to uncover relevant trends and opportunities that connect back to brand and business goals in a thought-provoking, creative, and actionable way. Join in to know what’s next at [thinklab.design/join-in](#).

SPECIALIZED FURNITURE

Zonez Releases Mother's Room

Working women with children can quickly describe how difficult it can be working during the early months after childbirth while breastfeeding their infants. Janitorial closets. Stairwells. Bathrooms. The obstacles to lactating while at work have been numerous and challenging.

Many employers try to do the right thing to support lactating mothers, but it's not always easy.

Zonez did not invent the free-standing mother's room, but it has innovated the solution to work out well for everyone. And just in time for Mother's Day!

Tucked away in the far reaches of the 2010 Affordable Care Act is a law requiring employers with 50 or more employees to provide mother's rooms. Twenty-nine states and Washington, D.C., have laws requiring employers to provide mother's rooms. Many states also require schools to provide these important spaces to staff, teachers, students and visitors.

The new mother's room is full of innovations.

Air flow is always a challenge in enclosed spaces. Zonez Mother's Room incorporates a patent-pending air management system that brings air into the 6-by-6-foot space through a wall-mounted fan and then exhausts it through another. This system creates a gentle exchange of air (every two minutes) occupants can actually feel, making them more comfortable. They can also control the air flow.

A second innovation is a completely new lid system offering visual and acoustical privacy while not requiring a sprinkler to be installed. (Many fire codes require rooms larger than 4-by-4-foot to have sprinklers). Open lid designs get around this requirement by using acoustical baffles, which Zonez uses on its other suites as an option. The lid on the Zonez Mother's Room features a design that blocks looking through the lid, acts as a noise barrier and allows external sprinklers to reach into the space. This allows the room to be easily moved around a building or campus.

The glass front wall and storefront door are opaque, letting external light in without being able to see inside. The door has an internal locking mechanism to signal if the room is occupied or vacant. Also included in the Mother's Room are a comfort shelf, a full-length mirror, a magnetic whiteboard (pictures of the family can be relaxing), a wall-mounted reading light, USB charging outlets and AC power outlets and space for a refrigerator.

All Zonez suites and rooms use Class A fire-rated materials, carry a 10-year warranty and are sold only through commercial furniture distributors. With an STC rating of 35, acoustical privacy complements visual privacy in this Mother's Room. Multiple frame color options and unlimited panel colors (or any hi-res digital image) can customize its look.



DESKS & WALLS

MASHstudios Launches the Flo Desk and Focus Wall

MASHstudios has added versatility to its READYMADE furniture collection with the launch of the sit-stand Flo Desk and a new sound-deadening soft wall.



The Flo Desk was designed in response to an increased demand for movement in the workplace. The adjustable-height desk allows users to go from sitting to standing with a push of a button.

"The Flo Desk is a natural, healthy and great looking approach to the sit-stand desk," said Bernard Brucha, principal and director of

design at MASHstudios, the Los Angeles maker of custom workplace solutions for brands including Nike, Chanel and OXO. "With this addition to our READYMADE line, we're making the luxury of an adjustable-height desk more accessible than ever with a quick-ship option that's made-to-order, built to last and priced competitively."

The Flo Desk features a matte laminate surface made with a one-inch Baltic birch plywood core, paired with a cold rolled steel metal frame and finished in matte black. Each unit is made up of two desks, which measure either 60 inches or 48 inches in length, 30 inches in depth and have an adjustable-height span of 27 to 47 inches. Each unit is powered with four outlets and the ability to integrate ethernet and daisy chain multiple stations to achieve a clean workplace. The desk will be available to order starting in May.

The Focus Wall seamlessly integrates into all workspaces, creating privacy and a space division. It creates a noise barrier to define space with a tackable surface, giving the end user flexibility to personalize their own workspace. The newly designed soft wall is a freestanding structure, able to be moved easily, with style and form.

"MASHstudios designed the Focus Wall in response to our clients' needs for a flexible privacy solution, which can easily transform a pre-existing space," Brucha said. "The Focus Wall can be positioned around a desk or workplace to create a layer of separation, blocking out noise and distraction in open plan workplaces."

