

Workplaces

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Workplaces of the Future Defined at NeoCon / Perspectives on Productivity / Inclusiveness in the Workplace: Be True to Yourself / Coworking and Working Out go Hand-in-Hand in NYC / Can Office Design Solve Obesity? / How 3D Printing is Changing the Way You Work / A new Era of Coworking / And Much More...





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Workplaces

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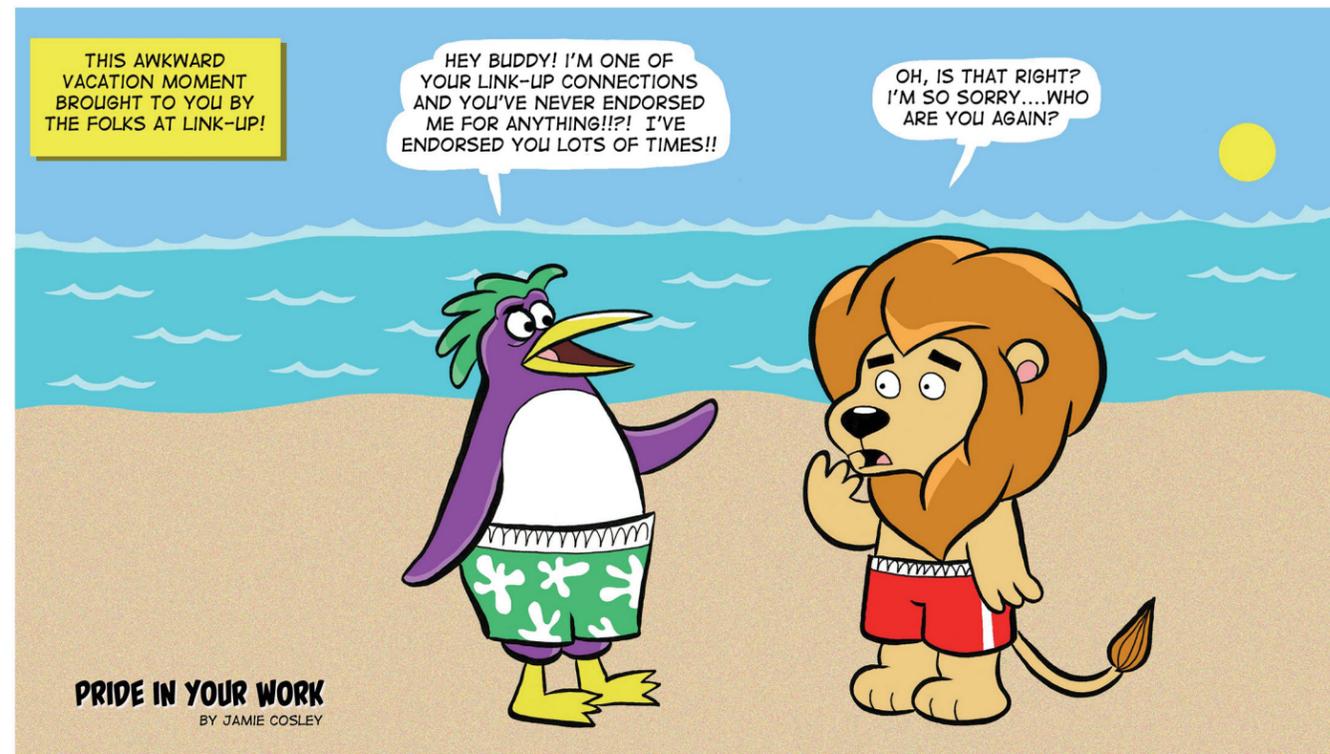
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that will help your customers work better, to stories that
will help you run a better, more informed company.
ROB KIRKBRIDE, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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ME FOR ANYTHING!!?! I'VE
ENDORSED YOU LOTS OF TIMES!!

OH, IS THAT RIGHT?
I'M SO SORRY....WHO
ARE YOU AGAIN?



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BY JAMIE COSLEY



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While you were working, office furniture makers and sellers, interior designers and the folks who create your workplaces gathered last month in Chicago to talk about how you'll work in the future and the products that will make it happen.

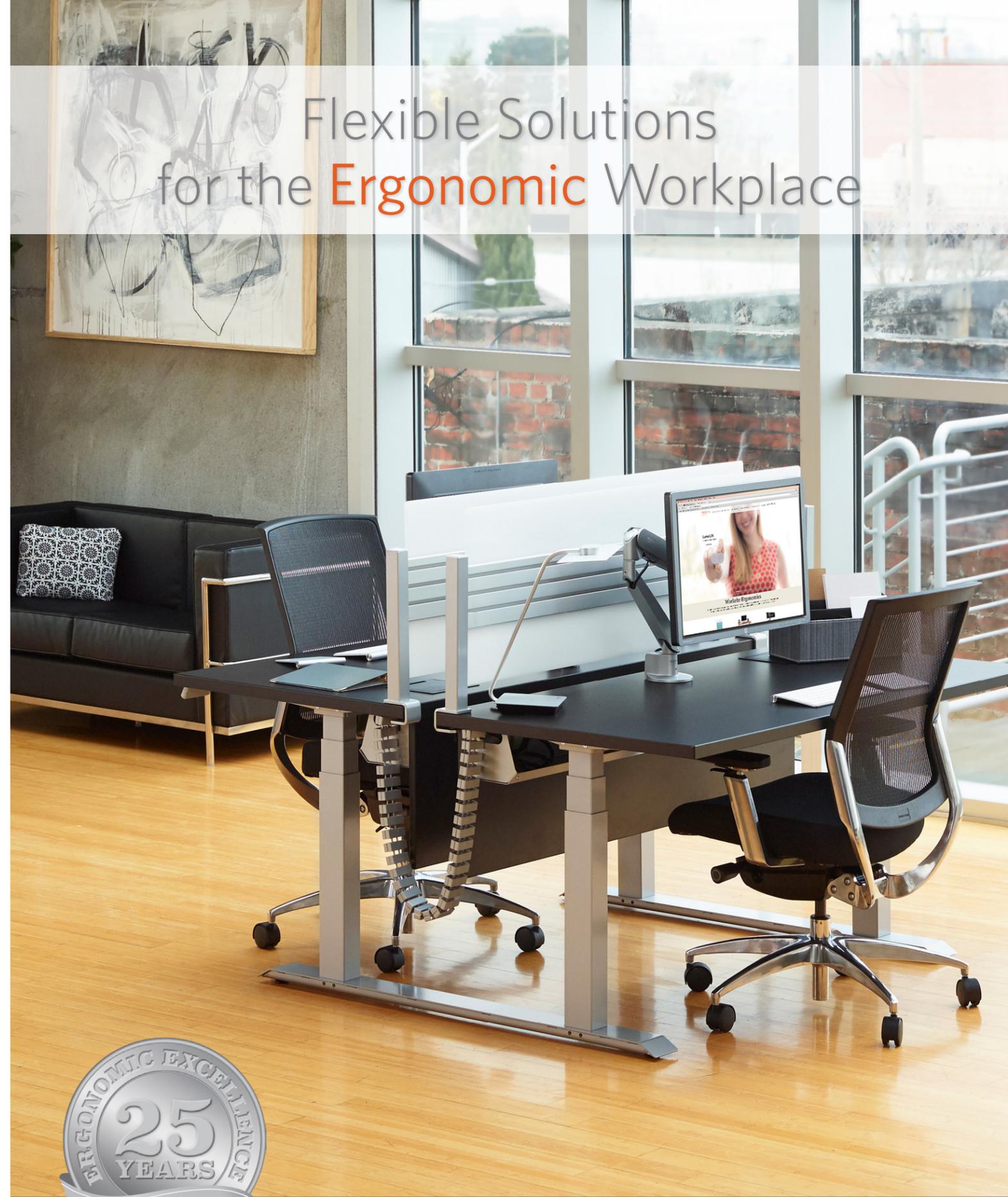
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To be true to yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.

— Ralph Waldo Emerson



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For anyone who follows workplace trends, it's no secret health and wellness are becoming all the rage when it comes to designing for the built environment. As a society, we have turned the corner from looking at sustainability as something inherent in a building (LEED) to extending that sustainability story to "human" sustainability.



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Intricately carved chairs, serpentine tables and elaborate lamp shades – these creative pieces were once the digital doodles of furniture designers with little hope of a life beyond a computer file. But the rise of 3D printing can now bring these designs to life with startlingly precision. Known as additive manufacturing, this technology is more than a way to push aesthetics past traditional limits.

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The dry erase marker may be a small accessory for the office, conference or training room, but it is one of those items that when you need it, it is very important. That's happening a lot more than it used to as

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92. A NEW ERA OF COWORKING

The coworking revolution is transforming real estate. Pioneered by start-ups, entrepreneurs and freelancers, a growing number of companies, large and small, are exploring how to incorporate the concept.

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Workplaces of the Future Defined at NeoCon

NeoCon is one of the largest gatherings of workplace experts in the world. Held annually at Chicago's cavernous Merchandise Mart, the event outlines trends that will affect the workplace for years to come. **Words and Pictures by Rob Kirkbride**

While you were working, office furniture makers and sellers, interior designers and the folks who create your workplaces gathered last month in Chicago to talk about how you'll work in the future and the products that will make it happen.

