Breaking News: Herman Miller Pauses West Michigan Manufacturing

Yesterday, all West Michigan manufacturing for Herman Miller temporarily shut down through April 13, 2020. Third and first shifts need not report for their next scheduled shifts. Please be advised that anyone who has questions or needs additional information should contact (800) 597-8970.

Sewing Face Masks at Dauphin

Industry Shifts Gears During Pandemic

COVID-19 Industry Bulletin Board

New on page 8 - Business of Furniture is dedicated to getting you the latest industry information.
HIGHLIGHTS

08 Industry Bulletin Board
Information during the Coronavirus outbreak is at a premium. Business of Furniture is dedicated to getting you the latest industry information.

18 Two Ways to Keep You Connected
Bellow Press is not immune to the business upheaval. So, we have spent weeks trying to figure out a plan for how to help our readers and advertisers stay connected through this unprecedented time.

20 UPFRONT: Dauphin Takes up 100 Million Mask Challenge
Inspired by the 100 Million Mask Challenge, office furniture manufacturer Dauphin quickly pivoted to the production of face masks for health care facilities close to its Northern New Jersey factory.

- Corix HQ by Nelson Worldwide. p38
WORK + EASY: WERKSY®

Werksy® from hOME.

The Business of Furniture
April 8, 2020

COLUMNS
Stephen Says 30
Training & Development 32

FINANCIAL
Industry Shares/Graphs 28

CALENDAR & MORE
Regional News 26
Upcoming Events 34
Marketplace & Classifieds 56

8 | The Industry Bulletin Board
Information during the Coronavirus outbreak is at a premium. Business of Furniture is dedicated to getting you the latest industry information.

38 | Utility Company Connects its Brand to New HQ Architecture
Corix chose a 22,000-square-foot space on the 36th floor in a downtown Chicago high-rise as its new headquarters and brought on Nelson Worldwide to complete the build out.

44 | You Take Care of Sales, Design, Avanto Streamlines the Process
Avanto helps streamline your back office processes through accounting, order management and merchant processing.

36 PLACES Publicis Sapient Offices – London

48 FIRST LOOKS The latest product introductions

50 PULSE The latest industry happenings

Koelnmesse, which stages the fair, said it is keeping a close eye on developments as it presses ahead with preparations for ORGATEC 2020 in seven months.
ThinkLab Insider; a membership program designed for our manufacturer partners.
The Pulse of The Industry
Hot Market Growth Report
Product Category Benchmark Studies
Live, Monthly Digital Seminars

Learn more at info.thinklab.design/insider-program
As a wife, mother, CEO, employer, peer and friend, I am flooded with concern for my family, for my IIDA team and for the design community I’m so honored to be a part of.

IIDA has been and always will be a community to turn to in good times and bad. We are strengthened by our common passion for design and our celebration of humanity. Now more than ever, the world requires what design so abundantly endows — grace, civility, compassion, clarity, connection, common sense, empathy, well-being, healing and hope.

We realize that the media landscape is changing day-to-day, as much of our lives are, and we continue to be a trusted partner to our community, including the writers and editors who cover design — sharing insight on COVID-19 responses, as well as news celebrating outstanding projects, designers and moments that elevate the human spirit.

As IIDA continues to support chapters and individual members while facing the new realities of work and life, we will continue to celebrate the work of our community and will be sharing design award winners and achievements with you over the coming weeks. The recipient of the 2020 Anna Hernandez/Luna Textiles Visionary Award, which honors female business owners making important contributions to design, is Kia Weatherspoon, president of Determined by Design. A champion of design equity for underserved communities and a leader in affordable housing and retail in the Washington, D.C., region, Weatherspoon strongly advocates for interior design as a standard for all, rather than a privilege for some.

IIDA also has launched Collective D(esg)inx, a weekly webinar series that addresses the current global situation through design-centric discussions and serves as an ongoing community conversation for all sectors of the industry. Episode I — Responding to Change — took place March 26, attracting almost 1,000 participants across design fields. The series continues every Thursday from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. Central Standard Time.

In the meantime, please connect with us via social media or by email with any media requests, questions or needs — we are here to listen and to help.

On behalf of IIDA and its leadership, I wish each of you safety, good health and every kindness. We look forward to getting through this together.

Cheryl S. Durst, IIDA Executive Vice President and CEO

From Herman Miller

Herman Miller announced Friday a set of actions throughout its global operations in response to the uncertain economic outlook resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, we’ve been carefully considering the right things to do for our people and our company to ensure we have both a healthy employee base and business when we emerge from these uncertain times,” said Andi Owen, president and CEO. “Just as we entered this crisis in a strong financial position, we are taking immediate actions to reduce expenses and manage liquidity so we can maintain strong financial footing on the other side of it.”

Herman Miller is implementing a range of actions aimed at temporarily reducing costs and preserving liquidity. These actions include a 10% reduction in cash compensation for the majority of the company’s salaried workforce. Additionally, the company is immediately suspending certain employer-paid retirement contributions and will suspend previously planned compensation increases
and cash incentive bonus programs for the upcoming fiscal year ending May 2021. The company will continue to evaluate further ways to manage costs in line with reduced revenue levels.

In addition to the 10% reduction in pay, Herman Miller’s CEO and its executive leadership team will defer additional levels of salary for a minimum of six months to further preserve cash flow in the near-term. This will include an incremental salary deferral of 50% for the chief executive officer and 15% for the rest of the leadership team.

The company is also announcing the postponement of its upcoming quarterly cash dividend, which was declared on Jan. 16 and was to be paid on April 15 to shareholders of record on Feb. 29. Herman Miller intends for this dividend to be paid to the original shareholders of record at a future date to be determined by the board of directors. The company also announced a temporary suspension of future dividends.

Despite these actions to manage business operations in the near-term, one week after shutting down manufacturing in the wake of Gov. Gretchen Whitmer’s “Stay Home, Stay Safe” executive order for the state of Michigan, Herman Miller welcomed back approximately 30% of its manufacturing workforce across its West Michigan facilities to help support customers who are actively engaged in the COVID-19 response, including the health care industry and federal, state and local governments. This work is coupled with using the company’s design, development and manufacturing capabilities to help in communities around the globe. Efforts include providing frontline health care workers with face masks and shields and partnering with local companies to divert operational capabilities to support the demand for temporary health care facilities. Donations and delivery of supplies are being managed by Herman Miller Cares, the company’s private foundation and global giving program.

“On behalf of the entire organization, I’d like to thank all our employees for their strength and character during these uncertain times,” Owen said. “I am proud to be working alongside them, and, as we have demonstrated in the past, I am confident we will successfully navigate this disruption together.”

From Trendway

First and foremost, we hope this message finds you, your family, friends and colleagues healthy and safe. We are currently operating as an essential business at normal capacity under the guidelines of our State. Our commitment remains stronger than ever to our employees, independent reps and dealers to be your trusted partner, navigating with you in the weeks ahead. We will be working harder than ever to stay connected to serve the needs of our dealer community at this time. Together we will come through this difficult and sad time. Our sincere thanks goes out to everyone coming together in the face of this crisis to support and take care of one another.

From JSI

JSI Production Operations Update

As the global COVID-19 situation evolves daily, we will continue to keep you updated with what is happening at JSI, and how that affects your business.

At present, constraints on supply chain and state restrictions affecting delivery limited our ability to schedule and produce orders during the week of March 30. Although our production (was) down during this time, our customer services teams and sales team will support your needs in any way possible. We will be available using video, web and audio technology as well as email to continue providing service to you and ensure that we are here for your project needs with as little disruption as possible. We are committed to providing you the most up-to-date information via our website and email communication. We appreciate your patience as we work through the challenges that COVID-19 is presenting to our country.

We are here to serve you. As always #lovewhatyoudo.

Mike Elliott — president, CEO and chairman of the board

From ASID

As we continually adapt to the impacts and effects of COVID-19, ASID is finding new ways to support the design industry.

Free CEU Access: Now through April 30, ASID is extending FREE access to their online catalog of educational resources and CEUs for members and non-members. The ASID Academy is a state-of-the-art, continuing education experience that offers designers IDCEC and AIA-approved CEUs in a variety of topics - ranging from health and wellness, workplace design, the business of design, and much more. So far, they’ve had over 3,400 people register for these free resources.