The Focus Wall is available in two configurations — the Serpentine soft wall and the "L" soft wall. They can be paired together or used separately, specific to each office's needs. Both are made with two-inch thick, sound-dampening construction, upholstered in woven wool and offered in a wide range of colors. The Serpentine is 54 inches long, 20 inches wide and 72 inches high. The "L" is 74 inches long, 28 inches wide and 50 inches high.

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MANUFACTURERS

Keilhauer Shares 2020 CSR

➔ As part of its annual recognition of Earth Day, Keilhauer released its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Report earlier this week. To increase transparency with customers and their community, the 2020 report will be shared through a series of videos which showcase Keilhauer's culture, facility and the stories behind its most innovative and sustainable products.

"Sustainability is at the heart of our culture, our design process and our company," said President Mike Keilhauer. "This year, we wanted to throw open the doors and invite the design community to see what we are doing and see some of the faces that have helped us pursue our goal of Closed Loop Manufacturing."

Closed Loop Manufacturing is the pinnacle of Keilhauer's sustainability goals, which are manufacturing without producing any waste, minimizing its reliance on the Earth's finite resources and stopping the use of any chemicals that cause net harm, such as those on the Red List. In 2019, Keilhauer continued to pursue this goal and achieved the following highlights along the way:

- 11% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions
- 11% reduction in energy usage
- 100% of energy usage offset with renewable energy credits
- Zero water wasted in manufacturing processes
- 87% success rate of waste diversion across all our facilities
- Zero waste to landfill
- Seven time recipient of Canada's Greenest Employer Award.

MANUFACTURERS

Scandinavian Spaces Available in CET

➔ Scandinavian Spaces' new CET Designer catalog by Configura includes top-selling products BOB, Pixel, Fendo, Pax, Vagabond, Motus, Cosmos, Ghost and more.

The company is committed to supporting the A&D community by providing industry-leading design tools that help designers work faster and smarter. It also strives to deliver innovative and authentic Scandinavian furniture and interior solutions for the modern-day work environment.

Scandinavian Spaces will continue to extend the catalog with more products as it supports and grows its CET design community.



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Suzanne Tron

SOFTWARE

Yulio Technologies Announces "Jump": Auto-create 360 VR projects directly from CET Designer

➔ Yulio Technologies, the leading firm in virtual reality presentation software for commercial furniture, has launched Jump, a subscription which allows users to access high-performance, cloud-based rendering services and create VR presentations and 2D renderings directly from CET Designer.

The CET Designer plug-in includes the Yulio toolbar and with a few clicks users can send the project to a high-speed rendering cloud, automatically creating navigation between scenes and a floorplan to show clients how it all fits together. The project is returned in minutes and can be viewed in any browser or with VR goggles.

"This is a game-changer for contract furniture dealerships because before this creating VR projects cost significant design and machine rendering time," said Rob Kendal, Yulio Technologies managing director. "Now with Jump, anyone can have a multi-scene, stunning VR project in



minutes using the wonderful CET Designer tools they already know from Configura.”

Yulio Jump launched with the aim of ensuring dealers and manufacturers they can use VR as an immersive presentation tool without investment in expensive software, hardware and training. Customers increasingly want photo-realistic designs to review so they can make informed decisions. And with many dealers and their clients working remotely, creating immersive remote presentations and a digital version of a showroom is more important than ever.

“To produce this level of realism previously, expensive software and lengthy design training was a must,” said Ian Hall, Yulio chief product officer. “With the Yulio Jump subscription, renderings out of CET Designer will have auto-applied materials and lighting enhancements, and be able to be presented in VR with Yulio software to really wow your clients.”

Design is poised to be transformed by virtual reality, which provides a window on something that doesn’t yet exist and tells visual stories.

“This engine creates faster, more beautiful projects from CET Designer, and that’s good news for dealers working to compete with elaborate visualizations,” Kendal said. “Yulio Jump levels the playing field and creates complex virtual reality projects with a few button clicks.”

