

The Business of Furniture | April 1, 2020

# BOF

## COVID-19 Industry Bulletin Board

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you the latest industry information.



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# BoF

The Business of Furniture

April 1, 2020

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The entrepreneurs. The risk takers. The hard workers. The driving force of our society. Makers of all kinds. The bold spirits who shape our world.

Because you dream big. You dare to create great things where there was nothing before. You envision our future, build our cities, establish our businesses, create our jobs, add value to our lives.

Thanks for being there every morning, leading our steps to a better world. Thanks for spending many of your nights shaping our tomorrow, creating a legacy.

Thanks for your passion and for being there every day, working, changing, creating, succeeding. Yes, sometimes failing, but always getting back on your feet to start all over again.

You are the essential heroes of our society who transform our world with your vision and actions.

**This one's for you, dear makers.**

**Keep it up. We got you.**

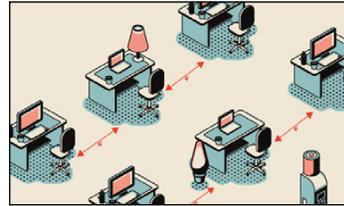
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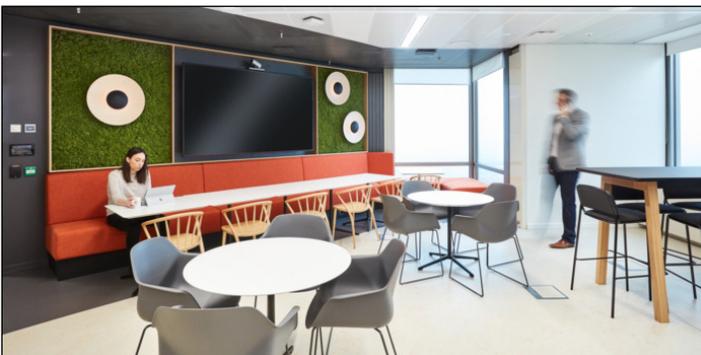
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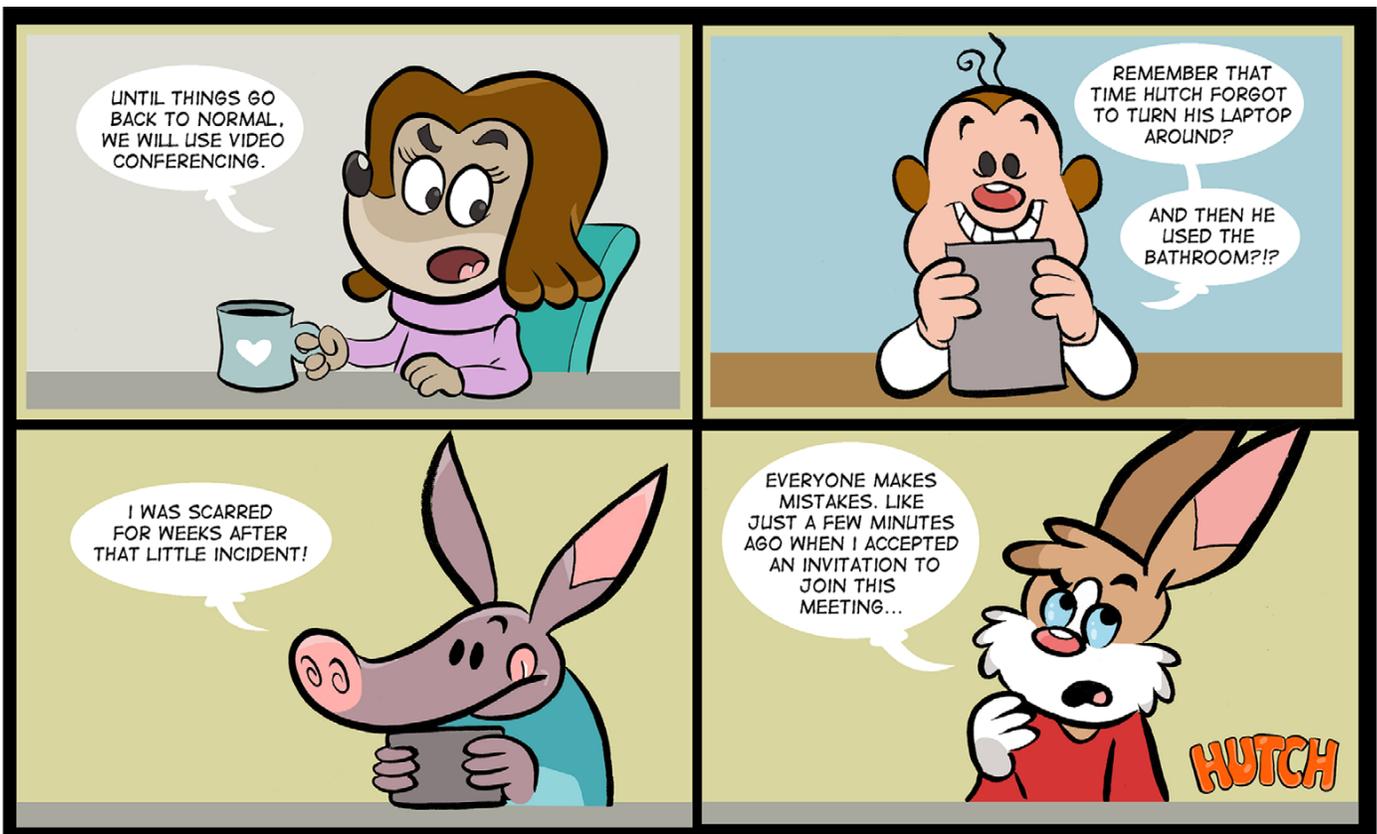
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*Business of Furniture* and *Workplaces* magazine are the go-to sources for keeping you informed about everything that is happening in the industry. From trends that affect your bottom line, to new products that will help your customers work better,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

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



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## COVID-19 Industry Bulletin Board

### **Editor's Note:**

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

### Shout Out: From Configura

☎ With six offices on three continents, we are no stranger to collaborating through technology. Our global team has been adapting to the impacts of COVID-19 and thanks to our existing infrastructure and experience, we haven't missed a beat with our partners and users.

Our community has always been strong, and even though we are physically separated nothing will keep us apart. Together we can conquer anything. All of us at Configura look forward to continuing to connect, collaborate and innovate with all of you in the weeks to come.

### Shout Out: From Orgatec's organizers

☎ Orgatec is definitely still on schedule to take place. Actually Orgatec will be even more interesting than previously with half of the population being in home office settings – a trend which will likely continue even after the COVID19 situation is over.

Best,  
Mette Petersen

### From Arcadia

☎ We are continuing to assess our operational capabilities during this challenging time and wanted to provide an update on what the next few weeks ahead will bring.

Beginning Monday, our manufacturing facility will be reopened in a limited capacity to resume production. Proper documentation has been provided by several healthcare and educational organizations that support our efforts as an essential business, and we will continue to fulfill orders while complying with state mandates. For the safety and health of our employees, we are staggering days and splitting shifts to ensure all protocols of social distancing continue to be observed, as well as abiding by stringent cleaning and sanitizing measures throughout our buildings.

