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# BoF

The Business of Furniture

April 15, 2020

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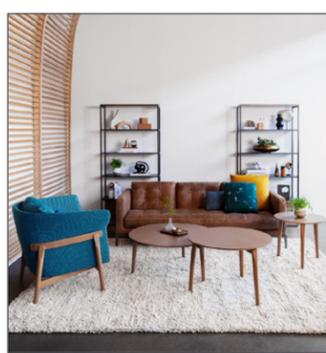


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*Business of Furniture* and *Workplaces* magazine are the go-to sources for keeping you informed about everything that is happening in the industry. From trends that affect your bottom line, to new products that will help your customers work better,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

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



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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 AIS

☛ AIS remains open as a designated Essential Employer during the COVID-19 Crisis. The company's decision is in direct response to urgent requests received through its sales and dealer network to provide product to critical services organizations throughout the country.

AIS will continue to manufacture and ship office furniture products to support the efficacy of hospitals and medical suppliers, biotech firms, local, state and federal agencies, IT firms and other critical providers throughout this crisis. Distributed product will help vital organizations continue to function by meeting the needs of their onsite and remote workers who are diligently working towards the mission of keeping the citizens of our nation safe, infrastructure running smoothly, and providing vital health services.

In addition to manufacturing its standard and custom office furniture solutions for critical customers, AIS is rapidly developing and producing unique products to help contain the COVID-19 virus. Cloth face masks are being sewn onsite and distributed to its employees and donated to frontline workers. Personal protective equipment and screens are in accelerated product development and will be produced in a converted section of the 600,000 square foot factory.

To protect the health and well-being of its employees, the company has initiated stringent practices in accordance with CDC and WHO guidelines throughout their organization.

#### Corporate Employee Protocols:

- Non-essential travel has been halted.
- Non-essential employees in Leominster and around the country are working from home.
- No face-to-face meetings are being held with groups.
- Use of tele-conferencing technology to service customers and sales requests.
- Social distancing practices are in place.
- Ill employees are required to stay home.

#### Operations and Manufacturing:

- Rigorous and regular cleaning in factory and office is ongoing.
- Temperature checks for onsite personnel entering the facility.
- Hand sanitizer has been placed across our facility and safe hygiene tips have been shared.
- Advanced air ventilation system exchanges fresh air in the factory frequently.
- Onsite employees are offered face masks or face shields to help prevent the spread of the virus.
- AIS will soon be producing divider screens for use in the factory to allow greater isolation of workers. These are currently in development.
- National showrooms are all closed, in compliance with local and state requirements.
- Visitors are allowed by appointment into our facility – and only in small groups of 10 or less.

"I am so proud of our dedicated employees and truly humbled to be designated as an essential employer in Massachusetts. We are working together and doing everything in our power to keep our teams safe while providing solutions to help support the frontline heroes across the country," AIS President and CEO Bruce Platzman said.

This designation comes as the governor of Massachusetts issued an emergency order requiring all business and organizations that do not provide COVID-19 Essential Services to close their workplaces to workers, customers and the public from 3/24/20 until 5/4/20.

For more information, please visit <https://www.ais-inc.com/>

### From Birsell + Seck (designers Ayse Birsell and Bibi Seck)

☛ Dear Friends,

We are in the fourth week of sheltering in New York City, and what a whirlwind it has been...

We at Birsell + Seck hope that you remain strong and healthy. We want to thank all of you who reached out to check in and see how we are doing.

We are healthy, safe and keeping mentally strong with daily inspiration and connection, albeit virtually.

We have been actively thinking about how we might contribute during these trying times. It is a moment of transition for all of us– we're here to support and assist you in anyway we can as we all take time to problem solve the present and imagine what the future may bring. The current uncertainty makes us think about all of the great collaborations and relationships we built over the years so please be in touch if you'd like to update us and have a conversation... or just say hello! We'd love to hear from you.

Wishing you health and fortitude,

Birsell + Seck Team

### From Kimball

☛ At Kimball International, nothing is more important than the health and safety of our employees, our customers, and the communities in which we operate. As we face this time of uncertainty around COVID-19, we are committed to playing a productive role in supporting the healthcare community through this crisis. We are humbled that our team members at Kimball International are caring for their community in meaningful ways during this time.

#### Our brands have launched crisis focused programs to aid our partners:

Kimball has created a new Quickship for Crisis Program that provides a quick turn-around of acute care and flexible triage products that include patient seating, overbed tables, exam stools, storage carts and privacy screens. Innovation is sometimes born during challenging times and we are humbled that our team members at Kimball are proving this to be true. Within one week, the Kimball engineering, manufacturing and design teams came together to create two new solutions through rapid prototyping and testing to help support Quick Triage Care in healthcare environments being set up at a moment's notice. Learn more: [Quickship for Crisis](#)

National's Quick Response program offers pre-configured solutions that are easy-to-order and quick-to-arrive. These range from complete vignettes to add-on pieces and accessories that support

a variety of frontline spaces including waiting and assessment spaces and gathering or break areas. The program is comprised of components that ship in 48 hours, options that deliver in 10 days or less, and products that are on our standard lead time, giving our customers the flexibility to choose which delivery timeframe works best for their situation. [Learn More](#)

In addition to our healthcare-focused product offering, the Kimball International team has also found new ways to service the immediate need for personal protective equipment by manufacturing medical masks and shields for local health centers. The Research and Design teams have utilized 3D printer capabilities to produce protective plastic shields for medical staff at local hospitals.

We're grateful to support the true heroes of this crisis, the healthcare workers on the frontlines.

## From HPFI

HPFI (High Point Furniture Industries) continues to closely monitor the impact that COVID-19 is making on our world, our country, our industry, our business partners and our associates.

HPFI operations have not been significantly affected. Our furniture is produced in High Point, North Carolina. We continue to work closely with all supply partners to stay ahead of material interruptions. Thus far, we have only experienced a disruption with one domestic supply partner and are diligently working towards a resolution.

HPFI remains committed to the health and safety of our associates and protecting their families and the central North Carolina community by incorporating the appropriate procedures to protect our office and factory associates.

We invite you to rediscover High Point Furniture. For details on the NOW Accelerated Response program, Flex seating or Parsec tables (shown in the image above) or any of the HPFI portfolio of furniture, please visit our website.

## From ESI

To All of Our Valued Partners:

ESI is working hard every day to create an environment that is safe for our employees and customers while still maintaining "business as usual." We are operating as an essential business under the guidelines of our State.

### 48 Hour Shipping

Our facilities are open for business and we are still shipping products out in our standard 48 hour lead time.

### Every Day Business

Our Customer Service team is still available from 6:30am to 5:00pm Pacific Time Monday through Friday. Contact us at 800.833.3746 or [customerservice@esiergo.com](mailto:customerservice@esiergo.com). While we have many employees now working from home, our entire team is still available to support our customers.

We want to thank everyone for working together to stay safe and healthy. Please take care. From your friends at ESI.

## From La-Z-Boy

La-Z-Boy last week provided an update to its COVID-19 action plan. With a continued focus on the health, safety and well-being of its employees and their families, its customers and the communities in which it operates, the company will continue to:

- Evaluate plans and timing to re-open the 155 company-owned La-Z-Boy Furniture Galleries stores on a case by case basis, subject to applicable federal, state and local requirements and guidelines, including social distancing; as a result, the company expects the cadence of store openings to vary.
- Evaluate plans and timing to re-start production at its U.S.- and Mexico-based manufacturing facilities, in line with applicable federal, state and local requirements and guidelines, as well as customer demand, with no firm date established; the company is monitoring health, safety and market conditions continually and plans to open as conditions dictate.
- Operate its Regional Distribution Centers, adhering to safety guidelines, to deliver in-process orders.

Kurt L. Darrow, chairman, president and chief executive officer of La-Z-Boy, said: "Across all our company locations, including plants, La-Z-Boy Furniture Galleries stores, and Regional Distribution Centers, with the safety and health of our employees and customers being at the forefront of our decisions, we have been monitoring the COVID-19 situation and are adhering to applicable regulations and guidelines set forth by relevant governing authorities. It is our intent to re-open stores and re-start plants as soon as practical so that we can start to bring some of our furloughed employees back to work and continue to provide great service to our customers. The timing of this will be largely dependent on when we are allowed to re-open under the stay-home orders issued by various states so that consumers can return to stores and shop, and employees can return to their jobs. As a result, we expect a phased return to operations over a period of time. Additionally, as we prepare to re-open stores and re-start plants, we continue to follow enhanced health and safety protocols across all locations to ensure our people and our customers are well protected."

The company remains focused on managing the business to preserve cash and to ensure the continued liquidity of the company.

## From KI Europe

Further to our update on Thursday, March 26, and the latest government's announcement on the lockdown, our manufacturing, warehouse, and delivery operations will remain closed until Monday, April 28, or until further notice.

We continue to support all of our customers through these difficult times. Our office staff and sales teams are all safely working remotely to help with any ongoing business requirements or queries you may have. All members of staff are contactable on their usual phone numbers and email addresses.

All general enquires can be sent to the phone numbers and email addresses below.

Education - +44 (0) 207 405 7082 | [education@kieurope.com](mailto:education@kieurope.com)

Workplace - +44 (0) 207 404 7441 | [workplace@kieurope.com](mailto:workplace@kieurope.com)

Jonathan M. Hindle FCSD

Group Managing Director - EMEA

## From COR

Dear partners,

The effects of the coronavirus on our daily lives can be felt very clearly and they are testing us severely. Our working relationship and the existence of our companies are also facing major challenges due to the pandemic.

Today we would like to update you on the current situation at COR. Our social responsibility is to ensure that the course of the infection is slowed down as much as possible and to do everything possible to break infection chains. For this reason, the visits of our field staff to your premises are suspended until further notice. Of course, our field and office staff will still be available for you by telephone or e-mail.

Our production is currently still running according to schedule. We will keep you posted if this changes.

Let us remain confident that we will overcome the economic setbacks caused by the pandemic and the associated existential threat. In this spirit, we wish you personally, your employees, your families and your company all the very best.

Kindest regards and stay healthy,  
Your COR team

## Shout Out: To Scandinavian Spaces for Teaming with Students on Virtual Showroom

Scandinavian Spaces is sharing the latest in Scandinavian design with a virtual showroom tour, and bringing the design community together in the digital world. In response to the ever-changing climate of 2020, the company is finding new ways to celebrate design and inspire like-minded creatives.

The International Contemporary Furniture Fair (ICFF) was scheduled to take place May 17-20, in New York City. With this year's fair canceled, Scandinavian Spaces decided to look for a different way to share their ICFF booth design. The original booth design will be converted into a virtual showroom that features cutting edge designs from partner brands Blå Station, Nordgröna, and Materia. To design the booth, Scandinavian Spaces - together with Texas State University - organized a competition for the University's Interior Design program.

The competition encouraged students to develop a concept and design a booth that represented the brand and its core values - Color, Life, and Design. Beginning in October 2019, the competition ran for several weeks. During that time university students met at Scandinavian Spaces' flagship showroom in Austin, Texas to learn about the progressive product line. Throughout the course of the competition, students had the opportunity to meet with Scandinavian Spaces team members to discuss ideas and receive feedback on their design concepts. The winning team of students was selected by a panel of Texas State University educators, alumni from the Interior Design community, and representatives from Scandinavian Spaces.

University Students and Designers Erin Elorreaga and Shelbie Metzler were selected as the winning team. Elorreaga and Metzler's award-winning booth design was inspired by the Swedish concept of Lagom - not too much and not too little, just right. The designers collaborated with Scandinavian Spaces and developed the display to highlight new furniture concepts for collaborative meetings, individual workstations, and acoustical wall treatments.

Viewers will be able to immerse themselves in the Scandinavian way of life by exploring a series of eight spaces within the booth, places where people can meet, work, and relax. A beautiful balance between work, play and purpose - the Scandinavian Spaces ICFE virtual showroom can be toured via [www.scandinavianspaces.com](http://www.scandinavianspaces.com) launching on Friday May 15th.

To get early access to the virtual showroom tour, please contact: [pr@scandinavianspaces.com](mailto:pr@scandinavianspaces.com).

## Shout Out: To Tarkett for Fostering Conversation about the Future of the Workplace

Among the many changes society has experienced in the past month, the relationship between work and how we experience physical space is one of the biggest. What will the workplace of the future look like when the dust settles? Tarkett will host a virtual CEU course examining this question with the goal of providing insights for personal development, connectivity and a potential blueprint for a happier, more productive workplace.

