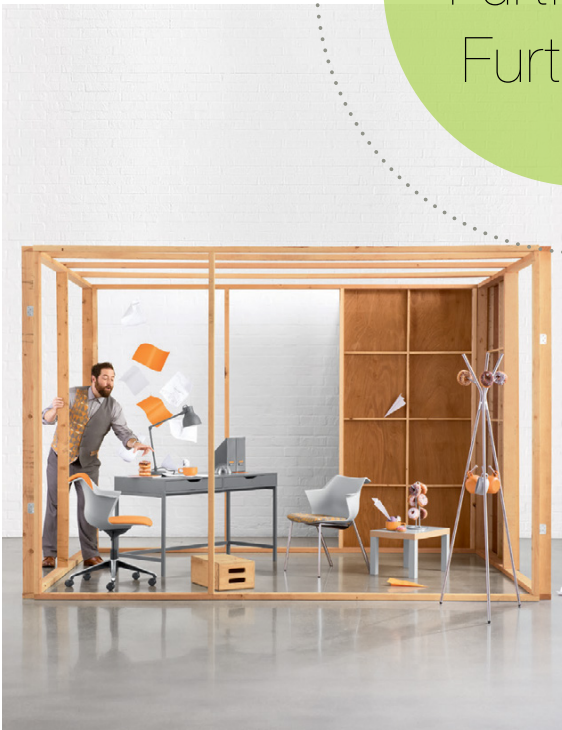


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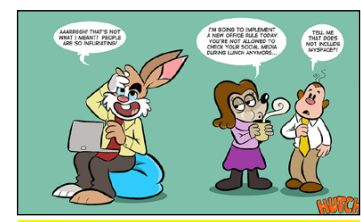
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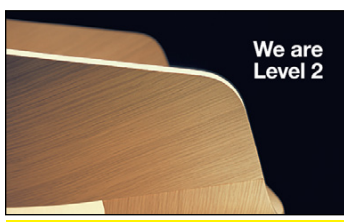


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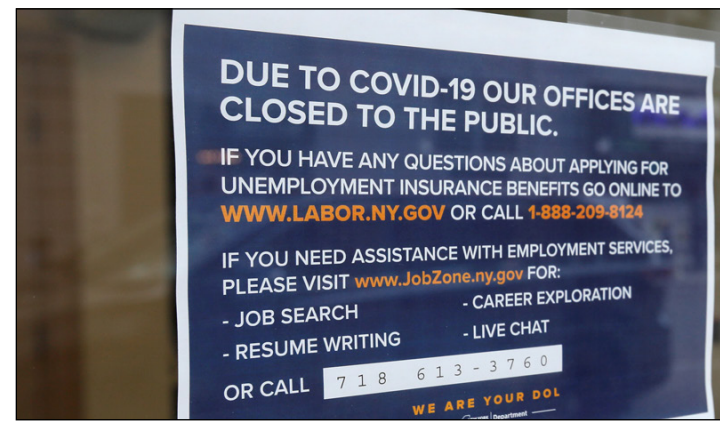
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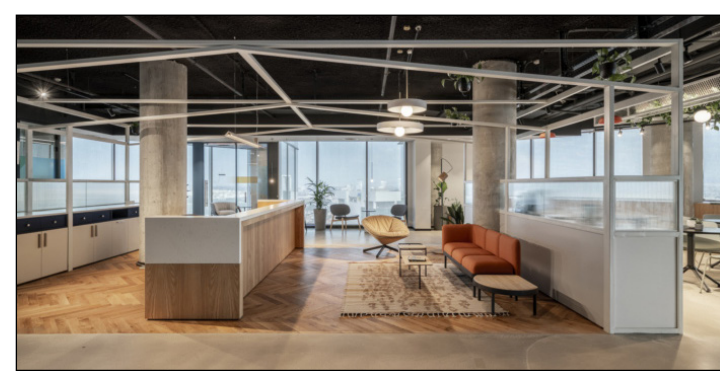
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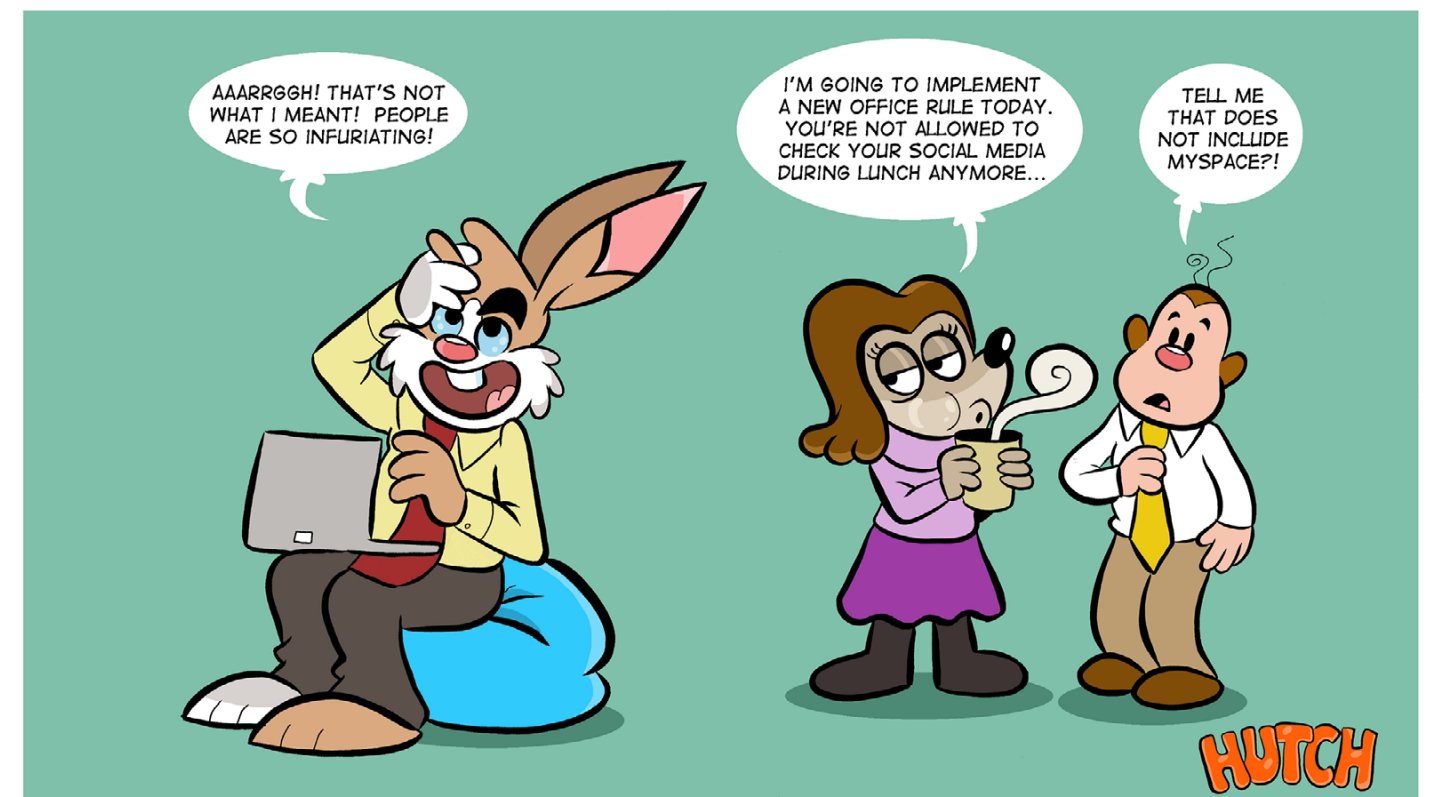
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**ROB KIRKBRIDE, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**



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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](mailto: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 National Office Furniture

➤ National Office Furniture, a unit of Kimball International, unveils research information and product solutions to help partners retrofit existing products, redesign spaces, and reimagine what's next. From the office to the home, and all of the in-between spaces where work happens, National has solutions to address a new way of working.

With over 250 new solutions to help redefine the future of work, National is here to help. Their new screen collection offers a variety of sizes, attachment methods, and materials, so a wide range of spaces can be retrofitted for increased protection. New Fringe lounge enhancements create space division, and Alloy benching panels accommodate employees' physical, emotional, and psychological wellbeing. National's value, design, and lead times are perfect complements to workplace readiness and employee wellness.

The Preparing for the New Mindset document offers strategies for success when re-engaging employees in the workplace. Complete with detailed information regarding people, places, and processes, this guide provides step-by-step planning considerations that can be used when creating safe workplace environments across all aspects of a business. From identifying workplace risks to addressing employees' physical, emotional, psychological, and cultural needs, this piece offers extensive protocols and considerations for a successful post-COVID-19 introduction to the workplace.

Our Considerations to Retrofit and Redesign document offers inspiration and solutions for the now, near, and next. With before and after images, as well as product suggestions, it is a comprehensive guide that outlines National's solutions to address today's new working environments.

The Now, Near, and Next video is a comprehensive Return to Work story, point of view, and research toolkit presented in a brief, under 400 second Pecha Kucha format. While there is no one-size-fits-all approach, National shares key learnings in the same spirit of cooperation that's inspired so many since this pandemic began.

Learn more about National's comprehensive resources and product solutions that are perfect for today's ever-changing workplace. The way the world is thinking about work has changed, and National has rolled up its sleeves to redesign the future.

### From Boss Design

➤ We are pleased to announce our showrooms in London, Manchester and Dudley are open to visitors again. Please get in touch if you want to arrange a visit. On arrival, you will be issued with a mask and sanitizer station and asked to observe the social distancing rules we've all got so good at.

## From the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC)

➤ The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) has released four new Safety First Pilot Credits in response to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). The credits outline sustainable best practices that align with public health and industry guidelines related to cleaning and disinfecting, workplace re-occupancy, HVAC and plumbing operations. The credits can be used by LEED projects that are certified or are undergoing certification.

The Safety First credits are part of USGBC's economic recovery strategy released last month, which focuses on sustainable solutions to rebuild a stronger and healthier economy by prioritizing healthy people in healthy places. The credits were created in direct response to COVID-19 and focus on the safety of those working in a building. These credits are available to all LEED 2009, LEED v4 and LEED v4.1 projects.

"These new credits are a first step in helping the building and construction industry demonstrate its commitment to sustainable strategies as part of building a healthier, more resilient future," said Mahesh Ramanujam, president & CEO of USGBC. "Supporting environmental and occupant health is a critical part of supporting community health and, as we look ahead, we know LEED and the USGBC community will play a role in delivering solutions that lay a better foundation for our economic and environmental well-being."

**The Safety First: Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Space** credit requires facilities to create a policy and implement procedures that follow green cleaning best practices that support a healthy indoor environment and worker safety. Unlike the need to develop new vaccines and medical treatments for COVID-19, current disinfectants and cleaning processes are effective against the Coronavirus, and sustainable options exist. In addition to product considerations, the credit also requires procedures and training for cleaning personnel, occupant education and other services that are within a management team's control.

**The Safety First: Re-Enter Your Workspace** credit is a tool to assess and plan for re-entry, as well as measure progress once a space is occupied. It identifies sustainable requirements in building operations and human behavior that take precautions against the spread of COVID-19. It aligns with the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Re-occupancy Assessment Tool and requires transparent reporting and evaluation of decisions to encourage continuous improvement.

**The Safety First: Building Water System Recommissioning** credit helps building teams reduce the risk that occupants are exposed to degraded water quality. Building and business closures over weeks or months reduce water usage that can potentially lead to stagnant water and water that is unsafe to drink or use. The credit integrates recommendations from industry organizations and experts, including the U.S. EPA and CDC. It requires buildings to develop and implement a water management plan, coordinate with local water and public health authorities, communicate water system activities and associated risks to building occupants and take steps to address water quality from the community supply, as well as the building.

**The Safety First: Managing Indoor Air Quality During COVID-19** credit builds on existing indoor air quality requirements and credits in LEED. Building teams should ensure indoor air quality systems are operating as designed and determine temporary adjustments to ventilation that may minimize the spread of COVID-19 through the air. Additional considerations include increasing ventilation and air filtration, physical distancing of occupants and following measures outlined in public health and industry resources, as well as guidance found in the Re-Enter Your Workspace credit. The guidance also encourages monitoring and evaluating indoor air quality on an ongoing basis.

These credits are based on current, known information. USGBC will refine its recommendations and is looking for feedback on the new credits.

# BF I don't Know About You, but I'll Never Take the Fun and Friendship of NeoCon for Granted Again.



## A very good Wednesday to you, my friends,

If you have been on Facebook for any length of time, you might start seeing "Memories." They are Facebook-generated reminders of posts you've made on this date over time. I have been on Facebook for a long, long time (and wasted countless hours on it), since back in the days when you had to have an .edu email address to sign up. I used to teach journalism as an adjunct professor at a local Grand Rapids college, so I had an .edu address. It's fun to see what I was doing and where I was in years past.

Today, a memory arrived in my Facebook notifications from 12 years ago. It was a simple post I made at the time: "I'm sick of NeoCon." It must have been on the Wednesday of NeoCon, a day I'm always dog-tired and ready to head home. By Wednesday during NeoCon week, I'm sick of restaurant food, sick of talking to people and sick of Chicago. I'm sure I'm not alone.

But when that memory came up today, I had to chuckle. What I wouldn't give to be at NeoCon this year. Because even though I complain come Wednesday at NeoCon, I sure do miss it this year. The old proverb says, "absence makes the heart grow fonder," and it certainly has for me. I miss the great steak dinners and parties, I miss talking to my friends that I only see once a year and I miss roaming the streets of Chicago.

The industry will recover from the COVID lockdown, and I believe that it will return even stronger and with more purpose. Still, I think we are all feeling the void left by the NeoCon cancellation. It was the right (and really, only) decision theMART and the show organizers could have made. It still wouldn't be safe to be in Chicago right now with 50,000 other folks. And Chicago isn't the kind of city where you can simply pick another date later in the year to host an event of NeoCon's size.

NeoCon simply couldn't happen this year.

Who knows? Maybe this is good for NeoCon and the industry. Maybe all of us will be recharged by its absence this year. Maybe we needed a break so we could all understand how important this event really is for the industry.

The show organizers did a great job with very little time to get NeoConnect, a virtual programming series, in place. It was filled with interesting programming. Our reporter Emily Clingman has been covering it for us. Bellow Press has been hard at work with its "Products, People and Projects" sections, another of which can be found in today's issue. The features include our friends from OM and 2020. Keep an eye out for those throughout the summer. There is still time to get yours scheduled. Reach out to Melissa Skolnick at [melissa@bellowpress](mailto:melissa@bellowpress) to schedule yours.