We have also created additional remote work opportunities for office personnel, thereby expanding the level of service and support we can provide to our customers. Teams will be available throughout the week to assist with quotes, answer questions, process orders, and the like. As a reminder, literature and material sampling requests are still being fulfilled so as needs arise, please feel free to submit at [literature@arcadiacontract.com](mailto:literature@arcadiacontract.com).

Although no one can predict what will happen as each day goes by, we hope to maintain this operational schedule for as long as possible and will notify you as it changes. In the meantime, please feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns you may have.

Thank you for being part of our community, for which we take strength in facing this unprecedented moment in time. Our thoughts are with you and from all of us, stay well and safe.

## From OM

☛ Dear OM Family,

OM Seating thanks you for your support over this past week while we've temporarily been on PAUSE for onsite shipping and production. We've done that to do our part in buying time for our healthcare system to ramp up, and to mitigate risks for our on-staff, "older" and "at risk" family members—both at OM and at home.

Looking ahead, please let your clients, accounts, and contacts know that we also care about their important needs and valued orders, and we generally hope to be able to responsibly return to temporarily reduced onsite production and shipping operations by the end of this week (April 3rd).

Please be patient as we allow for a brief "ramp-up" and further evaluation period early this week. We will make another announcement when we resume onsite shipping; including for any "essential orders" that continue to come in, and that we're keenly aware are needed.

What We Are Doing Meanwhile...

We are STILL TAKING ORDERS

Many departments are operating from home, and our Customer Experience team is entering orders on a first-come, first-served basis

On many confirmations we have assigned a temporary "high-date" to avoid confusion in evolving delivery dates. We will work with you to improve these dates, once our shipping resumes

Any urgent/"essential" orders, especially for the healthcare industry, will be pushed to the front if necessary. Please mark orders as such IF relevant—and an OM Customer Experience Team Member will contact you to plan

As a company we are strong, and what is strength for? Strength feeds resilience and allows us to make incredibly hard decisions, such as temporarily pausing onsite operations because we believe that what we do, matters.

OM pledges to continue being a responsible employer and corporate citizen, as well as continue to be your steadfast partner in serving seating needs everywhere. With all optimism, please stay well and healthy and care for each other.

OM Seating | Together, We Will.

## From La-Z-Boy

☛ La-Z-Boy announced its response to the COVID-19 crisis. The company is taking the following actions based on its on-going assessment of the accelerating spread of the coronavirus and to ensure the well-being of its employees and their families, its customers and the communities where it operates:

Temporary closure of its U.S. manufacturing facilities, effective immediately, to be re-evaluated on April 13, 2020

Temporary closure of all company-owned La-Z-Boy Furniture Galleries stores is in process, with 130 of 155 stores currently closed

Temporary closure of its Regional Distribution Centers once in-process orders are delivered

During this time, the company remains committed to serving its customers at La-Z-Boy.com and Joybird.com. Customers may still place orders which will be delivered when operations resume.

In light of these temporary closures, the company is taking the following measured actions to facilitate a strong ramp up once it resumes operations:

The furlough of approximately 6,800 employees, or approximately 70% of its global workforce

A salary reduction of 50% for senior management and 25% for salaried employees until further notice; additionally, the board of directors will forego the cash portion of its compensation until further notice

A freeze of the company's 401(k) match

Elimination of all non-essential operating expenses and capital expenditures

Elimination of the June quarterly dividend and termination of the share repurchase program indefinitely to prioritize near-term financial flexibility

In addition to almost \$200 million in cash, cash equivalents, restricted cash, and investments on hand, to strengthen its financial position and preserve liquidity, the company has proactively drawn \$75 million under its \$150 million revolving credit facility.

Kurt L. Darrow, chairman, president and chief executive officer, of La-Z-Boy Incorporated, said: "As we move through this unprecedented global pandemic, keeping our employees, customers and the communities in which we operate safe and healthy is of paramount importance. Throughout this period, La-Z-Boy has followed all government regulations and recommendations and implemented best-practice health and safety protocols. At this time, the company is not aware of any confirmed coronavirus cases across the enterprise and will continue our efforts to keep facilities clean and safe. However, our leadership team has determined that more significant measures are necessary to protect the health and safety of our employees, and to assist in the national effort to combat the spread of COVID-19. We will continue to assess the evolving situation to determine the cadence to re-start operations and open stores. During this challenging time, we will focus on managing our business to preserve cash and to ensure the continued liquidity of the company.

"While the decisions made were extremely difficult and we deeply regret the impact they will have on those affected and their families, they are deemed necessary as we face one of the most challenging periods in our history. Moving forward, with a strong financial foundation, the powerful La-Z-Boy brand, and our dedicated and hard-working people, I am confident the company will weather this storm. Although the path forward will likely be complex and unpredictable, we expect to return to full operations when the crisis lifts, and emerge with strength."

The company plans to report its fiscal 2020 fourth-quarter and full-year results in the second half of June, and will update the investment community with more details on its various initiatives at that time. Until that time, the company undertakes no obligation to update the investment community.

La-Z-Boy remains committed to paying dividends over the long-term and will seek to resume dividends as business conditions improve. Likewise, the company will reinstate share repurchases when it deems appropriate.

## From Herman Miller

🕒 Herman Miller is providing an update on how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected its business and operations, and how the company has been developing proactive strategies to manage through this challenging time.

"Herman Miller is taking significant steps to keep our employees safe and healthy while ensuring a return to form as a thriving company once this global health crisis has passed. Our

---

strong capital position is an important foundation for our efforts to navigate the path ahead. We are grateful to all our employees for their dedication, and we will continue to respond to this dynamic situation with the health of both our employees and our company top-of-mind,” said Andi Owen, president and CEO of Herman Miller.

#### Employee Safety and Health

While Herman Miller’s manufacturing plant in Dongguan, China, experienced the initial impact of COVID-19, it is now back up and running near full capacity. Lessons learned from that first interaction with the virus led to a number of employee safety measures to contain the spread of COVID-19, including domestic and international travel restrictions, work-from-home practices, extensive cleaning protocols, and ultimately the closure of our showrooms and retail outlets to the public.

#### Customer Focus

Our customer service, sales, supplier, and dealer teams are working closely with customers to meet current and shifting project demand. Sales teams are meeting with customers remotely via video calls and by leveraging virtual reality to continue the design and specification process that would normally take place in a showroom. Customer service representatives are working remotely to stay connected to customers regarding order status and projected delivery dates.

#### Manufacturing and Operations

As a global manufacturer, Herman Miller is responding to shelter-in-place and similar government orders in various locations around the world.

Approximately 30% of our manufacturing employees in Michigan have volunteered to return to work starting March 30 to support those essential businesses, such as the healthcare industry and the federal government. We’re also transforming part of our manufacturing facilities to fulfill immediate needs for medical and personal protective equipment.

As “stay at home” orders vary in scope from state to state and around the world, we are evaluating our facilities and workforce from location to location. Manufacturing is currently suspended at our facilities in Melksham, England, and near Bangalore, India. In Brazil, our manufacturing and warehouse facilities that serve Latin America are running as normal.