The free online course, "Altered States," is an examination of five cultural drivers and how they will influence the human condition, interpersonal relationships, and our use of space. Those cultural shifts include:

- Technology and the Happiness Paradox: The pursuit of happiness is actually making us less happy.
- The Reputation Economy: In our climate of fake news and political dissonance, we search for brands and employers that align with our personal values.
- The Diversity of One: A new approach to diversity, equity and inclusion encourages us to consider the unique contributions of every individual, beyond our visible differences.
- Spatial Economics: Advances in transportation and connectivity are allowing individuals to live further from city centers.
- Design for Deconstruction: Building for the future means more than just environmental effort, but actually how we build the dwellings where we live and work.

Attendees are eligible for credits through both AIA and IDCEC.

Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020

Time: 3 PM - 4 PM EDT

## Shout Out: To the ADFE for Keeping the Spirit of Architecture and Design Alive

Hey there!

Beyond educating and inspiring viewers about the power of design, the Architecture & Design Film Festival (ADFF) has always been about community. Now that theater screenings and in-person networking is not an option, ADFE director and founder Kyle Bergman has decided to launch a virtual festival experience, ADFE:ONLINE, as a way for the architecture and design community to remain engaged and experience several specially-curated films. We hope this online venue will serve as a virtual space for the professional design industry - and the broader community - to come together and learn about architecture and design.

From Thursday, April 16th - Sunday, April 19th (at 8pm EST and then replayed at 8pm PST), ADFE

**BOF**

will offer one film each night, including a live introduction and special guests. Following each film, we will have a Q&A with the film's director. For each program, there will be a modest \$0.99 fee which can be purchased by clicking on the link following the film description.

**Here is the lineup:**

- April 16 – The Human Shelter – An epic, poetic journey investigating how we, as human beings, design and build our homes. Special introduction by Sean Anderson, Associate Curator, Department of Architecture and Design at MoMA. After the film, Q&A with director Boris Benjamin Bertram.
  - April 17 – Glenn Murcutt: Spirit of Place – This film explores the life and art of Australia's most famous living architect and follows him as he designs his most ambitious project to date – a mosque for an Islamic community in Melbourne. After the film, a Q&A with director Catherine Hunter.
  - April 18 – James Hubbell - Between Heaven and Earth – The film looks at the life of architect James Hubbell and how the beauty of the natural environment has shaped his life, his art, and the many spiritual buildings he designed over his career. After the film, a Q&A with director Marianne Gerdes.
- April 18 – City Dreamers – Phyllis Lambert, Blanche Lemco van Ginkel, Cornelia Hahn Oberlander, Denise Scott Brown – four architect trailblazers used to being the only woman in the room.

## TIME TO RETHINK YOUR BACK OFFICE SOLUTIONS?

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## Whatever it Takes



**Happy Wednesday friends,**

Even in the best of times, I am a media junkie. I read a daily newspaper seven days a week (the paper kind that thumps onto my porch each morning). I subscribe to at least a dozen magazines, and I constantly scan websites.

During times of national distress, I devour even more information. I am a sponge. I firmly believe information is power. We need it more than ever. It is our hope that you find the information found in the pages of The Business of Furniture and Workplaces magazines valuable, especially in these topsy-turvy times.

There is much to be learned from reputable publications. I recently read the following line from the story, "We Can Afford to Beat This Crisis" in The Nation: "When faced with the genuine prospect of annihilation, the only adequate response is to do whatever it takes to prevent it." It was a powerful statement and one that rings true.

As an industry, when facing the prospect of annihilation, the only adequate response is to do whatever it takes to prevent it. And I believe we are. No one is giving up; no one is throwing in the towel. We are going to make it through this and emerge stronger from the other side.

The response to our new Industry Bulletin Board section has been overwhelming. We are doing our best to get all of the latest COVID-19 information out to the community as quickly as possible. There is no cost for these listings. Simply send information

to me at [rob@bellow.press](mailto:rob@bellow.press), and we will publish it.

If you are a NeoCon exhibitor or have a showroom in theMART, you should have received information on the other project we are working hard to launch called NeoCon: Products, People and Places. If you haven't heard about it, feel free to reach out to my colleague, Melissa Skolnick at [melissa@bellow.press](mailto:melissa@bellow.press). She can provide you with more information about this weekly section that will launch in early June.

We are not giving up and neither should you. Staying in front of your customers is important. Shifting your business as needed is important. Maintaining your marketing is important, too. Don't stop now.

Most of all, enjoy the ride. Take pleasure in the simple things. If you know me at all, you know one of my passions is music. Working from home has given me the chance to listen to more records in my collection. As I write this column, I am listening to a pristine copy of The Chirping Crickets album, the one that turned Buddy Holly into a star. It is one of my prized possessions.

I'm reading more and spending more time with my family. I'm also getting some cleaning projects done and trying to work out a little bit. I also try to take a moment everyday to find beauty in everyday life.

Regardless of what is happening in the outside world, we have a lot to be thankful for.

*Rob Kirkbride and the Business of Furniture team*



## Arper's Farewell to its Founder Luigi Feltrin

On April 5, Luigi Feltrin, Arper's honorary president, passed away at the age of 85.

Feltrin founded Arper in Monastier di Treviso in 1989, together with his sons Claudio, Arper president, and Mauro. Over the years, the company has established itself in the international design sector with its chairs, tables and furnishings.

Intuition and entrepreneurial spirit have always distinguished Luigi, who was loved not only by his family but also Arper's employees, with whom he always maintained a sincere relationship. He visited the company daily and never failed to share his passion and sincere admiration for the brand and its products with everyone.

Luigi led a dynamic life full of challenges. He moved to Piedmont when he was young, then to Switzerland, and then returned to Veneto to begin his entrepreneurial journey. Initially he was dedicated to the processing of leather, which was where Arper's expertise on this material started.

Today, Arper has 260 employees, makes 72-million-Euros a year, has an export of 92% and has 12 showrooms worldwide.

"My brother Mauro, my son Giulio and particularly I were lucky enough to be able to work alongside my father at the company," said Claudio. "The past 48 years have enriched me in a priceless way, because with a mentor like him, one can only get better and better."

## THE STREAM

### HERMAN MILLER'S ESPORTS ENTRY IS A WELCOMED FIGHT AGAINST GAMING CHAIRS

A legacy furniture brand, Herman Miller has been supplying offices with chairs for decades before esports ever existed.

"Some of the Herman Miller products are obviously more than the average gamer will want to spend," Lake said. "We are doing some research with Herman Miller to design an ergonomic chair that's more suited towards the average gamer's price point."

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE](#)



### BIG NUMBER

# 5

## sq. meters

According to research, whereas 20 years ago each worker was allocated on average more than 9 square meters of workspace, this has declined to around 7.33 square meters. And with co-working environments becoming more popular, this space is often far smaller for many workers: WeWork, for example, allocates just over 5 square meters per person across its global portfolio. We know close contact with a confirmed case hugely increases the risk of infection, so that makes the modern open-plan office environment extremely fertile ground for viruses.

### CAN'T FLY? ENJOY YOUR OWN AIRBUS A340 SEATS AT HOME

Designed for only the most die-hard 'avgeeks' and aviation enthusiasts, a company by the name of SkyArt produces "aviation-themed designer furniture". This ranges from tables made out of wing slats and fuselage sections to recliners and office chairs made from retired aircraft seats. Although the manufacturer has been around for the last 10 years, we just happened to stumble upon SkyArt and its intriguing products.

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE](#)



### ITALY'S DESIGN BRANDS "HOPEFUL" AS CORONAVIRUS LOCKDOWN END NEARS

Design brands in Italy are hoping to reopen factories and restart production lines next week, when coronavirus restrictions are due to be eased.

Emergency restrictions are set to lift on 13 April 2020, although Italian health minister Roberto Speranza could still announce an extension.

"We hope to open soon," said a spokesperson for family-run furniture brand Molteni&C, which is based in Lombardy in northern Italy. "Of course [we will be] in compliance with measures on healthcare to safeguard the safety of our workers and following the experts' instructions in terms of space sanitisation, protections and alternate work shifts."

### BIG NUMBER



### WILL CORONAVIRUS CHANGE THE WAY WE THINK ABOUT MODERN OFFICES FOR GOOD?

As coronavirus impacts our regular working lives for the foreseeable future, might this be the point that companies are forced to examine not just the way we work in terms of offering more remote working, but also how our offices are designed to promote health and wellbeing?

Firstly, while the pandemic may not permanently put an end to working in traditional office buildings, the global 'work-from-home' trial may mean a re-think, at the very least, of a change in office typology.

Although employers cite fostering better team working as the main reason for open plan layouts (though inevitably, cost-cutting has a lot to do with it), open space plans have often been unpopular with staff.

But as their employees work from home over the next few weeks at least, many employers may find that, ironically, their teams develop strong team-working bonds. Already, anecdotal evidence shows more teams are videoconferencing – or simply picking up the phone and speaking to their colleagues – rather than resorting to electronic communication, as tends to often happen in open-plan environments.

Secondly, those businesses that do have staff working in their offices are having to make sure they are suitably distanced from each other to prevent contracting the virus. That's not a problem at the moment with most employees at home, so it could focus minds on how easily diseases can spread in modern offices.

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE](#)

### COLLIERS PREDICTS CORONAVIRUS IMPACT ON OFFICE DEMAND WILL BE MINIMAL

While noting in its first-quarter 2020 snapshot of the New Jersey office market that the impacts of COVID-19 are not reflected in its data, the brokerage firm believes that the long-term impacts on office utilization in the Garden State and the nation for that matter will be minimal.

Acknowledging that the pandemic has caused office shutdowns and companies testing the effectiveness of remote work policies, Colliers notes that some in the industry are now wondering how a possible shift to teleworking by some firms will impact the commercial office sector?

"While more companies may adopt a work at home policy, the impact to office space utilization is anticipated to be minimal, as companies still find value in having people together physically and have spent the last decade optimizing their space efficiencies," Colliers states in its recently released report.

The brokerage firm noted that in the short-term, leasing activity is expected to slow down, but added, "once social distancing mandates are lifted, demand will gradually return, particularly with users who have inflexible upcoming lease expirations."

Colliers reports that there were 2,265,425 square feet of leasing activity statewide in the first quarter of 2020, down from 2,469,387 square feet leased in the first quarter of 2019.

The statewide office vacancy rate stood at 18.7% at the end of the first quarter of 2020, down from 18.9% 12 months earlier. The first quarter 2020 office vacancy rate for Northern New Jersey stood at 19.1%, while the Central New Jersey vacancy rate was 18.0%.

The average asking rental rate statewide at the end of the first quarter of 2020 was \$28.236-per-square-foot; Northern New Jersey's asking rent was \$30.01-per-square-foot.

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE](#)



A project by Henricksen

## The Interiors Industry Leans on One Another to Connect Amidst C-19 Chaos

PEOPLE IN THE INTERIORS INDUSTRY TODAY SEEM TO FALL INTO TWO CATEGORIES: THOSE WHO REMEMBER THE DOWNTURN OF 2008 AND THOSE WHO DON'T.

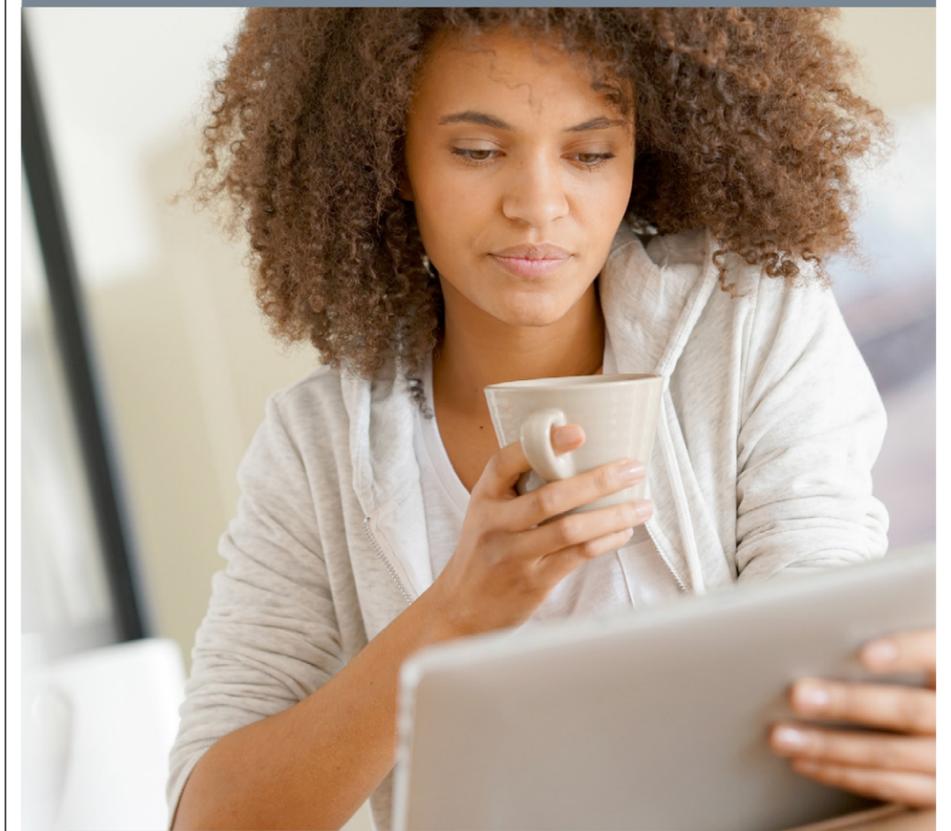
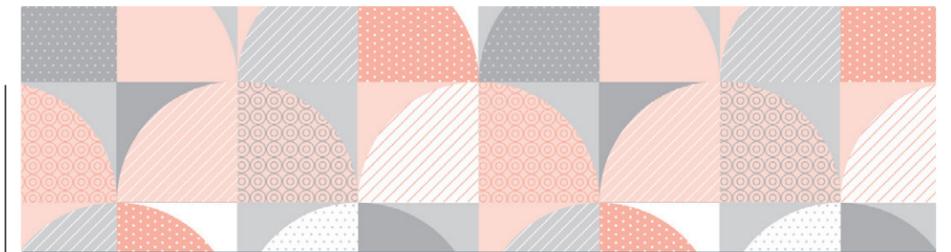
by Amanda Schneider

*The financial crisis is a stark reminder that transparency and disclosure are essential in today's marketplace.*

This quote from U.S. Sen. Jack Reed reminds us of the importance of being forthright and working together toward a common goal. It's incredibly relevant today, as the global economy feels the effects of Covid-19, and we must share best practices to collectively move forward. That said, would it come as a surprise that Reed's message was delivered in 2009, shortly after we began to experience signs of recovery from the Great Recession of 2008?