Look for the workplace to feel a lot more like home and a lot more connected through technology. It is going to be more comfortable with more lounge furniture and places to chill out. It's also going to be a healthier place with sit-to-stand desks that will remind you to get moving and more desk chairs that keep your back supported during long sessions in front of your computer.

The event is NeoCon, and it is one of the largest gatherings of workplace experts in the world. Held annually at Chicago's cavernous Merchandise Mart, the event outlines trends that will affect the workplace for years to come.

Office furniture makers are taking more chances. Workrite Ergonomics showed its Reveal prototype height-adjustable desk, which looks like a traditional desk when in the lowest position, but a sleek modern marvel when raised. The company worked with Gensler, a major interior design firm, on the prototype, said CEO Charlie Lawrence. "For the last 24 years, Workrite has focused on function. Now we are looking at style and design along with function," he said.

Though "specialist" office furniture companies like Workrite and Stir that focus on one or a small number of categories continue to make strides, major companies in the industry also had a strong show. It seems as if office furniture companies have spent the last year refining their offerings — making already good product lines and categories even better. One example is the HON Grove collection. In an industry with a preponderance of oversized and overstuffed lounge products, HON Grove has great size and scale.

Other exhibitors continued to build on trends from past years. Focal Upright Furniture, now part of Safeco, certainly did start the trend of perching chairs — basically seats with a stick used for leaning against while stand-



ing. Knoll is showing its new HiLo seat designed by Box Clever and other examples of the trend abound.

Knoll also joined the trend toward simple residential designs for the office with its stripped down Rockwell Unscripted collection. One showgoer said it looks like it came from IKEA (but with a much higher price tag). We will let the market be the judge of Rockwell Unscripted.

Desk Makers introduced several new “distressed” laminates that give its height-adjustable furniture a much warmer feel. The company also showed it with raw steel legs — another trend found at NeoCon this year, including on West Elm Workplace’s Truss line. Many know West Elm from its residential furniture roots.

Showrooms seemed to have taken on the look and feel of home furnishings stores as well. Teknion’s gorgeous space certainly had a homey feel, a departure from its stark white look of the past. AIS promoted a chill loft look in its showroom, complete with baristas and folky music. And Neutral Posture’s showroom was about as sunny as could be, literally coated with Benjamin Moore’s “Sunshine” yellow paint.

While office furniture makers are definitely working to get more residential, the industry is finding some traditionally residential companies are trying to break into the commercial office market. Italian seating maker Calligaris, which has made residential furniture since the 1920s, is working hard to build its commercial business, including a NeoCon showroom. The company counts McDonald’s and AT&T as seating customers already.

Individual work pods were the rage this year, “inspired” by Steelcase’s Brody introduction last year. Teknion showed off its Zones furniture collection by PearsonLloyd, which can be used to create small work or collaborative spaces. KI also showed its MyPlace collection that blurs the lines between lounge, work and personal space.

NeoCon 2016 marked the return of the task chair with some important introductions. Haworth’s Fern chair, Neutral Posture’s Icon and OM’s Truly are truly good, just to name a few.

Thankfully, a few companies also added some playful pieces to the NeoCon 2016 mix. BuzziSpace’s BuzziJungle was a fun sculptural element in the lobby and in its showroom, and Clarus Whiteboard had fun with a ping-pong table made from its product. Speaking of jungles, plants and greenery were everywhere at NeoCon, though Vitra’s jungle was the most dense.

My how things have changed since that first NeoCon nearly 50 years ago. While the show was once dominated by the industry’s majors (all of whom still participate), it has become much more welcoming to smaller companies looking to break into the market. Companies like Stir and Koleksiyon, which started on temporary floors, now occupy permanent showrooms. A seemingly endless stream of newcomers to the industry take their place on the lone remaining temporary floor, including those with new ideas like Metronaps, which was showing a pod designed, as the name suggests, for taking naps at work.



“The more you recline, the more the weight of your body is proportionately distributed and the more comfortable you get. Hence, the best chair is a bed.”

Niels Diffrient
Designer



Humanscale



Haworth's Fern



KI



K1



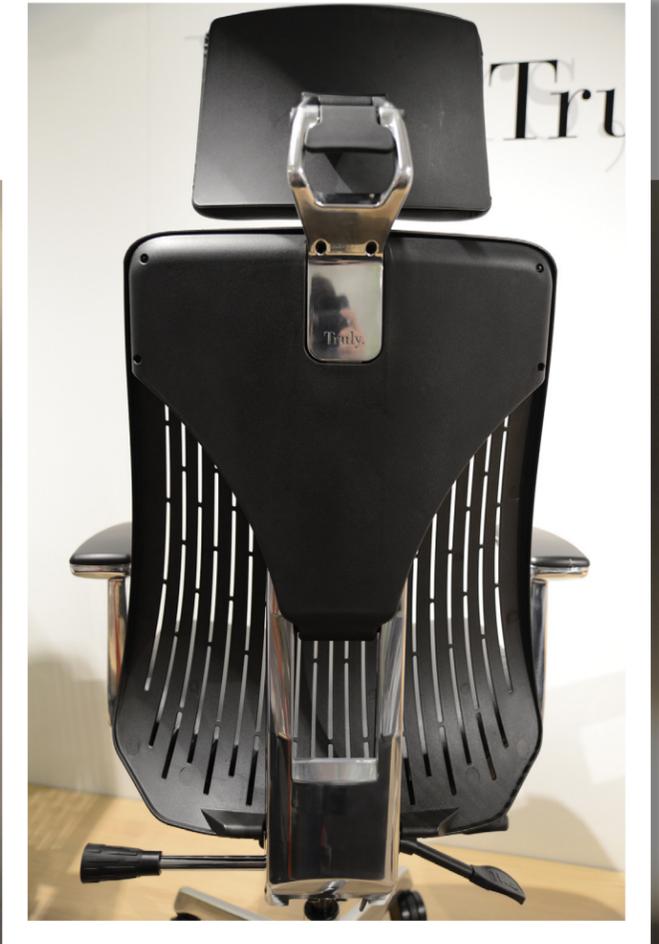
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Neutral Posture



Vitra





















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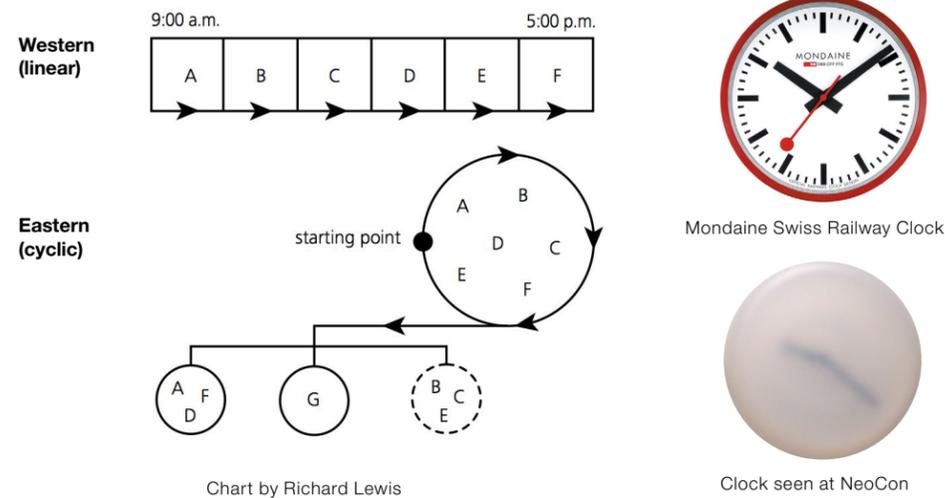
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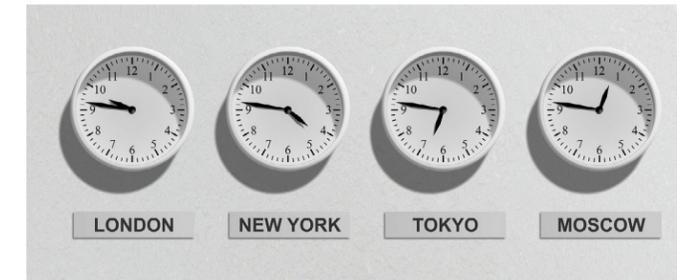
By IDa Design



Productivity is often brought up when talking about efficiency, or lack thereof, in the workplace. However, this topic of productivity might be more, well...productive if the conversation shifted to the notion of time itself. What seems to be a fixed convention can be interpreted differently depending on an individual's cultural view of time. The field of study around this topic is called Chronemics. It looks at how we humans perceive the passage of time and its impact on our interactions and communications. It also provides insight into the variety of cultural views surrounding time and perhaps why different people, whether based on culture, generation, or personality, behave differently as the second hand ticks on.

With such variation in mind, we looked at some broad perspectives on time between western and eastern cultures. Western countries, especially the United States, Switzerland, and Germany, view the passage of time as linear with tasks being connected end-to-end. Current tasks are prioritized before time carries them away to be "lost" in the past. Tasks are prioritized over relationships, which explains the western value of being "on time". (Swiss train anyone?) Some eastern cultures, view time cyclically. Comparatively more time may be allocated for thinking about options before taking action. Time is perceived as more plentiful in that it continues through the lives of children and future descendants. Cultural views of time remain prevalent, but globalization clearly has its effect on blurring these distinctions and providing space for learning and appreciation.