COVID-19 Resource Page: A landing page for all things related to the design industry and COVID-19, ASID has also launched their COVID-19 Resource Page. This online platform provides educational articles, insightful resources and helpful Q&As and is regularly updated to best reflect verified information from trusted sources and solution-focused news.


We’ve included links below to all of ASID’s resources, but please don’t hesitate to reach out if you’d like to connect with ASID CEO Randy Fiser on how they’re adapting to these changing times or to discuss their full breadth of offerings for the design community.

- ASID Academy
- ASID COVID-19 Resource Page
- ASID COVID-19 Webinars

From Landscape Forms

Landscape Forms, manufacturer of furniture, structure, accessories and LED lighting, continues to work both internally and collaboratively with community and state organizations to assist in combating the COVID-19 global pandemic.

As the COVID-19 crisis evolves, Landscape Forms remains committed to protecting the health and safety of its workers and community. “This is an unprecedented crisis that warrants a concentrated and coordinated response,” said Landscape Forms CEO Marjorie Simmons. “We’re continuing to leverage our resources to support the health and safety of our team members, our community, and the health care professionals working on the front lines to mitigate the impact of this virus.”

Landscape Forms is donating its inventory of personal protective equipment, including respiratory masks and gloves, to health care authorities, and is partnering with peer companies to produce clear protective face shields for use by those on the front lines of care. The company is also providing...
leadership to identify government support opportunities and assistance measures for its community and its businesses.

Landscape Forms is acting in compliance with a mandated three-week shelter-in-place order and will continue to diligently follow the precautions necessary to combat this pandemic. However, nearly every aspect of Landscape Forms’ business activities remains operational as teams are equipped with technology and protocols to work and collaborate remotely.

“While we’re realistic that more uncertainty lies ahead, one thing is for sure — the COVID-19 crisis will pass,” Simmons says. “We remain optimistic that by working together, our nation and our communities will emerge from this crisis stronger and more unified in purpose than ever before.”

From Via Seating

Dear friends, colleagues, partners and valued clients,

As this pandemic continues to rage on, we are all doing our best to cope while we continue to produce the seating needed for our customers. There are so many wonderful stories of compassion and people helping one another, especially the health care providers and first responders. Thank you for all that you do and thanks to all the great companies and leaders that are doing everything they can to get through this. At Via Seating, we are trying to do our part. We have secured several thousand masks that we have sent to the areas most in need in Seattle, NYC, Boston, New Orleans, Sacramento, San Antonio and other areas that are in desperate need. We are also sourcing materials to cut and sew masks on our production line to further increase the supply and send out where there are shortages, including our hospitals here in Reno/Sparks (Nevada).

In our facility we have most of our staff working from home and we are taking every precaution we can to keep our workforce safe and practicing to the utmost all the protocols from the CDC, including weekly deep cleaning. We are operating at our normal quick ship, 48-hour turnaround time for production. In addition, our biocidal copper mesh program offered on several of our chairs is especially important in helping reduce the spread of resistant bacteria. We are offering CEUs on how to combat superbugs and are having close to 100 attendees at each webinar. This CEU is highly relevant in this moment in time. It shows what we can do to be proactive in fighting infectious disease.

You can sign up for a seminar on our website here: https://viaseating.com/professional-resources/ceu-courses/.

I know we are all looking forward to the day things get back to normal. Hopefully that time will come soon. In the meantime, please be safe.

Chas Hepler, chief executive officer

From Nook

We know that COVID-19 has put a pause on some expected projects, but we are confident that any delayed business will come roaring back in the near future. We are experiencing no significant effects to our delivery, and are keeping up with order demand with no delay from our manufacturing centers in the U.K. and the U.S. Nook is always here to support the mental well-being of all of our friends, whether working from an office, coworking space or quarantined at home. Join us at www.facebook.com/groups/workathomennook for good feelings, memes and lighthearted tips on how to survive the 2020 COVID-19 quarantine without going insane.

We’d love for you to join us here for some fun and share the group with any clients that may have temporarily banished their workers to remote locations. Let’s keep our spirits up and remind everyone that Nook is not just furniture, it’s a better way of thinking.

Thanks, and hope to see you in the group.

The Nook HelloUSA Team

From Tarkett

Tarkett, a worldwide leader in innovative and sustainable flooring, has mobilized to streamline the process for FEMA contractors and other emergency response organizations to procure essential flooring products for use in health care and government facilities. By establishing a dedicated concierge line to quickly facilitate orders and continually evaluating its manufacturing operations to meet ever-changing demands, Tarkett is committed to supporting the recovery effort and getting products where they are needed most.

The needs of health care and government contractors are rapidly changing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and Tarkett is committed to serving the needs of its customers and communities in these challenging times. Through our own internal responses to this health crisis, Tarkett has positioned itself to safely continue to provide flooring solutions that are well-suited to address needs such as infection control and rapid occupancy.

“The pandemic has obviously impacted the construction industry in profound ways. We want our contracting and installation partners to know that we’re here for you,” said Rich Padgett, account executive for government sales for Tarkett North America. “As you work to keep our communities safe and our health care and government facilities responsive to changing needs, we’ll be here to provide solutions on your timeline.”

Through the following adjustments to its normal operations, Tarkett is equipped to support FEMA’s COVID-19 approach of preservation, allocation, acceleration and expansion:

- **Preservation:** Continually monitoring inventories of resilient and soft surface products, prioritizing those inventories for the immediate need.
- **Allocation:** Allocating those inventories once immediate needs are determined.
- **Acceleration:** Directing manufacturing resources to produce those products where inventories are being depleted.
- **Expansion:** Increasing manufacturing capabilities to meet the increased demand as this pandemic continues its aggressive path.

To discuss your health care and government flooring needs in response to the pandemic, contact Rich Padgett at (757) 810-8893 or Richard.Padgett@tarkett.com. In addition, Tarkett’s concierge hotline for FEMA contractors and other emergency response organizations can be reached at (440) 903-4698.
These include the Split and Milo communal tables.

- High-craft pieces that are not in inventory have been pushed to a 14-week lead time (from 6-12 weeks). These include the Fenced-in Console and Boardwalk table.

- Our partners in Michigan remain online under a state waiver until April 13. Sit/stand and fixed benching and desking are still available just in time. Other shipping times are:
  - Minim Rise desk and Benching have a four-week lead time.
  - Frame Rise desk has a two-week lead time.
  - 1x1 desk has a two-week lead time at $500.

- Our team on the ground in the Vietnam supply chain and our factories are still online. Custom and mass white label office products remain on our standard 12-week lead time (unless noted otherwise below).

- Large custom brass and wood slab pieces are pushed to a 14-week lead time (from 12 weeks). Brass Tack collection, Brass Fold collection, Stitch coffee table and Slab dining table are affected by this.

- Our internal and 3PL providers remain open for business and continue to ship.

From Peter Pepper Products
- Peter Pepper Products is considered an essential business provider within the essential services category, including health care, GPOs and federal and state government contract sectors.
- The health and safety of our employees, clients and end users is our priority. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are taking precautionary measures recommended by the CDC across our organization. Our key personnel, including manufacturing, office staff, sales representatives and those working remotely will continue to be available to ensure continued customer support.
- We will continue to manufacture products in the categories below as our supply chain remains intact:
  - HealthFirst infection prevention products
  - Waste and recycling receptacles, all categories
  - HIPAA chart, file and literature holders
  - Patient information boards
  - ClinArt, caregiver communication boards, visual boards, glass and porcelain writing surfaces
  - Scoop and Clip folding chairs for patient rooms and ED
  - Clocks and SyncTech clock systems
  - Coat hooks and racks
  - Worksurfaces, desks, NIK, iBooth, Express Desk, etc.
  - Modular partitions
  - Icon Healthcare alert signage
  - Wheelies, carts, cabinets etc.

- At this time our California and other U.S. FOB points are running business as usual. Be safe, stay well and thank you for your continued support of Peter Pepper Products and our Expressive Essentials!