**The consensus remains that while there may be some demand for workplace alterations when stay-at-home orders are lifted, product features like sneeze guards will be a fad that may address initial fears but will likely fade as things return to normal.**

People in the interiors industry today seem to fall into two categories: Those who remember the downturn of 2008 and those who don't. For those who do remember, one lesson seems abundantly clear: act fast, act early, and since this may be a marathon (and we don't yet know where



## SUPPORT

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

[www.indeal.org](http://www.indeal.org)

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the finish line is), pace yourself. For those who don't remember, it may feel like the sky is falling. For both audiences, the group advice seems to be: This, too, shall pass.

On April 1, [Henricksen](#) gathered a group of 40 representatives from corporate real estate, A&D, construction and product (manufacturers, dealers and installation) to talk about their industry's status and outlook, with the goal of providing a forum for asking questions, comparing notes and networking with peers.

The conversation focused on business challenges, keeping up relationships and stabilization efforts around business development and marketing. Circling back to Reed's sentiments, the discussion was filled with disclosures and transparency as the group worked to piece together a roadmap toward understanding what is happening and how to prepare for eventual recovery. While no one has a defined roadmap charted out yet, their collective viewpoints lead us in the right direction.

### Insights from CRE: Things are still moving, happening. People are getting creative.

In the world of commercial real estate, the story is characterized less by a stop sign and more by a redirect signal. Spaces are still being shown, but with creative measures. Video walkthroughs are popular, as is the practice of arriving early, unlocking the door, and then waiting outside as the client walks through the space alone.

### Installation firms are still moving forward with previously planned projects but with caution.

John Wichman, multimarket account manager at Cushman & Wakefield, shared insights into some of the technological advances that keep businesses running: "We have to start thinking outside the job we normally do. How do we get the visual information to people who need to see it? Some folks are using software called Matterport, while others are using StructionSite, which is more economical."

### Insights from Construction: Construction is still essential in many markets, where it continues. For those where it isn't, there's more concern about implications in the latter part of the year.

The construction industry is learning things that seemed catastrophic last week are normal today. But as some projects slow down, looming in the back of everyone's head is the notion this backlogged work will have to pick up at some point. In response, many companies are forgoing layoffs and tightening their belts in other areas so when the dust settles, they'll be ready to move forward, full steam ahead.

Insights from A&D: We are struggling to suddenly reframe workflows to remote. As a result, several projects are on hold due

to uncertainty, but not cancelled and, therefore, we must consider how [things will look when we return](#). We are just starting to see many firms apply their creativity to predictions about the future.

In Chicago, [McCormick Place transitioned](#) from an event center to a hospital, seemingly overnight. Across the country, retail/shopping malls are being repurposed and hotels are becoming hospitals or living facilities for hospital staff who don't want to return home and risk infecting their families. As A&D struggles to keep up with the sudden influx of project shift changes, they're also juggling the new challenges of remote work. So, in similar fashion to the construction industry, many firms are left juxtaposed between moving forward and planning for the future.

As Alex Lopatynsky, principal and managing director of [Cooper Carry's](#) New York office, explained: "We're seeing projects on 'hold' but not cancelled. Most of our current work is in early stages and is progressing, but the construction admin stage is tough to fulfill since it (traditionally) requires being on-site, in-person."

### Insights from product providers: The state-by-state variance in the definition of "essential business" is affecting product manufacturers. As a result, dealers are sorting through their checklists while installation firms are still going strong where possible.

The consensus remains that while there may be some demand for workplace alterations when stay-at-home orders are lifted, product features like sneeze guards will be a fad that may address initial fears but will likely fade as things return to normal. Installation firms are still moving forward with previously planned projects but with caution, being mindful of the rules affecting each individual state.

As the group concluded, Henricksen shared insightful recommendations pulled from the crash of 2008. First, they expect prices to go down across the board, with prices for some subs going up. We'll start to see more

bidders looking at a single project.

Russell Frees, president and CEO of Henricksen, left us with this hopeful look toward the future: "We have to be stewards and make people feel safe. We'll do this by taking measures, evaluating situations and letting our clients know where we stand with their projects. By staying positive and transparent, we can help our clients make the best decisions for their future.

If you're interested in up-to-date metrics on where the industry stands delivered right to your inbox, ThinkLab has launched a research study that can help. Among other data points, last

week's report shared that 60% of projects are still continuing as planned, though vary greatly by geography and vertical market. If you'd like to receive these metrics, [take our survey here](#), and we'll email you the results. **BoF**

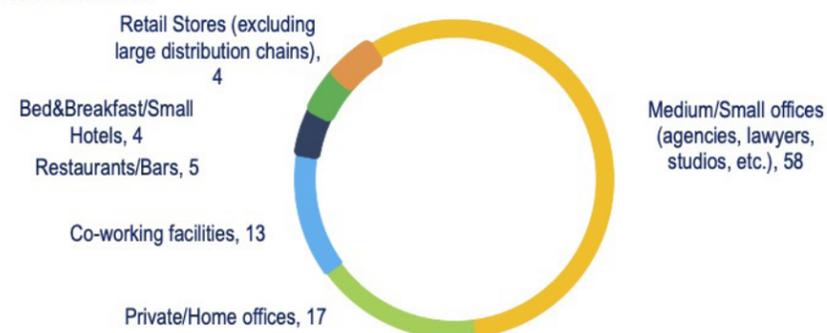
*Amanda Schneider is President of ThinkLab, the research division of Interior Design Media. At ThinkLab, we combine Interior Design Media's incredible reach within the architecture and design community with proven market research techniques to uncover relevant trends and opportunities that connect back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

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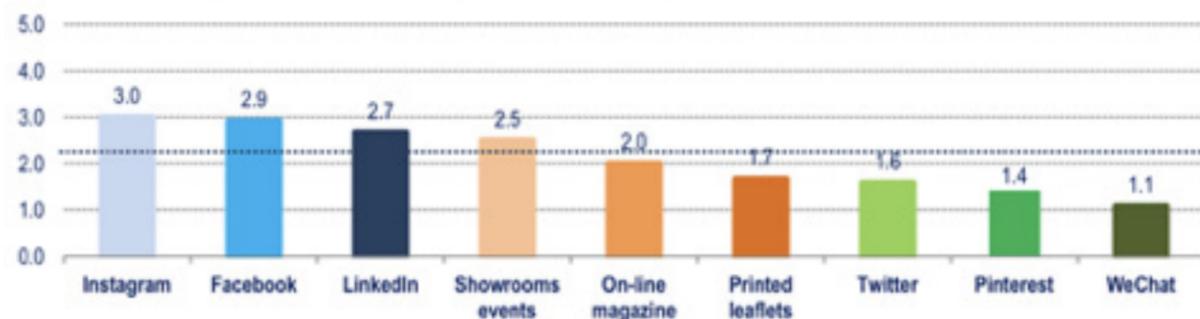
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**Q: COULD YOU PROVIDE AN APPROXIMATE BREAKDOWN OF THE TOTAL VALUE OF FURNITURE SALES BY SMALL BUSINESS CATEGORY?**

*Please indicate % on total sales*



**Q: WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING TOOLS DO YOU MAINLY USE TO PROMOTE YOUR ACTIVITY?**  
(Please evaluate: 1 represents "LOW USE" and 5 represents "STRONG USE")



## Office and Commercial Furniture Supply for Small Business and eCommerce in Europe: The Dealer Point of View

THE SURVEY SHOWED CUSTOMERS APPROACH THE DEALER PRIMARILY THROUGH THE WEB (WEBSITE OR SOCIAL MEDIA), WITH THE STORE VISIT STILL BEING IMPORTANT BUT LESS FREQUENT FOR THE FIRST APPROACH.

**C**SIL Market Research recently published results of a survey of 100 office furniture dealers, analyzing supply activity for small accounts in Europe.

The research on furnishing office spaces included furniture for small hotels, bed and breakfasts, bars/restaurants, co-working and individual offices.

Not surprisingly, customers are increasingly using e-commerce and m-commerce for the purchase of furniture.

According to the European Commission, in 2018, there were slightly more than 25 million small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the European Union, of which 93% were micro-SMEs (less than 10 employees and below EUR \$2 million revenues).

According to the last available figures from Eurostat, the percentage of employed persons in the EU who usually work from home stood at 5% in 2017. This figure was highest in the Netherlands (13.7%) and Finland (12.3%), followed by Austria, Denmark, Belgium and France. The percentage of employed persons in the EU who "sometimes" work from home has increased from 7.7% in 2008 to 9.6% in 2017. In the EU, more self-employed persons usually worked from home (18.1%) than employees (2.8%). This was true in all member states.

## E-commerce for the furniture sector is still a price-driven business.

The food service business of restaurants and bars is increasing, the survey showed, and the hospitality business is following the growth of tourist arrivals in Europe and the consequent increase in the number of available rooms. According to Lodging Econometrics, estimates of more than 50,000 new rooms were opened in Europe in 2019, meaning a 16% increase from 2018. The figures are also pushing ahead small facilities, whether luxury boutique hotels or mass bed and breakfasts.

According to the sample of dealers interviewed, the small business customers served in Europe are composed of 58% medium/small offices (agencies, lawyers, studios, etc.), 17% private/home offices and 13% co-working facilities. Other commercial customer segments (non-office segments) account for 13%.

Co-working facilities are expected to represent the fastest growing category in 2020 and 2021 followed by home offices

and restaurants/bars. Sales to small hospitality customers (bed and breakfasts) are expected to grow below the average with faster rates in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Southern Europe. Low demand is also expected for the furnishing of independent retail stores, confirming the sector statistics showing a general reduction of footprint all across European countries.

The survey showed customers approach the dealer primarily through the web (website or social media), with the store visit still being important but less frequent for the first approach. As a consequence, distributors are using web tools like Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn more and more to promote their activity.

Around one third of survey respondents said they are using some form of e-commerce (owned or third-party web platforms), and the share has increased quickly the last two years.

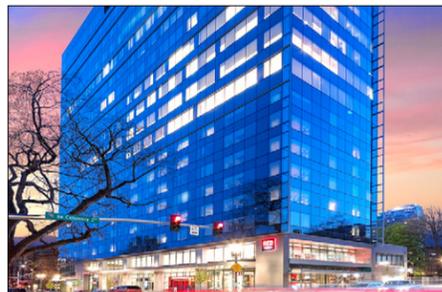
E-commerce for the furniture sector is still a price-driven business. The survey showed the main influencing factors when purchasing online are price, promotions/discounts and payment options.

CSIL, based in Milano, Italy, monitors international trends in furniture and other industries.

BoF

## PACIFIC WEST

## BROADWAY TOWER CHANGES HANDS



PORTLAND, Ore. — The office condominium interest in Portland's 19-story, newly-constructed Broadway Tower has changed hands in a record deal reportedly in the neighborhood of \$132.5 million. Principal Real Estate Investors acquired the 430,000-square-foot mixed-use tower. The high-rise office tower was developed by BPM Real Estate Group in 2018, and has 11 floors of Class A office space with exclusive decks on the top three floors.