Elsewhere in the U.S., Nemschoff, which also serves the health care industry, continues operations at full capacity in Sheboygan, WI. Distribution operations at Maharam, based in Yaphank, NY and Geiger, in both its Fulton, GA and Hildebran, NC locations, also remain open.

Internationally, outside of China, Herman Miller’s manufacturing facility located near Bangalore, India is temporarily closed until April 14 under a government order. In the United Kingdom, manufacturing and distribution operations at the company’s Portal Mill facility in Melksham, England are suspended until further notice due to a government-issued nationwide lockdown. In Brazil, the company’s manufacturing and warehouse facilities, which serve the Latin America region, are running as normal.

#### Retail Operations

Design within Reach (DWR) and HAY retail studios and stores across the US are currently closed to the public, but the company’s distribution center in Batavia, OH is still operational. Freight carriers are delivering to every market domestically but changing policies and procedures daily that may affect distribution. In some markets we are unable to offer white glove delivery at this time, but we can coordinate with the customers to deliver product to their door. Despite the studios and stores being closed, its eCommerce platforms are operating, and many account executives are working from home to help meet customers’ needs via digital chat and video capabilities, email and phone. Across those platforms, demand for home office products is helping to ease the transition of office

workers who have been forced to work from home and digital marketing strategies have pivoted to highlight our ability to address that customer need.

#### Capital Position

In addition to steps taken to protect its workforce and manage business operations, the company has taken actions to safeguard its capital position. At the end of the third quarter of fiscal 2020, the company had a well-positioned balance sheet and liquidity profile to weather these temporary disruptions, with \$111 million in cash on hand, a leverage ratio of 0.9x and availability on its revolving credit facility of \$266 million. Since the end of the quarter, the company withdrew \$265 million on its revolving credit facility as a precautionary measure to provide additional near-term liquidity. The company is also closely managing spending levels, capital investments, and working capital, and has temporarily suspended share repurchase activity as part of managing cash flows during this period.

While the longer-term economic impact cannot be reasonably estimated as the duration of this disruption is unclear, the company is taking important steps to maintain its financial strength in the current environment.

## From Boss Design

☺ Dear Friends, Clients and Partners,

In the interest of protecting our people and their families, and in line with the latest guidance from the UK Government we have decided to temporarily suspend UK operations until the week commencing 13th April.

This has been a difficult decision to make, but we feel that it is the only socially responsible action available to us and the right thing to do in supporting the national effort to beat this terrible global crisis. As always, our highest priority is the welfare of our people and those around us in our local communities.

Our sales team and office staff are now working from home and are in the process of adapting to the challenges this brings. This will ensure that we continue to meet your day-to-day needs and do everything possible to support you in your quest for future projects.

I would like to take this opportunity to say how proud I am of the efforts being made by everybody in the Boss team through these challenging times. Rest assured that when this passes, as we hope it will, our passion and resilience will ensure we meet our future goals.

Thanks to all of our customers and suppliers for your ongoing support – it is very much appreciated. Please stay safe and don't hesitate to call us if you need anything at all.

We look forward to seeing you all soon.

Kindest regards,

Brian Murray

Chairman - Boss Design

## From AMQ

☺ As we're sure most of you know, many states and local governments have issued "shelter-in-place" orders that require all citizens not engaged in essential business or life-sustaining activities to stay at home. These orders require the suspension of in-person operations that are not essential businesses or necessary to sustain or protect life, as defined in each local

order. As of Monday, March 30th we re-opened our warehouse operations in service of orders that qualify as “essential business”.

#### Shipping “Essential Business” Orders

Our warehouse operations have re-opened in limited capacity to support business that falls under the “essential business” criteria within each state. Orders must be submitted with a Customer Essential Orders Qualification letter that describes the nature of the project. This letter template is available to download here and is required when submitting Essential Business orders.

Examples of “essential business” includes:

- Hospitals or other healthcare facilities providing medical services;
  - Government agencies providing crisis response support;
  - Commercial customers providing direct food service or other life sustaining critical services;
  - Commercial customers providing other essential business services like banking or transportation;
  - Other essential business orders
- Submitting Essential Business Orders

For orders that meet this criteria, send P.O.s to [essentials@amqsolutions.com](mailto:essentials@amqsolutions.com) with a “Customer Essential Business qualification” letter (required). Download the template to forward to your customers at [amqsolutions.com/about/covid-19](http://amqsolutions.com/about/covid-19).

Please contact [essentials@amqsolutions.com](mailto:essentials@amqsolutions.com) with any questions.

#### Regular Business Orders

AMQ will continue to accept non-essential orders but will delay shipping these orders until the California shelter-in-place mandate is lifted. We will hold your order and contact you with a ship date once full operations are resumed.

We realize how much this disruption provides challenges for our dealers. Please know that we are doing everything we can to function as best we can and continue to meet our commitments to our valued customers.

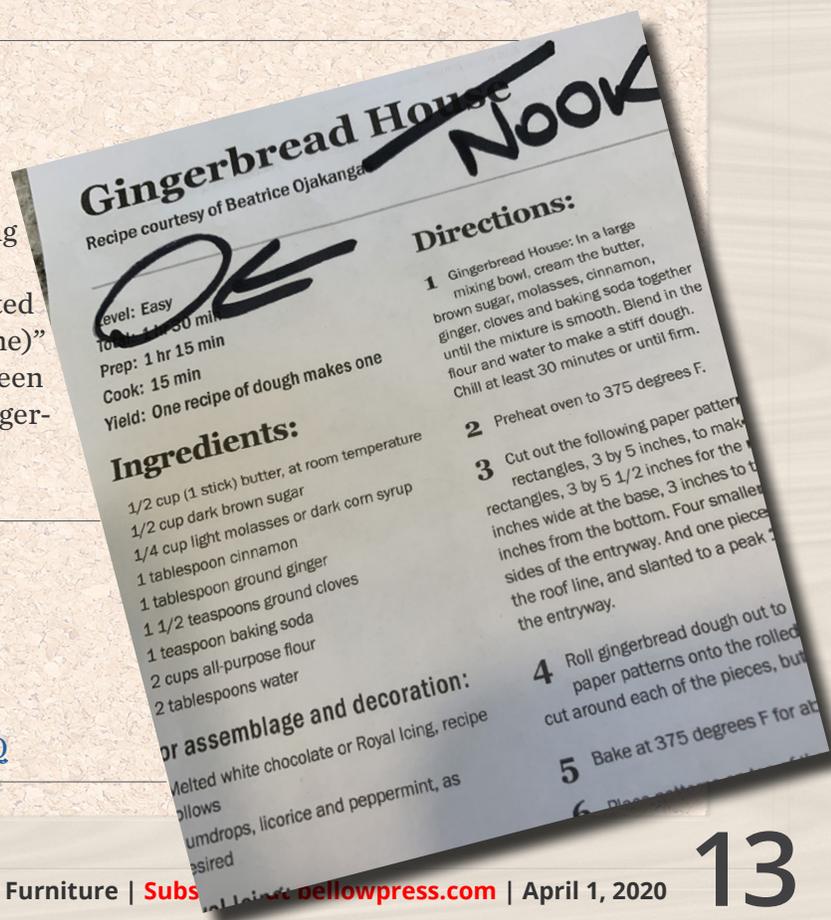
## For Fun and Inspiration: From Nook

Over on Facebook, the team from Nook, including David O’Coimin, Stewart Brown and Shaina Phillips are having fun while working from home. They created the “Mandated WFH Support Group (Self Quarantine)” and started a “British Bake Off” type challenge between members. Brown built a scale model Nook out of gingerbread. Others made brownies and cookies.