Our media colleagues in the industry have stepped up as well. Kudos to our friends at Interior Design and officeinsight who have worked hard on coverage as well. Though we are competitors, we are also friends, and we wish them the best.

For many folks, the most difficult aspect of this pandemic has been the isolation. We have been separated from our customers, our coworkers, our friends. I know I miss all of you. Being in Grand Rapids, I used to have at least one or two lunches or coffee dates with industry sources a week. I haven't met with those friends in months.

So I guess you could say the only thing I'm sick of now is this distancing. After this year, after this pandemic, I know one thing for sure: I'll never bitch about or take NeoCon for granted ever again.

*Rob Kirkbride and the Business of Furniture team*

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## Andreu World has Incorporated the LEVEL 2 Certification

Andreu World has incorporated the LEVEL2 certification into its designs. This international standard created by the Business and Institutional Furniture Manufacturer's Association (BIFMA) allows for a more open and transparent assessment of the environmental and social impacts that originate in the manufacture of furniture and serves as a reference for architects, designers and interior designers from around the world when choosing more sustainable furniture.

Andreu World is one of the first companies in Europe to achieve LEVEL2 certification for its entire catalog of designs. The LEVEL2 standard was created to offer the most open and transparent means of evaluating and communicating the environmental and social impacts of furniture on the built environment.

To achieve this, Andreu World has worked on the improvement and excellence of its production processes in four areas: materials, through the evaluation of the sustainability of the resources used in the manufacturing processes; energy and atmosphere, in which corporate sustainability policies, calculation of greenhouse gases in factories and reduction of energy consumption in production centers have been evaluated; human and ecosystem health through management plans and reduction of generated waste and social responsibility.

## THE STREAM

### WHY COVID-19 IS CHANGING OFFICE SPACE NOT ENDING IT

Although COVID-19 has radically altered every aspect of our lives, one of the biggest changes has been to the way we work. Whether it's in a spare bedroom, at the kitchen table or from the couch, more people than ever are working from home—instead of going into a physical office. This has made some speculate that the shift to mandatory remote work is going to cause the end to buildings and office space as we know it.

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE](#)



### THE LESSONS LEARNED UNDER LOCKDOWN WILL HELP US GROW AND IMPROVE

As the global community navigates the Coronavirus crisis, the nature of the workplace will be more important than ever. We have been working remotely on an unprecedented scale, and the benefits are clear – flexibility, time with family, and reduced commuting as a start. In some form, working from home is here to stay, even as returning to the physical office becomes possible. However, we have also discovered the limitations to remote working. While teams have been able to stay connected virtually, this cannot substitute for face-to-face collaboration, which is essential to fostering innovation.

Work is an inherently social activity, and the array of in person interactions we rely on can be difficult, or even impossible, to facilitate remotely. The post-COVID workplace must be reinvented to fulfil these needs, without compromising the health and safety of employees.

Although many will be craving a return to normal, going back to a pre-COVID workplace may not be possible – and, equally, may not be desirable. At this crucial juncture, we have the power and opportunity to reshape the workplace for the better, bringing offices into the future. While imminent, this change cannot be instant, but instead will happen in stages: Now, Near, and Far. With each of these phases, it is vital that we make offices of the future as safe as possible: well-designed and resilient for the challenges we may face.

The immediate priority for many businesses, universities and health organizations is to bring people back to work as quickly and safely as possible. Not only do spaces need to meet health guidelines, but they also need to be designed to help individuals feel safe at work. To accomplish this, organizations will be – and, indeed, already are – retrofitting their workplace with what they have today, moving desks apart and adding barriers, to keep the first wave of returning workers safe.

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE](#)

### BIG NUMBER

# 60.4 PERCENT

With monthly leasing activity in the Big Apple having increased while seeing lower leasing volume year-over-year, the latest Colliers International Manhattan Monthly Snapshot for May 2020 is decidedly mixed. According to the report, Manhattan's monthly leasing activity increased by 5.2% at 1.42 MSF in May compared to April 2020, and was higher by 21.9% compared to March. Nevertheless, year-over-year leasing volume was lower by more than one-half and was 60.4% below the 2019 average monthly volume of 3.58 MSF.

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE](#)



### MY NEW NORMAL: GENSLER CO-CEO ANDY COHEN

Because we are a global design firm, I have consistently worked virtually my entire career, especially when I became co-CEO 15 years ago with my partner, Diane Hoskins. As I am in LA and Diane in D.C., we are in constant communication with each other and key Gensler leaders from around the globe. So, even before the pandemic I was having video calls or traveling 50% of the time. Now, it has increased to 150% of the time as we work from home with 12- to 14-hour days starting early in the morning with video calls with clients and Gensler leaders in Europe and the Middle East and ending in the evening with Asia and India.

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE](#)

### WHEN EVERYONE CAN WORK FROM HOME, WHO GOES BACK TO THE OFFICE?

Behold a twist in the tale of remote work that no one saw coming: Now that coronavirus lockdowns are ending region-by-region around the world, some people may need to convince their bosses to let them stop working from home.

Office employees have spent years fine-tuning the argument in favor of work-from-anywhere policies, and publications including this one have shared countless posts with advice for winning over a skeptical boss. Now the coronavirus pandemic may turn the whole debate upside down. That's assuming more companies follow the example of Cloudflare, the cyberprotection and web infrastructure company, which plans to comply with social-distancing guidelines by reopening with just a fraction of its employees.

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE](#)



### WHAT IF WORKING FROM HOME GOES ON ... FOREVER?

The coronavirus crisis is forcing white-collar America to reconsider nearly every aspect of office life. Some practices now seem to be wastes of time, happily discarded; others seem to be unexpectedly crucial, and impossible to replicate online. For workers wondering right now if they're ever going back to the office, the most honest answer is this: Even if they do, the office might never be the same.

The consulting firm Accenture has more than 500,000 employees worldwide. Before the pandemic, no more than 10% of them worked remotely on any given day. By the middle of March, though, nearly all of them had been sent home. Their use of Microsoft Teams — software that enables co-workers to talk, videoconference, whiteboard and chat by text with one another — erupted. The volume of video calls went up sixfold; the audio calls tripled, to 900 million minutes. "Just to put that in context, that's 1,700 years of continuous audio," Paul Daugherty, the firm's chief technology officer, told me from his home office, where a huge ship's wheel could be seen hanging over his bookcase ("I'm a nerdy sailor," he joked).

Employees adapted quickly, he says: "They were using ironing boards as a stand-up desk." But what astonished him was that even though they had lost the easy rapport of face-to-face office contact, productivity didn't sink. It went up, when measured by several metrics — developer productivity, for example. "If you, six months ago, had said, 'We're going to give you a few weeks' notice, and then you're going to have your whole work force working from home,' I would have said: 'You're insane. There's no way it's possible.'"

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE](#)





## Steelcase CEO Jim Keane Speaks to Grand Rapids Economic Club about COVID and the Company

STEELCASE HAS WEATHERED THE ECONOMIC STORM CAUSED BY COVID-19 AND IS LISTENING TO THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY IN THE WAKE OF THE PROTESTS AND UNREST.

by Rob Kirkbride

Disaster preparation is important for any business, but leaders also have to adjust course as needed since there is no way to account for everything that might go wrong. Crisis management shouldn't

just happen in a crisis — it should be happening all the time. That was the message Steelcase President and Chief Executive Officer Jim Keane delivered to a joint virtual meeting of the Grand Rapids Economic Club and

Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce.

Steelcase has weathered the economic storm caused by COVID-19 and is listening to the African-American community in the wake of the protests and

unrest. But a business's reaction to huge, unexpected issues like these does not happen by chance. It happens through painstaking preparation.

### We didn't have time to do a controlled shutdown of our Grand Rapids plants.

"First of all, you have to prepare, you have to have a plan and you have to practice with your team," Keane said. "Whatever you plan in practice won't actually happen like that, but it still helps you build muscle in a crisis. We always pick an officer on deck to coordinate policy setting across our whole org chart. In the case of COVID, it was Sara Armbruster (vice president, strategy, research and digital transformation) who led strategy and various businesses for us. Sara delegated her entire day job to others and shifted 100% of her attention to leading us through COVID."

Number two, he said, is you have to move quickly by slowing down the game. For example, Steelcase had a daily 7:30 a.m. all-hands meeting of the senior team focused solely on the COVID-19 crisis. They made decisions in that meeting every day.

Number three, Keane said, is you slow down the game by being ahead. "This is something Jim Hackett used to talk about," Keane noted. "I like to say you have to see around corners because what's ahead isn't always a straight line. To do that you have

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to force yourself and your teams to think the unthinkable.”

A few weeks in early April almost every one of Steelcase’s factories was basically shut down. That’s something horrible, Keane said, but the management team actually did see it coming by mid March and made decisions then to prepare for it. By being ahead, they weren’t feeling they were trying to catch up.

“Of course, we weren’t perfect,” Keane said. “We made plans for things we thought were two or three weeks away, and it turned out it was the next day. And the sudden shutdown of the Michigan economy was the worst example of that. We didn’t have time to do a controlled shutdown of our Grand Rapids plants. And that really hurt when it came time to restart.”

Number four, he said, is that you distribute decisions to those who have the best view of the situation.

“I woke up some mornings to news that we made and executed a decision to close some plants somewhere in the world,” Keane said. “And it was the right decision. And it would have been worse if they had waited for me to wake up.”

The Steelcase management team has used principles laid out in the book “Team of Teams” by General Stanley McChrystal. The book calls on leaders to decentralize decisions so you don’t tie up the team with layers of approval. You let them decide and let them act.

Businesses are in crisis (or on the edge of crisis) more often

than leaders would like to believe, Keane said, adding they were more than in a state of whatever was considered normal.

Keane said to think back to the “old days” — February. What was going on in your business?

“All of us have annual planning exercises, but is that really enough when things are changing as quickly as they are?” Keane said. “You have to move quickly by slowing down the game. New NFL quarterbacks always seem to be hurrying, and experienced NFL quarterbacks seem to have plenty of time. I mean, watch Tom Brady. He has all day to see the field, change plays, make adjustments. How do you feel? Do you feel like you have lots of time to focus on what’s next? Or do you feel like you’re always racing against the clock?”

## A lot of customers have questions about what the office will look like going forward.

Keane said he stays ahead of what’s happening by watching “the news channel you don’t agree with.” He spends some time every day on Reddit so he can understand a wider diversity of perspectives on random topics.

At Steelcase, he said, putting

people first is another crisis management principle. “As it became clear, we had to cut our costs, we decided not to do layoffs for white collar workers,” Keane said. “Instead we asked all our white collar workers to take a pay reduction with the deepest reductions with the highest paid and with lower reductions and sometimes no reductions at all among the lower paid. We also paid the employees’ share of health care premiums so nobody had to worry about health care.”

Steelcase, like every other company, had to adapt to working remotely. Keane said normally they would have face-to-face meetings. Now, they are forced to video conference. It works and is efficient but, he said, “Nobody feels they have a space to just talk about how they’re feeling the way we would do. Last week I had one-on-one video meetings with some employees feeling a lot of pain. I would never in a hundred years, have chosen to have those meetings that way. It’s not fine. It’s not the same. It’s literally better than nothing at all. But we know in our hearts this is not the same.

“There’s a reason you pay \$75 to attend a sporting event and you could have watched it for free at home — that connection to other people. That is why the office will continue to be an important part of our work lives, regardless of how it is now. Things like business travel may change,” Keane said, noting the days of flying 19 hours for a business meeting that might last only a few hours are over.

The office will revive as the pandemic ends, but it will happen in stages, he said. A lot of customers have questions about what the office will look like going forward. It begins with protocols. Do you take people’s temperatures? What do you do when they enter the building? Should you use a tracker app to figure out where people are in the office? What about food service?

Keane calls it the retrofit stage — when the first wave of people start coming back into the office and start modifying their existing facilities. The second stage will be reconfiguring. This will take structural changes to the workplace. Steelcase is trying to help

its customers understand how they can reconfigure this space so that it doesn’t create a lot of waste and maybe even transitions forward into the third stage, which is the reinvention of the workplace.

“This is a part I’m kind of actually excited about,” he said. “There (have) been some articles about ‘Is this the return of cubicles?’ or something like that. That’s never actually happened. It’s never actually gone backwards. I don’t think it’s going to go backwards here either. It always goes forward to something.