[Connect Seattle](#)

## WORLD'S LARGEST LIVING BUILDING

PORTLAND, Ore. — Portland-headquartered architecture firm ZGF has shared a first look at PAE Living Building, a handsome and highly efficient commercial building that broke ground last month in Portland's historic Old Town District. The 58,700-square-foot, mixed-use project is designed to last 500-plus years and will stand strong — literally, as it meets the highest level of seismic criteria — as a superlative-laden paradigm of next-level sustainable building design and advanced engineering. The PAE Living Building is slated to be the largest commercial-use Living Building not only in Oregon but also, as it stands now, in the entire world.

[The Architect's Newspaper](#)

## MOUNTAIN WEST

## GROWTH CAN CONTINUE

DENVER — Everyone's waiting to see if the development that's driven Denver's economy for years will stall out as the coronavirus pandemic threatens to deflate the city's ballooning bottom line. At the same time, more people want to live in Denver than can afford to. There's a demand for homes — about 30,000 affordable homes, according to the city government's last official estimate. "Over the last couple of weeks, we've been really pushing the e-permit system because it gives everyone an online option and that work can continue," said Laura Swartz, a spokesperson for the planning department. Ted Leighty, CEO of the Colorado Association of Homebuilders, said projects are still generally moving forward. "As you build rooftops, that drives commercial development. Then the multiplier effect comes into play," Leighty said. "People buy homes then go buy furniture, appliances, those types of things."

[Denverite](#)

## MIDWEST

## UNANIMOUS APPROVAL

RAPID CITY, S.D. — The Rapid City Planning Commission unanimously approved the development of the land on St. Joseph Street between First and Second streets. The initial approval was given for a 4-story building — with the first floor being dedicated to commercial space and the other three floors making up a 99-unit apartment complex. The complex will help the city continue with its East of 5th vision to grow the city. This is a really exciting project for the community because St. Joe street is also identified as a revitalization corridor and to see more

development happening east of 5th, right next to downtown will be great for people to live downtown.

[KOTA TV](#)

## BUILDOUT PAUSED

CHICAGO — Uber has halted construction on its 463,000-square-foot space at 601W Cos.' Old Post Office redevelopment, the Chicago Tribune reported. It's reportedly Chicago's first big office buildout to be put on hold because of the coronavirus pandemic. The new offices will serve as the headquarters for Uber's freight service, which connects truck drivers with shippers.

[Connect Chicago](#)

## DEVELOPMENT TOPS OUT

CHICAGO — Skender Construction has topped out 1100 W. Fulton, a 45,000-square-foot office and retail building underway in Chicago in a former meat-packing facility, two miles northwest of downtown in the Fulton Market neighborhood. The building will incorporate the existing historic structure along with new construction of three-story and five-story sections. The single-tenant property is already leased to Herman Miller Inc.

[Commercial Property Executive](#)

## GREENLEAF FOODS TO BE ANCHOR

LISLE, Ill. — NAI Hiffman secured the first tenant, Greenleaf Foods, for 2200 Cabot Drive, a Class A, 131,000-square-foot multi-tenant office building. Owner RE Development Solutions is in the midst of an extensive renovation at the property. 2200 Cabot Drive was built in 1990 and was first renovated in 2002. The property is located in the park-like grounds of the 64-acre Corporate Lakes office develop-

ment, within the East-West corridor. The building's renovations include spec suites, a new lobby, a tenant lounge with micro-market, conference rooms, new restrooms and corridors, new HVAC mechanicals, a new roof and fresh landscaping.

[RE Journals](#)

## NORTHEAST

## TOWNER CONTINUES ITS RISE



BROOKLYN, N.Y. — Work has been moving along quickly on the glass and brick curtain wall of One Wiloughby Square, aka 420 Albee Square, a 495-foot-tall office skyscraper in Downtown Brooklyn. The 34-story reinforced concrete structure is the tallest new office building in Brooklyn and will yield 500,000 square feet of Class A office space.

[New York Yimby](#)

## RENOVATION PLANNED

WASHINGTON — A joint venture of Network Realty Partners and Meadow Partners hopes to start work in July on a major overhaul of an 11-story office building that lost its anchor tenant to new space near L'Enfant Plaza. The plan calls to expand the 300,000-square-foot office building, expansion to around 420,244 square feet. The building

was developed in 1969, putting it in a class of commodity office properties that are now struggling to attract tenants in the face of a wave of newer development. The building has been configured with a fair amount of flexibility baked in so that tenants have the ability, for example, to connect multiple floors internally by staircases.

[Washington Business Journal](#)

## WATERSIDE OFFICE VACATED

HARTFORD, Conn. — Health insurer Cigna Corp. is making multiple local real estate moves that will shift more employees to its Bloomfield corporate headquarters, which is currently undergoing a \$90-million-plus renovation. Cigna is leaving 125,000 square feet at Windsor's 3 Waterside Crossing office building, which currently houses 300 IT employees. Cigna announced plans to do a major renovation of its corporate office last year, which will include the purchase of new furniture and IT equipment as well as renovating the inside of the building and creating more conference rooms and flexible office space to add a 5,310-square-foot addition to the 5,900-square-foot building.

[Hartford Business Journal](#)

## MARRIOTT TOWER HALTED

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, Md. — At least seven construction sites have temporarily ceased operation after workers tested positive for COVID-19 or displayed symptoms of the virus. The list includes Marriott's future global headquarters in Downtown Bethesda, an office tower at Pike & Rose in North Bethesda and an indoor renovation at the science building on Montgomery College's Germantown Campus.

[WJLA](#)

## SOUTH

## PEPSI MAKES WAY FOR NEW BUILD

CHARLESTON, S.C. — The developer of a \$35 million office building under construction on Charleston's upper peninsula recently paid \$8.05 million for the nearby Pepsi distribution plant site, where a mixed-use development is planned. A mix of uses including apartments, office and retail is planned for the site in a future phase now in conceptual development. Pepsi is expected to vacate the site it's called home since the early 1960s within 18 months.

[The Post and Courier](#)

## FUNDING COMPLETE



NASHVILLE, Tenn. — GBT Realty Corporation completed its capital stack for its Class-A office tower ONE22ONE. Site work at the 0.77-acre site at 1221 Broadway began in February. GBT recently finalized its development plans to peak at 24 stories with 356,000 square feet of leasable space. Actively marketing the approximately 15,000 square feet of retail space at ground level that will further connectivity and street activation throughout the urban district.

[RE Journals](#)

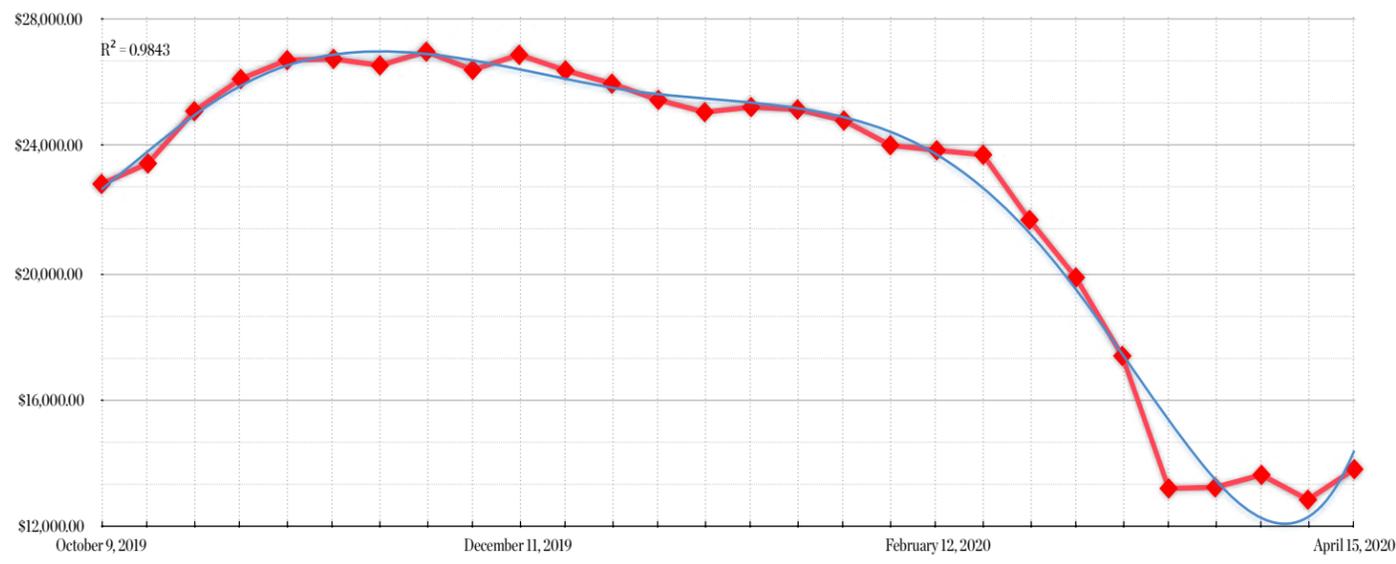
*Compiled by Emily Clingman*

BoF

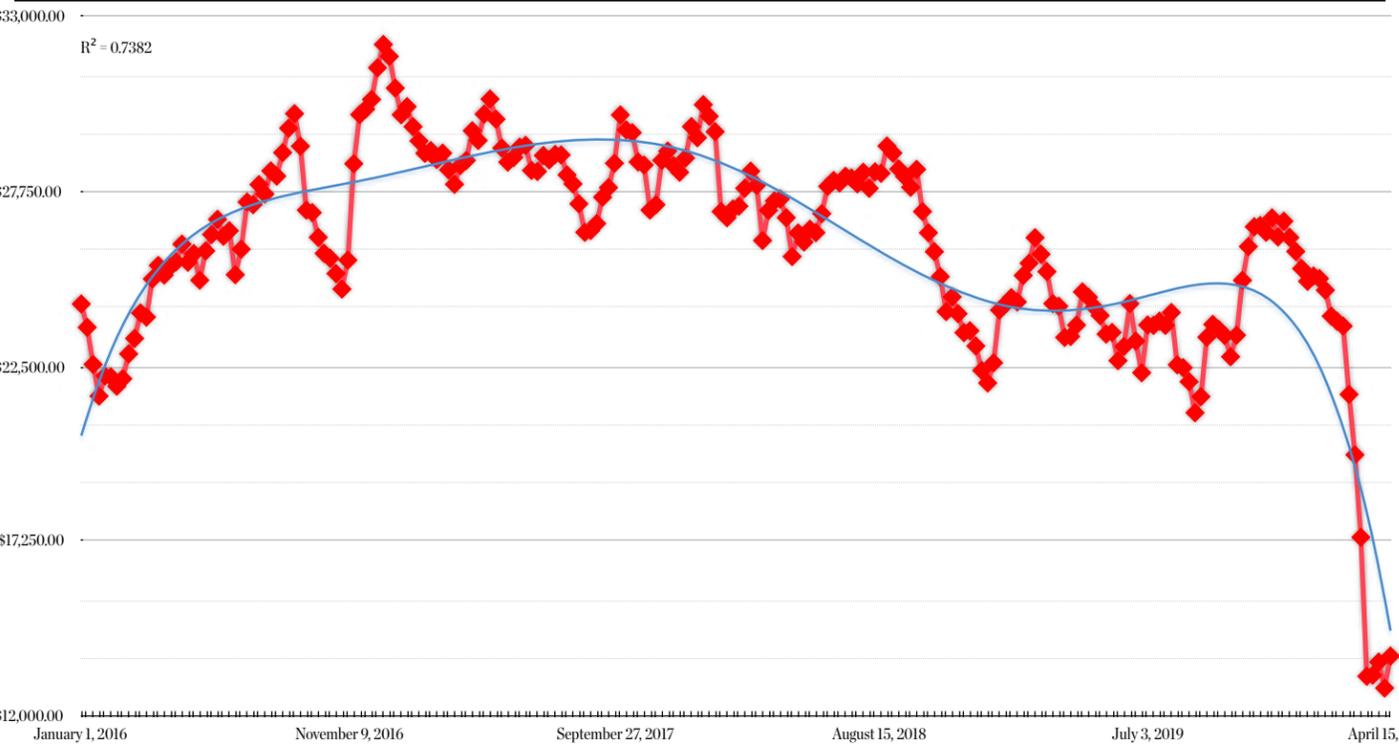
ALL TIME | January 1, 2016 BoF Industry Index Start: \$24,379.54  
 YEAR TO DATE | April 15, 2020 Yearly Start: \$25,443.00 (2019 Ended Up +15.31%)

**CURRENT VALUE** **\$13,814.16**  
**TOTAL GAIN / LOSS** **-10,565.38 (-43.34%)**  
**2020 YTD GAIN / LOSS** **-11,628.84 (-45.71%)**