If 525,600 minutes is how we measure a year (according to the Broadway musical, Rent), the average worker will spend about 120,000 of them clocked in. The system of seconds and minutes may seem universal but in Japan, this was not always so. During the Edo period, the clock was seasonal and relied on the amount of daylight. Day and night were each divided into 6 even segments, or toki. Consequently, a daylight toki in the summer lasted longer than a nighttime toki. The Japanese no longer follow this model, but cultural legacies remain, including a reverence for relationships over tasks.



Scott Thrift, a designer and filmmaker, is dedicated to expanding the western linear view of time. Rather than measuring in seconds, his clock captures the passage of time over one year. This timepiece, aptly named ThePresent, features a gradient that is inspired by the 4 seasons. He wants you to experience time rather than get lost in its disappearance. Using color gradients to convey a relationship between now and later, Thrift hopes to lengthen the present. Thrift is part of a generation that increasingly questions the status quo in light of technology and the rich diversity of a global community.



ThePresent Clock

The relational focus associated with cyclical time models overlaps nicely with generational influences on the workplace. Millennial and Gen Z workers – on the whole – are less linear, as evidenced by their ability to multi-task and blur the lines between being on or off of "the clock" (see our [April Workplaces article for more on this](#)). Differences in cultural perception of time is yet another influencer upon the changing workplace alongside more studied topics of gender, race, and generation.





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**INCLUSIVENESS IN THE
WORKPLACE:**

BE TRU TO YOURSELF

Story by Emily Clingman

Workplaces



To be true to yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

It's been a landmark year for 30-year-old Tru Jonkman. After living his whole life being known as a female, he made a life-changing decision recently to transition to a male identity. Jonkman, who has worked in the seating plant at Herman Miller in Holland, Michigan, since 2014, had been thinking about transitioning to a male for some time.

When he finally came out as male, he did it at work.

"I didn't have the courage to move forward and identify as trans until we had a training meeting about sexual harassment," he said. "After the meeting, I told one of the members of the LGBT leadership, 'I think this is what I am.' The training gave me the courage and the comfort to say it out loud."

Why at work?

"I'm here more than I am just about anywhere else in the world," he said. "I want to be comfortable where I'm spending the most time."

He said overall it's been a positive experience. Depart-

ment managers and work team leaders jumped right in to help Jonkman and to inform others. With some help from Transgender Michigan, Herman Miller facilitated a smooth transition for Jonkman.

Addressing the issues

This isn't always the case for transgender employees. According to the National Center for Transgender Equality, more than one in four transgender people have lost their job due to bias, and more than three-fourths have experienced some form of workplace discrimination. Refusal to hire, privacy violations, harassment and sexual violence on the job are common occurrences experienced by transgender people of color. Many people change jobs to avoid discrimination or the risk of discrimination. Extreme levels of unemployment and poverty lead one in eight to become involved in underground economies, such as sex and drug work, in order to survive.

Certain states do not have mandated protection for transgender employees.

Rachel Lucas, human resources and development specialist at The GLBT Community Center of Colorado in Denver explained there is some protection at the federal level, but in individual states with no protection for sexual orientation or gender identity, it's not illegal to discriminate.

"Trans employees leave jobs themselves because they don't feel safe or comfortable," Lucas said. "Things can get hostile or aggressive. They feel like they don't have a choice."

Small things add up over time, Lucas pointed out. "Microaggressions are often described as death by a thousand cuts," she said. "It just becomes unbearable."

Outright harassment can be seen in the form of managers or other employees refusing to acknowledge an employee's self-identified gender, derogatory remarks directed at a trans employee or even grabbing a trans employee's genitals to "prove" a particular gender. Another common example is telling someone how to



dress or groom to truly pass as identified gender.

Some harassment, in the form of comments made to a transgender employee is more subtle, and maybe even unintentional, but insensitive and inappropriate nonetheless. Here are examples:

I never knew you used to be a girl.

You're so beautiful for a trans girl.

How do you have sex?

Who's the man when you have sex?

Are your breasts real?

Can I touch?

"In their mind, that might not be offensive," Lucas said. "But, to a trans male, for instance, it's not that he used to be a girl, he has always been a man inside. But now, he is transitioned and feels more at home inside his body."

What's in a name

There are other issues too, such as binary systems.

"Our world is pretty much set up for male and female," Lucas said. "Job applications ask to check whether you're female or male, and what your legal name is."

Sometimes transgender employees don't know what to put there because they don't want to lie, Lucas explained, but they also don't want to list a name (from their driver's license or birth certificate) that doesn't correspond with their true identity.

"If they write that they are John Smith, but show up looking like Jane Smith, that causes a lot of stress for them," Lucas said. "So they start off the hiring process already in a conflict. There are no other options for them."

Once someone is hired, human resources systems encounter the same issues. Even if the employer is aware and supportive of an employee's gender identity, what box do they check in their binary system? How do they allocate insurance benefits? Gender specific dress codes also cause stress and confusion for transgender employees.

How to Support Transgender Colleagues

Tru Jonkman, a Herman Miller transgender employee, said sometimes, in an effort not to be offensive, people don't say anything at all about his gender change, which he says can be as frustrating as overtly discriminatory comments.

"I think that just asking, 'Hey, what is this process like,' is an OK question to ask," Jonkman said, adding that identifying oneself as an ally is a good way to get a response from a transitioning person. "Sort of like, 'I come in peace.'"

While it's negative to tell a transgender individual how to dress or act to pass as a certain gender, Jonkman said it's OK to compliment someone. "I lift weights," Jonkman said. "So, I'm not going to lie, when someone says in a friendly way, 'You're looking good, or you're getting buff,' I'm gonna be OK with that."

Jonkman said the best way to be an ally or to open a conversation is to start by asking how to be helpful. "Just say, 'What is the best way for me to be supportive of you?'" Jonkman said.

GLAAD (formerly known as the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation), offers the following advice for people to become better allies to transgender people.

You can't tell if someone is transgender just by looking: Transgender people don't all look a certain way or come from the same background, and many may not appear "visibly trans." You should assume there may be transgender people at any gathering.

Don't make assumptions about a transgender person's sexual orientation: Gender identity is different than sexual orientation. Sexual orientation is about who we're attracted to. Gender identity is about our own personal sense of being male or female (or someone outside that binary). Transgender people can be gay, lesbian, bisexual or straight.

If you don't know what pronouns to use, listen first: It's also appropriate to ask which pronouns an individual identifies with.

Don't ask a transgender person what their "real name" is: For some transgender people, being associated with their birth name is a tremendous source of anxiety, or it is simply a part of their life they wish to leave behind.

Be careful about confidentiality, disclosure and outing: Some transgender people feel comfortable disclosing their transgender status to others and some do not. Knowing a transgender person's status is personal information, and it is up to them to share it. Do not casually share this information or gossip about a person you know or think is transgender.

Don't ask about a transgender person's genitals, surgical status or sex life: It would be inappropriate to ask a non-transgender person about the appearance or status of their genitals, and it's equally inappropriate to ask a transgender person those questions.

Challenge anti-transgender remarks or jokes in public spaces: It's important to challenge anti-transgender remarks or jokes whenever they're said and no matter who says them.

Know your own limits as an ally: Don't be afraid to admit when you don't know something.



Restrooms are a huge point of stress, too, Lucas said.

"It actually causes health problems," she said. "Trans employees will avoid using the restroom in public, but that leads to urinary tract infections or bladder infections because they are holding it too long."

Lucas noted that under the transgender umbrella, gender non-conforming individuals who don't want to be in a box, who don't feel they are male or female face administrative confusion and frustration.

"How do they interact with that very binary gender system?" Lucas asked. "It's definitely a conversation that continues."

Communication matters

For Jonkman, it was the conversations about and in support of gender inclusiveness that saved him from workplace confusion and harassment.

"It was very important that the work team leaders had my back," Jonkman said, adding he works in several departments all over the plant. "The entire plant knows exactly who Tru is."

Abe Carrillo, director for inclusiveness and diversity at Herman Miller, said the leadership and guidelines were in place. Swift action was taken to facilitate the inclusiveness everyone has been trained in.

Herman Miller, in an effort to be a leader in diversity and inclusiveness, about 10 years ago implemented programs and policies within the company to score 100 percent on the Human Rights Campaign Foundation Corporate Equality Index. It's the national benchmarking tool on corporate policies and practices pertinent to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender employees.

"To us, inclusiveness is the hard part," Carrillo said. "You can throw a bunch of people together that maybe look different or come from different areas or different thoughts, but if you don't have the proper environment or leadership, it's not going to work very well."



Letting the employee guide the process is key, according to Carrillo.

"We didn't know if Tru wanted to be known right away," he said.

"Being able to be a leader in my own transition at work, I was also a part of Herman Miller transitioning," Jonkman said. "There are people that don't agree with certain lifestyles, there's passive aggressiveness and flat-out misgendering, but there are also polices in place."

"We're not here to change people's personal convictions," Carrillo said. "What we want to uphold is the company value of inclusiveness. We're going to treat each other with that respect here. Everyone is extra ordinary and a valuable individual. It sets the tone for how we manage, how we lead. We want everyone to feel welcome. What we say here is that we want everyone to bring their whole selves to work. We don't want you to leave parts of yourself behind because you are embarrassed or ashamed or feel that you are going to be in an unsafe environment because that prevents you from being the most productive or creative that you can be."