From Uhuru
- The health and safety of our teammates, stakeholders and partners is our priority, and we are open for business. We are also promoting home office packages on our website and deep discounting is available immediately. Ancillary inventory — Quick Ship is unaffected and 100% available to ship next day as needed. See the most recent Quick Ship inventory list at https://www.uhurudesign.com/collections/quickship-furniture

- Below is our product and lead time update:

  - Conference tables have been pushed to 12 weeks (from four to six weeks).
  - Communal tables (with veneered wood tops) have been pushed to seven weeks. These will be available from Quick Ship Inventory in seven weeks (from six weeks). They include the Broad and Band communal tables.
  - Communal tables (with solid wood tops) have been pushed to 12 weeks (from six weeks).

  - Wheelies, carts, cabinets etc.

Shout Out: to 2020 for helping designers work remotely with a free 30-day trial
- At 2020, our primary focus during the current coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) is the health and well-being of our employees, customers and partners. We have implemented steps to minimize the disruption to how we serve and support our customers while maintaining the safety of the 2020 team. Our support agents are now working remotely but have full access to our support and business services category, including health care, GPOs and federal and state government contract sectors.
- The health and safety of our employees, clients and end users is our priority. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are taking precautionary measures recommended by the CDC across our organization. Our key personnel, including manufacturing, office staff, sales representatives and those working remotely will continue to be available to ensure continued customer support.
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  - Coat hooks and racks
  - Worksurfaces, desks, NIK, iBooth, Express Desk, etc.
  - Modular partitions
  - Icon Healthcare alert signage
  - Wheelies, carts, cabinets etc.

- At this time our California and other U.S. FOB points are running business as usual. Be safe, stay well and thank you for your continued support of Peter Pepper Products and our Expressive Essentials!

From Seating Inc.
- At Seating Inc., ensuring that our crew is safe at work during the COVID19 outbreak is our first priority. We are open for business. Our American based supply chain is up and running, and our production and administrative teams are healthy and ready for work. As always, we'd love to hear from you. Your seat is safe with us.

Shout Out: to IIDA for presenting a timely online discussion on health care design
- On April 2, IIDA presented a timely online discussion with four leading health care design professionals from across the country. The one-hour event is available to watch at https://youtu.be/K6sTgT8G8TO.

- The current impact on their firms, specifically the health care practices within firms
- How their expertise as health care design professionals is coming into play at this time
- Their firms’ involvement with adaptation of existing facilities or repurposing for surge capacity
- The need to take a holistic approach to the immediate health care solutions needed in the near-term
- How future health care projects can be designed to better adapt for moments like this
- The impact on health care design overall in coming years.

From Peter Pepper Products
- Peter Pepper Products is considered an essential business provider within the essential services category, including health care, GPOs and federal and state government contract sectors.
- The health and safety of our employees, clients and end users is our priority. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are taking precautionary measures recommended by the CDC across our organization. Our key personnel, including manufacturing, office staff, sales representatives and those working remotely will continue to be available to ensure continued customer support.
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- At this time our California and other U.S. FOB points are running business as usual. Be safe, stay well and thank you for your continued support of Peter Pepper Products and our Expressive Essentials!
Shout Out: to BIFMA for helping keep the industry informed
- BIFMA has established an industry-specific webpage for COVID-19 resources in an effort to support and assist in this crisis. Go to www.bifma.org and click on COVID-19 Resources. The latest information on the pandemic from sources such as the National Association of Manufacturers, government agencies, health care experts and legal firms is being continuously updated at this location. As new resources become available, they will be added and are welcomed from all of BIFMA’s partners.

A “How To Help” section will provide information on how manufacturers can help address the shortage of supplies and medical equipment to treat COVID-19 patients. There is much that can be done to address this global threat on both a personal and professional level. BIFMA hopes to be a resource for directing your efforts in recognition that everyone has a role to play and this industry of innovators and creatives is rising to the challenge. Please send ideas, suggestions or questions to BIFMA at email@bifma.org.

Shout Out: to Symbiote for making furniture that helps those helping us
- Symbiote makes specialized furniture for hospitals, labs and other industrial applications. Its customers like LabCorp are working hard to fight the COVID-19 pandemic using Symbiote’s furniture and can be seen doing so in a video at https://vimeo.com/398575427/fd13c6e025

For Fun and Inspiration: Larry Leete, president, Montisa
- What I wanted to do during this quarantine period is to alleviate a little home seclusion stress for people for a couple of minutes each day. Music is a huge healer during down times — it can put a smile on your face and allow you the freedom to put down the heavy lifting for a few minutes. We have it so intertwined in our brand, why not bring some new music and bands that people may not have heard of (and some old ones introducing new songs) and introduce people to them. On a daily basis, I’m curating new music and introducing it as part of our WFH Turntable. I add on LinkedIn and then add to the Spotify playlist daily if people want to learn more without having to access LinkedIn to find the songs. Hopefully it gives a couple minutes of relief each day.

Playlist is located at https://open.spotify.com/playlist/3GMSkyWODYBkCaINGnvbQ?si=SQAL587ETiqD5rYJpE5wQ.
Happy Wednesday friends,

As days turn into weeks, we are starting to establish routines. For many of us, myself included, this period of social distancing has prompted some soul searching as well. I like the Danish word, hygee, one that is hard to translate, but basically means the ability to be comfortable in one’s own company. It is easy to be around others, many of us are finding, yet it can be difficult to be on our own.

We need others. As we spend time working from home and the industry shows, educational events and social calendar is blown up, we are looking for some sense of normalcy.

Things are becoming normalized, though nothing is normal. That includes the industry’s business practices as well. Though we are busier than ever trying to keep you abreast of the latest news as it pours in from around the world, Bellow Press is not immune to the business upheaval. So, we have spent weeks trying to figure out a plan for how to help our readers and advertisers stay connected through this unprecedented time.

For our readers, we started publishing a new section last week, one that will continue through the coronavirus crisis called the Industry Bulletin Board. It is a clearinghouse for information. We are posting everything we receive regarding business actions being taken to address the virus. Posting positive news is important as well, so we have “Shout Outs” to companies and people making a difference. There’s a chance to learn about a few fun things happening in the industry as well. There is no cost to you to have your information published on the Industry Bulletin Board. Please share it with me at rob@bellow.press.

Today, I am pleased to announce the plan for our advertisers. With support from theMART and NeoCon, Business of Furniture will begin publishing a weekly section beginning early June called “NeoCon: Products, People and Projects.” We understand that NeoCon cannot be replaced. We also understand that our advertisers cannot afford to do nothing to promote themselves during times like these. In fact, it is more important than ever.

Think of “NeoCon: Products, People and Projects” as more of a promotional package rather than simply an ad. Though the final details are being hammered out as we speak, it will include a story written by a Business of Furniture writer (and photography to go with) about a new product your company is launching, a person in your company that should be profiled or an impactful project that your company completed. The package will also include full page ads to run in Business of Furniture and Workplaces magazines at any time for the remainder of 2020. Your story will also be promoted by the organizers of NeoCon through its extensive network of attendees and upcoming communications efforts.

We are targeting a handful of non-competing profiles in each edition of Business of Furniture that will run throughout the summer. As part of our work with NeoCon, Business of Furniture and Workplaces magazines also will help theMART promote its work to “fill the gap” during this unusual time.

It is important to note that no one is trying to profit off a tragedy like COVID-19. But as with everything we do, we want to make sure the industry remains connected. Disengaging is the worst thing we could do when facing a crisis of this magnitude. When we proclaim, we are the “Voice of the Industry,” we intend to keep that promise, through good times and bad.

So how do you get involved? If you are a NeoCon tenant or exhibitor, you will receive information about the package directly from NeoCon organizers. After that, someone from Bellow Press will follow up with you directly. Or you can simply reach out to my colleague Melissa Skolnick for more information and pricing at melissa@bellow.press.

We are all in this together. And we can all get through this together.

Be well my friends,

Rob Kirkbride and the Business of Furniture team
Dauphin Takes up 100 Million Mask Challenge

Inspired by the 100 Million Mask Challenge, office furniture manufacturer Dauphin quickly pivoted to the production of face masks for health care facilities close to its Northern New Jersey factory. Enlisting its automated fabric cutting capabilities and skilled sewers, Dauphin repurposed synthetic materials normally used to line fabric for its upholstered chairs and lounge furniture. In addition to producing masks at its Boonton facility, Dauphin is also supplying its pre-cut synthetic materials to local community members who have volunteered to produce masks for neighbors and loved ones. Factory supervisor, Miguel Carhuayo researched the face mask criteria and material to come up with the best design. “We hope we will be able to help doctors and people who are helping our community in these difficult times.”