“So I think the future of the office, the ones that we’re actually going to be aspiring to as we

come out of this crisis, is one that gives us the best of both worlds. It gives us the best places to collaborate. And so when you’re collaborating in meetings and trying to do scenario planning and things I talked about before, there should be no better place than your office for that. Secondly, it should be a great place to socialize or interact with people. I just was saying that the most valuable part of the meetings are the things that happened before and after. So (make) sure people have space to be able to make those informal connections, to meet that new employee, to connect with that intern.” **BoF**

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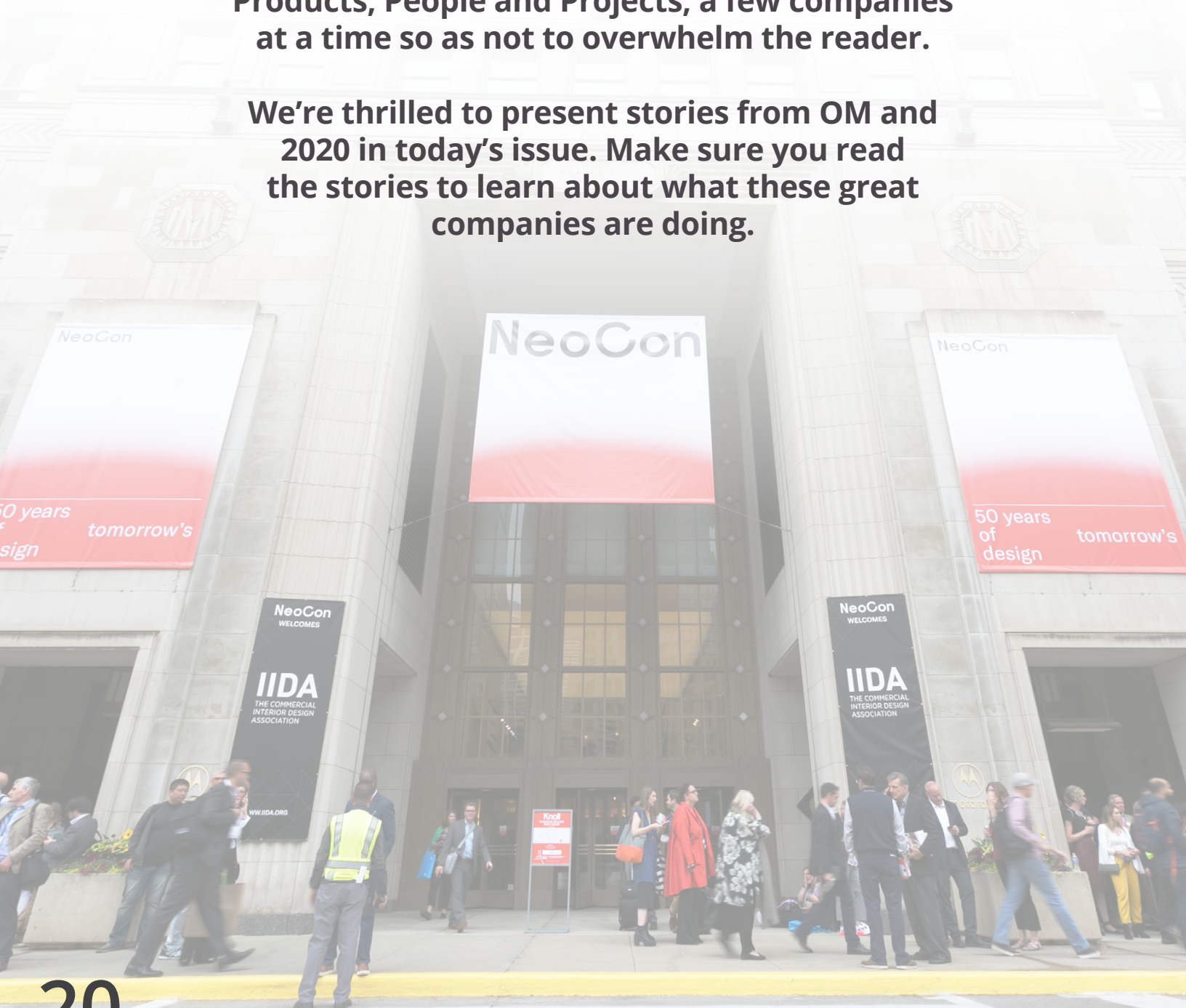
We launched Products, People and Projects this year to help fill the gaps. We don't want all the information we would have learned about at NeoCon to be lost.

So we worked with theMART to come up with a program you have seen the past few weeks. For the rest of the summer, we will be presenting Products, People and Projects, a few companies at a time so as not to overwhelm the reader.

We're thrilled to present stories from OM and 2020 in today's issue. Make sure you read the stories to learn about what these great companies are doing.

NeoCon: Products, People and Projects

**BoF**



**22** Never Stop Moving, Pushing or Striving — OM Digs Deep for Meaningful Change  
 Since its beginnings in 1986, Southern California-based OM has believed continual evolution creates a living company.

**36** 2020: Industry Mainstay Keeps Ahead of Technology (and Always has for its Customers)  
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## Never Stop Moving, Pushing or Striving — OM Digs Deep for Meaningful Change

**“Further up and further in” — this is the mantra of a company aiming to continually evolve with its customers and the furniture industry.** OM Seating, a national leader in mid-market seating solutions, believes a relentless push for change, endlessly adapting and developing afresh, is a necessity for a thriving, solutions-oriented company.

“I want us to have an inquisitive nature and to be constantly learning, improving, pushing,” said Wilson Chow, president of OM Seating. “At the same time, we also need to apply what we’ve learned — whether that’s to be better and better at seating designs or to the processes by which we run our company. We push ourselves, and we welcome push from the industry. Whether that’s from our reps who are hungry to build and sustain healthy sales or from fellow manufacturers. When we’re all coming from a particular perspective to ask how we can make work and the workplace (wherever that is) better, all of us win — customer, manufacturer, reps and the industry at large.”



**Since its beginnings in 1986, Southern California-based OM has believed continual evolution creates a living company.**

Chow believes the yin-yang of good competition is healthy when it drives us all to thrive creatively.

“Of course, we want our products and our processes to be one of the best and for our OM Family to be driven to seek better answers,” Chow said. “Often, when competitors come up with something that I consider amazing, or genuinely good, my reaction is, ‘How about us? How are we also pushing for good and better?’”

Since its beginnings in 1986, Southern California-based OM has believed continual evolution creates a living company.

“Everyone needs to believe, ‘It’s my responsibility,’” Chow said. “What makes someone want to work with us is more

than simply because we are the best — at whatever today’s rubric is. They work with us because we offer all the baseline key ingredients, and on top of that they know we are always pushing to be even better, always going further up, further in.”

**Pushing further**

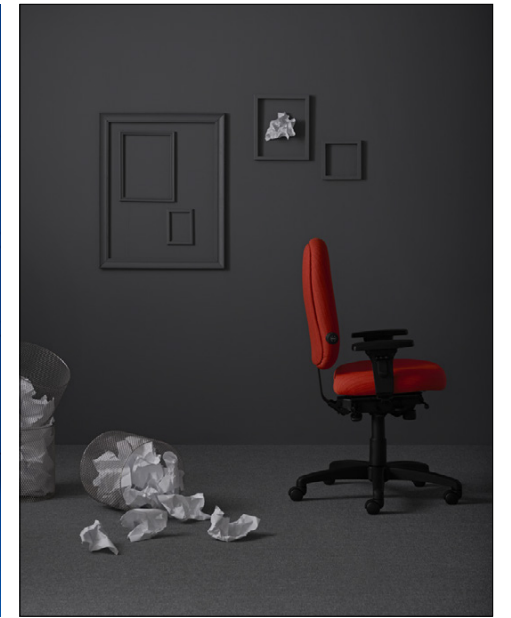
A relentless attention to process and progress drives OM’s company culture. Nowhere is that more evident than in product design and development.

Eric MacDonald, product development and design manager, joined the company five years ago and has been an integral part of giving a voice to the in-house OM Design Group.

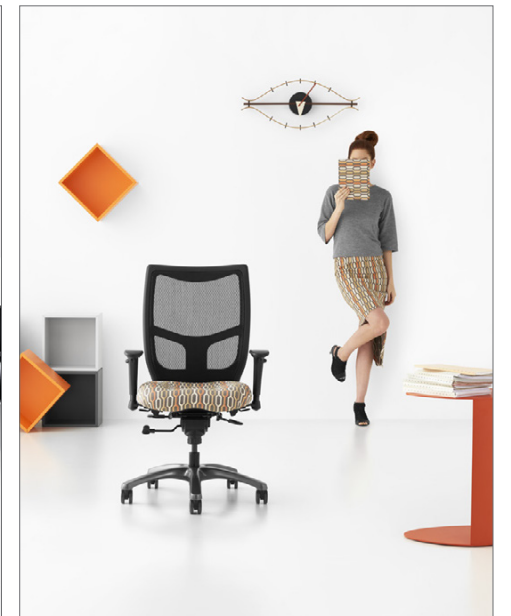


Werkysy® Collection

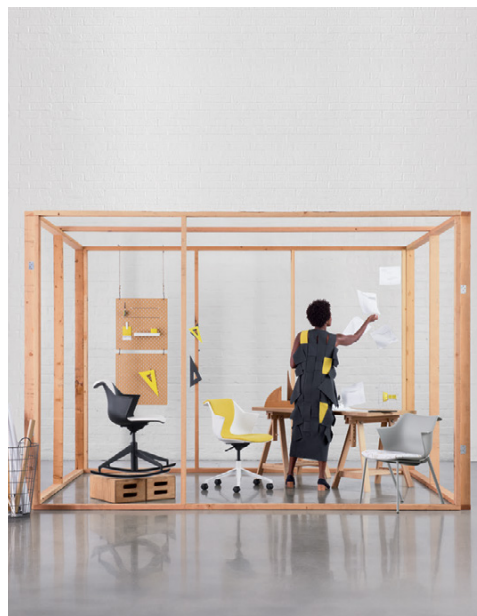
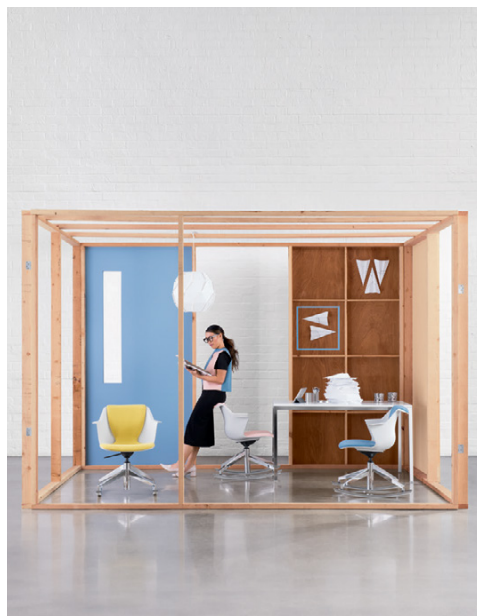
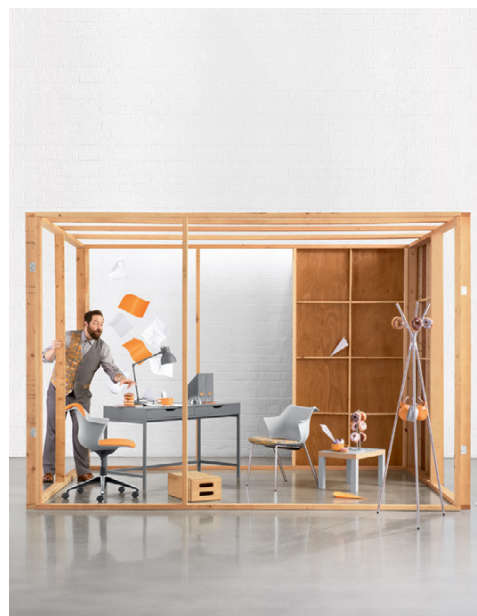
**OM AD  
 CAM  
 PAIGNS  
 2015-19**



2015-2016: Introducing the World of OM.



2017-2018: OM Becomes You.



2018: Create Your Space. (introducing Werksy)



2019: Color Your World.

## Focusing on multiple disciplines means OM seeks to partner with designers who also embody this spirit of collaboration.

“The design process involves much more than just industrial designers,” MacDonald said. “We take pride in having multiple disciplines engaged in a single focus. Whether that’s graphic design, marketing, mechanical engineering or manufacturing, each member of the team brings new light during the process. This drive for a new perspective is not only leveraged during in-house developments but also how we work with outside design partners.”

Focusing on multiple disciplines means OM seeks to partner with designers who also embody this spirit of collaboration.

“Francisco Romero of Phide-sign is a perfect example,” MacDonald said. “He holds degrees in both architecture and mathematics, and brings an incredible level of detail and focus to each new product. Over the past 10 years, he has developed OM5 Series®, OM5 Active and Truly.® with us. Each one of these products has proprietary innovation,

cleverly enhancing a user’s experience.”

The OM5 Series proved to be a watershed moment for the company. Challenged by then president Wallace Hwang to take a risk and push beyond off-the-shelf solutions, the company invested in the tooling for a ground-up, unconventional design for a mid-market work chair. This gutsy play resulted in OM5, which in its West Coast pre-launch debut took home one of the top prizes at the National Ergonomics Conference and Exposition: the ErgoExpo Attendees’ Choice Award.

The company pushed further forward with 2013’s launch of the OM5 Active, daring to aggressively enter a lightly traveled market (for OM) with a bold design. Like its namesake, this evolution of the OM5 Series was again one of the top vote getters for the Attendees’ Choice, beating out competition from several larger, higher profile companies to be that year’s only seating winner.



OM5 Active



**“Progress is not a thing that theoretically happens, but a thing we must doggedly drive to actively, consciously do.”**

Again, in the spirit of further up and further in, OM continued its innovative product development with 2016’s Truly. While re-imagining the engineering of a task chair, the design team devised a living backrest. The resulting TruFit™ technology forms the literal backbone of a modern-aesthetic, high-end design work chair. Like the OM5 Series, Truly has been recognized with numerous prestigious awards, including a resounding round-up of Interior Design’s HiP Award, HCD’s Nightingale Award, Ergo Expo Attendees’ Choice Award and the Chicago Athanaeum’s Good Design Award.

**Further in**

Despite — or perhaps because of — these accolades, the product design and development team continue to push. “Progress is not a thing that theoretically happens, but a thing we must doggedly drive to actively, consciously do,” Chow said.

Last year OM Seating debuted one of the most visually provocative, playful line-ups

in the industry — the Werksy Collection (think work plus easy), a networking tasker, a stackable visitor’s chair and a freedom-of-work inspiring rocking chair.

“We worked with the award-winning designer Henner Jahns of Gecco Vision on the collection,” MacDonald said. “During the development, we knew each chair configuration was going to help users collaborate. And because Henner knew that we never want to settle, we were able to challenge each other to pivot from the original intent, then work together to design and develop a brand new way to engage with a product and with each other. The pinnacle of this striving, this engagement with our process, is the rocking base that also swivels and has adjustable seat height. No one had done this before. Our goal is not just to be different, but to outdo ourselves. I like to think the Werksy Collection accomplishes both.”

**OM hasn’t stopped moving**

This spring, OM launched a Color Bloom campaign, developed to refresh and re-acti-



## Focusing on multiple disciplines means OM seeks to partner with designers who also embody this spirit of collaboration.

vate frame and fabric stories for two popular collections. OM5 Active enjoyed a color refresh, which replaced its original primary color scheme with a more sophisticated palette, while the Werksy Quilt Collection introduced a new range of splashy, custom colors to the delightful Werksy frames.

Queenie Wong, marketing and branding supervisor, said the goal was to introduce something fun in the spirit of what's next.

"We push even on those designs that are already in the market, already popular," Wong said. "The entire marketing and product design teams gather for brainstorming sessions. We have an opportunity to be genuinely raw in this creative process — to throw out ideas no matter how wild, to critique and question each other. And because there is so much respect in the room, and so much enthu-

siasm for the process, we're able to be free and to each contribute our own flavor and voice. It's a vulnerable process. But because we've agreed to think collectively, we can push for more and our solutions — whether a product or a service — can be so much more meaningful and impactful."