"Treat people like people," Jonkman said. "It's basic."

In addition to discrimination, harassment and misunderstandings at work, the struggle for acceptance can become overwhelming and hopeless sometimes, resulting in suicide attempts in the transgender community occurring four times as much as the general population.

"There are more cultures than one," Jonkman said. "We are a culture here at Herman Miller, which means there are transgender people in the community. Different religions and cultural backgrounds — that's what it means to be at Herman Miller. It's not just about making chairs. Knowing things about other people may challenge you, but everyone gets to be themselves. It's not worth it to diminish yourself for the comfort of others."

Jonkman said he believes in speaking up and speaking out.

"Not everyone is like me though," he said. "Allies are your armor. Rely on the people that do have that courage. There are resources to help you feel comfortable, safe and free to go to work as who you are." **WPM**

Resources for Those Looking for Support

The Human Rights Campaign workplace gender transition guidelines for employers.

Guidelines should address:

- Who in the business is charged with helping a transitioning employee manage his/her workplace transition
- What a transitioning employee can expect from management
- What management's expectations are for staff, transitioning employees and any existing LGBT employee group in facilitating a successful workplace transition
- What the general procedure is for implementing transition-related workplace changes, such as adjusting personnel and administrative records, as well as a communication plan for co-workers and clients
- Answers to frequently asked questions about dress code and rest room use

National organizations offering transgender information and services include:

- GLAAD (www.glaad.org)
- GLBT National Help Center (www.glbthotline.org)
- Human Right Campaign (www.hrc.org)
- National Center for Transgender Equality (www.transequality.org)
- Trans Advocacy Network (www.transadvocacynetwork.org)
- Transgender Law Center (www.transgenderlawcenter.org)



COWORKING AND WORKING OUT GO HAND-IN- HAND IN NYC

The concept behind Primary is that businesses and individuals prosper from convenient access to wellness.

Story by Stef Schwalb

Workplaces

Home to the New York Stock Exchange and the site of numerous NYC-based financial institutions, the Financial District (FiDi) is an area of the city where it's paramount to have work and well-being at their optimal levels. It's apropos then that Primary, a coworking space that combines health and wellness within the workplace, has unveiled its flagship location at 26 Broadway.

The concept behind Primary was that businesses and individuals prosper from convenient access to wellness. Believing that people work best when they feel good, the company uses a three-prong approach to achieve it: 1) by providing the physical workspace to enhance it; 2) fostering and supporting the community that's there; and 3) offering healthy amenities and benefits at every turn.

Primary's Chief Wellness Officer, Brian Hain, worked in conjunction with co-founders Lisa Skye Hain and Danny Orenstein to develop the project. In 2015 Lisa, an entrepreneurial community builder, approached Danny, a design construction specialist, to launch a vision she conceived in 2012. Recognizing that wellness

had helped them excel both personally and professionally, the founders started the process of uniting the two elements into one thriving workspace community. Incorporating Brian's fitness expertise, which includes a decade of experience in wellness programming, holistic health planning, multisport training, and community development, was the final piece of the puzzle.

Danny serves as the lead designer of Primary's space. Previously, he worked as the founding Director of Development for WeWork, leading the design and construction of the organization's first half million square feet of space (6 locations); then as Senior Construction Project Manager at Kate Spade, overseeing construc-



“THROUGHOUT THE SPACE, YOU’LL FIND FURNITURE WITH FINE WOODWORKING DETAILS, A SENSE OF CRAFTSMANSHIP AND SIMPLICITY.”

tion of the brand’s first two Flagship locations; and lastly, as Director of Store Development and Construction at Aesop. Before launching Primary, Lisa worked with The Corcoran Group on a top residential & commercial real estate sales team; managed two restaurants for Danny Meyer; built one of Manhattan BNI’s (Business Network International) largest and most prosperous chapters; and served as WeWork’s founding Head of Community, overseeing operations for their first 275 offices.

Opening this past June, Primary’s vast 25,000-square-foot space offers a soothing, spa-like atmosphere throughout the surroundings noticeable as soon as you depart the elevator. Featuring 66 fully furnished offices and 108 coworking seats, they can accommodate up to 324 people. All office partitions are double-glazed, providing sound reduction ratings similar to solid plasterboard walls. Audio-masking solutions have also been installed in the common areas to decrease ambient noises. The space features original furniture pieces, stylish bespoke light fixtures from Etsy vendors Lu-

cent Lightship and Photonic Studio, and visually stunning, large-format photographic prints on the walls. Additional furnishings come from Brooklyn Millwork and Iron Oaks, as well as custom-designed pieces by Primary Co-Founder Danny Orenstein. Green and moss walls, as well as formal floral arrangements provided by local vendors Greensulate and Brooklyn Plant Studio, play an integral part in the space for their calming effect and air-purifying qualities. “We turned towards a combination of Mid-century modern and Scandinavian modern design,” Hain revealed. “Throughout the space, you’ll find furniture with fine woodworking details, a sense of craftsmanship and simplicity. We like to celebrate the character of raw materials – using gorgeous, lightly veined marble and solid hardwoods. We were inspired by designers such as Finn Juhl, Arne Jacobsen, Alvar Aalto and Eero Saarinen, as well as publications such as Cereal Magazine (who’s Creative Director curated the artwork through the space), Kinfolk, and Monocle.”

The offices and desks are turnkey. With mem-





“WE ARE REALLY TAKING A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO THE OFFERINGS FROM THE WELLNESS PERSPECTIVE IN THAT THERE IS NOT A SINGLE STYLE OR TYPE OF PRACTICE IN ANY FORM THAT MEETS ALL NEEDS.”

bership, workers get access to daily events and classes, business amenities and conference rooms, and all on-site perks, including the members-only 600-square-foot fitness studio and 30+ classes per week (ranging from yoga and meditation to functional fitness); six private showers and changing room facilities; the full-service café and espresso bar that features Stumptown Coffee Roasters, healthy options of juices from Lulitoni and Pure Green, and catered lunches from Dig Inn; and a bike storage area.

“The lineup of classes will change from time to time based on our members’ feedback and attendance. We want to offer variety that meets our membership’s wellness needs. The same can be said for services,” Hain explained. “We are really taking a holistic approach to the offerings from the wellness perspective in that there is not a single style or type of practice in any form that meets all needs. We want to ensure we are

able to offer something nourishing for each and every member whether they love breaking a sweat or taking it easy.”

Primary has its own event coordinator onsite. In addition to weekly meet and greet happy hours, there are other unique events on the horizon. “We are launching our speaker series (a la TED talks – 15-20 minutes) in July, which is featuring two tracks,” Hain continued. “We will have the wellness-focus track on personal development tools and skills to pass along to our community, while also providing professional development education to boost and support our entrepreneurs throughout the space. We are also teaming up with a few partners from Equinox to MNDFL to offer their expertise in the respective fitness and meditation worlds as an ongoing offering in our space.” Primary plans to launch a Flatiron location within the next year and internationally the year after. **WPM**

CAN OFFICE DESIGN SOLVE OBESITY?

For the first time, research is looking at workplace design as one factor that, together with other lifestyle changes, can address our country's growing obesity epidemic.

Story by Amanda Schneider



Paul Scialla

For anyone who follows workplace trends, it's no secret health and wellness are becoming all the rage when it comes to designing for the built environment. As a society, we have turned the corner from looking at sustainability as something inherent in a building (LEED) to extending that sustainability story to "human" sustainability. The underlying premise is this: People ultimately are an organization's largest expense. If we can help employees live healthier and feel better, then they will create better work products. But how far does this go? Can designing healthy buildings really make people healthier? Pushed even further, can workplace design help cure obesity?

To explore this question, we spoke with Paul Scialla, founder of the International WELL Building Institute and Founder and CEO of Delos. The WELL Building Standard is administered by IWBI, which is a public benefit corporation with a mission to improve human health and well-being through the built environment. IWBI was launched by Delos in 2013, following a Clin-



ton Global Initiative to improve the way people live by developing spaces that enhance occupant health and quality of life. And just to give you an idea of how serious they are about the company's well-being mission, IWBI also recently launched a WELL Accredited Professional program, a credential signifying knowledge in human health and wellness in the built environment and specialization in the principles, practices and applications of the WELL Building Standard.

Reducing obesity or simply creating healthier habits seems like, at a minimum, a philanthropic thing to do for employees.

For the first time, research is looking at workplace design as one factor that, together with other lifestyle changes, can address our country's growing obesity epidemic. A growing body of research demonstrates that the environments where we live and work can have a direct impact on our well-being. "Several features of the WELL Building Standard in particular can help contribute to lower obesity rates," Scialla says. "For example, WELL requires the availability of fresh, wholesome foods and limits unhealthy ingredients to encourage better eating habits and food culture. WELL also promotes design that encourages



2000
The 15-year, \$4.7 billion Metro
Subway Project completes its last
three stations.

2003
The Frank Gehry-designed Disney
Concert Hall opens atop Bunker Hill,
becoming a star of the new Downtown.

2006
The 1.1 million sq ft
Los Angeles Convention Center
opens.

**OVERHEARD
@CBRE**

Regardless of industry,
office occupiers are
driven by the same thing:
the need for enhanced
collaboration and
creativity in their
business.**

Kevin Bender

CBRE Group Inc.'s Global Corporate Headquarters in downtown Los Angeles, which incorporated innovative WELL features such as circadian lighting systems to support employees' sleep/wake cycles and promote alertness, became the first commercial office building in the world to achieve WELL Certification through the pilot program.