View the video: <https://youtu.be/a69KBG3beg8>

## For Fun and Inspiration: From Muzo

Check out this Muzo Lockdown Vlog:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XVD1f1DfVIQ>





## ‘...So the Company and its Employees can Come Through This Crisis Together’



**A CERTAIN SENSE OF HELPLESSNESS COMES FROM BEING QUARANTINED.** Sure, all of us are trying to keep a normal business schedule through virtual meetings with customers and calls with colleagues. But we’d all like to do more.

Many of us are in this industry specifically because of the people who inhabit it. The office furniture industry is full of great people, truly kind people. That is becoming crystal clear as we head deeper into the world of social distancing and overturned business models.

From top to bottom, largest companies to smallest, the industry is doing what’s right and what’s best to address the coronavirus crisis.

Let’s start at the top. Steelcase announced strong yearly and quarterly sales and profits last week, which, of course, were compiled before a virus shut down most of the world. At the end of the company’s press release announcing its profits were a few paragraphs outlining what it would do to respond to COVID-19. Yes, the company has temporarily reduced or suspended operations at many of its manufacturing locations and distribution centers around the world.

The company also announced a series of measures to conserve capital during this period of disruption. Cash outflows related to operating expenses are being reduced by eliminating travel and events, overtime, temporary labor, annual merit increases and scaling back project spending. The company is also taking steps to significantly reduce capital expenditures by delaying longer-term projects.

Here’s where the company really showed its heart: “Operating expenses are being further reduced by lowering people costs. This includes temporarily reducing the base pay of the CEO to \$1 and of members of the company’s executive team by 60%. The Board of Directors has elected to reduce their cash retainer to zero ... In order to conserve capital during this period of disruption, the company announced ... that nearly all U.S.-based salaried employees will temporarily take a 50% base pay cut and a similar reduction in hours. The reductions will be less for some lower-paid workers and higher for some higher-paid workers. The company is taking these actions in an effort to avoid permanent headcount reductions so the company and its employees can come through this crisis together.”

Herman Miller will continue to pay its Michigan workers. It will structure the pay during the three-week shutdown as two weeks of regular wages and one week of paid vacation time, according to a statement. The company also is extending the decision to employees who opted for voluntary layoffs.

“Herman Miller is among many companies doing everything we can to keep our employees safe and healthy while ensuring a thriving company to return to once this global pandemic passes,” the company said in the statement. “We are grateful to all our employees for their dedication, and we will continue to monitor this dynamic situation with both our employees’ and company’s health top of mind.”

The industry is also doing its part to help with the relief effort.

Both Steelcase and Herman Miller are shifting some production to make much-needed supplies to support the COVID-19 response. Steelcase said: “This is an extraordinary crisis that necessitates extraordinary measures and actions from both the public and private sectors. Steelcase will do everything possible to fight back against this pandemic.” The products of many companies in our industry are in high demand because of the crisis. Loftwall, for example, is shipping miles of its demountable wall products for use in health care facilities where patients need to be kept separate.

Humanscale has a health care division that makes point-of-care and medical delivery carts for hospitals and health care workers, which CEO Bob King said are experiencing dramatic increases in demand.

“We produce these products in many of the same facilities we produce our commercial products, giving us the ability to keep our factories open when confronted with the possibility of government

closures,” he said.

Countless examples can be seen of individuals in our industry doing their part as well. It might include delivering groceries or well wishes to an elderly neighbor or simply smiling and waving at passing cars. It all helps.

And there are signs that slowly, eventually, things are going to get back to normal. The China International Furniture Fair, the first to postpone because of the spread of coronavirus, announced the end of last week it had new dates for the show to be held in Guangzhou. The organizers have decided the CIFF, which was originally scheduled for March, will now be July 27-30.

A friend posted a phrase online that got me thinking and was a slight relief in this time of unease. He said, “It never happens the way I worry about it.”

Those are words of wisdom in a time when so much is in the air. We are going to get through this friends.

*Rob Kirkbride and the Business of Furniture team*

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# Upfront

BoF



## Steelcase Combats COVID-19 Global Pandemic; Commits to Supply Critical Medical PPE Equipment Needs

Steelcase Friday reported it has already started and continues to manufacture and deploy critical equipment supplies for healthcare providers on the frontlines of the battle against the COVID-19 global pandemic. Among the supplies Steelcase is producing are masks for use in clinical environments; facial shields for clinicians in direct contact with patients; and social screens, desktop and floor mounted, for screening and communicating with visitors at safe social distances.

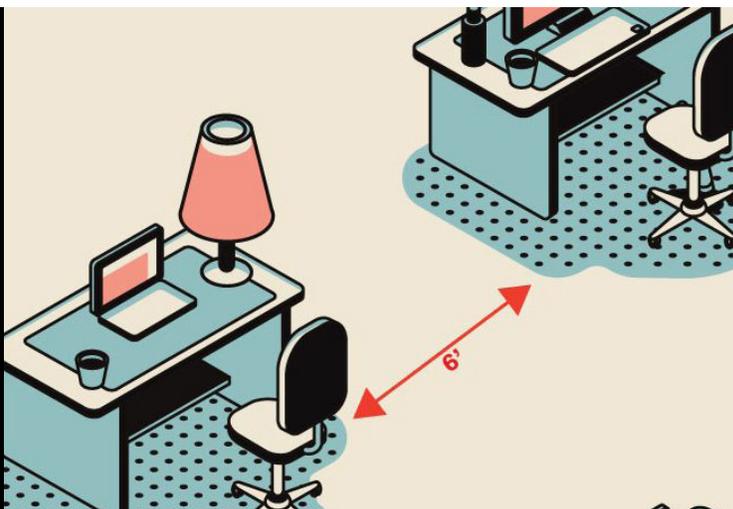
Steelcase is using its plants, model shop and innovation center to rapidly develop solutions that will be built to scale and distributed to medical facilities. The company is working in partnership with healthcare professionals to approve designs for prompt turnarounds. Steelcase is set to produce 6,000 isolation masks and 12,500 face shields per week, just in its Grand Rapids, Michigan facilities. The company is working hard to expand production to other geographies including Alabama, Mexico, Germany and through key partners.

“This is an extraordinary crisis that requires a strong, coordinated, global response. Steelcase is proud to join this fight and deploy every possible resource we have to support our communities, hospitals and healthcare workers with the equipment they need to keep us healthy and safe,” said Jim Keane, Steelcase President and CEO. “The outpouring of support from Steelcase employees looking for ways they can get involved is profoundly humbling. I am so proud of this team.”