THE STREAM

THE CORONAVIRUS IS GOING TO CHANGE HOW WE THINK ABOUT DESIGN

As the coronavirus pandemic continues to spread, disrupting daily life and causing major economic damage, design leaders are pivoting to focus on how building design can combat infectious diseases and improve public health outcomes. “I think we’re on the cusp of actually seeing it impact current work underway,” Gensler Managing Principal Kevin Henry said.

DONGHIA FILES FOR CHAPTER 7 BANKRUPTCY

Following the news that Donghia was closing its showrooms and laying off the majority of its staff, the company has filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy. According to documents filed in Connecticut District Court on Monday, the company estimates that it owes between $30 million and $50 million to more than 1,000 creditors including design centers where it had operated showrooms and a woman’s wife of top designers.

At the time of filing, the company listed $13 million in assets, $6 million in liabilities, $1.2 million in cash and $9 million in accounts receivable, which will go toward the liquidation of the company under Chapter 7 of the U.S. bankruptcy code.

BIFMA CONNECTING FURNITURE INDUSTRY RESOURCES IN COVID-19 FIGHT

BIFMA has established an industry-specific webpage for COVID-19 Resources in an effort to support and assist in this crisis. The latest information on the pandemic from sources such as the National Association of Manufacturers, government agencies, healthcare experts, and legal firms is being continuously updated at this location. As new resources become available, they will be added and are welcomed from all of BIFMA’s partners.

A “How To Help” section will provide information on how manufacturers can address the shortage of supplies and medical equipment to treat COVID-19 patients. Go to www.bifma.org and click on COVID-19 Resources.

NEW REPORT REVEALS DECLINE IN DEMAND FOR DESIGN SERVICES FOLLOWING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

A new report last week from the American Institute of Architects (AIA) reveals the immediate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on architecture firms in the U.S.

A recent AIA survey found that 50% of architecture firms reported fewer new design projects for March—as of the March 25 survey date—as compared to their expectations entering the month. In terms of work on active projects, the overwhelming majority of architecture firms (83%) are anticipating a decline in revenue for March relative to their expectations heading into the month, with over a third of firms estimating that their revenue will be at least 10% below expectations. This situation is anticipated to worsen in April, with 94% of firms expecting revenue declines, and over half of firms (50%) anticipating that the reversal falloff will exceed 10%.

“In the past several weeks, we’ve seen a huge shift in office culture across the country. The scale of this shift is just unprecedented and will surely lead to new ways of working,” said Sheila Sorgaek, partner at BIG.

“We are learning new styles of management that depend on the ability to dispense assignments efficiently across team members and rely on their deliveries without as much supervision or guidance as normal,” she said. “To make this ‘new normal’ more acceptable will require an extra effort.”

In Italy, practices were forced to make changes to the way they work early on, as it became one of the countries to be most severely affected by the pandemic. A nationwide lockdown came into effect on March 9.

Carlo Ratti, founding partner of Carlo Ratti Associati, told Dezeen that the current situation reminded him of the promise digital communication brought when they were first introduced. “Until a few weeks ago, despite having the technical capacity to work remotely, people overwhelmingly chose to sit in an office, or at least in a cafe,” Ratti told Dezeen.

However, Ratti believes that remote working will not be as imagined. “In fact, working from the top of a mountain—or at your kitchen table, most likely—might not be that exciting after all. To most of us, working includes social relations and communication,” he added. “To make this ‘new normal’ more acceptable will require an extra effort.”

WORKING FROM HOME “THE NEW NORMAL” FOR ARCHITECTS AND DESIGNERS

Coronavirus lockdowns will have a profound impact on how creative businesses work in future, according to architects and designers including Carlo Ratti Associati, BIG, Snøhetta and Pearson Lloyd.

Over the past couple of weeks a huge shift in office culture has occurred, with teams spread across multiple houses instead of one studio. This has forced architects and designers to adapt.

“The scale of this shift is just unprecedented and will surely lead to new ways of working,” said Sheila Sorgaek, partner at BIG. “We are learning new styles of management that depend on the ability to dispense assignments efficiently across team members and rely on their deliveries without as much supervision or guidance as normal,” she said. “To make this ‘new normal’ more acceptable will require an extra effort.”
Orgatec is On for October ... at Least for Now

KOELNMESSE, WHICH STAGES THE FAIR, SAID IT IS KEEPING A CLOSE EYE ON DEVELOPMENTS AS IT PRESSES AHEAD WITH PREPARATIONS FOR ORGATEC 2020 IN SEVEN MONTHS.

ORGATEC’s trade fair in Cologne is still on for Oct. 27-31.

The new measures being adopted almost daily in Germany because of the coronavirus, though, affect the specifications and recommendations of the authorities for hosting trade fairs. Any decisions concerning whether or not to host the event will be made as early as possible, organizers said, and ORGATEC will inform all those involved immediately.

The motto for this year’s ORGATEC’s trade fair — Variety of Work — is already being practiced in very diverse forms in many workplaces. In this context, the leading international trade fair for the modern working world has an even more important role to play as an engine and source of inspiration for the industry. It is now seeing the immense challenges facing modern work environments.

Koelnmesse, which stages the fair, said it is keeping a close eye on developments as it presses ahead with preparations for ORGATEC 2020 in seven months. It noted the number of registrations is excellent, and interest in the trade fair is increasing even further as a result of recent developments. A preliminary list of the registered exhibitors can be found at www.orgatec.com.

In 2020, ORGATEC will once again provide inspiration for the design of modern work environments for today and the future with a wide spectrum of events.
It will offer workshops, panels, talks and best-practice installations on themes such as the agile office and hospitality in collaboration with leading partners from research, the media, trade associations and its commercial partners.

**ORGATEC Architects Summit 2020**

Together with Frame and other partners, ORGATEC is debuting the ORGATEC Architects Summit, where architects will address a range of issues for the profession and the real estate industry. The topics on the agenda include digitalization, acoustics, sustainability, lighting, offices in public spaces and best-practice examples of special solutions.

Media partners will host talks, workshops and discussion rounds tailored to specific target groups. The full program for the ORGATEC Architects Summit will be announced shortly.

Another new offering at ORGATEC 2020 will be the light architecture program. Alongside these events, there will be a discussion on light architecture titled “Healthy Light in the Workplace.”

The Fraunhofer Institute for Building Physics IBP will host the People in Spaces symposium, which will take a broad approach to addressing challenges relating to spatial acoustics and other influences affecting people.

Koelnmesse, which stages the fair, said it is keeping a close eye on developments as it presses ahead with preparations for ORGATEC 2020 in seven months.

In the southern halls on the trade fair grounds, ORGATEC will invite international trade visitors to explore the #inspired-hospitality experience area. This area will focus on the blurring boundaries between public and private spaces, and between work in the office, at home and on the go. If hotels are to turn their lobbies into temporary workplaces and companies want to open up their coworking spaces to startups, suitable infrastructure is required. Offering an insight into the technologies and design examples, this area will transform Variety of Work into a tangible experience with practical relevance for trade fair visitors.

Robot-led tour of five working environments

The Variety of Work Boulevard by Leap in Time will be especially stimulating. On the Boulevard North, ORGATEC will partner with Prof. Ruth Stock-Homburg from the Leap in Time Institute at the Technical Institute of Darmstadt to showcase a special implementation of the trade fair’s motto, Variety of Work, based on findings from her studies. Leap in Time will allow international trade visitors to experience various working environments in a special form, including the chance to take a robot-led tour of the modules. Studies by the Leap in Time work-life research center have shown in the future people will use more than just one work environment. Stock-Homburg’s research has recognized five types of work environments: activity-based working, work and play, smart living and working, everywhere and everytime and recreation.

**Latest trade fair coronavirus information**

If, contrary to current expectations, ORGATEC should have to be postponed or cancelled due to the coronavirus outbreak, exhibitors who do not wish to participate on the alternative dates will receive a refund of payments they have made to Koelnmesse. All decisions concerning whether or not to host the event will be made as early as possible, and ORGATEC will inform all those involved immediately.