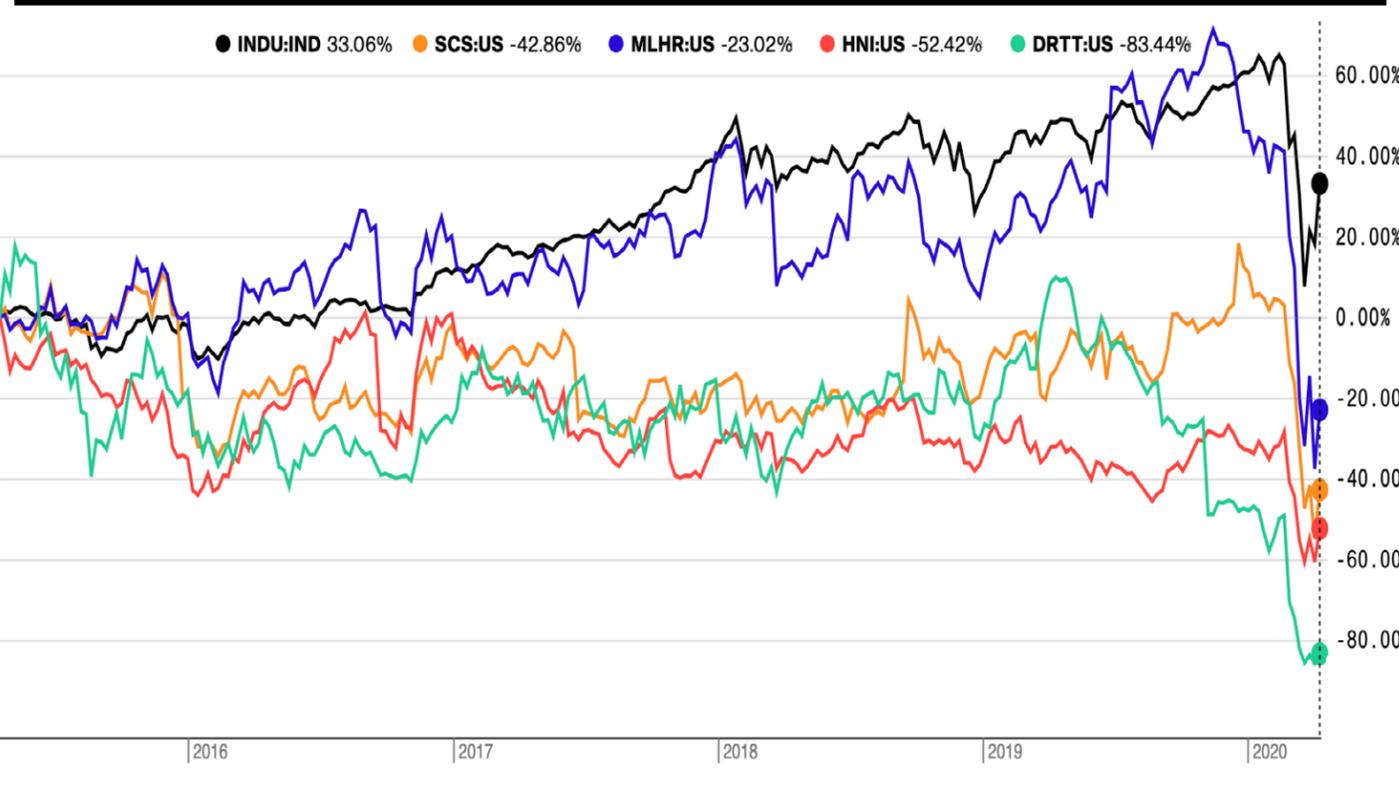
▲ SYMBOL	PRICE	CHANGE	TOTAL GAIN	1D GAIN	OPEN	PREV CLOSE	VOLUME	MARKET CAP	DAY RANGE	52WK RANGE
<b>DRTT:US</b> DIRTT Environm...	1.01 20:00	+0.99% +0.01	-85.45% -593.00	+0.99% +0.99	1.06	1.00	67,309	85.53M	1.01 - 1.07	0.71 - 6.90
<b>FLXS:US</b> Flexsteel Indust...	9.45 20:00	+0.96% +0.09	-78.61% -3,473.00	+0.96% +9.00	9.52	9.36	63,363	75.52M	9.26 - 9.84	9.26 - 25.81
<b>HNI:US</b> HNI Corp	25.32 20:04	+0.96% +0.24	-29.78% -1,074.00	+0.96% +24.00	26.06	25.08	149,186	1.08B	25.20 - 26.34	16.61 - 42.90
<b>INQ:CN</b> Inscape Corp	0.78 16:10	+0.00% +0.00	-74.00% -159.83	+0.00% +0.00	—	0.78	1,000	11.22M	—	0.60 - 1.95
<b>KBAL:US</b> Kimball Internati...	11.76 20:00	-5.08% -0.63	+20.37% +199.00	-5.08% -63.00	12.49	12.39	139,061	432.80M	11.65 - 12.57	8.19 - 22.40
<b>KEQU:US</b> Kewaunee Scie...	8.00 20:00	+2.83% +0.22	-55.03% -979.00	+2.83% +22.00	7.70	7.78	3,823	22.00M	7.70 8.00	6.96 - 23.00
<b>KNL:US</b> Knoll Inc	10.69 20:04	-3.08% -0.34	-43.14% -811.00	-3.08% -34.00	11.30	11.03	509,176	541.48M	10.60 - 11.59	7.74 - 28.30
<b>LEG:US</b> Leggett & Platt L...	29.02 20:04	+1.19% +0.34	-30.94% -1,300.00	+1.19% +34.00	28.88	28.68	1,077,924	3.84B	28.62 - 29.66	22.03 - 55.42
<b>MLHR:US</b> Herman Miller Inc	20.73 20:00	-1.19% -0.25	-27.77% -797.00	-1.19% -25.00	21.51	20.98	591,606	1.22B	20.31 - 21.86	14.39 - 49.87
<b>SCS:US</b> Steelcase Inc	9.93 20:04	-1.97% -0.20	-33.36% -497.00	-1.97% -20.00	10.39	10.13	919,724	1.16B	9.84 - 10.57	7.02 - 23.02
<b>TILE:US</b> Interface Inc	9.26 20:00	+1.31% +0.12	-51.62% -988.00	+1.31% +12.00	9.44	9.14	640,942	542.24M	9.12 - 9.73	5.06 - 17.68
<b>VIRC:US</b> Virco Manufactu...	2.41 20:00	-0.41% -0.01	-27.63% -92.00	-0.41% -1.00	2.36	2.42	5,452	37.87M	2.36 - 2.51	1.82 - 5.00



BoF Industry Index - Since Jan 1, 2016



Five Years - Major Industry Stocks



# The 35th Annual Interior Design Hall of Fame Gala was Held in December 2019 at the River Pavilion, Javits Center NYC, and Now it is a COVID-19 Hospital. That is Surreal!



**These times are unprecedented and communication is our life line.** I have received so many nice e-mails from our clients and candidates around the country who follow me on social media or see me on TV. Thank you! I decided to dedicate this week's column to sharing my own self-quarantine experience in New York City, the epicenter of the coronavirus outbreak.

TVG offices are in mid-town Manhattan in a skyscraper on Sixth Avenue. On a "normal" weekday morning I would walk through Rockefeller Center and see people from all over the country standing outside the TODAY show studios,

cheering on Hoda and Savannah. By coincidence, Herman Miller's NYC showroom and office was in the same building as us, until they moved all the divisions downtown to their own building. I'd run into Herman Miller people on the elevator and, as a headhunter, you can imagine the interesting conversations that we had. And I can see the Knoll showroom and executive offices diagonally from my own office window now. In other words, we're in the center of the action.

At TVG we have private offices because we are interviewing candidates in person which does not lend itself to "open office" or benching

systems, as you can imagine. All TVG employees started working from home at the end of March. I have never worked from home before. Good recruiting does not lend itself to being home because you want to interview candidates in person whenever possible, but we will make it work. At TVG we have daily team meetings via Zoom instead of holding them in our conference room and we now interview candidates on the telephone and Skype or Zoom instead of in person. Like all of you, we wonder when this will be over.

I live in Manhattan on the upper west side near Central Park. A block



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](#).

away is the landmark building called The Dakota. Built in 1885, it's famously known as the building where John Lennon lived until he was murdered on the sidewalk in front of the building and it's also the location of the movie Rosemary's Baby. What is like to be in New York City during a pandemic? Scary for sure, but not as bad as you might think. I have a spacious 2 floor, 3 bedroom apartment and more space to roam around in than some friends have in a regular house. I am truly blessed.

Think of this, it blows my mind: Jacob Javits Convention Center in NYC that was the location of the Interior Design Hall of Fame Dinner less than 4 months ago is now a 2,500 bed coronavirus hospital. Maybe the table I sat at is now where a ventilator sits. And the Javits Center is also the same location I would have been in May for ICFF. Unreal right? Then Central Park, which is at the end of my street and where I jog around the reservoir each morning, is now set up with hospital tents and there's a frenzied group of heroic doctors, nurses and first-responders working to save virus victims. Many people have left the City during the crisis, to stay at their country homes or to move back into their parent's home in the suburbs but I feel safe here, in the city never sleeps - and by the way, I am having a hard time sleeping myself!

Here is how we do social distancing in NYC. The Trader Joe's near me only allows 25 people in the store at one time and all employees must wear masks and now, installed just yesterday, they have plexiglass partitions built around each cashier and an "X" marked on the floor so we keep a certain distance apart. Costco the same (yes we have one Costco

in NYC!). There are lines but with a game on my smart phone it goes fast, and I keep telling myself it's temporary. I am a bit neurotic so I bought masks when you could still get them, and plenty of latex gloves. Here is a tip for you, when you do have to be out wear your glasses or sunglasses at all times, to protect your eyes!

I spend my work day on the phone with clients, and they all seem busy. I work from my Womb chair. That is my home office, if I tire of that chair I move to another room and to my Eames chair. That's all I need for my home office. Many are frustrated that they need to furlough or let people go. Mostly everyone has taken a pay cut, including me. Candidates who have lost jobs, call too. Most of the people released so far are not in sales or revenue generating positions. Yet everyone is scared. I explain to people who call who lost their jobs how to apply for unemployment insurance, and then how to find their next job, on their own. I tell them to be a little flexible on salary requirements as they look for a new job. Companies are still planning on hiring between June and September and none of the searches we have been retained for have been put on hold. How can that be? It is because companies still need good people and they always will. Smart HR departments want to be prepared for when the market returns. Sadly, some of the stories I hear make me think that some sales people that were let go under the guise of COVID 19 were really an opportunity for a company to down size or to get rid of sales people that have not been performing.

How am I emotionally? A wreck, probably just like you. The cat and mouse of the virus is getting to me.

Will I get it? If I cough I wonder: do I have it? Business outlook: seems OK now but will it continue? Can't sleep and watching too much TV. Worried about my son who lives in California and hoping he is taking this pandemic as seriously as I am. TVG is located in NYC but our searches are all over the country, currently in Grand Rapids, San Francisco, Texas, North Carolina and Atlanta. Many areas are not yet hard hit like NYC. We sold a search this week in Salt Lake City and the client was a floorcovering company and they were asking me questions about NYC, like they barely knew there was a pandemic. So I hear different perspectives from everywhere across the U.S. I worry about my clients and the candidates we have placed over the years and wonder how I can help them. Finally, I do a lot of praying. My church has a Facebook page and I virtually "attend" a 5:30 Mass each day. I need it. Checking in with my God every day works for me.

Finally I have a large social media following and presence on Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn and I reach out to my followers each day. I have been to the TV studio to tape workplace segments for the syndicated TV show "Inside Edition" and I am still a regular on the morning TV circuit so I hope you will watch for me on TV.

Hey, thanks for listening. So tell me how you are doing, write me or even call the office. Yes, I am around and happy to share my advice and we can exchange stories. It really helps. Next week I am back to my regular format so keep those workplace and job questions coming!

Stephen

# April 2020: How Will This Month Define You?



Have a suggestion for the column? Please email Sid at [sid.meadows@embark-cct.com](mailto:sid.meadows@embark-cct.com)

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

**It's 4:30 a.m. as I write this column, which seems to be my new norm. Up around 3:30 am, take the dogs out, make some coffee then head into my office to work. Sometimes I read or listen to a podcast, work on business plans and ideas, email, or sometimes I just sit in silence.**

This morning I read an article written by my college roommate and long-time friend, Joe. In his article, "What Can Be?" he shares his belief that what we are all going through right now is a "defining moment in our history" and I couldn't agree more. It's a defining moment not just in our history, but in our lives.