Another view of CBRE Group Inc.'s Global Corporate Headquarters in downtown Los Angeles



The recently established Well Living Lab in collaboration with Mayo Clinic. The Well Living Lab is the first scientific research center that uses exclusively human-centered research to understand the interaction between health, well-being and indoor environments.



The Well Living Lab control room.



physical activity throughout the day and reduces sedentariness, such as promoting stair accessibility and incorporating active workstations and standing desks.” By promoting these practices in the workplace — perhaps the place where Americans spend a majority of their waking hours — healthy habits that become natural behavior outside of the workplace can be developed.

Reducing obesity or simply creating healthier habits seems like, at a minimum, a philanthropic thing to do for employees. But to justify the investment in a certification program, many wonder if there really is a return on investment to these efforts. “We have found physical workplace to be one of the top three factors affecting performance and job satisfaction,” Scialla says. “Personnel costs significantly outweigh the costs for design, construction, maintenance and operations. Addressing occupant health channels resources toward reducing the largest line item in the 30-year costs of a building — the personnel — and therefore

offers a meaningful return on investment. The WELL Certification process aims to help create a built environment that can improve the nutrition, fitness, mood, sleep patterns, productivity and performance of its occupants.”

WELL already has seen “tremendously positive” results, according to Scialla. CBRE Group Inc.’s Global Corporate Headquarters in downtown Los Angeles, which incorporated innovative WELL features such as circadian lighting systems to support employees’ sleep/wake cycles and promote alertness, became the first commercial office building in the world to achieve WELL Certification through the pilot program. In an employee survey, one-year post-occupancy, 92 percent of respondents reported the new space created a positive effect on their health and well-being; 94 percent said it had a positive impact on their business performance; and 83 percent said they felt more productive.

“TD Bank’s office in Toronto also recently



became the first WELL Certified office under v1 of the standard, and a number of Fortune 500 companies are involved in the nearly 200 WELL building projects taking place in 18 countries around the world,” Scialla says.

To explore these concepts further, Delos recently established the Well Living Lab in collaboration with Mayo Clinic. The Well Living Lab is the first scientific research center that uses exclusively human-centered research to understand the interaction between health, well-being and indoor environments. “Americans spend more than 90 percent of their time indoors — from homes to office or work environments, schools, retail stores, fitness centers, health care facilities and more — which means exposure to indoor environments is at an all-time high,” Scialla says. “But what many people don’t realize is that buildings, and everything in them, can affect human health and well-being. The purpose of the Well

Living Lab is to study indoor environments and foster the creation of healthier indoor spaces to live, work and play.”

Wellness will continue to be at the heart of workplace design. Evidence is building to show physical space has the potential to add measurable value to the health, well-being, productivity and happiness of building occupants. Scialla closes with his generous and emphatic view on the issue: “By placing people at the heart of design, construction, operations and development decisions, we have the ability to add value to real estate assets, generate savings in personnel costs and enhance the human experience. We truly believe that health is a right not a privilege.” **WPM**

About the author: Amanda Schneider is a trends researcher, blogger for the Huffington Post, and the founder of Contract Consulting Group www.contractconsultinggroup.com, a consulting practice serving the Contract Interiors Industry focused on business strategy, market research, and marketing content development.

HOW 3D PRINTING IS CHANGING THE WAY YOU WORK



"The cost and physical footprint of 3D printing equipment has been reduced in recent years. As more design studios struggle to justify the space required for in-house model shops or the fees to work with a professional model shop, 3D printing has become a more effective way of realizing and evaluating the design process," **By Jennie Morton**

Intricately carved chairs, serpentine tables and elaborate lamp shades – these creative pieces were once the digital doodles of furniture designers with little hope of a life beyond a computer file. But the rise of 3D printing can now bring these designs to life with startlingly precision. Known as additive manufacturing, this technology is more than a way to push aesthetics past traditional limits. Companies can turn renderings into reality at a faster pace with a smaller environmental impact. Learn how specifying 3D printed furnishings will elevate your office landscape.

Condensing the Production Timeline

3D printing debuted over 30 years ago and has swiftly found applications in almost every industry. Anything from medical supplies and automotive parts to fashion apparel and action figurines can be constructed by these robotic printers. Most manufacturers use the technique for rapid prototyping, which allows them to quickly create scale models or sample parts. This ability can reduce turnaround from weeks to a matter of days if the designers work with a model studio. Those with on-site machines can simply print off a component at the end of a business day and have it waiting the next morning.

“The cost and physical footprint of 3D printing equipment has been reduced in recent years. As more design studios struggle to justify the space required for in-house model shops or the fees to work with a professional model shop, 3D printing has become a more effective way of realizing and evaluating the design process,” explains Richard Stevens, founder and creative director of forpeople, a design agency. “We use additive manufacturing to demonstrate everything from scale models of spatial design, from language and detail development to technical geometry and engineering development. 3D printing offers the opportunity and immediacy to interact with a design in-house.”

These timetable efficiencies not only help designers achieve the desired visual look, but they are afforded more opportunities for evaluation and testing. Teams can uncover imperfections and develop remedies with greater expediency.

“The key benefit to 3D printing is fabrication time and the ability to prototype more design directions at a faster pace,” Stevens notes. “We also typically 3D print at quarter or half scale, which enables us to optimize the time taken to produce the models as well as make them more easily transportable.”

The firm, which has used additive manufacturing for over a decade, partnered with Herman Miller on its Keyn Chair Group. The result is a line of meeting and side seating with just four main parts that can recline up to 10 degrees.

“During the development of the Keyn Chair Group, we used 3D printing extensively to prototype and test the complex mechanisms and geometry in the ergonomic rigs used to validate and refine user comfort,” explains Stevens. “This allowed the engineers to tweak the design of the kinematic movement at nearly the same time the prototypes were tested with users.”

A Personalized Touch

For interior designers, workplace consultants and property owners, 3D printing offers new options for customization. Feedback or requests from end



Wilkahn Presto

users can be incorporated into the CAD drawing, ensuring the finished product will support their workplace needs.

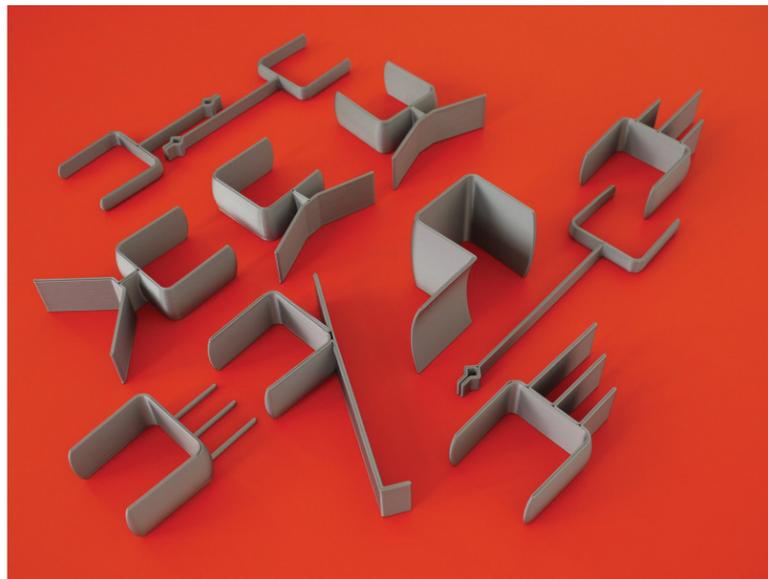
“The idea that 3D printing is an open door to invite customers to extend a system according to their specifications is extremely important,” says Carola Zwick, company partner and designer for Studio 7.5. “Not all work went to the cloud – we think of offices as labs and studios that need to support very particular physical aspects of work. 3D printing is the interface that can help a workspace to adapt quickly to emerging needs.”

For example, Herman Miller uses 3D printing for its Metaform Portfolio. A collaboration with Studio 7.5, the modular system is a series of panels that provides space delineation for individual workspaces or collaboration areas and includes

staggered recesses and nooks for organization. A variation of 3D printing called fused deposition modeling (FDM) is used for metaformTools, which are custom hooks and mini shelves that corral office supplies. The clip-on accessories can be customized by the client for shape, size, color and material choice.

“3D printing is more flexible because the design is stored as a file and only executed on demand. If you use FDM in an intelligent way, you create no waste and the production can happen as close to the customer as possible,” Zwick explains. “In our case, we are able to offer over 70 colors for our products and can start production the minute an order comes in.”

For American Standard, a manufacturer of kitchen and restroom products, 3D printing enabled its



Studio 7.5 metaformTools for Herman Miller

For American Standard 3D printing enabled its design team to turn a functional sink faucet into an eye-catching amenity.



design team to turn a functional sink faucet into an eye-catching amenity. DVX is made from Inconel alloy, which provides structural strength that can conceal waterways in inventive ways. The metal construction is also free of lead so the fixture meets safety codes.