Yulio Jump is available in special dealer plans starting from \$3,000 a year, which includes unlimited rendering capacity and five Yulio software seats for editing and presenting VR, as well as VR headsets for sharing.

DEALERS

Absolute Resource Announces Major Rebranding

➔ Absolute Resource has announced a top-to-bottom rebranding campaign to reflect the company’s progression into an international partnership business.



Jordan and Jayson Gates

The interior design and architecture product specification resource company’s rebrand includes a new website, logo and graphics. Its features are a simple AR mark, customized fonts and a sharp new color story.

Jayson Gates, owner and founder at Absolute Resource, which is based in the Pacific Northwest, said “Today the architect and design community has access to more materials and resources than we could have dreamed of when I started in the business almost 20 years ago. The rapid deployment of new web-based platforms provides an incredible amount of information and the need for a trusted local expert remains more important than ever.

“Absolute Resource continues to provide value by rapidly delivering product expertise from initial design development through project completion. With this new brand, we further unify our commitment to bringing the most relevant and exciting product innovators to the Pacific Northwest, and with it, the most successful interior design projects.”

Absolute Resource’s partner manufacturers include TURF, naughtone, Leland, Rich Brilliant Willing, Spacestor, Camira and Montisa.

EVENTS

Interior Design Show Calls for Conference Speakers

➔ Transformative change for people and the planet is occurring at a rapid pace today. More than ever, design thinking and insightful expertise is needed to push new realities forward by reimagining and reforming how we live, work and create.

You can take part in shaping our future by showcasing your original approach and engaging ideas in front of the decision-makers of design at the IDS Toronto Conference happening Jan. 21-22, 2021.

The IDS Conference examines design through a broad, multidisciplinary lens from the future of work and home to the impacts of AI, sustainable innovations, new social structures, and, of course, unprecedented world shifts such as COVID-19. Our mandate is to explore design solutions for the most pressing issues of our time.

You can see the conference schedule [here](#).

REPRESENTING

Trendway Welcomes Two New Rep Groups to its Sales Team

➔ Trendway has added two independent rep groups to its team of sales professionals that will expand coverage significantly in Texas and Canada.

From Texas, the award-winning team of Wallin Marketing Services will be covering the central and south region of the state. Led by Principal Don Wallin, the team includes the experienced sales executives Tracey Bailey, Allison Wallin and Ed Bustamante. Wallin Marketing Services has a combined total of more than 50 years experience in contract furniture sales with a track record of providing quality services and solutions to the architectural and design community, dealers and end users. The team operates a 2,400-square-foot showroom space in Houston, Texas, near the Houston Design Center. “We are thrilled to have this team join us to further expand our markets and growth opportunities for Trendway in this region,” shared Chris Tattersall, Trendway regional sales director for the Southeast.

Flipside Corporate Furniture, located in the western region of Canada, has also joined the Trendway’s sales team. Led by Principal Marc Aubin, this group has more than 15 years of experience with contract furniture sales and has operated as an independent rep group for four years.

“The addition of Flipside will significantly increase our outreach to A&D professionals and contract furniture dealers in Western Canada, and we look forward to a renewed growth in this area,” said Jim Ford, Trendway regional sales director for the West.

ASSOCIATIONS

IIDA Announces Winners of 15th Annual Student Design Competition

➔ The International Interior Design Association has announced the winners of the 2020 Student Design Competition sponsored by OFS and Carolina. The annual competition provides emerging professionals the opportunity to showcase their work and gain exposure in the interior

design industry. This year's competition brief challenged participants to design a fictitious digestive health clinic for a physician's group specializing in gastroenterology.

"The Student Design Competition allows us to preview what the future of design has in store through these real-world design solutions," said Cheryl S. Durst, IIDA executive vice president and CEO. "This year's winning submissions demonstrated design sophistication and a strong understanding of what all who experience health care spaces — from individuals and families to employees — require in a healing environment."