OM's messaging is another testament to the team's focus on process. Whether the outcome is a new logo with seven threads, each representing the elements that keep the company strong, quirky trade show themes or an ever-evolving ad campaign that can be read as chapters in a book, OM keeps pushing forward and developing the story further.

### Process of meaningful messaging

Though the company is forward-thinking by intention, OM is attentive to its past and





**As OM Seating keeps designing its way into the future, one element that Chow hopes will never change is the company spirit, the constant drive for meaningful changes and impactful designs.**

to the people who bind the company together.

“I think of the OM business that my father [William Chow] built, then his co-founder Wallace Hwang, and now myself — with me as just the latest chapter — as a long-evolving business. I realize that each of us, not only me but everyone who works here, invests our time, our talent and our effort over and over, in the particular ways each of us can, and together we all build a company that is a representation of our individual personalities, aspirations and talents,” Chow said.

As OM Seating keeps designing its way into the future, one element that Chow hopes will never change is the company

spirit, the constant drive for meaningful changes and impactful designs.

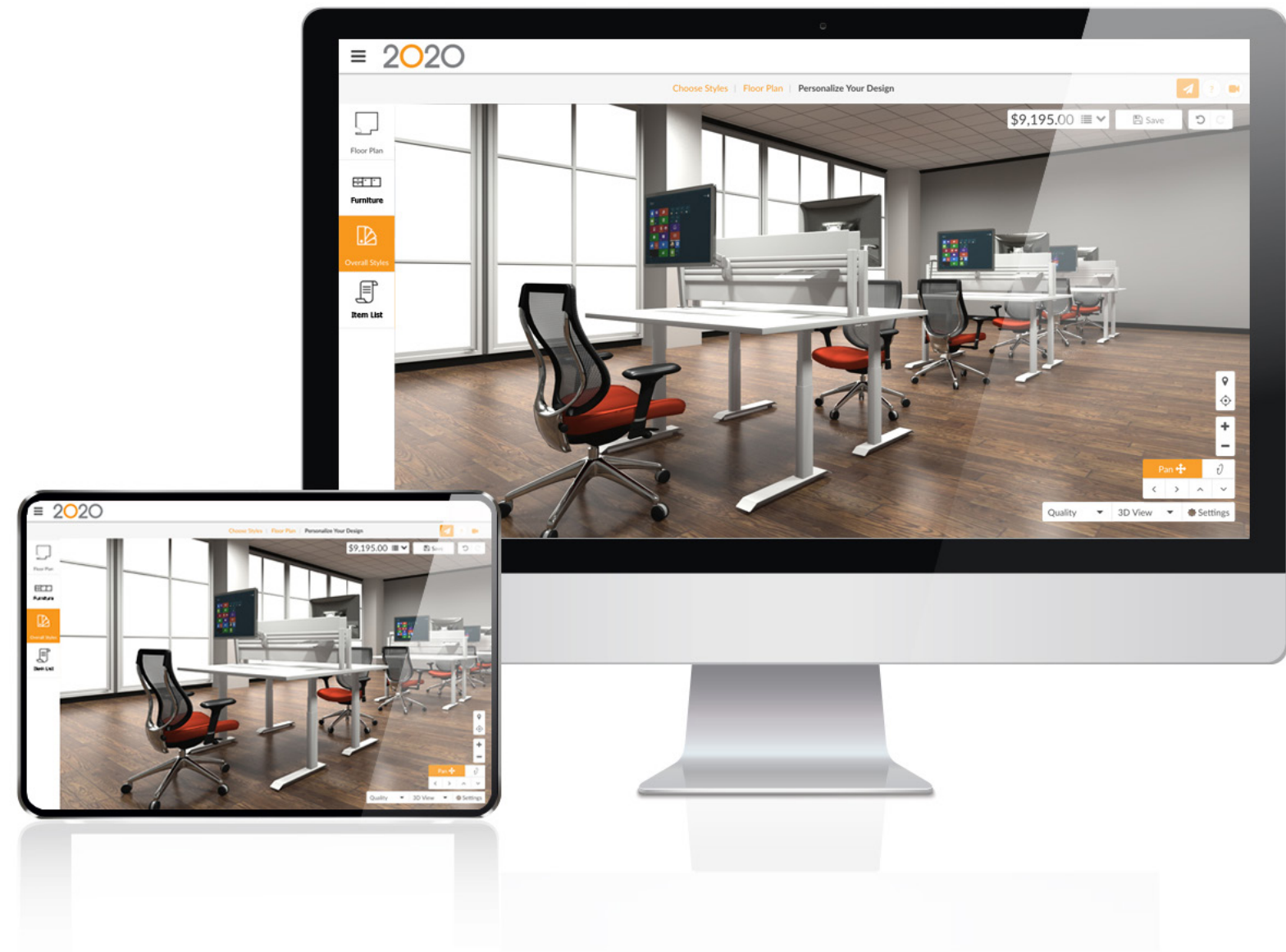
“We’re all committed to the process and the progress of discovering what our passions can help to create,” he said. “If we work on our work like we live our lives — naturally curious, constantly self-improving and pushing for the ever-critical execution, we can’t help but to do better and at times, even reach being the best. As Queenie tells me all the time, ‘We’re all here to inspire, show some personality and encourage fun.’ The passion shows in all of our work. Okay, so, that’s what keeps us going. And I think you’ll see that in everything that we do.” **BoF**

OM5 Series®

## 2020: Industry Mainstay Keeps Ahead of Technology (and Always has for its Customers)

In the mid-1980s, when Prince was singing about Raspberry Berets, and Ronald Reagan occupied the White House, several software systems were being developed that would go on to revolutionize the office furniture industry. Companies like Intellicon, Giza and CAP were building software to make it easier to design large projects and order office furniture. At the same time, kitchen cabinet manufacturer MKS was developing 2020 Design, a similar software solution for the kitchen and bath industry. Like many industry-specific software solutions created at the time, the technology was spun off and a new company — 20-20 Technologies (today known as 2020) — was created in 1987.

[2020](#) grew quickly in its first 15 years — creating a strong relationship with the National Kitchen and Bath Association and becoming a standard tool of industry giants Home Depot and Lowe’s. In 1990, its first subsidiaries in Europe were founded.



**By the mid-1990s, 2020's web version of its software let consumers create their own designs.**

By the mid-1990s, 2020's web version of its software let consumers create their own designs. In the early 2000s, the company entered the office furniture industry by acquiring Intellicon, Giza and CAP.

There would be many more acquisitions over the years to consolidate its position in the office furniture industry and other vertical markets. In total, 2020 made 17 acquisitions between 2000 and 2008. The positive was that the acquisitions brought together many of the best technologies of the time under one umbrella. Competing systems were combined. The best was taken from all and used to create the best system possible.

That innovation continues today, and 2020 is as focused as it has ever been, according to Chief Executive Officer Mark Stoeber.

"We feel like we're in a very good spot," he said. "I feel like we have stayed entirely focused on thinking about the long view in our business. We are very, very focused on seeing the changing trends in the overall buying process. 2020

is a much broader company today. We serve multiple verticals — from contract furnishings to large residential and manufacturing businesses. Millions of consumers around the world use 2020's online tools to get inspired and design their spaces.

"By providing end-to-end solutions and an expansive collection of manufacturers' catalogs, 2020 provides businesses with the software and content to be more efficient, integrated and productive. This has allowed us to sort of keep our finger on the pulse of the entire supply chain. We've become more in tune with the changing buying processes and the buying journey of the end user. The buyer may want to connect digitally with a professional designer, or they may want to plan their space on an eCommerce site. Technology has changed that journey radically. We knew it was going to change on the residential side, and we suspected it would likely carry over on the office side."

In short, 2020 understands younger professionals are coming up in the industry. The

# A new buying journey.



# Collaborate.



millennial shift has changed so many things for the market and the professionals working within it. “It has blurred the lines between residential and commercial spaces,” Stoever said. “It has also changed the way customers want to access and how they view technology.”

The company has focused most of its innovation around building experiences that it believes will speak to the future designer as well as connecting the end user to all phases of the buying journey — from inspiration to design to manufacturing to installation. 2020 is working hard to understand the end user of the software. To that end, 2020 has spent a lot of time working on cloud computing, web tools and other ways that designers can sit down and start thinking about space, accessing all of the products that are available for that space quickly and easily. 2020 has built a number of new tools and applications that allow this to happen.

The second area that 2020 has spent a lot of time on is its dealer community, which Stoever said is very, very important to the company, both on the contract furnishings side and also on the residential side. Both are going through similar changes.

“The emergence of the omni-channel space was something we also really felt very strongly about as a way to reinvigorate the dealer channel,” he said. “Recognizing that end users are finding out about various products differently using the web, using eCommerce channels. Visiting multiple manufacturers before even sitting down and thinking about what it is that they want. So they bring to the dealer a lot more inspiration than ever before.

“Supporting that omni-channel approach is very, very important for us. We’ve done a number of things on both the manufacturer and the dealer sides to allow them to start promoting



**“The emergence of the omni-channel space was something we also really felt very strongly about as a way to reinvigorate the dealer channel.”**

their wares and driving interest. Many of them are marketing directly to the end user. Our omni channel focus allows manufacturers to start capturing leads and then in many cases, sharing those leads with their dealer community as well.”

The dealer channel doesn’t go away just because the buyer journey is changing, and the worlds are being blended between physical and online. It doesn’t mean that the dealer channel is any less important, Stoever said. They continue to play a vital role in a complicated sales process.

“So we came in this market and said, ‘Let’s not put our head in the sand like so many other folks and believe that this whole internet thing is going to go away and not disrupt us,’” he said. “Let’s figure out how we embrace it and help reinvigorate that whole channel. And that’s what we have been doing.”

The third part of 2020’s work has been recognizing it has always had a focus on the manufacturers’ catalogs and recognizing that its customers’ needs over the years and decades have changed because catalogs are coming from multiple sources.

Since 2020 has been serving various industries for so long and has been in technology since the beginning, it has the wind at its back,

which makes the company much better at helping its customers venture into new channels or face unexpected distribution challenges.

A good example of how 2020 has helped its customers came during the COVID-19 crisis. A European client called and told Stoever it was able to quickly find holes in its supply chain because of 2020. The company has a broad materials list that was missing one part because it came from China, and the Chinese factory was shut down. They quickly found a replacement from an Italian vendor through online intelligence through 2020.

“That project would have been put on hold for that one component out of hundreds,” Stoever said. “He shared his gratitude with me by saying, ‘I always knew there was some value there, but I could never really appreciate it. Now I can appreciate it because we have been able to maintain our business as we go through this crisis.’ There’s been a number of other examples that people have told us because they’ve been able to be online and have access to the data and in the projects, and it’s really helped.”

The most successful companies stay true to their commitment to a longer-term vision, he said. Innovations will continue to be the roadmap for 2020 and its work in the future.

“That’s going to continue,” Stoever said. “And



2020 Chief Executive Officer Mark Stoever



**2020 works both in residential and commercial, it is able to bridge the gaps that manufacturers and dealers might find as they increasingly work in both sides of the industry.**

we have to be all about making sure we are connected to that feedback loop and understanding the implications of those demands of the end user on the dealer channel and on the manufacturer channel. Dealers have different needs and manufacturers have different needs. So we stay focused on what those needs are and that helps drive our product roadmaps. And we will continue to apply the lessons we learn in one vertical market to problems faced in all the other markets we are in.”

2020 makes a great tactical partner for office furnishings customers as well, said Bruce Allum, director of sales — manufacturers/retailers. Since 2020 works both in residential and commercial, it is able to bridge the gaps that manufacturers and dealers might find as they increasingly work in both sides of the industry. “We are a familiar partner with experience that can help them as they start blurring the lines into the broader “resimercial” world,” he said.

“As these majors get into other vertical mar-

kets there’s another distribution channel that uses their own standard set of design tools currently. Our standardized streaming content is designed very specifically to be consumed by each of those different design platforms in each of those different vertical markets. In the future, I definitely see those design platforms merging together to remove those barriers between vertical markets. This content will be accessed 24/7 from wherever the designer is, wherever the customer is, and wherever any other influencers are. That access may come from desktop design platforms, but more likely, it will be accessed via web-based apps and mobile devices.”

2020 is working hard to identify your future problems before they happen, Allum said. “That’s one of the reasons why 2020 has such strong partnerships with its customers. We worry about the future and future technologies so you don’t have to.”

To learn more about 2020, click [here](#). **BoF**

## PACIFIC WEST

## STAKES ARE HIGH



SAN JOSE — The city of San Jose's plan for a new cap of fees related to development projects in the Diridon Station area contains a wrinkle that could greatly raise the costs of building what would be an iconic tech campus in the downtown district. Platform 16, envisioned by its principal owners and developers Boston Properties and Canada Pension Plan Investment Board as a tech campus totaling 1.1 million square feet in downtown San Jose, broke ground in March. Potentially, 5,500 tech workers could be employed at Platform 16, a project with a unique look that would sprout along the banks of the Guadalupe River near the corner of Autumn Parkway and West Julian Street in downtown San Jose. Construction has been paused amid the economic uncertainty unleashed by the coronavirus.

[The Mercury-News](#)

## SPEC OFFICE ADVANCES



BURLINGAME, Calif. — Dewey Land Company and DivcoWest received \$33.8 million in construction financing for the speculative de-

velopment of a 44,605-square-foot office property. Due for completion in 2022, 250 California will feature four stories of best-in-class office space, ground-floor retail and a three-level subterranean parking facility. The transit-oriented building has a premier location in downtown Burlingame, immediately adjacent to the Burlingame Caltrain station.

[Connect California](#)

## MOUNTAIN WEST

MARKET STRONG  
IN THE ROCKIES

DENVER — Denver's office market serves as a prime example of an industry sector that experienced great strength prepandemic and already is seeing great impact as remote work became mandatory for a vast majority of downtown employers. The downtown office market remained strong with stable average lease rates (\$35.32 per square foot) and vacancy rates (10.3%). Investors continue to see the downtown Denver opportunity, with 26 development projects under construction or planned — adding up to roughly 1.3 million square feet of office space, plus 1,500 residential units and 1,000 hotel rooms in the pipeline.