*BoF*
**PACIFIC WEST**

**HOTEL AIMS TO BE MOST LUXURIOUS**

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. — LVMH, the luxury conglomerate is planning to open an ultra-premium hotel on the famed Rodeo Drive thoroughfare to outshine all competition. Part of the Cheval Blanc collection, the swanky 155-room hotel will sit at the corner of Rodeo Drive and Little Santa Monica Boulevard. While this area is replete with high-end hotels, including the iconic Beverly Hills Hotel and the Beverly Wilshire, the Cheval Blanc is vying to be even more exclusive. The hotel will feature oversized suites, two swimming pools — one of which is a private penthouse pool — plus a private club. Rather than focusing on banquet or conference facilities, LVMH will capitalize on its nearby network of high-end restaurants, spas and retailers to sate guests. The building will be a 266,000-square-foot project featuring large windows and an urban paseo, wrapped in a bioclimatic façade designed to minimize energy use and glare from the desert sun. Entrepreneurial center facilities include a mix of studios, classrooms, offices, exhibition and event spaces, as well as fabrication and workshop areas with specialized equipment and environmental systems.

**MIDWEST**

**OLD CITY HALL**

PHILADELPHIA — Rubenstein Partners, and investment partner Monarch Alternative Capital LP, plan to renovate the 1926 City Hall into a hub for global experiences with the best connectivity in Philadelphia. Rubenstein’s Centre into a hub for global experiences and environmental systems. And, that raises the possibility that instead of a relentless slide down we may instead see a dramatic economic rebound.

**NORTHEAST**

**ENHANCED TENANT EXPERIENCE**

BOSTON — DWS Group completed the expansion and renovation of 50, 60 and 62 Stanford Street in Boston’s West End neighborhood. The complex features a 10-story medical office tower and a new two-story building for future medical office/retail users. Todd Henderson, head of real estate, Americas, said, “The project team developed a fully-renewed space that was meticulously designed to enhance the tenant experience with improved access, while providing high quality features consistent with Boston’s finest medical institutions.”

**CONFIDENCE IN PLANS**

ATLANTA — Philadelphia-based Rubenstein Partners, and investment partner Monarch Alternative Capital LP, plan to renovate the 47-acre Lindbergh City Center, a transit-oriented development surrounding Atlanta’s Lindbergh MARTA train station. The developer has brought on a team to help guide the facelift, re-naming and re-branding efforts. The one-million-square-foot, mixed-use property will be transformed into modern mixed-use community. That includes redesigning the building exteriors, reconfiguring the existing retail footprint and adding new local retailers, art galleries and restaurants. The goal is to open up and enliven the space with new furniture, lighting, and event programming. Rubenstein’s Taylor Smith says, “While there is much uncertainty in today’s marketplace due to the coronavirus pandemic, we are confident in our plans to redevelop Lindbergh City Center into a hub for global experiences with the best connectivity in Atlanta.”

**RUSSIA**

**AUTOMATED VALET OFFERED**

BOSTON — It’s too early to call an end to Greater Boston’s epic building boom, even if the coronavirus has managed to turn the global economy upside down in a few short months. Developers were riding a record-breaking wave of construction just a few weeks ago, with nearly 100 major projects under way within Boston’s city limits alone. Unlike the Depression or the Great Recession, at the heart of this downtown turn is not a crisis in the financial system. And, that raises the possibility that instead of a relentless slide down we may instead see a dramatic economic rebound.

**CONFIDENCE IN PLANS**

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. — LVMH, the luxury conglomerate is planning to open an ultra-premium hotel on the famed Rodeo Drive thoroughfare to outshine all competition. Part of the Cheval Blanc collection, the swanky 155-room hotel will sit at the corner of Rodeo Drive and Little Santa Monica Boulevard. While this area is replete with high-end hotels, including the iconic Beverly Hills Hotel and the Beverly Wilshire, the Cheval Blanc is vying to be even more exclusive. The hotel will feature oversized suites, two swimming pools — one of which is a private penthouse pool — plus a private club. Rather than focusing on banquet or conference facilities, LVMH will capitalize on its nearby network of high-end restaurants, spas and retailers to sate guests. The building will be a 266,000-square-foot project featuring large windows and an urban paseo, wrapped in a bioclimatic façade designed to minimize energy use and glare from the desert sun. Entrepreneurial center facilities include a mix of studios, classrooms, offices, exhibition and event spaces, as well as fabrication and workshop areas with specialized equipment and environmental systems.

**MOUNTAIN WEST**

**NEW LIVE-WORK TOWER**

PHOENIX, Ariz. — Studio Ma has broken ground on a new mixed-use tower complex for Arizona State University. The downtown residence hall and entrepreneurial center aims to foster innovation and collaboration for students and the campus community. The 16-floor residential tower includes academic and interdisciplinary facilities with living space for up to 530 students. The 284,000-square-foot building features large windows and an urban paseo, wrapped in a bioclimatic façade designed to minimize energy use and glare from the desert sun. Entrepreneurial center facilities include a mix of studios, classrooms, offices, exhibition and event spaces, as well as fabrication and workshop areas with specialized equipment and environmental systems.

**REGIONAL INDUSTRY NEWS**

Compiled by Emily Clingman

BoF
## INDUSTRY SHARES

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### 2020 YTD GAIN / LOSS

- **$12,853.02**
- **$11,526.52 (-47.28%)**
- **$12,589.98 (-49.48%)**

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**BoF Industry Index - Since Jan 1, 2016**

![Stock Graphs](image)

**BoF Industry Index Start: $24,379.54**

**Yearly Start: $25,443.00 (2019 Ended Up +15.31%)**

- **ALL TIME**
  - January 1, 2016
  - November 2, 2016
  - September 13, 2017
  - July 25, 2018
  - June 5, 2019
  - April 8, 2020

- **YEAR TO DATE**
  - April 8, 2020

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If You Own a Business: Apply for the Paycheck Protection Program. Here is how!

Dear Stephen:

I own a mid-size furniture dealership, and I am worried about my business and being able to keep my employees. Well, I am first worried about the health and safety of my family, my employees and their families, but after that I’m worried about how to keep my business going without having to lay off the great people who work here.

My business is in a state that requires self-quarantine until April 30, but the pandemic is so bad where I am, who knows for sure if that date will not have to move to June. It is a mess. Right now everyone in my office is working remotely. We are a modern sales organization so transitioning to working from home for my employees was not a major problem. I have seen enough articles about that, including yours (thank you very much). My clients at A&D firms, other dealers and smaller manufacturers have one major problem right now, and it is not learning ZOOM. It is our payroll. I think we are all nervous the sharp drop off of revenue and cash flow will force us to fire or furlough our valuable employees. I know you are the expert on recruiting but this is different. How do I save the jobs of the good people I already have? What are your thoughts on the PPP and the CARES Act specific to our industry and my business?

Signed,

Scared Dealer Owner

Dear Dealer Owner:

I am glad you asked, and I am happy to share what I know because we’re in this together. This is a resilient industry and will bounce back but there are some immediate resources I can share that can make a real difference to saving jobs right now. The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and the Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program (EIDL) are the two major options for small businesses to obtain financial help during the coronavirus outbreak — and you should apply for both. You qualify if you employ less than 500 people, so most furniture and floor-covering dealers, A&D firms and small manufacturers qualify. At The Viscusi Group I have been on the phone with many of my dealer, independent rep and manufacturing clients from across the country and with my many friends who own A&D firms. We have been sharing information about these government programs. I have encouraged everyone to apply for this funding.

The PPP can help businesses that keep employees on the payroll or rehire them by June 30 if they have been laid off, and these loans could be fully forgiven. Businesses are able to request 2.5 times their average monthly payroll cost for this loan. Apply as soon as you have finished this column by contacting your banker and accountant and completing a very short online form. Be aware that since PPP is a brand new program rolled out fast on April 3, even the most experienced bankers do not know much about it yet. Everyone is learning together, so be patient with them.

If you cannot get your banker on the phone at this time just go to your bank’s website and see if they are participating in the PPP. Here is something interesting I have learned: Many big banks do not want to participate in the PPP program because, I would guess, there is not enough money in it for them. Who knows for sure, but if your bank is not participating in PPP you can also go to third-party lenders. Here is a LINK to one the third-party lenders — https://sbacares.boe.gov — and there are many others. All of this, of course, should be done in consultation with your CPA.