Additive manufacturing is more than finding the right hue or personalizing a design. It can step in to create a highly specialized offering that is otherwise difficult or costly to produce. Traditional production methods are generally unable to accommodate an order that might be used by only one company. But 3D printing isn't influenced by the same economies of scale. It is uniquely positioned to deliver items that are one of a kind. Think of a museum that wants to generate a replica of a piece in its collection or a preservationist that needs to fabricate an architectural detail on a historic building. NASA has even placed 3D printers on the International Space Station so astronauts can produce repair tools as necessary.

"We like to think of 3D printing as apps to an existing OS," says Zwick. "For example, we recently designed shoe holders for the development department of a large sportswear company. This was a necessary item for them, but hardly in high demand elsewhere. 3D printing enabled us to deliver an exclusive solution."

Environmentally Responsible Fabrication

3D printing offers an attractive range of environmental benefits. Because the machine creates a precise version of a digital drawing, there is virtually no waste during printing. Customers have the assurance that materials are used only as need and won't end up in landfills.

Take for example the intricately sculpted base of the Rio side table designed by Morgan Studio and studioINTEGRATE. By using selective laser sintering (SLS), the lattice pattern is constructed from a single piece of polyamide, a synthetic polymer. No leftover portions are discarded where the cut-

outs are, which would be the case with traditional manufacturing techniques.

A study by researchers at Michigan Technological University on the energy consumption of an at-home printer suggests that additive manufacturing could also conserve electricity on a commercial scale. Furthermore, if a factory using 3D printing is located in the U.S., a product's greenhouse gas emissions are significantly reduced because it is not being shipped overseas.

"Wilkhahn has been fascinated by 3D printing's individualized and environmentally friendly production," says Simone Vingerhoets-Ziesmann, CEO. "Not only can the customer be directly involved in the design process, but they will receive a sustainable product tailored to their individual needs. The manufacturing capabilities of 3D printing support local production, minimize transportation and lower our carbon footprint."

Many of the resins or metals used in additive manufacturing are also recycled or recyclable. Bio-based filaments can even be derived from cellulose and lignin (fibers found in wood) and turned into a liquid state compatible for printing. Wilkhahn's Presto stool has a lignin base because the material is durable but ultimately biodegradable. Polylactic acid is another thermoplastic polymer that is made from rapidly renewable plants such as corn and cane sugar. These eco-friendly materials strengthen a product's environmental declaration or life-cycle assessment and can also help it qualify for GREENGUARD, BIMFA level or Cradle to Cradle certification.

3D printing gives business owners an opportunity to take an active role in space planning. You don't have to flip through a catalog hoping to find furnishings that will suit your specific needs. Your workplace can be tailored with functional pieces that support productivity and sustainability – endless design possibilities are just a click of a mouse away. too." **WPM**

Jennie Morton is a contributing writer to Workplaces.

Have a product you want us to review, or would like to see reviewed? *Let us know!*
 Email: reviews@bellow.press



EXPO DRY ERASE MARKERS

The dry erase marker may be a small accessory for the office, conference or training room, but it is one of those items that when you need it, it is very important.

That’s happening a lot more than it used to as whiteboards find their way out of conference or training rooms and spread throughout the workplace. The ones on wheels can be moved around for impromptu collaboration or at individual work stations.

Over the years I have used all kinds of dry erase markers and without a doubt, EXPO, the nation’s number one brand, is the best. Previously the markers and eraser would be stored on the dust tray, an ugly part of what otherwise could be a whiteboard with nice clean lines. A logical solution would be to take advantage of the magnetic properties of the whiteboard, and that’s what EXPO has done: The new markers include a magnet permanently attached to the marker’s side and an eraser in the cap.

This is a better solution than purchasing a magnet that attaches to the end of the marker, which would need to be switched as markers are replaced and hopefully not thrown in the trash with the old marker. The eraser in the cap is a great solution to the larger eraser that over time can be come very dirty and is almost impossible to clean. You get a new, clean eraser with each marker. The only disadvantage is the size of the eraser.

I have been using these markers for the past several weeks and have been very satisfied. The marker and the eraser are always within easy reach as I place it right where I had been working. Yes, this may be a small item, but sometimes it is the little things that can cause frustrations and can make a difference.



EXPO Markers with magnet and eraser

staples.com \$6

👍👍👍👍1/2

AVANT PRO WITH STYLUS

For a while I have seen pens that include a stylus for use with touch screens. I thought maybe there was something to these and wanted to see if they were useful.

The pen I selected was the Avant Pro. What first attracted me to the pen was the look: a stainless-steel body with a rubber-cushioned grip. Once I took it back to the office and started using it. I was impressed with the weight and construction of the pen. It writes smoothly, but not “very” smoothly. I could feel a little roughness as the pen glided over the paper. The clip is solid and has maintained its shape.

The point of my trying out the pen was the stylus, which required more pressure than I expected. It took about a minute to get the pressure and technique down. Although I was not any faster, I did find I was more accurate than with my fingers. The largest problem was that I did not use it. If I received a text, and if the pen was not in my hand, I would just pick up the phone and use my fingers. When I use my Windows 10 laptop I found the same problem, I would just lift my hands off the keyboard to touch the screen. Although the pen and stylus performed as expected, I would not recommend rushing out and getting a stylus pen because if you are like me, the stylus will never be used.



Avant Pro with Stylus

staples.com

\$10



FIELD NOTES KRAFT RULED MEMO BOOK

Despite our move toward tech taking over our office lives, there is something comforting about a simple, durable notepad where you can jot down notes and ideas. Workplaces has tried a number of simple notebooks, from legal pad style to school notebooks, but none match up to Field Notes, a line of memo books the company claims are inspired “by the vanishing subgenre of agricultural memo books, ornate pocket ledgers and the simple, unassuming beauty of a well-crafted grocery list.”



Field Notes Kraft ruled memo book

amazon.com

\$9.95 for a three-pack



Field Notes were created by the Draplin Design Co. in Portland, Oregon, in conjunction with Coudal Partners in Chicago, who describe the notebooks as “an honest memo book worth fillin’ up with good information.” The paper covers wear amazingly well, even when carried in your back pocket. They are the perfect size as well, 3 1/2 by 5 1/2 inches — small enough to carry around easily, but large enough to be actually useful.

The only gripe I can make about Field Notes memo books is that they are only 48 pages — a bit too small for my liking. Doubling the pages would make them more handy. Still, if you want a rock-solid notebook that is environmentally friendly

but wears like leather, pick Field Notes.



IKEA LACK SHELVING UNIT

Why is it so difficult to find a good shelving unit for work or the home office? While bookshelves and storage cabinets seem to be a dime a dozen, good shelves sturdy enough to stack books or files are exceedingly difficult to find. So, like any cheap-skate trying to outfit an office, I turned to IKEA for help.

The Lack shelving unit is part of IKEA’s excellent Lack line of bookshelves (cubes really), that are robust, even though they are a bit chunky looking. When I found IKEA added the Lack shelving unit to the line, I was excited to try it out in the office. Design-wise, the Lack shares the same clunky characteristics as the bookshelves in the line, which I find cool, though others might hate it.

It is function where the Lack shelving unit falls flat on its face. Simply put, it is too big and bulky to even hang from the wall. It is designed to be used horizontally or vertically. It works vertically, propped up and anchored to a wall, but it is a disaster when you attempt to mount it as a traditional bookshelf horizontally. It is simply too heavy to anchor to the wall safely, even with nothing on the shelves. So when it comes to a good bookshelf for the workplace, I’ll keep searching.

IKEA Lack shelving unit

ikea.com

\$49.99





Spec Introduced Bud at NeoCon 2016

Flexible, friendly and smart, Bud is confident on its own or works well with others, making it easy to fit in anywhere.

Bud offers easily adaptable seating options for lounge areas, available in round, square or crescent shapes. They can be paired to create fun configurations or used alone as accessory seating. Whether you need versatile seating for an informal meeting or to inspire collaboration, the possibilities are limited only by your imagination and how many friends you have.

Bud is available in an array of fabric and vinyl, including antibacterial and antimicrobial options. Different fabrics can be used on the seat and sides.

Bud will be ready to ship Sept. 1.



Spec Takes EndZone Benches One Step Further

Spec has introduced EndZone, a multipurpose work surface ideal for collaborative learning and plug-and-go activities in high traffic areas.

“With EndZone’s ever-increasing popularity and simplicity of design, it was only natural to take the series one step further and offer it as a bench,” said Shelley MacDonald, director of marketing.

The EndZone Bench, which was shown at NeoCon 2016, is available in two, three or four seats and can be specified with or without cushions in an unlimited number of fabrics. A variety of cushion configurations are offered that can create seating and table combinations.

The benches are offered in both laminate and veneer. The undersurface support beam and the insides of the end panels can be finished in contrasting laminates for a striking design detail. Power can be added to the sides of the 2-inch end panel so users can plug and play as they wait.

The EndZone Bench will start shipping Sept. 1.



Spec introduced Varsity at NeoCon 2016

Spec introduced Varsity, the latest addition to its collection of tables, at NeoCon 2016.