[Colorado Real Estate Journal](#)

## MIDWEST

## CLEANING ROBOTS

MINNEAPOLIS — Building owners throughout the Twin Cities are deploying cleaning robots, chemicals and UV light as they perform a long list of safety chores ahead of the anticipated arrival of throngs of office workers and students returning to structures idled for months because of COVID-19. With more businesses reopening under newly relaxed state orders, Minnesota office towers, office parks and schools are scrambling to awaken sleeping giants and upgrade equipment to thwart the deadly virus and kill mold, legionella bacteria and other health risks possibly festering in dormant workplaces. Tim Kittila, facility assessment manager for Kraus-Anderson, which owns and leases 1 million square feet of commercial real estate across Minnesota said, "COVID-19 is a constant reminder as to why facilities need to be improved and worked on."

[Star Tribune](#)

FIRST COVID-READY  
BUILDING

CHICAGO — Located in Chicago's Fulton Market District, Fulton East is a 12-story, 90,000-square-foot office and retail building slated to open late summer 2020. The newly constructed development is also among the first commercial buildings specifically designed for a post COVID-19 world. Developer Parkside Realty instantaneously placed health and wellness at the forefront of the project, causing the opening date to shift from July to August in order to implement a new design strategy. As an under-construction, boutique office building, Parkside fortunately had the opportunity to modify Fulton East's design in

response to COVID-19 in real time, allowing the company to thoughtfully address employers' increased concerns for their employees' office experience and create an environment where hygiene, health, safety, and wellness are holistically considered.

[Forbes](#)

## WELLS TOPS OFF BUILDING



CHICAGO — Urban Innovations Ltd. affiliate, North Wells Capital has topped off exterior construction at its office development, located in Chicago's River North neighborhood. The project consisted of doubling the building's size and adding amenities, such as an interior tenant lounge, game room, rooftop terrace, tenant bike rooms and an open lobby space. The boutique building will feature an open atrium stairwell, independent HVAC systems, new elevators, touchless restrooms and nearby parking options. NORR serves as the architect for the project, and ARCO/Murray serves as the general contractor. The project, known collectively as Verso, aims to reinvigorate the city's creative office submarket.

[Globe Street](#)

## NORTHEAST

## HOTEL CLOSING FOREVER

NEW YORK — As the coronavirus continues to wreak havoc on the lodging sector, the Omni Berkshire

Place hotel in Manhattan will close for good. After stay-at-home orders were issued in March in response to the coronavirus, hotel occupancy rates in the city fell to as low as 15% — even as many hotels shuttered and were removed from the metric. Omni has also temporarily closed its hotel in Chicago. TRT Holdings plans to keep the 399-room hotel property, which is in the rezoned Midtown East district and could be converted to office space.

[The Real Deal](#)

PROJECT LANDS FIRST  
TENANT

RICHMOND, Va. — Amid questions and theories about the future of office space in the age of coronavirus, a new office development in Scott's Addition has netted its first tenant. Clay Suites, an ongoing rehab and modernization of a boxy 1960s-era office building is being developed by a group led by Yogi Singh. They acquired the 11,200-square-foot building in early 2019 for \$1.26 million. Clay Suites ultimately will house 14,500 square feet, thanks to a 4,500-square-foot addition the developers worked into the design. "We added an addition to bring a little bit of character to the façade and augment the office spaces," Singh said, adding that two outdoor patio spaces and 40 parking spaces are part of the plan.

[Richmond BizSense](#)

## SOUTH

TRANSFORMATIONAL  
PLANS IN WORKS

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Developers are creating a vision to transform the former Caribbean Cold Storage building site in the Rail Yard District into Dennis + Ives. It will be a new look for an old part of town. Dennis



+ Ives is designed to be anchored by creative office space, a brewhouse-taproom or distillery, a full-service restaurant, a cafe and outdoor event space. The district is in the industrial Beaver Street area west of Interstate 95 and barely minutes from Downtown. Property records show several existing structures total about 72,000 square feet but the final development size of Dennis+Ives hasn't been decided.

[Jacksonville Daily Record](#)

## SOME CALL IT HOTLANTA

ATLANTA — Atlanta's office development scene remains incredibly active: In the first four months of 2020, developers completed close to 1.7 million square feet of space, with an additional 1.5 million square feet slated for delivery through the end of the year. At the start of June, some 7.7 million square feet of office space was underway in Atlanta. Despite initial concerns that the COVID-19 pandemic would put a stop to development activity, the vast majority of the metro's projects continue to move forward. Even as uncertainty grows, speculative projects are still leasing up and work carries on, particularly in the Midtown submarket, which is home to 40% of all ongoing office development activity.

[Commercial Property Executive](#)

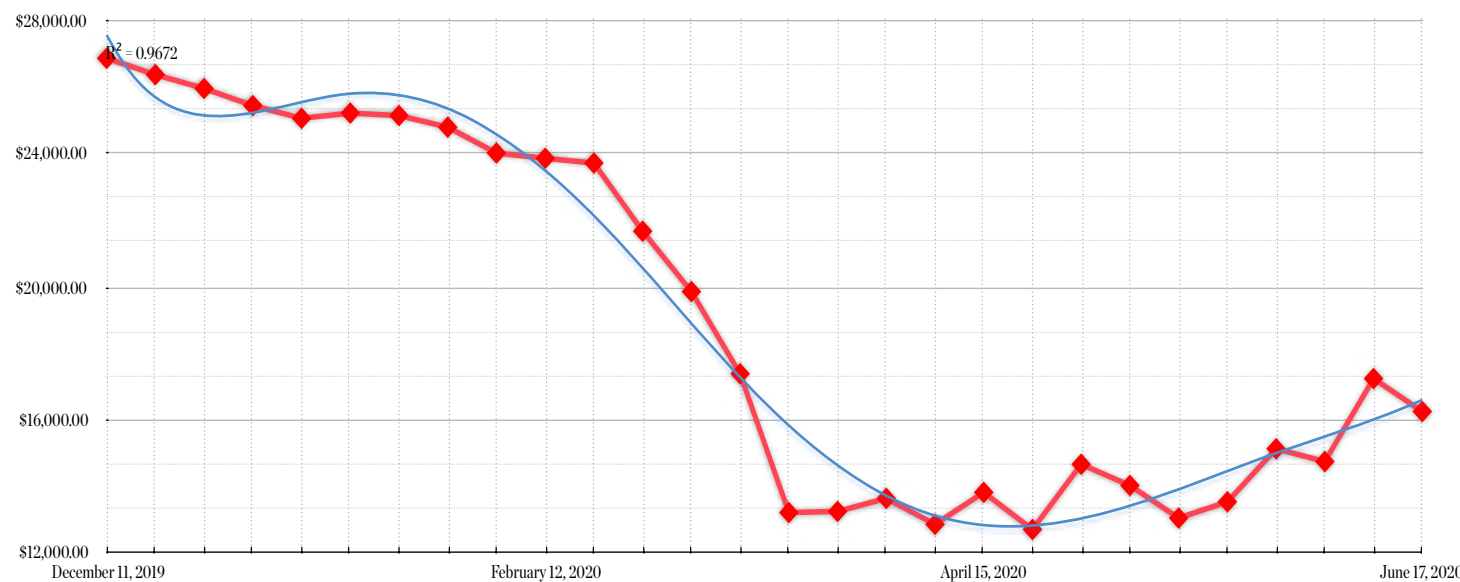
*Compiled by Emily Clingman*

BoF

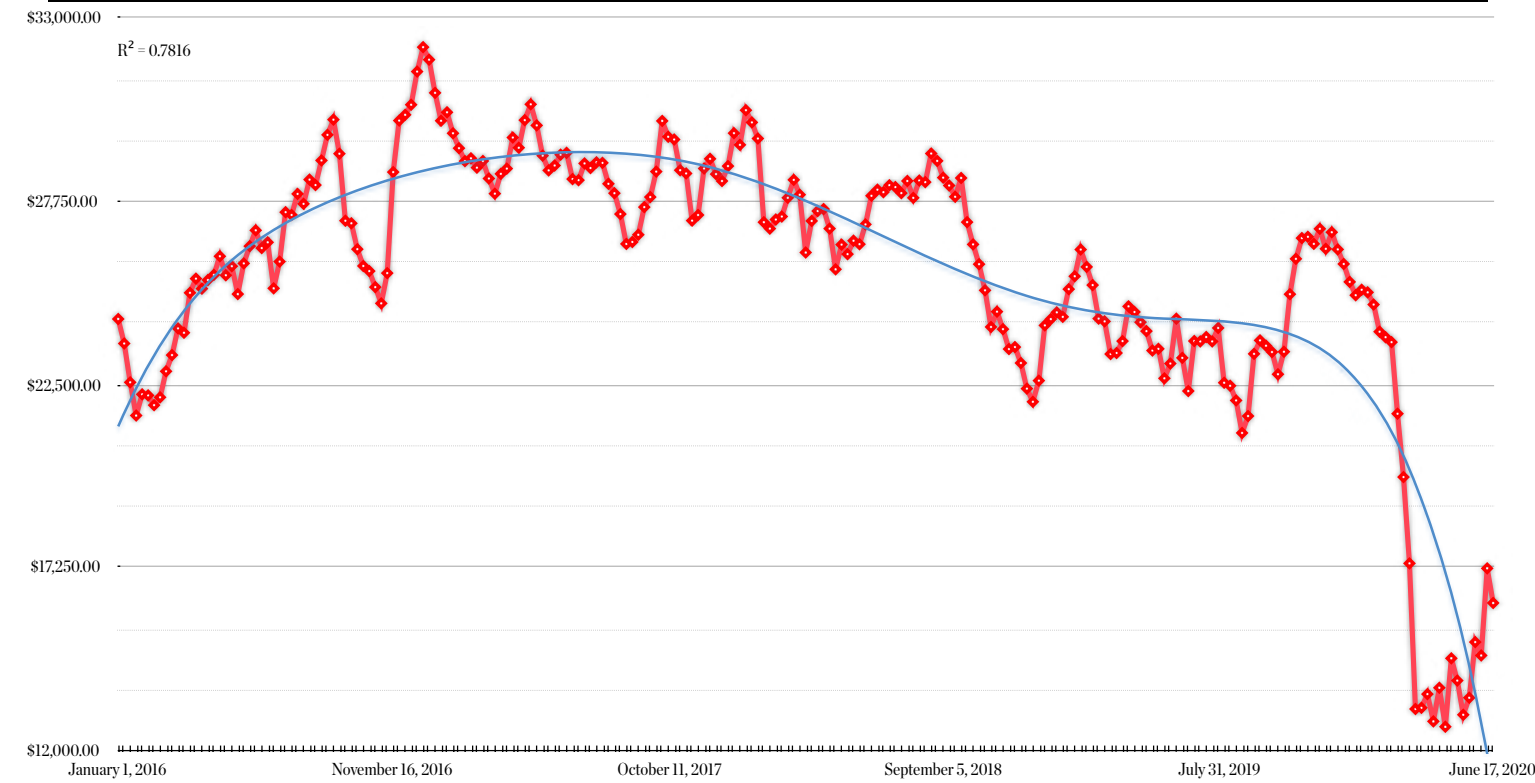
ALL TIME | January 1, 2016 BoF Industry Index Start: \$24,379.54  
 YEAR TO DATE | June 17, 2020 Yearly Start: \$25,443.00 (2019 Ended Up +15.31%)

**CURRENT VALUE** **TOTAL GAIN / LOSS** **2020 YTD GAIN / LOSS**  
**\$16,244.91** **-8,134.63 (-33.37%)** **-9,198.09 (-36.15%)**