Even if your business has never taken a loan before I promise you will not regret going online and at least learn about these two programs.

Do not stop there. Go on the www.SBA.GOV and look into the Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program which includes a $10,000 grant that businesses do not need to pay back — ever! Like free money to help keep your business going.

Even if your business has never taken a loan before I promise you will not regret going online and at least learn about these two programs. And do it now because even if you own a business may have already applied since there is a cap on the funding in the CARE bill. At TVG Recruiters we know what you are going through, we all are in the same boat. This virus is a great leveler. I am here for the industry that has been so good to me and hope I can help. Even if you have never been a client, or we have never spoken, shoot me an email with your questions. We can set up a confidential call, and I will share what I know about these programs. I know how hard it is for you to have to let go of valued, loyal employees so here are two compelling programs you should act on now. There may be other options, like cutting executive’s pay rather than shrinking your salesforce – ideas that we can discuss.

And finally, if you are reading this and are worried about losing your job or have already lost your job, write me as well. Get that resume updated and get it to me, but only after you have applied for unemployment!

Signed,
Stephen
5X Connection: Developing and Increasing Meaningful Connections in a Time of Crisis

No doubt the world we live and work in has been turned upside down over the past few weeks. Our offices and showrooms are closed, we’re working from home, our manufacturerers are closed, our friends and colleagues are being laid off or furloughed, and our customers are slowing their projects or cancelling them all together. None of us really know when this is going to slow down much less end — we are not in control, and that’s a scary feeling.

But there are a few things you can control — your attitude, your mindset and your actions.

Now is not the time to sell — now is the time to serve!

The best, most powerful thing you can do is to develop and increase the connection you have with your customers, influencers, and prospects — which means you have to stop selling, stop asking for opportunities and start creating meaningful connections with them.

Look, I get it — for you to stop selling is not going to be easy, and yeah, it’s going to make your budget even tighter. But what your community needs more than ever is you to serve and support them. The last thing you want to be known for is ambulance chasing during a worldwide crisis. I know, you might be ready to stop reading at this point, but stay with me — I think you’ll be glad you did.

Though it’s time for you to stop selling — it is not time for you to binge watch a new show on Netflix or just hang out around the house. It’s time for you to get focused and start building for the future. It’s time for you to 5X Connect.

A couple of weeks ago, I had a Zoom meeting with a few others to brainstorm ways we could all stay engaged and connected with our clients. The energizing and valuable session is what we call our “What If Up” brainstorm (more on that in another column). But the basis behind this session was to collectively come up with ideas and ways to serve our various different communities — and from that, came 5X Connect.

What is 5X Connect? It’s you connecting with five different people every single day without selling or asking them for an opportunity. Pick up the phone, and start dialing. No email, no text message — use your phone and have a conversation.

First, I made a list of people I wanted to check in on. I started with my current clients, then former clients, then prospects I’ve been working with and from there I went to the contacts in my phone and made my list. No doubt it’s long, but I’ve got a good list to work from. I started, and I took one step forward to connecting on a more meaningful level.

Each day, I go down my list and call five people. It’s not always easy — I’m still working with clients that engaged with us before all this happened. We have to finish their projects, and we have to continue to serve our community, although a lot differently. But I am more than capable of this relationship connection building each day, especially with my increased time during the day.

Then I made a list of questions I wanted to ask — thought starters, if you will, that would keep the conversation focused on them and not me or the services we offer. From there I started dialing, with my mindset focused on connection and not the dollar signs — and the results have been amazing.

To help you through this, I created a workbook which includes a quick overview of 5X Connection and a list of questions you can ask. I’ve also included an area for you to list the people you want to call and their phone number. Lastly, there is a page that allows you to keep track of who you called each day. You can download this document at www.sidmeadows.com/5xconnection.

Why is this level of connection so important? Because right now you can’t sell, so relationships are your moneymaker. You may not see that payday turn around for more than a year, but after this is over, your connections will remember you called to check in on them, their business and see how they were doing in crisis. That’s also what will lead them to call you back when they are able to buy from you. Why? Because they trust you. They trust your heart and your care for them beyond the sale. So, connect 5x now, and invest in your future and the future of your customers.

Hopefully, there will soon be a time to start selling again — but for right now, our focus needs to be on another, on building relationships and supporting our clients and community. Each of us needs to realize we have more to offer the world than our products and services — the most valuable thing you can offer anyone during this time is yourself.

Be sure to join the conversation (www.sidmeadows.com) and visit my blog to share your thoughts on the 5X Connection process and how it’s helping you connect (and re-connect) with your customer.
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

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.com

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

EDSpaces is an international, cutting-edge conference, 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

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.
PLACES

Publicis Sapient Offices – London
Habit Action has completed the office design for Publicis Sapient, a digital business transformation company, located in London, England.

A unique furniture solution for digital transformation experts, helping create an up-to-the-minute workspace for ongoing
digital development.

Situated in the heart of Clerkenwell, close to Farrington station, this iconic Turnmills building was once warehousing and stables for horses in Victorian London. Now a thriving workspace owned by Publicis Sapient, the building houses hundreds of employees every day.
Utility Company Connects its Brand to New HQ Architecture

CORIX CHOSE A 22,000-SQUARE-FOOT SPACE ON THE 36TH FLOOR IN A DOWNTOWN CHICAGO HIGH-RISE AS ITS NEW HEADQUARTERS AND BROUGHT ON NELSON WORLDWIDE TO COMPLETE THE BUILD OUT.

by Emily Clingman

It’s not every time that a company’s brand translates so literally into the architecture around it. But with Corix Group of Companies, its new headquarters hit the design jackpot.

Corix is a leader in the implementation of sustainable water, wastewater and energy utility infrastructure solutions for small to medium-sized communities across North America. Until recently, it was located in the Chicago suburb of Northbrook, Illinois.

The company started out 50 years ago in a farmhouse, and as it grew over the years, additions were made to the structure, but nothing was cohesive. Employees were working in small groups in actual bedrooms. Other employees were located in additions. The team was extremely segregated. It didn’t feel like an office and people just gave up walking the maze of twisted hallways trying to find anyone else. The scenario was affecting the way people worked and obviously, not in a great way.

The other challenge with being located in a random farmhouse off the highway in the suburbs was talent attraction. The remote location and unusual setup lacked a certain draw. Corix decided it was time to move — and a big move it was.

Corix chose a 22,000-square-foot space on the 36th floor in a downtown Chicago high-rise as its new headquarters and brought on Nelson Worldwide to complete the build out. The company wanted the space to be designed for easy engagement and collaboration among its staff. Because of the nature of Corix’s services, the company wanted to go industrial in the look and feel.

Nelson transformed Corix’s new offices to create an entirely different atmosphere from its previous space. Early on, it was decided to leave the ceilings exposed to enhance the industrial feel.
“The pipes were an obvious thing,” said Kristin Cerutti, senior designer at Nelson. “At first, we wondered if we could just paint the existing pipes on the ceiling blue, their logo color. Then, it sort of stirred from that. Does it have to be blue? Does it just have to be existing pipes or can we bring in decorative pipes? And why just be decorative? They should have a purpose and a meaning.”

Nelson installed pipes throughout the space to serve a dual purpose: vibrant décor and creative wayfinding. Each pipe color represents a core market the company serves — water, gas and electricity — and acts as a gentle and organic guide, leading employees and guests in the right direction.

The office is organized into three neighborhoods, one for each department — ecosystems, as Cerutti explained. Each is designed to support its own function, then circulate out to the environment at large. Using Corix’s three distinct logo colors — two shades of blue and a shade of green, each ecosystem is designated a different color (dark blue for water, light blue for gas and green for energy).

“So, when the pipe colors change, and the furniture colors change slightly, you’ll know which department you’re in,” she said.

The public corridors have orange pipes — a color representative of community and a nod back to pride
in the community Corix serves. All of the different color pipes come together into a graphic of the Corix logo in the center of the lobby.

Corix went with a Steelcase open benching system for its task areas.

“They really wanted to bring in the industrial look, and Steelcase had some really fitting products,” Cerutti said.

Also included in the new office is a large café — something not possible in the farmhouse as the cramped kitchen only fit about six people around the table. Now, 30 people can gather if they want to. The café views overlook the Chicago River, offering a comfortable and inspiring place to take a break, do some work or hold a casual meeting. All of the furniture in the café is easily moveable to hold events like a birthday lunch or company-wide meetings and shuffleboard games ... for real, it’s their thing.