Varsity is a sleek and sporty table that achieves its classic silhouette with a 1-inch table top, framed by 1.5-inch square profile legs and a 1-inch apron. It's available in lounge, sitting or bar heights and a wide range of sizes. Finishes are available with numerous laminates and veneer choices, plus stains to match. Table base finishes are available in any of Spec's 76 Spectone colors and it is suitable for university classrooms, cafeterias, libraries and other general purpose work spaces.

Varsity ships knocked down and is easy to install with just five components. It will be ready to ship Sept. 1.



SurfaceWorks Introduces Stretch-Out LX Edition

SurfaceWorks is set to launch its new height-adjustable workstation, Stretch-Out LX Edition. Based on the original Stretch-Out model, the LX Edition will provide complete workstation essentials, such as a pencil lip, integrated wire management and attached power bar.

The new Focus top is designed to increase productivity. Its unique MR4V edge treatment is specifically designed for the workstation environment, featuring an ergonomic flexible edge for user comfort and a raised pencil lip to prevent objects from falling off.

The height-adjustable base provides numerous health benefits, including the ability to manage back pain and release energy, making it easier to focus. With features such as programmable heights, soft start/stop and ultra-quiet motors, the table is ideal for all applications. It ranges from 25 to 51 inches in height. Built for long-lasting function and durability, the 95-pound base is designed to withstand the rigors of hard use.

A new era of coworking



The evolution of coworking

The coworking revolution is transforming real estate. Pioneered by start-ups, entrepreneurs and freelancers, a growing number of companies, large and small, are exploring how to incorporate the concept. Coworking and liquid or flexible space are fast becoming critical components of wider Corporate Real Estate (CRE) and portfolio strategy. This paper explores the benefits and barriers to coworking. It identifies four models that organisations can apply to maximise value from the coworking experience.

The number of members using coworking spaces globally has been steadily increasing year on year and is predicted to reach one million by 2018¹. Coworking has traditionally been favoured by start-ups and entrepreneurs as a flexible and collaborative workplace solution. With four million new businesses being registered worldwide just in one year², coworking spaces are witnessing increased demand. There are a number of growing specialist providers, such as WeWork, who last year opened the UK's largest shared space in London, with capacity to house 3,000 members. With professional and other services representing over half of the entrepreneurs in North America and nearly half in Europe³ similar solutions are being developed in other cities across the globe.

Initially a trend that emerged as a start-up phenomenon, coworking is being adopted by more and more organisations. In Amsterdam, mature companies such as Philips and IBM are utilising coworking space to encourage innovation alongside start-ups. NUMA, which opened France's first coworking space in 2008 and an entrepreneurial hub in 2011, is now working with 30 large companies and helping to accelerate a number of start-ups⁴.

Coworking is centered on creating space which supports collaboration, openness, knowledge sharing, innovation, and the user experience. Demand for coworking space has been driven by the growth of creative and tech industries as well as the changing nature of work. Mobile technologies and personal devices have made working remotely from a variety of locations much easier. While this has fuelled the growth in home working, companies and their employees increasingly see the value of being part of a collaborative environment –something which is at the core of coworking. The results of the latest Global Coworking Survey reveal that 61% of coworking space providers are planning to expand their operations and almost 80% expect the number of members to increase in 2016.⁵

With a growing number of companies looking to tap into these benefits, it is only a matter of time before coworking becomes an integral part of the corporate real estate toolkit.



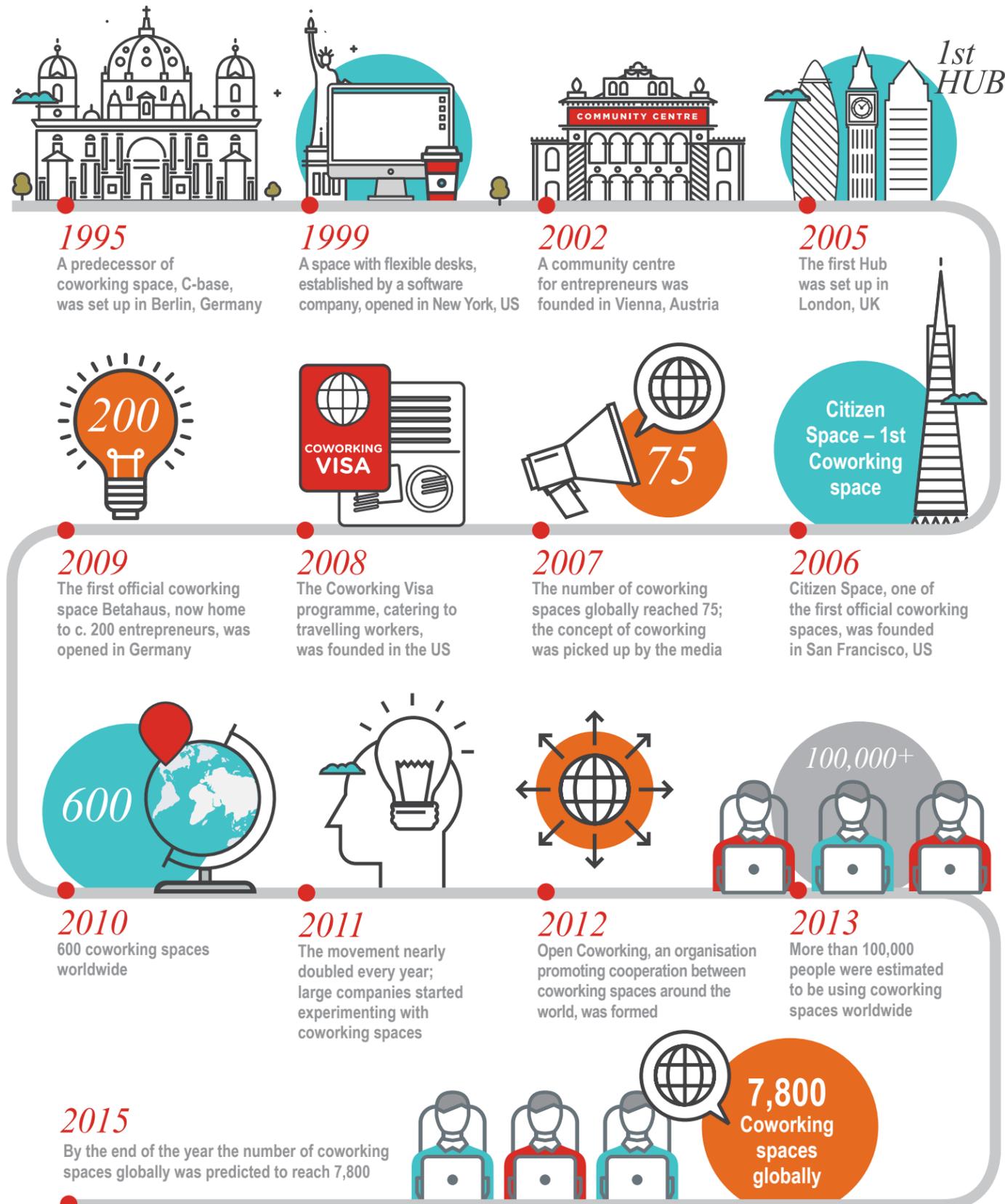
Coworking

(n.) The use of an office or other working environment by people who are self-employed or working for different employers, typically so as to share equipment, ideas, and knowledge.

Oxford Dictionaries

¹ Smallbizlabs 2014
² World Bank 2015
³ Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Report 2015/16
⁴ NUMA 2015

The coworking journey



Four models of coworking

There are a number of examples where companies have successfully employed coworking. Four core models are emerging which can be applied by organisations seeking to exploit the benefits of coworking.



EndMatter

10 Workspace Features that Millennials and Gen Z Want

The new workforce, made up of Millennials and Gen Z don't like the concept of cubicles. Those entering the workforce or looking for positions now are doing so in a time when tech companies are the holy grail for employment. These tech firms have set the standard for what an office space should look like. These office spaces are certainly not the cubicles of the past. So how do you set yourself apart from the competition and use your office space as an advantage in the talent war? Here are the 10 features that will make your workspace more attractive to Millennials and Gen Z:

1. Collegiate-Like Spaces
2. A Suite of Amenities
3. Technology
4. Coffee
5. Acoustic Controls
6. Third Spaces
7. Fresh Food Options
8. Natural Light
9. Sustainability
10. Ergonomics



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One of the Top Workplaces to Work: One Workplace in the Bay Area