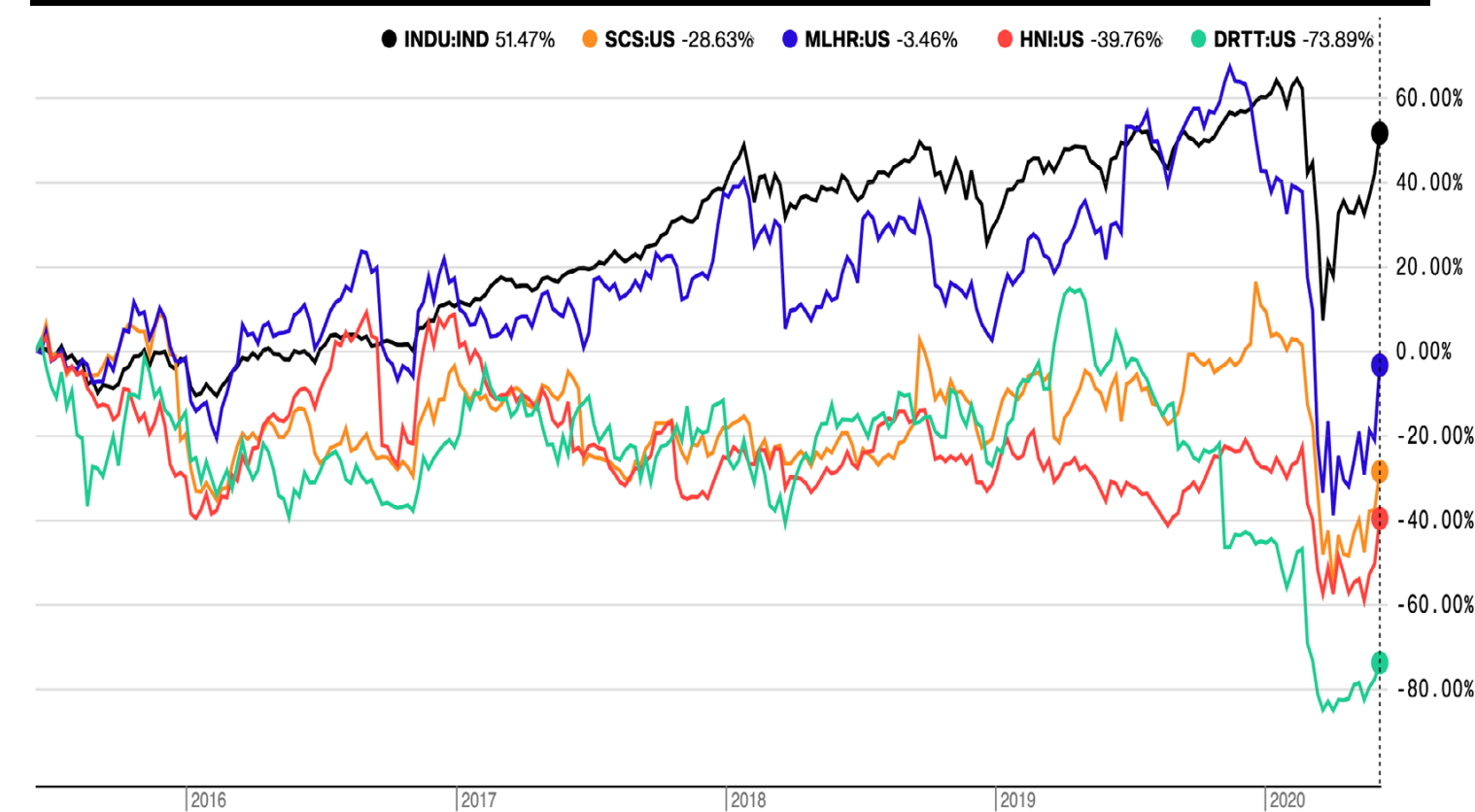
▲ SYMBOL	PRICE	CHANGE	TOTAL GAIN	1D GAIN	OPEN	PREV CLOSE	VOLUME	MARKET CAP	DAY RANGE	52WK RANGE
<b>DRTT:US</b> DIRTT Environm...	1.46 17:20	+3.55% +0.05	-78.96% -548.00	+3.55% +5.00	1.48	1.41	158,447	123.63M	1.37 -1.48	0.71 -6.19
<b>FLXS:US</b> Flexsteel Indust...	12.36 17:20	-7.97% -1.07	-72.02% -3,182.00	-7.97% -107.00	12.83	13.43	119,407	98.89M	12.13 -13.42	7.81 -21.31
<b>HNI:US</b> HNI Corp	29.67 17:05	+3.92% +1.12	-17.72% -639.00	+3.92% +112.00	30.06	28.55	253,921	1.27B	29.07 -30.21	16.61 -42.90
<b>INQ:CN</b> Inscape Corp	0.50 13:54	+6.38% +0.03	-83.33% -184.56	+6.38% +2.21	0.50	0.47	29,545	7.19M	0.50 -0.50	0.35 -1.40
<b>KBAL:US</b> Kimball Internati...	12.25 17:20	+4.97% +0.58	+25.38% +248.00	+4.97% +58.00	12.25	11.67	251,412	451.23M	11.80 -12.44	8.19 -22.40
<b>KEQU:US</b> Kewaunee Scie...	8.99 17:20	-4.06% -0.38	-49.47% -880.00	-4.06% -38.00	8.99	9.37	489	24.73M	8.99 -8.99	6.96 -22.53
<b>KNL:US</b> Knoll Inc	12.82 17:05	+3.97% +0.49	-31.81% -598.00	+3.97% +49.00	12.99	12.33	529,454	649.30M	12.47 -13.13	7.74 -28.30
<b>LEG:US</b> Leggett & Platt L...	35.21 17:05	+4.36% +1.47	-16.21% -681.00	+4.36% +147.00	35.43	33.74	1,296,423	4.66B	34.10 -35.78	22.03 -55.42
<b>MLHR:US</b> Herman Miller Inc	25.59 17:20	+3.23% +0.80	-10.84% -311.00	+3.23% +80.00	25.67	24.79	502,104	1.50B	24.95 -26.27	14.39 -49.87
<b>SCS:US</b> Steelcase Inc	12.54 17:05	+2.79% +0.34	-15.84% -236.00	+2.79% +34.00	12.90	12.20	870,330	1.44B	12.40 -12.90	7.02 -23.02
<b>TILE:US</b> Interface Inc	8.55 17:20	+0.59% +0.05	-55.33% -1,059.00	+0.59% +5.00	8.98	8.50	625,442	499.98M	8.46 -9.00	5.06 -17.68
<b>VIRC:US</b> Virco Mfg. Corp	2.64 17:20	-2.58% -0.07	-20.72% -69.00	-2.58% -7.00	2.70	2.71	6,283	41.48M	2.64 -2.72	1.82 -5.00



BoF Industry Index - Since Jan 1, 2016



Five Years - Major Industry Stocks





# In These Unusual Times I am So Glad We Go To Market with Independent Reps!



You can send your workplace questions to Stephen at: [StephenSays@bellow.press](mailto: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,

We are a midsized, family-owned, furniture manufacturer. We make products dealers love to sell and the A&D community specifies — we're sort of a hybrid dealer and A&D line. We go to market using independent rep organizations and always have. In large metropolitan markets our independents are large organizations, and in smaller markets it's usually an individual owner operator. I am sure you get the idea. We have no direct field sales employees. Our reps work on commission only so we have

basically no sales expense until somebody sells something. That's a nice feeling, but an even better feeling is signing a big fat commission check at the end of a month for an independent rep that has sold our products.

For us, I do not have to deal with cash needed for salaries, medical benefits, the 401K, car, travel and expenses for salespeople who may not be selling or showroom staff I would not need, considering what is hap-

pening in the world today. That is all paid for by the owner of the rep group that represents our company.

It has been an ongoing discussion in our family for years about the great profits we may be missing by going to market with a direct sales force. I am friendly with many of my competitors our size, and I talk with them at BIFMA meetings. They all have a different feeling on what to do, especially in the largest cities. Many of these

other manufacturers have a combination of independents and direct sales teams. I have seen this with Andreu World, Bernhardt, Exemplis, Clarus and others. My gut tells me that is not for me and to keep my overhead low and stick with my independent reps nationwide. Our independents are like an extended family — especially now — and they are loyal and are bringing us business. What is the norm? Any thoughts on this discussion?

Signed,

Love My Independents

Dear Independent Lover,

This question comes up quite often from medium-sized manufacturers wondering if it is time to hire their own direct sales reps. My advice is to stick with your gut, and stick with your independent reps. That is usually what I tell most manufacturers under a certain revenue number. Look, I strongly believe that we will see a “V” recovery and business will be better than people think, but whether I

am right or wrong, why not keep your costs low and trust your proven strategy?

Independent reps need to sell your furniture because they only work on commission — they are profoundly motivated. There's an old expression in sales — kind of crude but true — “you only eat what you kill,” meaning the best sales people believe it's up to them to sell something if they want to be successful. That's why the best sellers at a manufacturer sometimes leave and launch their own independent rep business. They believe in themselves. And your company is the beneficiary of this attitude.

Most of the “majors” have had to cut salaries and fire some of the support people, yet very few of the smaller companies who use independent reps have had to reduce salaries or lay off people. It is easy to figure out why. Let me expound a bit more: I do not believe in a “mixture” of the two types of sales forces; direct W2 salespeople in a major market and independents elsewhere. It looks self-serving and puts

doubt in the minds of the independent reps because they feel once they build market share it will be taken away from them, and they will be replaced with a direct person.

The manufacturer is taking the best market like NYC and writing off the weaker markets. And, hey, guess who has huge overhead now in NYC, a city that is barely even open? So, if you try to have it both ways I think what happens is the independent reps will trust you less. Again, go with your gut, especially today. It is the smart way for smaller and mid-sized manufacturers to go to market and survive. This does not apply to the largest companies that need their own sales force, but I'd say any manufacturer at about \$80 million or less should consider the independent rep strategy. After all, cash is king, and you will have a lot more of it by lowering your overhead while still providing a great living to the independent rep organizations that are, in effect, your business partners.

Signed,

Stephen

## 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](http://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. One of the major highlights of EFE2020 is the inauguration of the "Office Furniture Hall".

[www.efemy](http://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](http://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](http://www.ed-spaces.com)

## LONDON (NEW DATE)

## Clerkenwell Design Week

May 25-27, 2021

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](http://www.clerkenwelldesignweek.com)

## CHICAGO

## NeoCon

June 14-16, 2021



NeoCon is the world's leading platform for commercial design and the annual gathering place for over 50,000 design professionals and end-users. Marking its 52nd edition, NeoCon continues to serve as the commercial design industry's launch pad for innovation - showcasing game-changing products and services from leading companies and emerging talent, and providing unparalleled access to the most cutting-edge solutions.

[www.neocon.com](http://www.neocon.com)

## EVENT

## DATE &amp; LOCATION

## CHINA INTERNATIONAL FURNITURE FAIR, CIFF (PHASE TWO) (NEW DATE)

July 27-30, 2020

Guangzhou, China

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>

## EXPORT FURNITURE EXHIBITION (NEW DATE)

Aug 27-29 2020

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

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/>

## DOMOTEX ASIA (NEW DATE)

Aug 31 - Sept 2, 2020

Shanghai, China

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>

## ORGATEC 2020

October 27-31, 2020

Cologne, Germany

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>

## INDEAL LEADERSHIP EVOLUTION

November 8-11, 2020

San Diego

INDEAL's 2020 Conference provides program members with an opportunity to gain critical knowledge focused on supporting business growth and profitability. This year's event offers perspective on developing teams that thrive, along with valuable insight into the state of the commercial furniture industry, economy and program at large. A varied agenda and numerous prospects for networking combine the benefit of multiple experiences into one, streamlined event.

[Event website coming soon](http://www.indeal.com)

## CLERKENWELL DESIGN WEEK

May 25-27, 2021

London

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<http://www.clerkenwelldesignweek.com>

## NEOCON

June 14-16, 2021

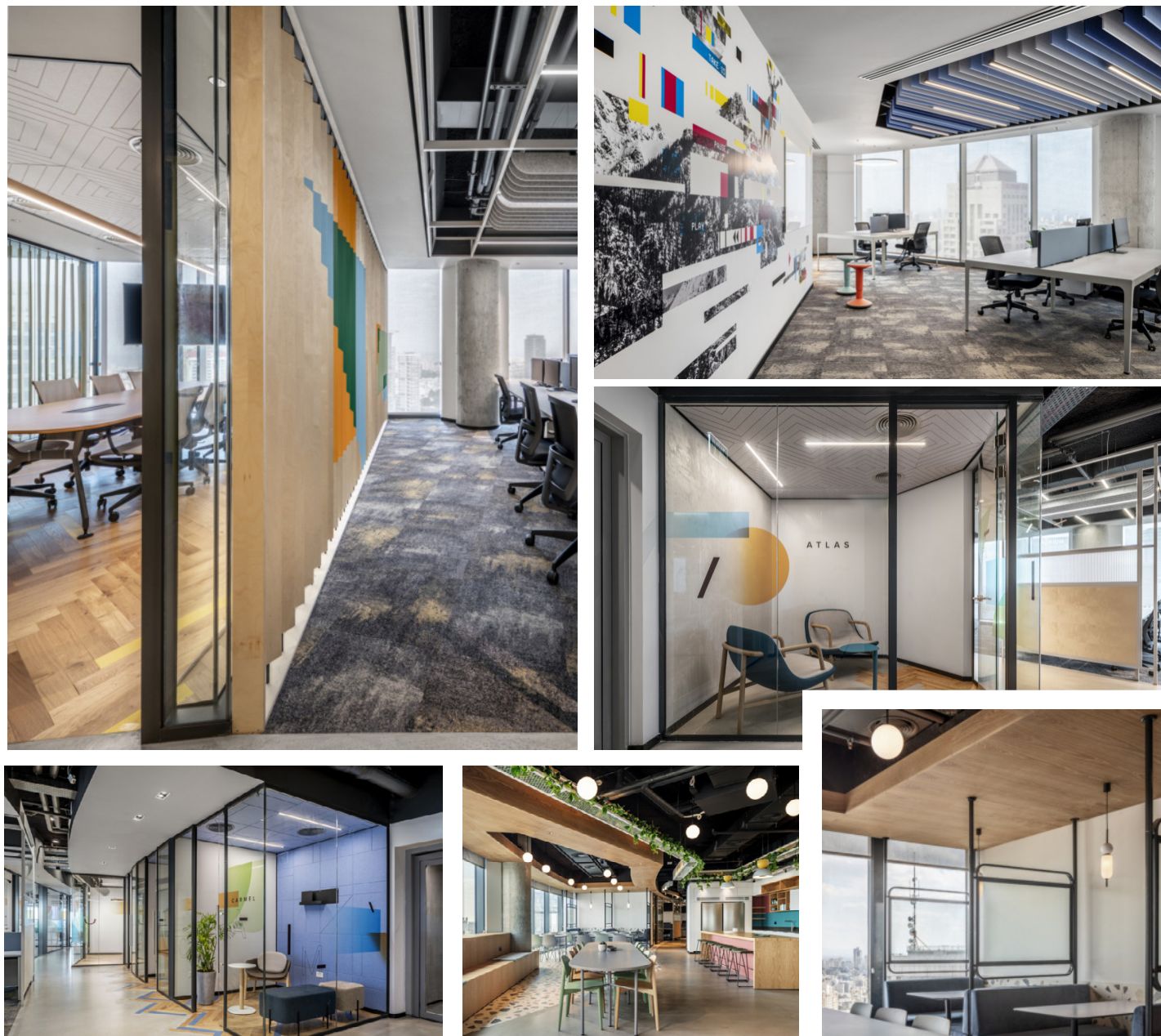
Chicago

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<http://www.neocon.com>

## 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.



**Innovid Offices – Ramat Gan**

Innovid's new Ramat Gan office has an informal feeling with a natural, harmonious and experiential flow, a design concept that rests on the online advertising company's commitment to content streaming.

EN Design studio has realized the office design for Innovid, an online advertising technology company, located in Ramat Gan, Israel.

The design concept rests on the company's core business: content streaming. The project involved the use of modern materials to create an informal feeling and natural, harmonious and experiential flow. One of the challenges in the design was to create a modular space that allows personal work, alongside a joint work involving several employees. The space, about 90% of which is open space, is capable of accommodating a multitude of situations at any given moment.



READ MORE



Photography: Yoav Peled

FIRM: EN Studio  
 CLIENT: Innovid  
 17,000 sqft  
 SCOPE: Office  
 LOCATION: Ramat Gan, Israel  
 INDUSTRY: Technology

**Workplaces**

**HOW WE USE THE OFFICE MAY CHANGE, THE WORKPLACE IS HERE TO STAY**

THE A+D COMMUNITY IS LOOKING FOR AN IMMEDIATE AND LOGICAL RESPONSE TO HELP CLIENTS SOLVE FOR THE NEAR TERM RETURN TO THE OFFICE.