## WHAT DOES COVID-19 MEAN FOR SHARED OFFICE SPACES?

It's likely that the coronavirus will cast a long shadow on the way work gets done for months or even years to come. Living with, and responding to the risk of a new, highly-contagious, potentially fatal disease might just become the new office reality. We know that we will eventually be going back to work, but we don't yet know what that will look like.

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE](#)



## GET YOUR HOME READY

A COVID-19 outbreak could last for a long time in your community. Depending on the severity of the outbreak, public health officials may recommend community actions designed to help keep people healthy, reduce exposures to COVID-19, and slow the spread of the disease. Creating a household plan can help protect your health and the health of those you care about in the event of an outbreak of COVID-19 in your community. You should base the details of your household plan on the needs and daily routine of your household members.

Talk with the people who need to be included in your plan. Meet with household members, other relatives, and friends to discuss what to do if a COVID-19 outbreak occurs in your community and what the needs of each person will be.

Practice everyday preventive actions now. Remind everyone in your household of the importance of practicing everyday preventive actions that can help prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses: Avoid close contact with people who are sick, Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care, Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue.

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Remember, a COVID-19 outbreak could last a long time. The impact on individuals, households, and communities might be great. When public health officials determine the outbreak has ended in your community, take time to improve your household's plan. As public health officials continue to plan for COVID-19 and other disease outbreaks, you and your household also have an important role to play in ongoing planning efforts.

## BIG NUMBER

# 70 PERCENT

An estimated 70% of American offices use some form of the open plan, which departs from the traditional arrangement of private offices on the perimeter and workstations on the interior.

As part of the shift, which has occurred in the past 15 to 20 years, many companies cut costs by shrinking the size of individual workstations. A typical workstation now has 36 square feet instead of 48 square feet, a 25% reduction.



## COVID-19: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FLEXIBLE WORKSPACE

In this challenging time as COVID-19 impacts workplace operations globally, we break down how occupiers can engage with flexible workspace operators, as both a near-term business continuity solution and longer-term way of working for enterprises.

The risk of exposure to COVID-19 exists across all workplace environments. Unless a flexible workspace operator has implemented heightened health and safety protocols, the exposure risk in a flexible workspace is just as high, if not higher, than a traditional office.

However, many flexible workspaces are taking drastic measures to maintain strong hygiene and social distancing (more on this below), and so there may be specific ways to leverage the sector as part of your business continuity efforts. Depending on your business you may need to utilize a selection of these, rather than just one:

**Whole Office Contingency:** in the event your office is closed, or take-up of new space is not possible due to construction delays, taking up space in less impacted locations through a flexible workspace operator could be considered. Several operators are proactively marketing this solution and some are exploring ways to unlock large blocks of inventory to accommodate major continuity demand.

**Mission Critical Risk Mitigation:** consider proactively leveraging the flexible workspace sector to disperse mission critical teams across two or more locations in order to mitigate risk.

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE](#)

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE](#)



## OUT OF OFFICE: HOW WORKPLACES EVOLVED FROM CUBICLES TO COFFEE SHOPS

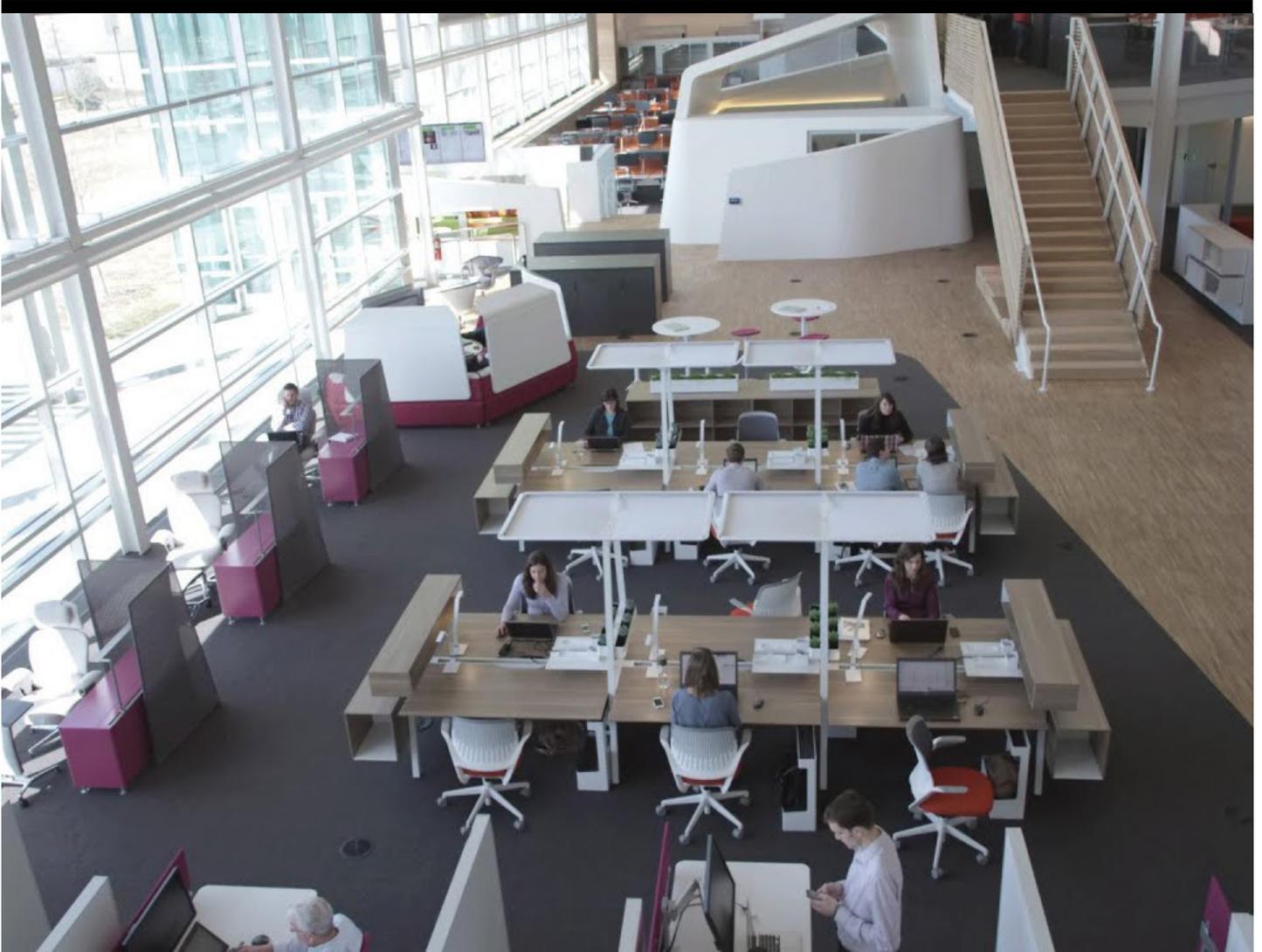
The year is 1985, you're packing your briefcase to head to the office, where you'll sit behind a desk to do some paperwork. Fast forward to 2020, and you're having a conference call with the entire team from the coffee shop across the street. Relatively, not much has changed; work is still being completed by the end of the day, it's just with a different scenery.