In one year, when you look back to April 2020, what will you see? What will you remember? What will your family, children, friends, colleagues and clients remember, about you? Just for a moment, ponder this question.

## Who are you going to be?

Do I want to get up at 3:30 a.m.? No, but it's my new norm. Why? Well, the answer is not what you think. I'm sure most of you believe

it's because I'm scared and worried, and I am. Just like the rest of you, I'm worried about my business, my team, my family and more. This is real, this is happening to us, and it's happening now.

But that's not what wakes me up. What gets me out of bed, well before the chickens across the street (my neighbors have an obnoxious rooster that starts crowing at 5 a.m.), is excitement and joy. Before I even get out of bed, my mind is racing with all the things I get to do today — so much so that I get up and start doing.

You see, I'm making the most of this moment. I'm defining the moment — it's NOT defining me. I choose joy! I choose to serve. I choose to move forward. And, I'm doing it in a new way and making an impact in my life and the lives of others.

## What do you choose?

I am not stuck in quarantine. I'm stuck in the middle of an amazing gift — the gift of April 2020. The gift of connecting with my family in a new way. The gift of reinventing my business. The gift of serving our community and its people. I could go on and on about the many gifts I've been given at this moment, but the most important gift I've been given is choice.

## What gifts have you been given?

While reading Joe's article, I realized I had become what he calls an "April Innovator." I'm using this time to "springboard to create a new way of looking at the world and business." I'm embracing grit, perseverance, hard work, creativity, innovation — and I'm being a disruptor. "I'm driven by faith, hope and the belief in the power of joy. It's the knowledge, quite simply put, that everything is going to be OK." Because it will be OK, and if you tackle this challenge head on, you will come out on the other side in a better position and a better person.

## What actions are you taking?

Right now, moving into action is one of the most important

things you can do and there are lots of options. Are you working on a new idea, project or initiative to serve your customers or are you binge watching NetFlix? Are you expanding your knowledge and skills right now or are you glued to the gloom and doom of the news channels? Are you having meaningful conversations with your customers and family or are you moping around pondering how bad this all is? Your actions and your mindset are everything — and people are watching you and your actions

I'm working longer hours, in smarter ways and harder than I have ever before — and I'm having more fun. Yes, more fun and I'm more excited than I thought possible. The world is full of choices and the actions you take now could define you for a long time — so let it define you the right way.

## How do you get moving?

I get it. It can be hard to get motivated and move everyday and show up as your best self. But my encouragement to you is to focus on these things, in this order:

- Fuel your soul: First thing when you wake up, find the gratitude for the day, pray or

meditate — do something to get your soul in the right place. Do something to fuel your soul.

- Fuel your mind: Get your mind activated. Read, listen to a podcast or something that will invigorate your mind and put your mindset in a positive place. Do something to fuel your mind.

- Fuel your body: Get moving, even if for just a few minutes. Walk, jog, run, exercise. Do something to fuel your body.

Remember, you have a choice of how you are going to show up and lead. Make the right choice. Join me and my friend Joe, and become an April Innovator. Embrace the gifts you have been given and move forward. Make a positive impact, everyday, on you, your family, your friends, your colleagues, your team and your organization.

When you look back on April 2020, what will you see? How will you define this time in history?

*Be well and stay safe friends and make this your moment. Please visit my blog, [www.sidmeadows.com](http://www.sidmeadows.com), and share your thoughts and ideas on how you are going to make this one of the best, most impactful months of your life!*

**LONDON (NEW DATE)**

**Clerkenwell Design Week**  
July 14-26, 2020



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

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

**GUANGZHOU, CHINA**

**CIFF**  
July 27-30, 2020



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

[www.ciff.furniture](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 and the fair continues to attract more and more trade visitors annually. One of the major highlights of EFE2020 is the inauguration of the "Office Furniture Hall" with the latest innovative and modern creative office furniture.

[www.efemy](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



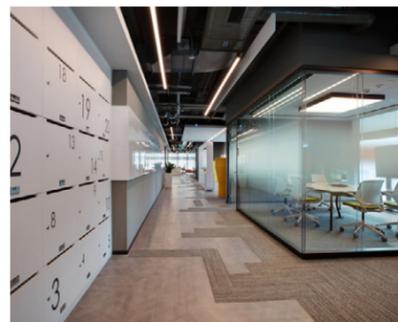
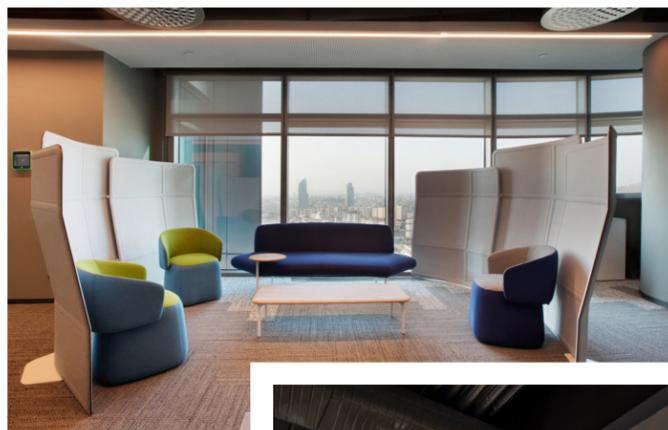
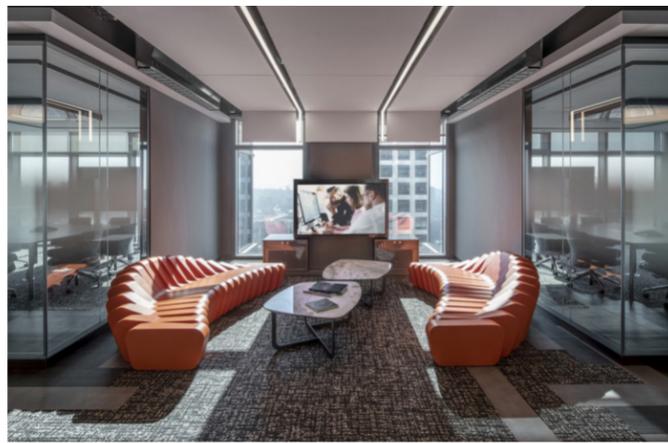
**EDspaces** is where innovations are unveiled and collaborations form, bringing together education's creative change agents who plan, design and manage innovative learning spaces. Leaders from school districts and colleges, architects, interior designers, distributors and exhibitors will engage and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

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

EVENT	DATE & LOCATION
<b>HDEXPO</b> HD Expo is designed to take your professional development to the next level. Manufacturers unique to HD Expo debut their latest products; where industry leaders share their insights and knowledge on and off the show floor; and where networking leads to game-changing collaborations. <a href="http://www.hdexpo.com">http://www.hdexpo.com</a>	May 5-7, 2020 Las Vegas
<b>ICFF</b> For over 30 years, ICFF has built a solid reputation as North America's premier residential and commercial interior design showcase. Attracting visitors from over 68 countries, ICFF brings together a cross-section of the industry to showcase what's next and what's best for luxury residential and commercial interiors. <a href="http://www.icff.com">http://www.icff.com</a>	May 17-20, 2020 New York City
<b>NEOCON</b> NeoCon is the world's leading platform for commercial design and the annual gathering of over 50,000 design professionals and end-users. Marking its 51st edition, NeoCon continues to be the industry's launch pad for innovation - showcasing game-changing products, services, and emerging talent, and providing unparalleled access to the most cutting-edge solutions. <a href="http://www.neocon.com">http://www.neocon.com</a>	June 8-10, 2020 Chicago
<b>CLERKENWELL DESIGN WEEK (NEW DATE)</b> 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. <a href="http://www.clerkenwelldesignweek.com">http://www.clerkenwelldesignweek.com</a>	July 14-16, 2020 London
<b>CHINA INTERNATIONAL FURNITURE FAIR, CIFF (PHASE TWO) (NEW DATE)</b> 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. <a href="http://www.ciff.furniture">http://www.ciff.furniture</a>	July 27-30, 2020 Guangzhou, China
<b>EXPORT FURNITURE EXHIBITION (NEW DATE)</b> 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. <a href="http://www.efemy/">http://www.efemy/</a>	Aug 27-29 2020 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
<b>DOMOTEX ASIA (NEW DATE)</b> 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. <a href="http://www.domotexasiachinafloor.com">http://www.domotexasiachinafloor.com</a>	Aug 31 - Sept 2, 2020 Shanghai, China
<b>ORGATEC 2020</b> 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. <a href="http://www.orgatec.com">http://www.orgatec.com</a>	October 27-31, 2020 Cologne, Germany

**Cancelled / Postponed Notes:**

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



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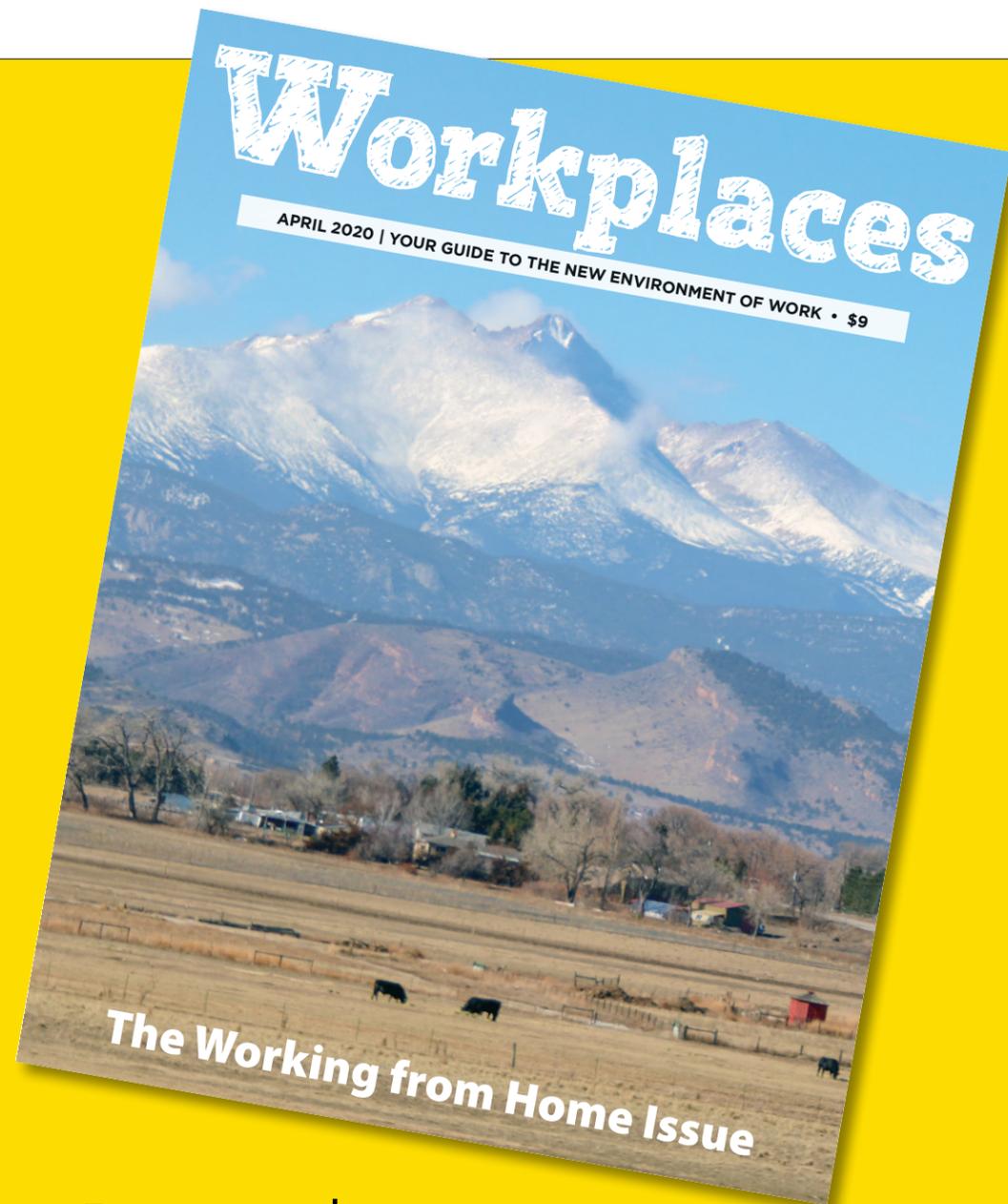


**SAP Offices – Istanbul**

Mimaristudio implemented a human-centric design concept to better engage employees at SAP's offices in Istanbul, Turkey. Mimaristudio realized the project's interior design concept, design, and studies, led by SAP's Global Real Estate and Facilities Management Team. SAP Turkey's new head office with 1,800 square meters followed an approach that has changed the physical workspace as well as work culture and habits. The project has created a working environment and living space that combines SAP's innovative, human-centric face with its global design criteria.