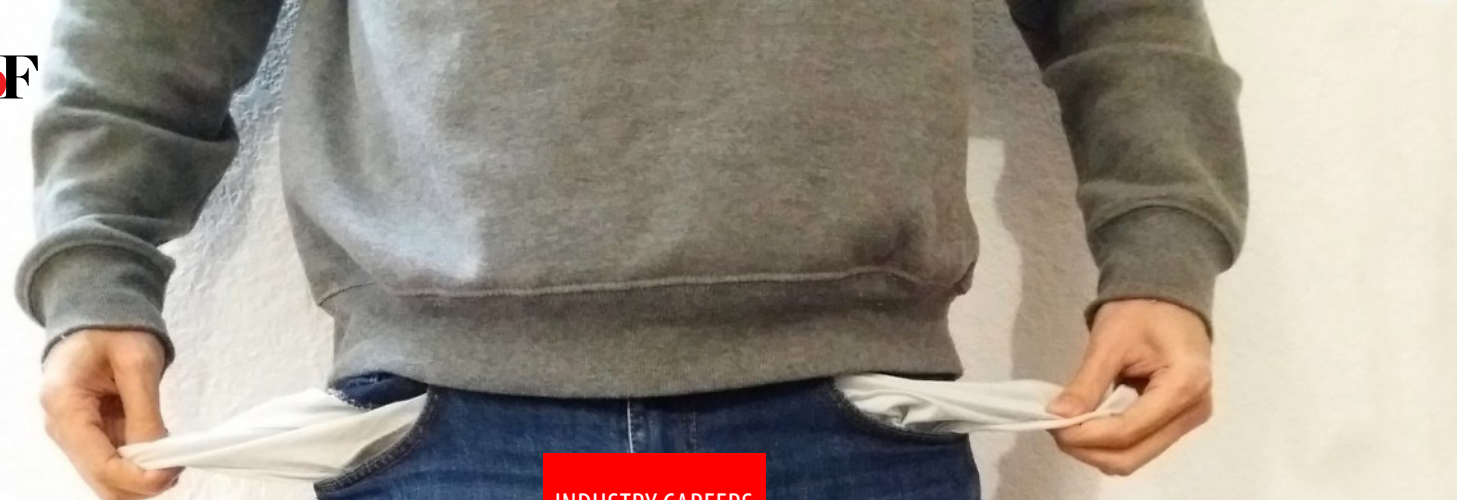
BY BRIAN WILSON, CO-FOUNDER, PAIR

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**Workplaces | June 2020**

Where I'm Working | Digital Tools Arrive to Get Frontline Employees Back to Work Safely | Survey Reveals Employee Attitudes on Remote Work and the Future of Office Space | The Contactless Office | How We Use the Office May Change, the Workplace is Here to Stay | The Workplace as a Social Organism | Furniture Industry Insights for the 'World of Work' Post COVID-19 | Embracing a New Reality. Workplace Strategy Insights for COVID and Beyond | Adjusting Office Spaces for A Post-Pandemic Workplace | Chicago's Fulton East Is Nation's First Office Building Designed To Deliver Health-Focused Operating Solutions For Post-COVID-19 Business Environment | IIDA's Collective D(esign) Series Focuses on Adaptability and Change in the Workplace | Product Matter

Read the June 2020 issue today at: <https://bellowpress.com>



INDUSTRY CAREERS

## When Nothing is Guaranteed: Practical Ways to Reset your Career Trajectory

WITH INDUSTRY INSIDERS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT A REBOUND AND A REVAMPING OF THE OFFICE, THERE IS STILL REAL FEAR ABOUT THE NOW WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS OF FURLOUGHS, LAYOFFS AND “CREATIVE RE-STRUCTURING” THAT’S GOING ON IN THE WORLD OF CONTRACT FURNITURE.

by Bryce Stuckenschneider

Tens of millions of Americans have filed for unemployment in the last 90 days, and thousands of those people are from our industry. Friends, colleagues and competitors are suddenly trying to navigate a world of uncertainty. With industry insiders optimistic about a rebound and a revamping of the office, there is still real fear about the now weekly announcements of furloughs, layoffs and “creative re-structuring” that’s going on in the world of contract furniture.

We’ve talked to recruiters, coaches, executives and the people in the trenches, asking for advice for our colleagues that are dealing with the new normal. Whether you lost your job, think you might, or are just trying to be proactive in a time when nothing is guaranteed, we thought this list may help.

### Perception is everything

- Control your social media history: Many people in our industry have been on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter for almost a decade. While Instagram’s rise is more recent, it would surprise you to see what some people “forgot” they posted in their 20s. Nearly every employer we spoke with mentioned that social media footprint can often be a tiebreaker in hiring decisions. The simplest move is to set everything to private or only viewed by friends. The extra step (which I recommend) is to comb through 10 years of photos you didn’t know you were tagged in and save yourself a headache in the future.
- Follow brands that intrigue you and engage with their content: This simple step can expand your worldview, broaden your design vocabulary and give

- you valuable insight into your future competition. There are few things more impressive than when a candidate sits down for an interview and instead of asking me who our top competitors are, is able to articulate them from their own memory and research.
- Audit yourself: Ask two to three people you trust to dissect what your footprint looks like online. We all have those friends that have very polished digital personas — go out of your comfort zone and ask them to push you to be better. Good friends will be honest about the fact that the picture of you from five years ago at the lake house isn’t the best look for your LinkedIn profile picture.
- Understand your privacy settings: You may have a great profile but it does you no good if a recruiter can’t view it. Did you even know you can set your LinkedIn settings to “interested in new opportunities?” Also, Facebook’s settings are changing almost annually — so the answer of “I set my privacy the way I wanted in 2016” doesn’t mean you’re as covered as you may believe.

### Finding the needle in the haystack

- Contrary to the way it may feel, some companies are hiring right now. Yes, they’re getting inundated with resumes (our last five positions each received 200+ applicants in the first 24 hours), but it’s still possible to clear a way through the noise to be noticed
- This requires work: Don’t be afraid to reach out to independent reps about which brands are on fire in their markets. Lean on your LinkedIn network in new ways, and be open to criticism or chasing down crazy leads. I’ve seen candidates who have success learning about the sphere of influence around a hiring manager. Who do they report to? Who reports to them? Most people are impressed when a candidate goes out of their way to be noticed. We have candidates who will email our general info@ inbox to be noticed, have a conversation with someone on our web chat, or just call and be friendly with our customer service team to learn more about the company. Is there a line between assertive and creepy? Yes. But you’ve got to try and stand out somehow, right?
- Follow the wave. What companies are manufacturing products for the new office? Odds are they’re growing and hiring. Use tools like MyResource Library or Interior Design’s HiP Awards to learn about trends, growth and be willing to gamble that companies with

great design will win in the end.

### Double down on you

- It has never been easier to learn: Whether it’s a new language, a discipline (like coding or CAD drawing) or becoming an expert on the world of soft seating — this is a time to get better. Are these things that will necessarily trickle onto your resume? No. But these will be the things that set you apart when you land the interview. Countless universities have offered up free courses in the midst of the pandemic and knowledge-sharing giants like Khan Academy are making it easier than ever to better yourself.
- Be selfish: Do the thing you always put off doing. You aren’t doing yourself or your future employer any favors by leaving a job where you were burned out to sprint into the next one. If possible, take time to assess what you loved, what you hated and what you would have done differently at your last stop. Spend some time away from devices. Force yourself to do at least one thing you’ve had on your New Year’s Resolution list each of the last five years (In my case: force myself to write every day for 30 minutes).
- Make friends: You aren’t in this alone — millions of people are trying to figure this out. There are great networking opportunities on LinkedIn, including some just for our industry. Coaching services like Embark CCT are working to bring people together with a program called Re:group.
- Know your narrative: Be prepared to tell the story of your career. Recruiters don’t want bullet points, they want a character arc. Embrace the things that were hard, be ready to explain why you weren’t deemed essential previously, and make sure your story feels like the best chapters are about to be written.

BoF

*Bryce Stuckenschneider is a passionate contract furniture advocate and the CEO of Loftwall, a Texas-based manufacturer of products focused on bringing privacy and division to the workplace. He has written for BoF, Inc. Magazine, Interior Design and numerous other publications on the intersection of commercial furniture and global trends.*

## WHITEBOARDS

## Ghent Introduces Color Palette and Partnership with Maharam

➔ Hints of color expansion have been a part of GMi Companies' showroom, the parent company of Ghent, since the opening of suite 1060 in theMART in 2018. With a combination of neutrals and bright pops of on trend colors, Ghent has defined a new type of visual communication product that can also serve as functional artwork in a space.

With the introduction of an expanded color palette, designers, dealers and end users can have a harmonious look and feel across product lines and throughout the space.

Ghent's Color Library features 19 standard glassboard colors plus frosted ones. These colors were specifically chosen because of their universal appeal, how well they work with other natural elements like wood and how they focus on Ghent's brand promise of providing tools that help with communication, collaboration and learning. These colors have been tested and proven to work well with markers and interior design trends one in the same.

A unique painting process allows color matching to PMS, RAL or Sherwin Williams colors if the need for a color outside of Ghent's extended palette is what is preferred. This is done without any additional upcharge.



## SIT/STAND

## OMT-Veyhl USA Corporation Releasing New Product - The Entyre Table

➔ OMT-Veyhl USA Corporation is offering an ergonomic, electric height-adjustable desk designed for the home office — the Entyre Table.

The table base is available in black, white or silver with the option to choose from a sunset grey or white, 1-inch, low pressure laminate work surface. It features casters for easy mobility and an optional eight-outlet power strip. The table's single stage columns start at 27.5 inches with a maximum standing height range of 46.5 inches measured at the top of the surface.



## SEATING

## Swurve, Keilhauer's First Carbon Neutral Chair

➔ As Keilhauer's first carbon neutral product, Swurve has been a project of passion for the company's Design for Environment team. Keilhauer took every possible step to reduce carbon emissions, from sustainably sourcing materials and responsible manufacturing, to a carefully thought-through, end-of-life and recyclability plan. Where carbon emissions remain, such as during transportation, Keilhauer is investing in carbon reduction and climate change mitigation projects to offset them. Verified by third parties, every Swurve sold will produce net-zero carbon emissions.



Swurve is a refined, dynamic solution that can respond to all the varied needs these spaces need to meet. Lightweight, comfortable and carefully scaled, Swurve can easily be moved and rearranged to create an area that respects physical distance while encouraging collaboration. Furthermore, the expansive color offering makes the conference chair versatile enough to complement any color scheme. From gentle neutrals to bold, statement-making hues, Swurve is offered in 22 colors of mesh and also in leather and leather alternative upholstery for environments with increased sanitization needs.

Swurve's distinctive, sculptured form reflects the shapes we find in nature. Graceful, swooping arms gradually change thickness and shape as they subtly twist out from the chair's body. Connecting behind the chair's body they appear to grow organically from the seat. The round, curvaceous feeling of Swurve is both a byproduct of Designer Andrew Jones's method and his intention. "Soft, round shapes not only feel great for chairs, they connect with people on an emotional level," Jones said. "Swurve softens up the workplace with sitting and visual comfort."

The chair's clean lines are achieved by meticulous engineering and ergonomic supports hidden from sight. Tension between the mesh back and frame provides lumbar support while Keilhauer's patented syncro-tilt mechanism provides smooth movement when leaning and moving in the chair. Swurve's signature arms gently slope down to prevent contact with tables while adding an intriguing design detail.

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Please include **high resolution photos** along with your release; at least 8 megapixels. You can submit online at:  
<https://bellow.press/SubmitNews>

## DESIGN

## Designing a Better Chicago Announces Grant Program Recipients

➡ Designing a Better Chicago has announced the inaugural recipients of the 2020 Design Impact Grants.

The program provides project-specific grants to individuals and organizations using design or design principles to address pressing issues in Chicago communities. The grantees are Chicago Mobile Makers, a nonprofit that offers youth design-thinking and problem-solving workshops, and Maplewood Housing for the Visually Impaired (Friedman Place), a nonprofit, supportive living community for adults who are blind or visually impaired.

The grant program is a key component of Designing a Better Chicago, a collaborative initiative organized and supported by NeoCon and theMART, the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) and the Design Museum of Chicago. It is focused on highlighting and supporting Chicago's extraordinary design legacy and community. The grants are generously funded by NeoCon and theMART.

Chicago Mobile Makers was founded in 2017 by Maya Bird-Murphy who grew up in Oak Park and was no stranger to Chicago's injustices in the built environment. "We're honored to have been awarded the Impact Grant," she said. "It will allow Chicago Mobile Makers to grow and to engage more youth all over the city. We're excited to continue fighting for an equitable Chicago through the Designing a Better Chicago grant program."

The Chicago Mobile Makerspace, a retrofitted USPS delivery van, will be transformed into a classroom, tool shop, design studio, gallery and community gathering space for Chicago youth with the grant monies. Design education programs — including meaningful design thinking, problem-solving and skill-building workshops — will be able to be held anywhere the facility on wheels can travel, from an empty lot to a parking lot or even a summer street festival. The project's long-term objective is to help create the next generation of civically minded and responsible designers, architects, makers and doers for a city built by, and for, all.

Maplewood Housing for the Visually Impaired, known as Friedman Place, is a nonprofit supportive living community in Chicago for adults who are blind or visually impaired. It has been highly successful in its design of spaces that promote the independence and self-determination of its residents. Alexander Brown, Friedman Place executive director, said "Friedman Place is grate-



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Suzanne Tron

ful to be included as an inaugural grantee from Designing A Better Chicago. This grant will fund a video and college level course materials in efforts to widely and freely share design concepts that have allowed for increased independence of blind or visually impaired Friedman Place residents.

"Over 15 years Friedman Place has cultivated a community that features nonvisual markers using sound, touch and smell — all of which serve to orient a person who is blind, much like a sign or a building directory informs a sighted person. Most of the elements are easily installed and are not costly, facilitate communication with the sighted and, if universally adopted, would make Chicago a more inclusive city."

Bird-Murphy and Kathy Gregg, Friedman Place's chief development officer, will join Tanner Woodford, founder and executive director of the Design Museum of Chicago, in conversation at 2 p.m. on June 26 CST as part of NeoConnect, NeoCon's digital community hub.

## SOFTWARE

## Configura Announces Virtual CET Experience

➡ Configura, maker of CET Designer software, announced the annual CET Experience will be hosted as a virtual conference, Oct. 13-15.

"Our Configura community is stronger than ever, and we can't wait to bring our users, developers, partners and employees together through our Virtual CET Experience this fall," said Configura CEO Stefan Persson. "While we wish we could learn and collaborate in person, we hope

this virtual format will make it possible for those who haven't been able to attend CET Experience in the past to join us. We look forward to capturing the spirit of our amazing Configura community through our virtual conference and hope it inspires people to join us in person next year."

Formerly known as the CET Designer User and Developer Conference, CET Experience brings together hundreds of people from around the world who use, create and invest in CET Designer — including designers, dealers, developers, manufacturers, Configura employees and implementation partners.