Employees nowadays are looking for something more than just a job behind a desk. They want to work in a dynamic, inspiring space that adds value to their knowledge and promotes their mental and physical well-being.

## IS CORONAVIRUS THE BEGINNING OF THE END OF OFFICES?

Over the last three months, coronavirus has spread to more than 100 countries and claimed more than 3,800 lives (as of March 8, 2020). It has also plunged many global industries into a paralysis, from canceled flights and mass quarantines to disruptions in supply chains and financial markets. Setting aside the serious health implications of the outbreak, the coronavirus epidemic has, in an unorthodox way, amplified a debate over the future of work. With millions of people around the world working from home as a result of the outbreak, the question is being asked by outlets around the world: are we seeing the beginning of the end of the traditional office typology?

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE](#)



# Steelcase Reports Strong Year, Quarter; Outlines Cost-Saving Measures Related to Coronavirus

NEARLY ALL U.S.-BASED SALARIED EMPLOYEES WILL TEMPORARILY TAKE A 50% BASE PAY CUT AND A SIMILAR REDUCTION IN HOURS.

## TOP INDUSTRY NEWS

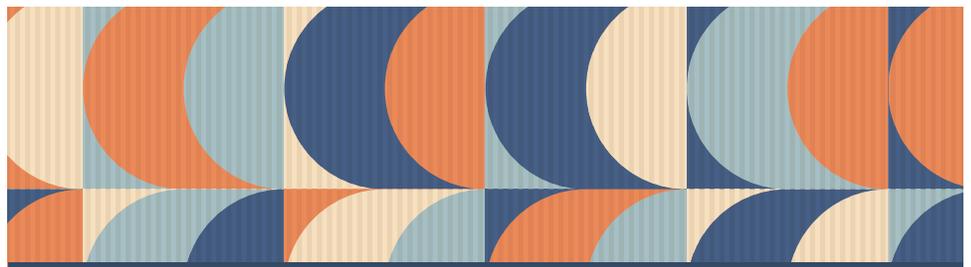
Steelcase's fourth quarter results included the announcement of temporarily reducing and suspending operations at many of its manufacturing locations and distribution centers around the world, typically in response to government orders related to COVID-19.

This currently includes facilities in the U.S., France, India and Malaysia and will soon include Spain and the U.K. The affected U.S. facilities currently include manufacturing and distribution centers in Michigan, California, Pennsylvania and Texas. This will temporarily, but significantly, reduce the company's ability to make and ship products and therefore recognize revenue and generate cash beginning in the first quarter of fiscal 2021, the report stated.

A series of measures to conserve capital during this period are being taken, according to the report. Significant employee cuts are being made in plants where operations have been reduced or suspended. Nearly all of the company's hourly manufacturing and distribution employees in Michigan have been temporarily laid off.

The company also announced nearly all U.S.-based salaried employees will temporarily take a 50% base pay cut and a similar reduction in hours. The reductions will be less for some lower-paid workers and higher for some higher-paid workers.

Operating expenses are being reduced by temporarily reducing the base pay of the CEO to \$1 and



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members of the company's executive team by 60%. The board of directors has elected to reduce their cash retainer to zero.

The company said it will pay the full cost of employee health insurance premiums during this period.

Cash outflows related to operating expenses are being reduced by eliminating travel and events, overtime, temporary labor and annual merit increases and scaling back project spending. The company is also taking steps to significantly reduce capital expenditures by delaying longer-term projects.

The report said the company is taking these actions in an effort to avoid permanent reductions of workers so the company and its employees can come through this crisis together.

Steelcase is also taking steps to manage working capital carefully. It anticipates its finished goods inventory could increase as customers face their own local closures and are unable to receive products. The company's raw material and work in process inventories also could increase as it receives order cancellations. It is taking steps to work with its customers and anticipate these problems to reduce the potential impact. The company also intends to closely manage its receivables and payables as it scales down operations in affected areas.

"As we enter fiscal 2021, we had strong backlog, strong orders and a growing pipeline, particularly in EMEA and the Americas,

but the COVID-19 crisis has interrupted our operations in a way that makes it impossible to provide meaningful estimates of revenues or earnings per share," said Jim Keane, president and CEO. "In the short run, we are confident the actions we are taking will protect our people and therefore our relationships with customers, dealers and suppliers. These actions will also protect the company's capital, so we can navigate through this crisis and emerge strong and ready to compete."

Steelcase reported fourth quarter revenue of \$946.2 million and net income of \$66.5 million, or diluted earnings of \$0.55 per share, which included a \$21 million gain and \$8.7 million tax benefit related to the sale of PolyVision Corporation on Feb. 24. Excluding those items, net of related variable compensation expense, adjusted earnings were \$0.39 per share, which represented an increase of 34% compared to the prior year. In the prior year, Steelcase reported \$912.4 million in revenue and net income of \$22.6 million, or diluted earnings of \$0.19 per share and adjusted earnings of \$0.29 per share.

Revenue increased 4% in the fourth quarter compared to the prior year and declined 1% on an organic basis after adjusting for currency translation effects and approximately \$48 million associated with an extra week of shipments in the current quarter. The results reflected the initial impacts of the coronavirus

(COVID-19) which reduced shipments in China in the quarter by approximately \$7 million. The organic decline was driven by the Americas and Other category, partially offset by strong growth in EMEA. The Americas declined 3% organically compared to the prior year, which grew 17% compared to the fourth quarter of fiscal 2018, and was unfavorably impacted by the timing of the U.S. Thanksgiving holiday. The Other category was negatively impacted by the customer requested delivery delays in China as a result of COVID-19.

Orders (adjusted for currency translation effects and the impact of an extra week in the current quarter) grew 7% in the fourth quarter compared to the prior year, led by 12% growth in EMEA and 6% growth in the Americas. The current year included strong growth in both project and day-to-day business in the Americas and EMEA and strength in January and February. Backlog at the end of the quarter was up 17% compared to the prior year.

"I want to recognize the efforts of our teams around the globe who drove strong, better-than-expected revenue and earnings per share in our fourth quarter," Keane said. "Through terrific performance by all three regions — Americas, EMEA and Asia Pacific — Steelcase delivered its highest annual revenue and operating income in nearly 20 years."

The company sold its PolyVision subsidiary during the fourth quarter for net proceeds of \$72.6 million. This generated a gain

on sale of \$21 million, which reduced operating expenses in the Other category. The company realized a net tax benefit on the sale which reduced income tax expense by \$8.7 million. Variable compensation expenses related to the transaction totaled \$13.4 million and was spread across the various business segments in cost of sales and operating expenses.

Fourth quarter operating income of \$69 million (or 7.3% of revenue) represented an increase of \$22 million or 46.8% compared to operating income of \$47 million (or 5.2% of revenue) in the prior year. The increase included a \$7.6 million net benefit from the sale of PolyVision. The Americas reported operating income of \$42.6 million

compared to \$51 million in the prior year. Adjusted for \$10.3 million of variable compensation expenses related to the sale of PolyVision, operating income in the Americas increased by \$1.9 million. EMEA reported operating income of \$8.3 million (which included \$1.8 million of variable compensation expenses related to the sale of PolyVision), compared to \$1.5 million in the prior year, driven primarily by higher revenue and gross margin improvement. The Other category reported operating income of \$24.9 million, which included \$20.4 million from the gain on the sale of PolyVision, net of variable compensation expense, compared to \$3.7 million in the prior year.