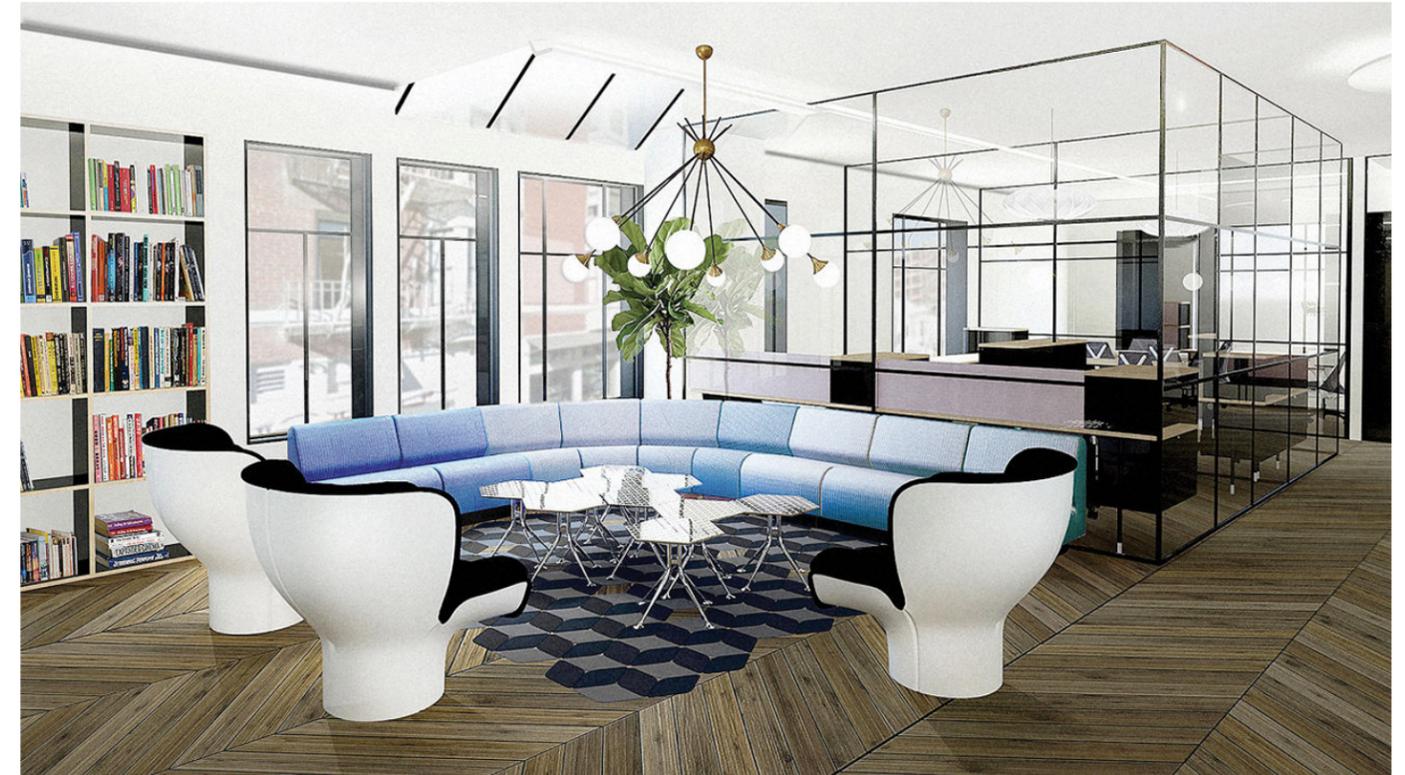
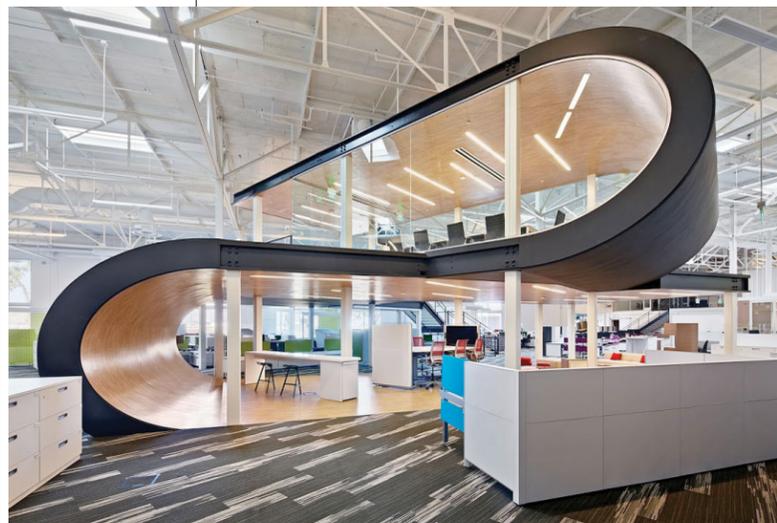
One Workplace in the San Francisco-Bay Area, was named one of the top workplaces to work for by The Bay Area News Group.

“A workplace that overtime has advanced, been reborn and is forever encouraging collaboration and innovation. One Workplace has focused on never failing in encouraging employee collaboration, strong work ethics, creativity, a sense of connectedness and family fun. Our culture more or less is how the organization will be remembered years from now. The stronger we've become collectively, the more our company will grow and achieve. We've learned to worry less about the expectations of being great and simply focus on top priority, which is giving back to those who put so much into all that helps our organization thrive. Constructing a great organization is only half the battle. The real work is in building a culture within that organization, nurturing it so that years from now you're continuously proud to be one of the top workplaces to work for in the Bay Area.”

“Our workplaces are where most of us spend a vast majority of our time. Often times, we're



seeing our colleagues, clients and partners more than we're seeing our own families. In order for our employees to develop a sense of contentment with that sometimes scary fact, we've focused on curating an environment where we treat all of our employees with the same value that our company was founded, family.”



[READ MORE](#)

Pay \$4K to Work in a Temple to Yves Béhar's Design

Most of us—okay, none of us—will ever get to live like Silicon Valley designer Yves Béhar. But thanks to the coworking space Canopy, some people might make their office lives a bit more Béhar-ian.

Set to open this fall in San Francisco's Tony Pacific Heights neighborhood, Canopy is the brainchild of Béhar and his friend, architect, and developer Amir Mortazavi. Like other boutique coworking spaces, expect a mix of shared and private spaces, an in-house cafe, bookable conference rooms, phone booths for calls, and swanky design.

The space will be tastefully outfitted with a number of furnishings and finishes befitting what the two are

calling a “mature” workspace: tiles from Heath Ceramics; classic furniture from Joe Colombo, Alexander Girard, and Don Chadwick; and, naturally, Béhar's own designs including August smart locks, Sodastreams, Juicero presses, Sayl task chairs, and workstations he designed for Herman Miller (which he also specified for his design firm).

Noticeably absent? Ping-Pong tables and their juvenile brethren. “There are no foosball tables here,” Béhar said in a release, speaking to the type of person Canopy hopes to attract—workers who are more interested in getting things done than goofing around.

But along with a grown-up aesthetic comes a steep price tag. Membership starts at \$650 per month for a seat at a shared table and goes up to \$4,000 for a private office. Canopy is expected to open in September.

Diana Budds - Fastcodesign.com

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Upfront THE WEEK IN CONTRACT FURNISHINGS

NeoCon Ahead

NeoCon: The Product Issue

HUNDREDS OF MANUFACTURERS AND TENS OF THOUSANDS OF VISITORS WILL DESCEND UPON CHICAGO'S GIANT MERCHANDISE MART FOR NEOCON 2016. IN THIS SPECIAL NEOCON ISSUE OF THE BUSINESS OF FURNITURE, WE HIGHLIGHT MANY OF THE MUST SEE NEW PRODUCTS THAT WILL BE ON DISPLAY.

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Welcome to Your 'Brain Book'

In a technical sense, what you are reading is a product guide. It is an expansive (though not entirely complete) listing of all the things you can see when NeoCon opens in a few days. But when you take a peek inside this issue of Business of Furniture, I ask that you look beyond the pictures of pretty products. Instead of thinking of this as a product guide, I ask that you consider what went into the products that grace these pages.

Each photo, each description represents literally thousands of hours of design, engineering and marketing work, not to mention the work done by factory workers, support staff, accountants, lawyers and everyone who has a hand in making every single product that is shown at NeoCon. It also represents the beginning of the industry for the sales staff, dealers and reps whose critical job is to sell what the industry has created to the world.

I've lost track of how many NeoCon's I've attended. It's somewhere between 18 and 20. And it is easy to get jaded by the sheer volume of what I've seen over the course of those years. I often catch myself saying something like, "Yeah, I've seen a bench in every showroom this year" or asking "Why do we need another task chair?" I dismissively pass some showrooms by and hold other manufacturers to unobtainable standards; a disease caused by years of covering the event. It is easy to pass judgement on new products at NeoCon — until you realize how much effort went into them.

This year, I'm going to try to look at NeoCon through fresh eyes, which makes sense, I suppose, since this is my first NeoCon as editor of *Bellow Press* and our publications, *Business of Furniture* and *Workplaces Magazine*. Of course, that doesn't mean every new product has value. Some will be duds, to be sure. My colleagues and I are going to call them out. It would be unfair to those who really did innovate if we didn't. Still, I am going to respect and celebrate the work that went into every single new product introduced.

The people behind these products want you to see them. That's the point of NeoCon after all (and getting a few world-class steaks over the course of the week). So get out there and take a look. If you like something in a showroom you pass, let the folks manning it know. They will appreciate the well-deserved kudos. Of course, there is no way you can see everything. NeoCon is too big for that. So use this guide throughout the year. Circle items that you want to come back to later in the year that you weren't able to see in person.

So instead of thinking of this as a product guide, consider it your brain book — a collection of what makes our industry so special. From the good to the bad to the ugly, what is found in this guide is what defines us as an industry.

From everyone at *Bellow Press*, welcome to NeoCon. We look forward to meeting with old friends and new and celebrating the work that goes into this remarkable event.

- Rob Kirkbride

THE BUSINESS MAKERS

The Rise of Resimercial

Ligne Roset: 5 Generations and Still Innovating

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