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FIRM: **mimaristudio**  
 CLIENT: **SAP**  
 SCOPE: **Office**  
 LOCATION: **Istanbul, Turkey**  
 INDUSTRY: **Software Development**



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MAKERS

## How VariDesk Became Vari: An Interview with CEO Jason McCann

VARIDESK STARTED WORKING WITH EXPERTS THAT WORKED WITH OTHER COMPANIES ON TRANSITIONING THEIR BRANDING, INCLUDING ONE WHICH HELPED FEDERAL EXPRESS GO TO FEDEX.

by Rob Kirkbride

**When Varidesk launched** a few short years ago, it began with a single product — a simple desk riser. To say it was a success is a gross understatement. More than 3 million people around the world use that initial product.

Then the Dallas-based company did something more companies should: It listened to its fans who asked it to create total workspaces that elevate people. If the company was to follow its fans' advice, the Varidesk brand would have to change. Varidesk was a great name for the company when it was just making desks, but as a workplace company, it was limiting, said Chief Executive Officer Jason McCann.

“We’ve got a great net promoter score, I think it’s 82 right now,” he said. “We’ve got great brand recognition. So we went down a process and said, ‘What are our options there? Is there something we need to do?’ ”

Varidesk started working with experts that worked with other companies on transitioning their branding, including one which helped Federal Express go to FedEx.

“We interviewed current customers, potential customers, and we shared the idea: Could we become Vari?” McCann said. “It resonated so well with people and tested so great.”

It took more than a year to get the new branding in place and fit all the pieces together to make the change from Varidesk to Vari. The new name works well because flexibility is increasingly important in the workplace, which is designed to ebb and flow, McCann said. Customers are looking for different things as well, including shorter term leases and spaces that transform on a dime for them. Again, Vari works.

“I think we’ve got well over 200 products today in our offering for clients,” McCann said. “We really think about workspace as a whole, and wherever work is today. And our product roadmap has over 300-plus new product ideas in our vision, as we think about the workspace of the future.”

While Vari as a company and brand is changing rapidly, the way it does business and the “continuous focus on the end customer ... isn’t changing at all,” McCann said.

Still, the rebranding is important to drive home what is different about the company. Everyone thinks of Vari as the creators of Varidesk, but they might not recognize it has soft seating, conference tables, walls, LED lighting and conference tables.

The switch to Vari allows the company to “elevate,” McCann said. The way it operates won’t change, but it will take work for the company to build awareness about the branding. In many ways, Vari will build on the success of Varidesk. Vari has grown and evolved since it was launched. It was different in the industry because it started out by selling to individuals. While that personal connection remains important — and unique — it also works closely with its corporate clients on outfitting offices and entire floorplates.

Initially, customers were buying a Varidesk because they suffered from back pain, but the majority of them were shipped into large companies. Less than 20% were going to homes and about 80% were being brought into work. McCann calls it BYOD — bring your own desk to work. That initial ripple turned into a wave. Companies saw their workers were more produc-



tive, and they wanted more from Varidesk.

“We simply elevated our vision to really more of a business-to-business model as opposed to a business-to-end-user model,” he said. “So if you think about it, clients were initially purchasing them for themselves. They might have used their own money. They might have had a budget where they procured it from. The model was elevated to where we work with corporations, and they are buying a lot of the products for themselves.”

The product mix grew from the simple desk riser to a collection of office furniture. The company let its customers direct its product development based on other pain points inside the organization, McCann said.

Vari has a very entrepreneurial spirit so it was able to help like-minded customers. That’s when the company started to add things like anti-fatigue mats, monitor arms, standing-height conference tables, walls and other products for rapidly growing businesses.

Vari was experiencing the same growing pains as many of its customers, so the company knew what was needed. McCann said, “Our clients would tour our headquarters and say, ‘I want this.’ And they were pointing around the room, and what they weren’t describing was one product, they





were describing the energy of the space. And all of our products and our people create that. And so that's how our vision transformed to creating workspaces that elevate people.”

Still, having a direct relationship with all of its customers is very important to Vari. That interaction isn't going anywhere, McCann said. He considers it a real strength.

“So you start with one product, you earn the right to do business,” he said. “I need to everyday wake up and earn the right for you and I to do business together. I've got to honor my commitments to you, and vice versa. And then as the relationship gets stronger, I can help you with your growing pains and as your business needs change. That relationship and that direct line of communication has elevated us.”

That trust allowed Vari to add services like design and space planning. Then clients started asking for installation. It's not something McCann envisioned, but having that direct relationship with the customer added to Vari's offerings.

The relationship, the listening, the transparency and being authentic from a core value standpoint are “just the way we operate,” McCann said, and are what let Vari help customers on their journeys.

“So it's allowed me to get new product ideas and start down the path of now providing services,” he said. “It's obviously allowed us to scale and grow our business very fast. A lot of companies are now aware of us, which is good. It's just taking care of one customer at a time, one order at a time, one fan at a time, earning that order every day and not breaking that bond of trust that you have with a fan base.”

Following the formula has helped build Vari into a formidable business in the office furniture industry, but McCann sees more areas where the company can grow. Work from home was already a big piece of its business and is poised for expansion. And the company has just scratched the surface on schools and educational furniture. He said all the areas in the workplace are fair game based upon listening to its customers.

McCann said from a business model standpoint, he thinks Vari can live beyond his lifetime: “I believe we have an opportunity to build one of the great brands of creating workspaces — one of the great workplace innovation companies.” **BoF**



MAKERS

## Loftwall Is Thriving on Incredible Ideas and American Grit

LOFTWALL PROVIDES PRIVACY — SPECIALIZING IN SPACE DIVISION WITH PRODUCTS LIKE ROOM DIVIDERS, COUNTER SHIELDS AND SOUND CONTROL PANELS.

by Emily Clingman

**Flashback to January.** Dallas-based Loftwall had its sights set high for 2020. The company had a robust pipeline it was excited about, a lease had just been signed for its debut at NeoCon this summer. Everything was looking up, and Loftwall was on pace to double its business.

“And then all this happened,” said Bryce Stuckenschneider, CEO of Loftwall. “For about two days, I was scared and depressed, unsure, then I kind of woke up from it, and I wondered why can’t we be part of the solution? I don’t know why this has to derail us. So, we pulled together the leadership team, and I presented four or five things that I thought we could do to thrive through this.”

Loftwall provides privacy — specializing in space division with products like room dividers, counter shields and sound control panels. Anticipating hospitals would be overwhelmed by the Corona virus crisis, Stuckenschneider and his team, in the course of two weeks, restructured “everything,” he said. Before the pandemic, health care sales accounted for about 10% of Loftwall’s sales. Now, health care business accounts for about 90%.

“When Dallas County issued a shelter-in-place order a few weeks ago, we had to determine how essential we were,” Stuckenschneider said. “So, I had to talk with people in government ... eventually I connected with my state rep, who answered my call out of the blue, and he talked with me for 45 minutes. He talked me through the situation, what his interpretation of the order is, etcetera. Then I explained to him what we do, and he deemed us absolutely essential, and he said he was going to prove that. Think about it. Government and local officials are being leaned on to solve problems they never had to solve before — like commandeer the convention center and transform it into an infirmary. I told him we can do that with our products, and that we are a good U.S.A. story — we’re staying open, we are helping the cause. Then the flood gates opened.”

Loftwall is focusing on three main products for immediate health care assistance — pods, walls and counter guards.

“We’ve always sold walls like this, but usually with acoustic finishes and pretty designs,” he said. “In this case, we had to come up with something that could be made fast, cheap and bleach cleanable. It was a pivot on materials, but the core of what we did for the pop-up spaces was already in place.”

The counter shield, or sneeze guard to describe it better, was developed in two days. It’s a product that already exists in Loftwall’s line, but a customer called wondering if it was available in a miniature version for her retail location.



Loftwall Healthcare makeshift facility

“And we thought, this person is not alone,” Stuckenschneider said. “We spent the entire day working on making it to scale and affordable — because people don’t want to pay \$500 for these things right now. Wednesday morning, we launched it, and it’s Thursday afternoon right now, and we have 100s of orders for them. That came out of the last 48 hours.”

Speed is key right now.

Loftwall already was proud of its lead times of five to seven days, which is “lightning-fast” in the industry, Stuckenschneider said, but that’s not fast enough today. “Now we’re shipping things in 24 hours, which is like the speed of Amazon,” he said.

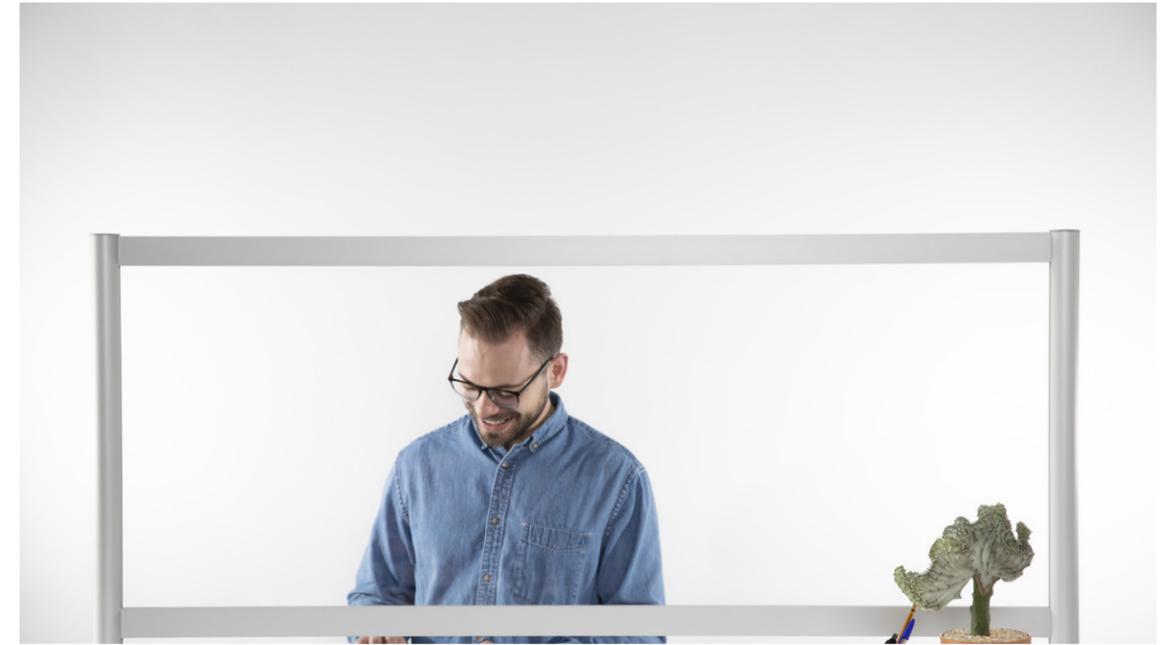
Stuckenschneider noted because people aren’t buying desks, chairs and conference tables, the market is on Loftwall’s side right now, and there’s an opportunity for smaller companies. “If they can deliver with speed and flexibility, they will win bids over larger companies that can’t regroup and retool so quickly,” he said.

Stuckenschneider said the key for the team at Loftwall, “is to be completely willing to completely abandon the thing you did yesterday.” Luckily, he says, the team is willing to roll with the punches and its mantra is “whatever it takes.”

“We’re believing in what we’re doing,” he said.

When thinking about what the future holds for the industry, of course, Stuckenschneider is unsure, but he anticipates a disruption.

“This will be a 9-11-type event where you date time by it, meaning things



Loftwall CounterShield

were a certain way in the world before 9-11 and then certain ways changed afterward,” he said. “But I don’t think the world was worse after 9-11. In a lot of ways, our world got better and safer. It’s incredibly sad to know as many people will get sick and die for us to change some things that we probably should have changed all along.”

So, what does it mean for our industry?

“I’m not positive, but I think our industry was ready for a shake-up anyway,” Stuckenschneider said. “Realizing people need on-demand things, I’m curious to see who can solve problems quickly and be willing to be wrong. It’s hard because there is a lot at stake. If we weren’t willing to be wrong, we wouldn’t have made a lot of decisions we have made in the last few weeks.”

Stuckenschneider suggests looking to one’s team for new ideas moving forward.

“I’d say the last 10 good decisions we made in the past few weeks, eight or nine of them came from places I would not have expected,” he said. “And I don’t know that, if things were normal in the world, I would have stopped to listen. I haven’t always been a great listener. When I think of a few things we’ve done in recent weeks, like pumped up the sales team in a certain way, and made a few changes to the website, none of those were my ideas. It was maybe because I was so desperate for us to survive and thrive, that I was interested in any idea. So, remember, you’ve got a whole workforce that probably has some incredible ideas.” **BoF**

## TABLES

## Studio TK Introduces Havn Table Series



Studio TK has launched the Havn Table Series designed by Busk+Hertzog. This new offering of occasional tables complements the Havn seating collection, also created by Busk+Hertzog.