“The ability to come together was really important to them,” Cerutti said.

While the new office is amazing, the staff feedback very positive, and all the spaces are being used in the way they were intended, Corix’s 70 employees were a bit apprehensive at first to move downtown.

“It was a huge shock to move from a farmhouse in the suburbs to a high-rise in the city,” Cerutti said. “But they really embraced it.”

Most of the staff lived in the suburbs near the former office, so it was quite a big change for them. Corix put in place several opportunities to prepare them to work downtown.

“They held staff meetings downtown so people could get a feel for the commute and what the surrounding area is like,” she said. “They were able to see the ongoing construction. They really felt like they were part of the process. The Corix team really helped its employees be successful in the move, rather than just springing it on them. No, ‘Oh, by the way, pack your stuff.’ By visiting frequently and watching the progress, employees could warm up to the idea how big rooms were going to be, what the views looked like, etcetera.”

Designing Corix’s new headquarters was unique for Nelson.

“We do a lot of tech and law firms and corporate spaces,” Cerutti said. “With this project, we were able to be literal in the design, such as with the pipes, to relate it to the company’s services and missions.

“They are very proud of what they do, and see themselves as providing a very important service to the community. That’s the biggest reason people like working there. So, we designed for the people, versus just making it a trendy, cool space. As far as attraction and retention is concerned, a meaningfully designed space is a draw for job seekers.”
You Take Care of Sales, Design, Avanto Streamlines the Process

AVANTO HELPS STREAMLINE YOUR BACK OFFICE PROCESSES THROUGH ACCOUNTING, ORDER MANAGEMENT AND MERCHANT PROCESSING.

by Rob Kirkbride

How much time do you spend as a manufacturer, dealer or installation company on back office processing? How much time does accounting and paperwork cost you? If you spend more time pushing paperwork than selling furniture, you need Avanto, a company that promises to streamline your back office system to save you time and money.

Not to get technical, but Avanto specializes in Process as a Service (PaaS) and Robotic Process Automation (RPA). Simply put, Avanto helps streamline your back office processes through accounting, order management and merchant processing. The company takes the stuff you don’t want to do off your plate so you can focus on what you want to do.

Avanto is designed for the office furniture industry and born from it. Matt Danyliw, a partner at Avanto, began his career as a CPA whose first client was a Herman Miller dealership in the Northeast. He went on to become an executive leader in office furniture dealerships. Along the way, he identified the pain points in the sales and delivery process. From that knowledge, Avanto was born.

Commercial furniture sales, delivery and accounting processes have many steps: a purchase order from the dealer, an acknowledgement and invoice shipping notifications from manufacturers, installation packages, purchase order approval, change orders, storage from installation companies. Avanto facilitates the communication between those different entities within the ecosystem.

“When you talk about the life cycle of an order, you have a salesperson, you have designers, they’re creating renderings, they’re building the specification files and the specifications software,” Danyliw said. “So all of that is happening on the front end, and we focus on the stuff that happens on the back end. Once all of that activity ends, and it becomes an order is when we kick in. We are able to either do the processing, automate part of the processing or make it easier for companies to process themselves. From that purchase order through cash receipt, again, we can be an outsource solution for a company, we can be a technology solution for a company, or we can just be process consultants to help people navigate how to improve their process.”
Danyliw’s background is important to Avanto’s story. As mentioned, he was a CPA whose client was a Herman Miller dealership that had lost its CFO. His boss was the acting CFO, and Danyliw was his right-hand man. He did everything his boss at the dealership didn’t want to do.

Eight years later, he became the actual CFO for that company. It went from $17 million in sales to $50 million in a six-month period. It was a rapid rise, followed by the financial crisis—a rapid decline. The company went from $50 million to about $25 million. “So I learned a lot about scaling through that, meaning, we had to hire a ton of people to support the growth, and then we had to fire a ton of people, and it was awful,” he said. “I had to be part of that because I was their CFO, I was their HR person. I was in charge of IT.”

As part of the growing pains at the dealership, Danyliw found there was a need for a solution to all the paperwork. The dealership needed sign-offs from all the parties involved and it simply wasn’t happening as smoothly as it should. He found that the paperwork “would fly out the installer’s windows, or they would say, ‘Oh, I gave you that folder. I put it on Susie’s desk.’” The dealership’s major clients needed those signatures to get paid.

“I had to come up with a solution to connect us with our installer. And so I came up with a document management solution that existed. It was a company out there that I had contracted with, and we developed a solution where they were scanning things at their warehouse when they first arrived, and it would kick off an invoicing process. It was all automated. This was back in 2007, so this was over 10 years ago. Most of these tools were pretty antiquated compared to now.”

As he went through his career, he worked for a business system in the industry. Next, he went to one of their clients as their COO for another dealership. The dealership that he was a CFO for in Connecticut was a smaller dealership. It had one main office and a smaller satellite office. The one he worked for in Florida had four major markets and five offices.

At every stop along the way, he implemented a lot of the processes and software, each more complicated. And at each stop, it had an even bigger impact, meaning, he was able to scale it even more. He was able to automate even more because it was so complicated.

“I’m a process guy and IT guy and a finance guy,” Danyliw said. “And I realized I loved creating solutions for this. And I also realized that there’s probably an opportunity to help other organizations implement doc management systems, become paperless, automate workflow. And through that we developed Avanto into what it is today.”

Avanto’s mission is to help move the contract furniture industry forward in both process and technology. Avanto’s not going to make this happen by itself. Instead, Avanto wants to work with all the other companies in the industry that are working on streamlining other parts of the business system, from the NetSuites to the MRLs. But that’s the future.

“Right now, we are providing solutions in the industry’s current state,” he said. “And the current state is that everything is done via email, via PDF, via documents, and very little is done electronically, which is where we’re trying to get to. So right now, we are providing processing services as a service.”

Danyliw’s recent focus has been on getting an understanding of what manufacturers value and what will move the needle for them to get on board with Avanto. He said he has a deep understanding of the dealerships, so he is trying to really dive into the manufacturers and their processes. “I don’t think it’s that complicated,” he said. “All we’re talking about is parts and pieces.”

Avanto is well into the process. The company is working on custom solutions for companies, but also on a platform that is scalable. That means it will work for a dealer in San Francisco the same as it will for one in Chicago or Miami.

“We’re being very mindful of the fact that this needs to be a scalable solution that needs to be an open platform, which means that people can access it if they want to through their business systems or other tools they use, and that it will be flexible enough to manage the different types of information that is being added to it and the different situations,” Danyliw said.
**SEATING**

**9to5 Seating Unveils Active Seating Remy**

9to5 Seating has entered the active seating market with Remy, a lightweight addition to an ergo-conscious office. Remy is a motion stool with a curved rocker-shaped base that encourages spinal alignment and freedom of movement throughout the day.

The stool’s 20-degree, front-to-back rock facilitates a hip-to-femur angle that engages core muscles which support good posture. Its base features a non-marking, non-slip tread. Whether at a standing desk or a standard-height surface, its push-button height adjustment and 360-degree swivel makes it ideal for those who like to perch, those who prefer a traditional sit or those who go back and forth.

The design possibilities are plentiful with Remy. Its molded foam seat may be covered with any fabric, and it comes in black and white plastic colors. This flexibility paired with its light weight enables it to suit various environments, including cafés, collaborative zones, impromptu areas and more.

“Remy demonstrates what is possible when innovation, design and wellness converge,” said Dara Mir, president and CEO of 9to5 Seating. “With its stylish form, Remy complements the workspace just as well as it supports the body.”

Remy is GREENGUARD Gold certified and has achieved BIFMA LEVEL 1.

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**TABLES**

**Encore Introduces String Games**

Playing with forms and appearances is what String Games from Encore is all about. The collection of meeting tables is distinguished by metal accents that appear to pass fluidly through the solid wood frame. Available in veneer, laminate or solid surface materials, String Games can be specified in seated and bar heights and features optional power capability via a discreetly concealed wire management system.