This year's theme is "Making a Difference," and it will feature three half-day sessions from noon to 5 p.m. EST. The conference will highlight ways people can make a difference through design and ways people can create something bigger than themselves. CET Experience will feature breakout sessions tailored for developers and designers. The conference will also highlight the CET Designer Awards.

Keynote speakers include Johan Lyreborn, Configura's chief evangelist and co-founder and Chip DeGrace, Interface's vice president of workplace applications. Lyreborn will lead a conversation on how the Configura community has made a difference over the last 30 years. DeGrace's presentation will highlight ways to make a difference while making a profit.

"Our users are change agents and problem solvers at heart who strive to make our built environment a better, safer place. They make a difference in their communities every day, and we're excited to highlight how our community uses CET Designer to drive change," said Tracy Lanning, Configura vice president of global customer experience. "Attendees can expect our same edgy and energy-filled conference but in a virtual setting. We hope to bring the excitement of CET Experience to all of our attendees whether they are working from home or back in the office. We look forward to bringing everyone together in person next year."

Registration opens June 29. Cost is \$150 per person. Learn more at [cetexperience.com](http://cetexperience.com).

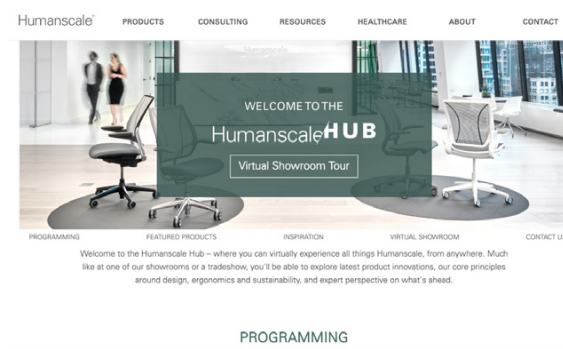
The fall partner meeting will take place virtually from 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Oct. 12.

#### MANUFACTURER

## Humanscale Launches Online Platform to Offer Virtual Showroom Tours

➔ Humanscale has launched its new Humanscale Hub, a virtual destination featuring showroom tours, product announcements, a library of video content and an inspiration gallery. The Hub will be updated with new content regularly to better inform and engage with customers in an increasingly digital world.

A highlight of the Humanscale Hub includes a virtual showroom tour. While many customers are currently unable to tour showrooms in person, Humanscale's virtual showroom will allow visitors to virtually explore the space. Humanscale will showcase a selection of new and updated products in the Hub. Its WellGuard separation panels, Summa executive chair, Nova task light with a wireless charging base and the M10 monitor arm with a Triple Crossbar will be featured highlights, among others.



- WellGuard separation panels: Introduced this month, these panels enhance a safe return to the workplace. They reduce airflow between workstations, accommodate workspace privacy and can help reduce workplace distractions. They are available in clear or frosted plastic resin and in felted PET.

- Summa: Humanscale's new executive chair is thoughtful design at its best. Offering ergonomic support and comfort, Summa envelops each unique sitter with its sculpted shape, which is punctuated by smooth, seamless upholstery. This sophisticated chair is made-to-order and hand-upholstered. Almost entirely customizable, Summa is available in multiple configurations, wood finishes and chrome-free leather upholstery options that are healthy for sitters and the environment.

- M10 monitor arm with triple crossbar: Part of Humanscale's revolutionary monitor arm line, the M10 instantly improves the comfort, health and productivity of any workspace. A strong triple crossbar allows M10 to hold up to three monitors or 48 pounds — all while maintaining a simple and sleek design.

- Video content: The Humanscale Hub also features a video library. Content ranges from ergonomic tips for working from home, a celebration of the iconic Freedom chair designed for Humanscale by Niels Diffrient, a showcase of Humanscale's online ergonomics software ergoIQ and a demonstration of its line of monitor arms. New videos will be continuously uploaded in the coming weeks.

The video library NeoCon programming featured "From Ocean to Office: A New Path for Plastic," a conversation with Jane Abernethy, Humanscale's chief sustainability officer, on June 12.

Panelists included Kendall Starkman, initiative manager at Lonely Whale; Mikhail Davis, director, technical sustainability, Americas at Interface and Abernethy.

#### MANUFACTURER

## Kimball Announces CET Extension on My Resource Library

➔ Kimball has expanded its My Resource Library (MRL) partnership with updated binders that include CET Designer files, ProjectSpec and other specification software files.

"We are extremely excited to take our relationship with My Resource Library to the next level with their new CET extension," said Becky Schneider, director of marketing at Kimball. "This enhancement will allow designers and specifiers quicker and more efficient use of the products in Kimball binders. It is our goal to continue to offer resources that increase ease of specification. We have always been thrilled with our partnership with My Resource Library and together (we) are excited to bring this new functionality to our specification community."

"This functionality allows the Kimball dealer and design partners to visually find the products they wish to use on their project and simply drag the file into the appropriate software by using the new My Resource Library CET Extension. We are delighted that Kimball is one of the first manufacturers to leverage the MRL extension by linking marketing materials to specification tools, which reinforces our commitment to support a more streamlined and easy specification process."

## MANUFACTURERS

## Nook Announces the Winning Super Nook Design

Earlier this year, Nook challenged the design community to create a Nook with an additional super power. The competition attracted extremely detailed designs from the best of the design industry's creative minds and was eventually decided by a hard-fought popular vote.

Mariana Serratos, Joy Perez-Tsai and Paige Parrish of Ware Malcomb won the contest with their Teleportation Nook.

Designer David O'Coimin's Teleportation Nook provides a space where everyone is welcome to come and unleash their own superpower, which is the core of Nook's mission of helping everyone bring their best self to the task at hand.

The Nook engineering team is hard at work making the Teleportation Nook a reality. A full scale functional version will be showcased at events across the USA before it finally retires to a mental health charity to be useful for many years to come.

The entries for all of the finalists, including the designer's inspiration, methodology and even animation, can be viewed at [www.nookpod.com/design-competition](http://www.nookpod.com/design-competition).



## MANUFACTURERS

## SurfaceWorks Reveals Top Ten Finalists For The 2020 Penny Coloring Contest

SurfaceWorks has announced the 10 winners of the 2020 Penny Coloring Contest. The winning entries were chosen from dozens of submissions from around the world. Each of the winners will receive a custom Penny table with their artwork transformed into a digital laminate top.

The winners are as follows:

- Ayala Perlman, Blooming Arts
- Emily Switz, Emmons Business Interiors
- Emma Colt, LAMMCO
- Emma Dickman, Tallgrass Business Resources
- Laura Nayeli Martinez, Corporate Source
- Mary Knotek, Bay View Industries
- Patty Brown, Dixie Pottery Gallery
- Piyush Prajapati, Godwin Austen Johnson
- Refaad Sulttan Sha, Godwin Austen Johnson
- Seth Crussel, LAMMCO.

Launched in February, the coloring contest is a part of SurfaceWorks' annual Valentine's Day



Campaign. Participants received a template of the Penny top and were allowed to use their medium of choice. Many used colored pencils and markers, while others submitted photographs.

The winning entries were selected by a panel of coloring experts composed of a diverse group of SurfaceWorks employees. "It was difficult to choose just ten winners as we had so many creative designs submitted," said Lauren Stark, marketing generalist at SurfaceWorks. "The contest is designed to bring an element of fun into the workplace and to demonstrate our custom capabilities."

To view images of the winning designs visit: <https://www.surfaceworks.us/News/SURFACE-WORKS-REVEALS-TOP-10-FINALIST-FOR-THE-2020>.

## MANUFACTURERS / DEALERS

## Allseating Announces New Cape Cod-Based Dealer Through Indoff Commercial Interiors

Allseating has announced Ron Regan, a sales partner at Indoff Commercial Interiors, is its newest dealer. He will primarily focus on the Southeastern region of Massachusetts in Cape Cod.



Regan

Prior to working for Indoff, Regan managed a family-owned contract furnishings dealership in Connecticut for more than 25 years. Serving Fortune 500 companies as a certified workspaces assessor, Regan discovered his passion for creating supportive, ergonomic work environments. Regan's relationship with Allseating goes back more than 20 years, when he first worked with the company on custom chair designs for United Technologies. There he met Regional Sales Director Richard Sassone and identified the synergies between his and Allseating's missions.

"Having known Ron for nearly two decades, I couldn't be more thrilled that he is partnering with Allseating in such a unique business location," Sassone said.

Regan will be spearheading the Commercial Interiors and Business Products divisions for Indoff and plans to open a small showroom in the near future to display his best products, including an array of Allseating task and conference chairs.

## REPRESENTATION

## KFI Studios and The Contract Group - New Partners in the Carolinas

The Contract Group, which has been servicing commercial furniture dealerships, design firms and end users throughout the Carolinas for more than 35 years, has been chosen as the newest representative group for KFI Studios in Louisville, Kentucky.

KFI Studios product offering and its service and reputation in the market mirrors The Contract Group's mission statement of consistency, dependability and reliability for customers.

Skip Dunaway, a partner at The Contract Group, said, "By adding KFI Studios to our manufacturing partnerships, we are now one of the best solutions for commercial, health care, hospitality and office furniture throughout the Carolinas. KFI gives us that competitive advantage and adds continued value to our core competency and customer satisfaction."



## ASSOCIATIONS

**ASID Names Design Luminary Gary Wheeler as Interim CEO**

➔ The American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) has named designer Gary Wheeler as its interim chief executive officer. The appointment comes on the heels of the recent announcement that Randy Fiser will step down from his position as CEO at the end of July. Wheeler, one of the most respected names in design, will lead the organization through the transition period until a permanent CEO is named.



Wheeler

“There is no one more qualified for this role than Gary Wheeler,” said Jennifer Kolstad, ASID board of directors chair and Ford Motor Company global design director. “His extensive experience in design leadership and impeccable history with ASID made him the natural choice. The entire board and I are confident that Gary will continue the progress of the organization with the care and dedication it deserves.”

Wheeler is a titan of the design profession. His career has spanned more than 30 years in which he has led practices at Perkins and Will, Gensler and, most recently, HDR. He has designed workplaces for companies such as Apple, Time Warner, American Express and JP Morgan. He has been a member of ASID since he was a student. His many ASID accomplishments and milestones include being named the Designer of Distinction (1999), granted fellowship, serving as national president (1994) and much more.

During Wheeler’s time as ASID president, he was a transformative leader who ushered in a new era for the organization by expanding the ASID Foundation and investing in research and evidence-based design. Beyond Society honors, Wheeler has been inducted into the Interior Design Hall of Fame, received the Senior Fellow Award from The Design Future Council, and been named an International Interior Design Association Fellow, one a few designers with Fellow distinction with ASID and IIDA.

“First, I want to thank the ASID board for entrusting me with the responsibility of helping lead the organization that I love,” Wheeler said. “ASID has been a central part of my career and life. I look forward to continuing to give back and lend my expertise during this time of transition. Our unified goal is to continue to showcase the impact of design and the role of interior designers creating spaces that promote the health and well-being of people.”

He began the role of Interim CEO June 15. In addition to Wheeler’s appointment, Charles Jewett, ASID chief administrative officer, will shift to the role of chief operating officer to manage day-to-day staff operations. Jewett previously held management positions at multiple large corporations, including Blackboard.

A search committee comprising ASID members, board members, and industry professionals has begun the process of identifying the permanent CEO. The committee will be chaired by John Cialone, an ASID board member.

## REPRESENTING

**KFI Studios Joins Forces with Polito Associates**

➔ KFI Studios has announced a new partnership with Polito Associates of Southern California. Established in 2000, Polito Associates has built a reputation as one of the top independent manufacturers rep organizations for contract office furnishings in Southern California.

“We are excited to add KFI Studios to our portfolio of quality manufacturers,” said Tom Polito, rep group principal. “Their youthful urban designs, moderate price points and quick-ship delivery to the West Coast check all the boxes that our dealers ask us for.”

As principal, Polito has more than 20 years of industry experience in directing the firm’s vision of increasing brand awareness for those manufacturers represented. The firm has close relationships with contract furniture dealers and A&D firms with emphasis in higher education, health care, GSA and corporate channels.

## CAREERS

**H Contract Taps Mark Craven for New Executive Position in Sales, Merchandising**

➔ As part of its strategy to accelerate sales growth, senior living furniture specialist H Contract has reorganized its sales management, marketing and product development operations and



Craven

tapped industry veteran Mark Craven for the new position of vice president of sales and merchandising.

Craven, who served in executive positions for senior living specialist Fairfield Chair more than a dozen years before joining H Contract’s parent company Hooker Furniture in 2018, “is uniquely positioned to support our reps and customers in creating new sales opportunities,” said Dean Jarrett, vice president and general manager. “He can leverage his product development talent, industry experience and outstanding customer relationships to drive growth.”

Craven will oversee a sales organization comprising 26 sales territories and will work with the company’s customer base, including commercial interior designers and specifiers, senior living and retirement center end users and commercial furniture retailers.

Since its founding in 2013, H Contract has achieved double-digit, year-over-year sales growth.

“I look forward to working with our sales force and customers and raising awareness about H Contract and the value that the brand brings to the senior living market,” Craven said. “Our products are designed to bring style, function and grace to the senior living facility.”

## CAREERS

**Spellman Brady & Company Hires Danielle Spellman**

➔ Spellman Brady has announced Danielle Spellman has joined the firm as an art associate. In her role, she is responsible for creating project-specific artwork concepts; making artwork selections to meet the project budget; completing documents for presentations; and assisting with record keeping of all art processes and project-related documents.



Spellman

Spellman attended Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore, Maryland, where she earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Film, Video and Photography and became OSHA 10 Certified. Prior to joining Spellman Brady, she served as a photo assistant with several photography studios, worked with the Maryland Film Festival and produced a short film for the Baltimore Student Film Showcase.

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**TRENDWAY - SEEKS INDEPENDENT SALES REP GROUP, TEXAS**

**Trendway** >

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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](mailto:keliopulos@trendway.com)

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*INDEPENDENT REPS & REP GROUPS WANTED:  
 MULTIPLE REGIONS*



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**JOB DESCRIPTION**

- Build relationships with contract furniture dealers in your territory
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**For more information, contact Pat Zerbe at:**  
[patz@wyattseating.com](mailto:patz@wyattseating.com)

**Be sure to check out our website at:**  
[www.wyattseating.com](http://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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## REPS AND DEALERS WANTED



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