“After the successful introduction of Havn, we wanted to create some side tables that were equally versatile and multi-purpose as the Havn lounge series,” said Stephan B. Hertzog, co-founder of the Busk+Hertzog design studio. “The tables needed to match Havn seating’s endless configuration options – fabric, color, wood type. Drawing on some of the design principles from Havn Lounge, we created a small series of truly universal tables. These tables complement Havn both in design and functionality but, at the same time, work perfectly on their own or together with other lounge furniture, within or outside the Studio TK collection.”

The Havn seating and tables collection is designed around a craft aesthetic, noted Charlie Bell, Studio TK president. “Its clean lines and minimalist aesthetic suit the contemporary character of modern commercial interiors,” he said. “The intrinsic beauty in Havn is its ability to be applied to different environments to yield different outcomes. Through the use of a closely shared visual language, Havn performs well as a collection, but as individual elements within an interior, the details and function start to shine through.”

Wood legs on Havn tables visually harmonize with Havn lounge legs, and enable the tables to complement other lounge collections. Top options include veneer and laminate.

Square occasional, rectangular occasional and round tables are offered in heights of 16 and 20 inches. Square tables are 22 by 22 inches. Rectangular table sizes include 22 by 32 inches and 22 by 40 inches. Round tables are available in three diameters – 22, 30 and 36 inches.

## SEATING

## Werksy Blossoms in with New Quilt Collection



OM’s award-winning Werksy chairs blossom with a dozen new Quilt Collection colors designed by the OM Design Group.

Available in a palette ranging from dusky DeerBrook to red hot Apple Orchard and calming Bermuda, the Werksy Quilt Collection adds another level of comfort and flair to a chair celebrated for its charm and function.

More than a traditional task chair, Werksy is inspired by the unconventional – and now unprecedented – ways people work. Paying tribute to classic form while celebrating the simplicity of post-adjust-everything task chairs, Werksy provides seating comfort without sacrificing its seamless surface flow and ultra-functional moveability.

The Werksy Collection includes guest seating with a natural waterfall backrest ledge; a light task seating chair with a tilting mechanism for extra comfort; a height-adjustable stool with a turn-lock footring; and a group-work oriented rocking chair that is height-adjustable and has an auto-return swivel.

Werksy is available in three shell colors: Modern Black, Palladium Grey and Arctic White. The new Quilt Collection, offered as fully upholstered or seat-only, is available in Raven, Stone Pine, DeerBrook, Laluna, Lake Breeze, Vineyard, Haven, Bermuda, Palmetto, Marigold, Sunny Grove and Apple Orchard.

## TEXTILES

## Interlock from Concertex

Leading Concertex’s studio into a new era of design, Design Director Aaron Mensik set out to alter all preconceived notions of coated fabrics. With a strong textile background, Mensik focused on creating products that merge coated construction with woven sensibility. The outcome produced Interlock, an elegant and dimensional polyurethane that seamlessly combines the two opposing concepts into one design.

Taking a cue from crafted textiles, Interlock is a sophisticated-looking polyurethane reminiscent of intertwining braids. The face of 100% polyurethane is layered over a polyester foam backing and ultra-sonically embossed to create a quilted, dimensional motif.

Durability is not compromised as Interlock boasts more than 100,000 double rubs and has a graffiti-free finishing to withstand the rigorous demands of high-traffic interiors. Available in a palette of stylish hues and neutrals, it comes in a 52-inch size.



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## SOFTWARE

## Special-T Updates Content for Industry Design Tools 20/20 Cap and GIZA, Project Matrix and the KITS Collaborator

Special-T, manufacturer of tables and related products for the office workspace, recently updated its content for the 20/20 CAP & GIZA, Project Matrix and the KITS Collaborator design tools.

The new content, which was released April 1, includes updated prices and an extensive array of new products, including the Cast Iron 2.0 line of tables for break rooms and cafés, the Liberty Electric height-adjustable table, Relax occasional tables and adjustable monitor arms.

The update for 20/20 CAP & GIZA is available on the April update disk distributed by 20/20 or it can be downloaded from the 20/20 website, [www.2020.net](http://www.2020.net). The updates for Project Matrix and the KITS Collaborator are available from their websites: <https://projectmatrix.com/> and <https://www.kisp.com/kits>.



## SOFTWARE

## 2020 Office Inspiration Awards for Office Designers

Entries are being accepted for the 2020 Office Inspiration Awards for office designers in North America using 2020 Visual Impression.

“With current events as they exist, and especially with so many people working now from home, this is a great opportunity for our customers to show off their design skills and submit their best work for a chance to shine,” said Amanda Sharpe, 2020 Office customer care manager.

Designers can submit their work in six categories, and there is an additional category for voters’ choice. The categories are:

- Educational Spaces — spaces that encourage learning in a classroom
- Wellness in Design — healthy spaces for the modern workplace
- Collaborative Designs — spaces that encourage synergy and teamwork
- Flexible Plans — multi-purpose spaces
- Home Office — productive spaces for working remotely
- Orange is the New Everything — incorporate the color orange into any space.

The top three designs with the most votes will be eligible for the Voter’s Choice Award.

Multiple submissions are encouraged, however, each submitted design must be unique. Each participant is only eligible to win once, and the winners will be chosen by a panel of 2020 judges.

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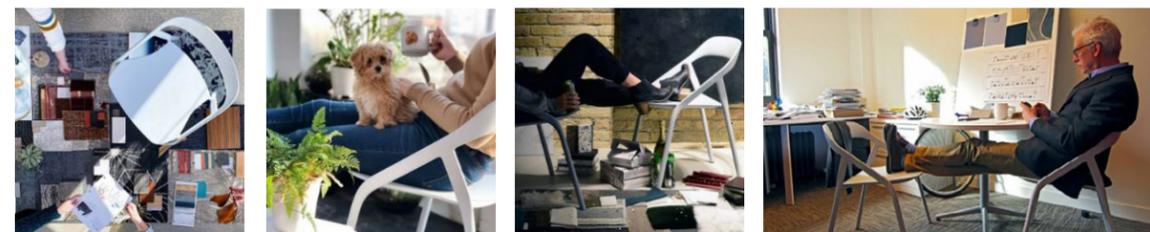
The contest opened April 13 and closes May 18. Each winner in each of the six categories will get a \$150 Amazon eGift card, the winner of the Voters’ Choice category will get a \$150 Amazon eGift card and two winners will be highlighted in a 2020 Customer Spotlight.

To learn more about the 2020 Office Inspiration awards, visit <https://www.2020spaces.com/2020products/2020visualimpression/inspiration-awards/>.

## MANUFACTURERS

## Meet the Winners of the LessThanFive Essentials Competition

To celebrate the launch of the new Essentials Series, six architecture and design firms around the country were asked to share snapshots of a day in the life of a LessThanFive chair.



To highlight the durable versatility and creative freedom the LessThanFive chair invites, competitors were asked to showcase three work modes capturing images that represented morning

focus and rejuvenation, afternoon creative collaboration and late night social connection.

Six firms — Eastlake Studio, FOX Architects, Gary Lee Partners, Gertler & Wentz Architects, Highland Associates and VVell Studio — participated in the competition and shared their photos on Instagram where they were put to a popular vote.

Week one sought inspiration for incorporating dedicated spaces for focus and rejuvenation. Whether sipping a cup of coffee in the morning or relaxing with your pet-friendly office's favorite four-legged employee, LessThanFive supports a range of settings that support focus and rejuvenation.

Creative collaboration pictures were sought for week two, as it's no secret modern work is driven by collaboration. A five-generation workforce and the shift away from traditional 9-5 hours have all changed the way we think, plan and innovate. LessThanFive gives offices tools to collaborate on the fly and create spaces where employees can interact across a variety of work styles.

Week three sought social connection pictures. Companies that provide comfortable spaces for employees to connect face-to-face promote rich relationships, support a sense of belonging and help people develop their interpersonal skills.

Claiming the winning spot in the LessThanFive Essentials competition with the highest number of overall votes was Eastlake Studio. From puppies to pizza parties, Eastlake showed the versatility of the LessThanFive chair and how it can support any workplace setting. Founded in 1987, Eastlake Studio, is an architecture and interior design firm focused on workplace, residential and retail interiors. Community and celebration play a key role in the Chicago-based firm's design and culture.

Winning the week three theme of social connection with the highest number of votes was Gary Lee Partners. The Chicago-based interior design collective founded in 1993 works to harness the power of space to elevate how people think, work and live within a physical environment.

#### SUPPLIERS

## The 3form Family of Companies are Launching the Align Program

➔ The 3form family of companies, including 3form, LightArt, EFI, and Springboard, are launching Align: a poignant platform of earth- and people-centric initiatives focused on three main pillars: people, product, and planet. The Align program represents the culmination of 17+ years of commitment to sustainability at 3form, and is an effective re-doubling of their efforts to pursue environmentally and socially responsible design. The companies strive to develop materials with intentionality that empower architects, designers, and consumers to make smart choices about how they buy and build. The three pillars—people, product, and planet—translate into practices: Optimizing current offerings and establishing protocols for the products of the future—not only reducing the companies' footprint, but contributing to the restoration of our planet and the betterment of human lives. Responding to this moment of urgency, Align is the next step toward net-positive manufacturing within the companies.

Under the guidance of Align, the companies aim to create net-positive products that will leave our planet in better condition.

Products meeting the Align standard will be labeled with the Align stamp—an instant indicator

of responsibly designed products, some carrying industry certifications such as Living Product Challenge, EPDs, Declare labels, and GreenGuard Gold. This allows architects and designers the opportunity to meet LEED v4.1, WELL and other green building challenges easily and transparently.

#### CAREERS

## Cliff Grendahl Joining Nook Pod as Special Project Manager

➔ Cliff Grendahl has joined the Nook Pod team as special projects manager for Nook's growth across North America.



Grendahl

“Cliff brings a wealth of experience and passion for the contract furniture industry to Nook, including recently working closely with dealer networks as dealer development manager for INDEAL,” said Stewart Brown of Nook. “We could not be more pleased that Cliff chose Nook as the home for the next stage in his career and (is) joining our team to bring new ways of working once we are all able to come together again.”

Nook makes mobile quiet-spaces for people to meet and work away from the noise of offices, events and public spaces.

#### CAREERS

## DLR Group Welcomes Business Development Leader

➔ Carol Duke has joined DLR Group as a principal and will lead national business development and strategy for the firm's Cultural+Performing Arts Studio.

Based in Washington, D.C., Duke has nearly three decades of experience in business development, focusing primarily on cultural and performing arts facilities.

“I love both the arts and architecture,” Duke said. “When I travel, including for work, I visit museums, theaters, college campuses and tour the best buildings — new and old — that define a local community. I also love to discuss architecture with design teams, clients, and anyone who will listen.”

Duke has held several leadership and committee positions and remains actively involved in organizations such as the American Institute of Architects, Society of College and University Planning and the Society of Marketing Professional Services.

#### REPRESENTATION

## Nevers Chooses New Rep for Utah

➔ Commercial furniture manufacturer Nevers Industries of Maple Grove, Minnesota, has named Interior Products Group of Salt Lake City as its new representative for the state of Utah.

Julie Wissler, Interior Products Group principal, inked an agreement with Nevers CEO Chris Evenstad that allows her company to promote and sell all of Nevers' product lines.

“This is an exciting opportunity for us to have such a talented, service-oriented company represent us in Utah,” Evenstad said. “Working together, I know we can provide Interior Products' customers with finely-crafted, U.S.-made commercial furniture that inspires companies and individuals to work in style.”

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

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

- Build relationships with contract furniture dealers in your territory
- Present Wyatt products and company to prospective dealers
- Specification, pricing and discounting for customers
- In-person, phone, e-mail and web conference communication with dealers
- Promoting the Wyatt movement with creative thinking and exceptional customer service.

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**For more information, contact Pat Zerbe at:**  
[patz@wyattseating.com](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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At **Bellow Press** we deliver a platform to reach facility managers, specifiers, interior designers, reps and dealers who seek insightful, strategic coverage of the contract furnishings industry as a front-and-center concern. We cover the industry from a strategic point of view, concentrating on quality analysis and independently written articles, helping you understand the business better.

Our competitive edge lies within its highly targeted and fully paid subscriber base - you're investing to reach an extremely qualified audience. It's more affordable on a per-page basis than broad interior design based monthly publications, and it's more affordable on a CPM basis than in-market publications. Better yet, none of your media buy is wasted: we pinpoint the industry professionals who are specifically focused on contract furnishings.

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- Increase brand awareness
- Put your brand next to great content
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