“Our EMEA business delivered an outstanding quarter with \$8 million of operating income, as our teams drove strong revenue growth and executed against our gross margin improvement and fitness initiatives,” said Dave Sylvester, senior vice president and CFO. “The operating income margin of 1.5% for the region for the full fiscal year is a great accomplishment and is reflective of the collective effort of the entire organization.”

Gross margin of 32.5% in the fourth quarter represented an increase of 150 basis points compared to the prior year, with a 90-basis-point improvement in the Americas, a 330-basis-point improvement in EMEA and a 190 basis point improvement in



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the Other category. On a consolidated basis, the improvement was driven by pricing benefits and lower commodity costs, partially offset by lower absorption of fixed costs and higher variable compensation expense related to the gain on the sale of PolyVision.

Operating expenses of \$238.2 million in the fourth quarter represented an increase of \$2.1 million compared to the prior year and included an \$11.9 million benefit from the sale of PolyVision, net of variable compensation expense. The year-over-year comparison also included an estimated \$10.4 million of operating costs related to the additional week in the current quarter, higher spending to support growth initiatives, higher variable compensation expense and \$1.2 million of favorable currency translation effects.

The company recorded a net income tax benefit of \$1.3 million in the fourth quarter, which included an \$8.7 million tax benefit related to the sale of PolyVision and \$3.6 million of other net discrete tax benefits. Adjusted for those items, the company's effective tax rate approximated 25% in the fourth quarter. In the prior year, income tax expense was \$5.7 million, which included \$1.7 million of net discrete tax benefits.

### Fiscal 2020 results

For fiscal 2020, the company recorded \$3.7 billion of revenue and net income of \$199.7 million, or diluted earnings per share of \$1.66. Adjusted earnings were

\$1.50 per share. In fiscal 2019, the company recorded \$3.4 billion of revenue, net income of \$126 million, diluted earnings per share of \$1.05 and adjusted earnings per share of \$1.20.

Revenue increased 8% in fiscal 2020, with an 8% increase in the Americas, a 9% increase in EMEA and a 7% increase in the Other category. On an organic basis, fiscal 2020 revenue increased 5%, with a 5% increase in the Americas, a 6% increase in EMEA and a 7% increase in the Other category.

Operating income for fiscal 2020 of \$257 million, or 6.9% of revenue, represented an increase of \$73.4 million compared to operating income for fiscal 2019 of \$183.6 million, or 5.3% of revenue. The improvement was driven by the revenue growth, improved gross margin and operating expense leverage. The gross margin improvement was primarily driven by pricing benefits, lower commodity costs and higher absorption of fixed costs, partially offset by unfavorable business mix.

### Liquidity

The company is taking steps to maximize liquidity in recognition of the increased risk and uncertainty related to the COVID-19 crisis. At year end, total liquidity, comprised of cash, cash equivalents and the cash surrender value of company-owned life insurance, aggregated to \$701 million. This represents the company's highest year-end liquidity in more than 10 years.

In addition, during March, as the virus began to affect EMEA and the Americas, the company drew \$250 million under its new five-year unsecured revolving syndicated credit facility to provide additional liquidity.

Total debt was \$484.3 million at the end of the fourth quarter, which included \$450 million maturing in 2029. To maximize liquidity, the company elected to forgo using a portion of the PolyVision sale proceeds to pay off a note payable as had been previously planned.

The company did not repurchase any shares during the fourth quarter and repurchased approximately 0.5 million shares in the full fiscal year. During the first few weeks of March 2020, the company repurchased, through an existing 10b5-1 plan, 3 million shares of its Class A Common Stock at an aggregate cost of \$38.6 million, which represented the total amount authorized under that plan.

"Cash flow from operations totaled \$142 million in the quarter and \$361 million for the year which, along with \$73 million of net proceeds from the sale of PolyVision, contributed to the \$282 million increase in cash during the year," Sylvester said. "This build up in cash, along with the renewal and expansion of our global credit facility, put us into a very strong position going into our new fiscal year and to weather the growing economic uncertainty driven by the COVID-19 pandemic." **BoF**

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# A Note from CIFF: The Show is Rescheduled for Late July

**T**he new dates for the China International Furniture Fair (Guangzhou) are July 18-21 for the home furniture, home decor and outdoor leisure show, and July 27-30 for the office show.

The fairs were originally scheduled for March 18-21 and March 28-31, but canceled due to COVID-19.

The positive trend in containing COVID-19 has expanded in China, but the overseas spread of the virus has brought new challenges. CIFF Guangzhou is always prepared to adjust and respond to changing circum-

stances, a press statement said.

Here are other portions of the statement:

“Giving full consideration to the welfare of exhibitors and visitors, the organizers made cautious decisions and careful plans in providing a safe, healthy and ordered exhibition environment.

“Meanwhile, by the time work and production is back on track, exhibitors and visitors will have more time to prepare for the show. It is hoped that with a pleasant atmosphere and rich content, CIFF Guangzhou ... will give all participants a rewarding show experience.

“As the ‘national team’ of China’s furnishing exhibition industry, CIFF Guangzhou always rises up to tough challenges. Making the most of its advantage in mobilizing venue, exhibition and service resources, CIFF Guangzhou strives to put on satisfying performance for the industry.”

CIFF gave special thanks to exhibitors, visitors and all industry stakeholders for their support: “We believe as long as all industry members stand together to fight difficulties, China and the world’s furnishing industry will certainly embrace new development.” **BoF**

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## Salone del Mobile.Milano Now Cancelled; Event to Take Place Next April

**T**he 2020 edition of the Salone del Mobile.Milano has been canceled and rescheduled for April 13-18, 2021.

Previously it had been announced the date had been changed from April to June because of coronavirus, but the pandemic has not improved enough to hold the show this year.

“Although we were determined to keep to the June date, to allow the annual event to take place as planned, the present, un-

precedented circumstances and medium-term uncertainties now mean that this year’s Salone can no longer go ahead,” organizers said in a statement.