Entries were judged by a panel of design professionals: Edwin A. Beltran, NBBJ principal; Amy Mays, HDR interior design practice leader; and Natalie Thomas, OFS and Carolina national accounts director, health care.

"We were impressed by the commitment, potential and overall design abilities of each student submission this year," said Beltran on behalf of the jury. "The winners were a stand-out group, expressing strong design solutions and a firm understanding of health and wellness environments."

The 2020 Student Design Competition winners are:

- First place: Tak Ying Chan and Wanlu Liu from the Pratt Institute, for the Osmosis Digestive Health Clinic
- Second place: Erica Vallejo and Katherine White from University of Texas at Arlington for Curecology
- Third place: Krishhoe Rinaldy from Bandung Institute of Technology for Connect - Nature: Supportive Design for Digestive Clinic

Winners received awards of \$2,500, \$1,500, and \$750, respectively. The projects can be viewed on the IIDA website.

CAREERS

DLR Group adds K-12 Education Leader in New York City

➔ DLR Group has added education design expertise to its New York City location with the hiring of Jana Silsby. She joins the firm as a principal and will serve as a K-12 education client leader.



Silsby

Silsby will collaborate with design teams across the country to enhance the learning experience for students, staff and communities. She has decades of experience planning and designing learning environments and is an integral member of the team conducting an educational facilities master plan in the U.S. Virgin Islands. It includes more than 2.7 million square feet of educational space in 45 facilities across St. Croix, St. John and St. Thomas.

"Jana brings a new level of leadership to grow the firm's portfolio of clients in New York and along the upper east coast," said Jim French, DLR Group senior principal who leads the firm's K-12 Education Studio. "She is respected within the design industry and is well-known by school district clients for her ability to create innovative learning spaces."

"By creating educational environments that allow learners to explore, discover, fail and recover, I am helping them to understand who they are and who they want to be, Silsby said. "This experience unlocks the door to their potential."

Silsby is a champion of integrated design and an advocate for investing project dollars in sustainable strategies and systems that have the longest life and greatest impact on health, comfort and well-being.

CAREERS

KAI Announces New Hire Roland Parè as Director of Mechanical Engineering in Atlanta Office

➔ KAI has announced the hiring of Roland Parè, PE as Director of Mechanical Engineering of its Atlanta office.



Parè

As the Director of Mechanical Engineering, Parè is responsible for the overall coordination of mechanical and plumbing drawings and specifications. He also coordinates and works with engineering counterparts in KAI's Arlington, Texas and St. Louis offices on various projects that the offices may share.

He has 12 years of industry experience, having previously worked as a Consulting Mechanical Engineer for EXP US Services in Atlanta and as a Consulting Mechanical Engineer for Huseman & Associates in Metairie, Louisiana.

"Roland is a tremendous asset to our engineering department in Atlanta, based on his multiple years of consulting and engineering experience and work with HVAC systems," said KAI's Vice President of Architecture & Engineering Operations Larry Pijut, AIA. "He brings an enhanced expertise with a regimented approach to mechanical engineering."

Parè has a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering Technology from the University of Maine and is currently licensed as a Professional Engineer in Georgia and Maine. He is a member of ASHRAE; the American Legion Post 233 out of Loganville, Georgia; the American Legion Riders, and he is a Commander in the Naval Reserves.

FLOORCOVERING

Crossville Announces 2019 Recycling Program Milestones

➔ Officials with domestic tile manufacturer Crossville have announced the company recycled 7,951,271 pounds of fired porcelain in 2019, bringing the company's cumulative recycling total to nearly 134 million pounds since the 2009 launch of the Tile Take-Back program and the TOTO USA recycling partnership.



These recycling initiatives are based on the company's proprietary process for recycling fired porcelain products, including post-consumer materials. Through Tile Take-Back, Crossville is able to recycle previously installed tile collected from its distribution network, as well as scraps that result from tile cutting during installation, sizing or sample creation. Through its TOTO partnership, Crossville receives pre-consumer fired porcelain toilets that do not meet quality standards. Prior to the partnership, these cast-offs were being sent to landfills for disposal, but now they are recycled for use in manufacturing new tile.