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**TEXTILES**

**Arc-Com Releases Talavera**

The Arc-Com Design Studio delivers a multi-colored geometric with the addition of the Talavera pattern. Talavera finds its inspiration in the ornately patterned, hand-painted Spanish and Mexican clay tiles. The tiles originate from the Spanish city of Talavera de la Reina, home to many potters, and the intricate graphic designs of the tiles come from the Arabic-Andalusian influence in ninth century Spain.

Spanish potters migrated to Puebla, Mexico, in the 16th century, and Talavera de la Reina’s style of Talavera tiles became well known in Puebla. Talavera tile factories became prevalent throughout Mexico in the 18th century. Today Puebla is still home to traditional pottery workshops that craft traditional Talavera tiles.

Pattern Talavera modernizes the classic Spanish/Mexican-influenced geometry through the use of innovative weave structure and color. A crisp outline frames the motifs. The creative combination of lustrous, matte and heathered yarns adds surface interest to this textile.

As a result of extensive yarn sourcing by the design studio, the textile has been engineered to be compatible with bleach. The ability to be cleaned and disinfected with bleach, combined with a stain-resistant finish and a 125,000 double rub abrasion result, allows pattern Talavera to be used in virtually any interior setting.

The 11 SKU color palette addresses a multitude of market segments. Neutrals, blue greens, purple, navy and a bright primary are all included.
In response to feedback and requests from the design community, Allsteel has revamped its website to provide a more comprehensive user-friendly experience with simplified functionality. With the addition of 2,000 new assets and an improved intuitive layout, designers and dealers can access look books, insights, typicals, finishes, product information and firsthand designer videos easily. An expansive selection of whitesweep images have been added to help customers visualize product settings without the interference of polarizing colors or settings. Stronger user-centric search capabilities, improved Revit files and the ability to instantly download any image on the site makes saving and sharing files with colleagues and clients easier.

Allsteel's re-designed website provides advanced tools, client stories and a fully mobile and collaborative online experience, enabling the design community to continue working together from wherever they are.

Allsteel invites the A&D and dealer communities to check out the website and share their feedback and suggestions.
KFI Studios Repped by Seibold + Baker

KFI Studios of Louisville, Kentucky, has announced Seibold + Baker as its new rep.

Seibold + Baker have a nearly 50-year history of service in Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky and most recently Illinois. Its commitment to customers, manufacturers and team members mirrors KFI Studios’ standards of integrity.

“Partnering with KFI Studios in Illinois is a great evolutionary next step as we continue to grow and add value to our customers,” said Colin Baker, Seibold + Baker partner and Illinois lead. “We couldn’t be more excited to start repping such a design- and people-focused company like KFI Studios.”

ASID Presents Award Winners and Scholars of 2020 Ones to Watch

The American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) has announced the winners and scholars for its 2020 Ones to Watch, an annual program that recognizes under-represented, rising design professionals.

“In an effort to ensure that diversity and inclusion is reflected and valued across every facet of design, Ones to Watch was developed to shine a light on diverse, future leaders within the design profession,” said Randy Fiser, ASID CEO.

The program recognizes industry professionals who represent a dedication to the profession and inclusion.

ASID Ones to Watch Award Winners consists of four categories: Design Excellence, Education Leadership, Manufacturing Leadership and Volunteer Leadership.

From the 20 award winners, the Society selected eight ASID Ones to Watch Scholars to participate in a leadership development training program. The two-year program teaches them to lead through experiential learning, coaching and mentoring.

The 2020 ASID Ones to Watch Scholars are:

Kendra Locklear Ordia, University of Nebraska assistant professor of interior design / Santiago Rivera, Gensler regional foundations, associations and organizations regional leader/associate director / Greer May, Studio 11 Design associate principal / Mike Goetz, HOL senior project designer / Heather Sutherland, Perkins and Will interior designer II / Kelsey Davidson, SALT principal interior designer / Taruan Mabry, ICRAVE senior interior designer / Madison Miller, Gensler, interior designer.

The 2020 ASID Ones to Watch Award winners are:


Representing

Nightingale Selects Aligned Reps for Northern California and Northern Nevada

Aligned Reps, based in San Mateo, California, has been selected by Nightingale to represent it in Northern California and Northern Nevada.

Managed by principals Mark and Gavin McGregor, Aligned Reps serves private and public sector clients. “Aligned Reps offers a tremendous value for dealers, plus they are perfectly positioned to grow our product line within one of the most important furniture markets in the U.S.,” said Egon Szenttamasy, Nightingale vice president of commercial sales.

ASSOCIATIONS

ASID Presents Award Winners and Scholars of 2020 Ones to Watch

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Events

Education Visionary Ted Dintersmith to Keynote EDspaces 2020

The Education Market Association’s opening keynote speaker for EDspaces in November is author and education change agent Ted Dintersmith.

Dintersmith will present “What Schools Could Be — Small Steps That Lead to Big Change.” His speech will share the potential educational institutions have if transformative learning experiences are focused on instead of test scores.

Dintersmith is on a mission to give kids a real chance to thrive in the innovation era. “Without profound change in traditional education, most of our current students will be at risk in a world defined by innovation,” he said. “It doesn’t have to be this way.”

During his 2015-2016 school year journey to all 50 states visiting 200 schools, Dintersmith met thousands of people involved in education, including students, teachers, administrators, parents, education policy makers, legislators and governors. He explored and highlighted conditions, including learning spaces and environments fostering exceptional student learning, and identified change models enabling a school, district or state to effectively transform classrooms at scale. Dintersmith will share an inspiring account of educators in ordinary circumstances doing extraordinary things, illustrating what leads to powerful learning in classrooms and how to empower our teachers to make it happen.

“As a collaborator and peer of past keynote speakers — Sir Ken Robinson and Tony Wagner — Ted will continue the important conversation on the future of education,” said Jim McGarry, EDmarket president and CEO. “Ted knows the key role the education market plays in creating the next generation of learning environments and will challenge us to support transformational change that positively impact schools everywhere.”

Dintersmith’s professional background spans technology, entrepreneurship and public policy. He was ranked by Business 2.0 as the top-performing U.S. venture capitalist for 1995-1999. In 2012, President Obama appointed him to the United Nations General Assembly. He has been the senior executive producer of several films that have premiered at Sundance, including the acclaimed extraordinaire things, illustrating what leads to powerful learning in classrooms and how to empower our teachers to make it happen.

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Nearly 200 companies will exhibit products at EDspaces, which will be Nov. 11-13 at the Charlotte Convention Center in North Carolina.
TRENDWAY - SEeks Independent SALES REP GROUP, Texas

Trendway is currently seeking an Independent Sales Rep Group to cover an established territory in Central/South Texas. The ideal organization should be based in one of the 3 main markets of this territory and have representation in the other two locations. The territory includes Houston, San Antonio and Austin. Potential Rep Groups should have business development personnel familiar with the GSA/SLED market along with a commercial focus. Preferable to have representative dedicated to Architectural Products. Group should have no conflicts in their existing offering and be able to fully promote the sale of Trendway products by establishing new business relationships, as well as maintaining and expanding current accounts.

Qualifications:
- Ability to build and maintain Dealer, A + D, and end user relationships
- Ability to travel within territory
If this sounds like you, please send cover letter and resume to: heliopulos@trendway.com

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- Threading capacity, Automated Powder coating capacity.
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INDEPENDENT SALES REP WANTED
INDEPENDENT REPS & REP GROUPS WANTED: MULTIPLE REGIONS

Join the Wyatt movement in the Pacific Northwest, DC Metro, Texas, Heartland, Mountain Region, NYC Metro and New England!

Wyatt Seating is a manufacturer built with contract furniture dealers in mind. We provide dealers with a go-to seating line that helps them win projects and increase dealer margin. Wyatt offers a variety of mid-market task, conference, and guest seating. Our rapid growth has increased the demand for talented independent reps and rep groups that pride themselves on relationship building and customer service.

JOB DESCRIPTION
- Build relationships with contract furniture dealers in your territory
- 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.
Wyatt doesn’t look & feel like every other seating company, and that is by design. Come join a movement that leaves you energized and inspired!

For more information, contact Pat Zerbe at:
pat@wyattnseating.com

Be sure to check out our website at:
www.wyattnseating.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 furnishing spaces tailor-made to suit it’s 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 direct investment.
- 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 Medellin, 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 bicion investment banking in Colombia:

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+57 315 363 3666
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