All 134 million cumulative pounds of the recycled material Crossville has diverted from landfills have been or will be introduced into the tile production process. This use of recycled material during manufacturing results in Crossville maintaining its status as a net consumer of waste for an eighth consecutive year. Net waste consumption is achieved by using more waste than is created during production. Additionally, in 2019 Crossville removed 2,323,046 pounds of filtrate solids from dirty water and recycled it back into tile production. **BoF**

Bof
INDUSTRY
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TRENDWAY - SEEKS INDEPENDENT SALES REP GROUP, TEXAS

Trendway >

Trendway is currently seeking an Independent Sales Rep Group to cover an established territory in Central/South Texas.

The ideal organization should be based in one of the 3 main markets of this territory and have representation in the other two locations. The territory includes Houston, San Antonio and Austin. Potential Rep Groups should have business development personnel familiar with the GSA/SLED market along

with a commercial focus. Preferable to have representative dedicated to Architectural Products. Group should have no conflicts in their existing offering and be able to fully promote the sale of Trendway products by establishing new business relationships, as well as maintaining and expanding current accounts.

Qualifications:

- Ability to build and maintain Dealer, A + D, and end user relationships
- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- Ability to travel within territory

If this sounds like you, please send cover letter and resume to:
keliopulos@trendway.com

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INDEPENDENT SALES REP WANTED

*INDEPENDENT REPS & REP GROUPS WANTED:
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Join the Wyatt movement in the Pacific Northwest, DC Metro, Texas, Heartland, Mountain Region, NYC Metro and New England!

Wyatt Seating is a manufacturer built with contract furniture dealers in mind. We provide dealers with a go-to seating line that helps them win projects and increase dealer margin.

Wyatt offers a variety of mid-market task, conference, and guest seating. Our rapid growth has increased the demand for talented independent reps and rep groups that pride themselves on relationship building and customer service.

JOB DESCRIPTION

- Build relationships with contract furniture dealers in your territory
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- In-person, phone, e-mail and web conference communication with dealers
- Promoting the Wyatt movement with creative thinking and exceptional customer service.

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For more information, contact Pat Zerbe at:

patz@wyattseating.com

Be sure to check out our website at:

www.wyattseating.com

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY IN OFFICE FURNITURE MANUFACTURING AND SALE IN COLOMBIA

Company specialized in manufacturing and sales of furniture for offices and commercial environments, with excellent quality, market share, and a diverse portfolio of products and services aimed at refurbishing spaces tailor-made to suit its clientele's needs, seeks investors interested in acquiring a 100% stake in the company's shares.

Location: Colombia

- Economic growth, market size, macroeconomic management, geopolitical standing and political stability have consolidated Colombia as a prime destination for foreign capital investments.
- Direct foreign investment increased by 24% during the first semester of 2019.
- Recent GDP growth expectations have been estimated at 3.2% to 3.5% for 2019.
- Medium term perspectives place such growth at 4% by 2021.

The Company:

- 18 years in the office and commercial space furniture market, and among the leaders at present.
- Differentiating factors include providing customers with design and implementation of solutions, transforming office spaces into unique environments, tailor-made to the needs, expectations and budgets of each organization.
- Products and services are provided through three separate divisions or business units.
- Integrated solutions are provided to customers, from office and commercial space designs and blueprints, to manufacturing, delivery and installation of furniture, both standard and custom made.
- Customers benefit from an integrated solution in which company designs, builds, furnishes, installs, and automates the working environment to the customers technological specifications.
- Distribution and commercialization of its products and services to a wide variety of clients nationwide is accomplished through offices in Bogotá and Medellín, and an e-commerce platform.
- During the past six years, The Company has increased market share among the industry leaders.
- ROE for 2017 and 2018 was 26% y 34% respectively.

Inquiries

For further information and in order to receive a teaser, and confidential information memorandum that further describes

the opportunity please contact bicon investment banking in Colombia:

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