The 2021 edition, which will celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Salone, will be a special event for the entire sector. For the first time ever, all the biennial exhibitions will be held in conjunction with the Salone Internazionale del Mobile, the International Furnishing Accessories Exhibition, Workplace3.0, S.Project and

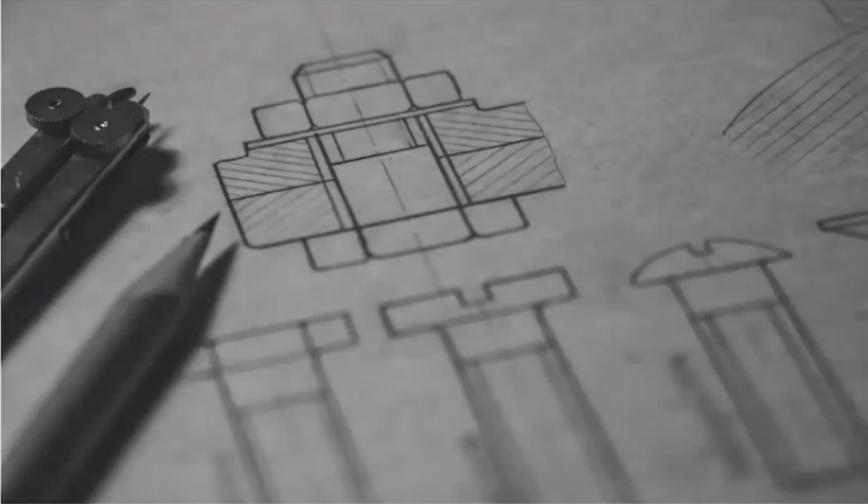
SaloneSatellite. This means EuroCucina, FTK (Technology For the Kitchen) and the International Bathroom Exhibition will also take place next year, along with EuroLuce, which was already scheduled for 2021.

“This single, great, sector-wide trade fair will represent a fresh opportunity to pull together to revitalize our businesses, the entire supply chain that works in synergy with the Salone and Milan,” organizers said. **BoF**

## AUTOCAD INTEGRATION

PLANNED RELEASE: MONTHLY

- Bugfixes
- Performance
- Features





WATCH THE VIDEO

# Configura Holds Virtual Spring Partner Meeting

THIS YEAR, BECAUSE OF THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS, CONFIGURA HELD THE MEETING VIRTUALLY.

By Rob Kirkbride

**T**he show must go on — at least virtually. For 13 years, Configura, the space planning configurator company, has held a spring partner meeting in Grand Rapids, Michigan where those on the “front line” of implementing the powerful software for their manufactur-

ing companies come together to learn about what’s new at Configura and how to better use its CET Designer product.

This year, because of the coronavirus crisis, Configura held the meeting virtually. The more than 120 who attended the meeting dialed in and met Stefan

Persson, the company’s new chief executive officer, and learned about changes and improvements to the software.

Persson has been on the job for a few short months and said he is trying to “fit all the puzzle pieces together.”

“Building a successful team or

company is a little like building a jigsaw puzzle,” he said. “There are a lot of pieces, and you have to find the right place for every single individual in the big scheme of things. Continuing to build this jigsaw puzzle is one of my missions. I completely love the culture of this company. Also, finding this community. I’ve been talking to some of the partners out there. It feels like a family, which is completely amazing. That is something we need to preserve and build upon.”

Former CEO Johan Lyreborn, who also is one of the company’s founders, is still active as the company’s “chief evangelist.” He said Configura and its partners meet twice a year to provide users with an update on where the company is and where it is going.

The other meeting is CET Experience. The event was held in Florida last fall and had 560 attendees and 63 speakers. The company also held its first conference in China with 85 attendees. The event was sponsored by Sunon.

Configura had a strong 2019 with a 25% increase in sales, 30% increase in employees and 30 new partners, which is the most new partners Configura has ever seen in a single year. Last year Configura opened up offices in Germany and Japan to go with its headquarters in Linköping and office in Göteborg, Sweden, its North American hub in Grand Rapids and offices in Kuala

Lumpur, Malaysia and Shenzhen, China.

## Configura is going to slow its release schedule slightly so its partners can catch up to all the changes to the software.

The company also opened an office on the Malaysian island of Simeulue where locals are being trained in CET Designer and the Configura platform and will help with quality assurance and maintenance. On the environmental front, Configura is working on Bangkaru Island in Malaysia to protect turtle nesting areas and clean the beaches of plastic.

“There are still so many things we can do,” Lyreborn said. “We need to remember where we came from and why we do this. I strongly believe we can help in several ways — to be able to do things smarter. I believe that PGC (parametric graphic control) can contribute a lot to what we want to do.”

Persson outlined the company’s strategy, which is based on simplification for its customers. He said Configura wants to continue to increase the value of its products and broaden the community, making it stronger and larger. It could include adding new indus-

tries to its customer mix.

Configura wants to look at how it does business, get to know the community even better, figure out its strengths and improve in other areas where necessary, Persson explained. “It is just amazing,” he said. “There is so much we can do, but so much we have done. I see fantastic potential in this company.”

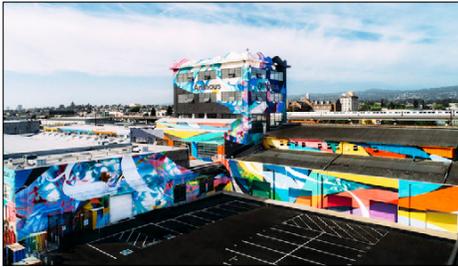
Chief Product Officer Nicklas Dagersten gave the virtual attendees an update on changes to CET Designer, Configura’s work-horse space planning software. The release pace for CET Designer has increased in the last two years to every month. Configura is going to slow its release schedule slightly so its partners can catch up to all the changes to the software.

Pontus Wallberg, R&D developer, outlined Configura’s Web Configurator launch. There is an annual fee to buy into the service, but users will pay only for what they actually use. The more they use it, the more they pay.

Persson said he has done some early work on areas in which Configura needs to improve, noting it must provide the industry good value and be good partners. “We have so much knowledge about how we can help, but we haven’t packaged it in a good way,” he said. “We also need community input — to listen for and find good ideas (from our partners).” **BoF**

## PACIFIC WEST

## NEXT PHASE UNVEILED



OAKLAND, Calif. — Oakland-based Riaz Capital unveiled the second and final phase of Artthaus Studios, a 120,000-square-foot complex located in the heart of Oakland's historic Jingtletown neighborhood. Originally built as a cannery, the structure, clad in brightly-colored murals on all sides, has quickly become a recognizable landmark in the neighborhood. Today, the property is home to nearly 100 small businesses, and is considered a catalyst for revitalizing the area. This final phase completes the transformation of the industrial building to a sustainable, affordable space, where a diverse group of artists and creative professionals will thrive.

[Biznow](#)

## MOUNTAIN WEST

## STUDYING FIRE FOR SAFER OFFICES



BOULDER, Colo. — Engineers and technicians at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) built a recreation of an office-building floor to see how it would react to a fire that wasn't stopped by traditional means, such as fire retardants

and sprinklers. What the researchers found was that the double angle connections were able to endure more stress than the shear tab connections, which could be useful knowledge for those designing office buildings. These steel beams are designed to handle vertical forces, like weight, but not lateral forces like what they observed during the fire. "We typically design for wind or the gravitational force from the building contents," said Lisa Choe, NIST structural engineer.

[Inverse](#)

## SKY OFFICE PLANNED

PHOENIX, Ariz. — Developer Ted Akiba submitted development plans for Kierland Sky, a 534,000-square-foot office project in northeast Phoenix. Two new six-story Class A office buildings would rise on a 6.78-acre site where an existing office complex now sits. In addition to the office space, 6,000 feet of retail and restaurant space is planned. The initial building would rise 90-feet on the property's north side. Plans also include a parking structure with two levels of subterranean and five above ground. A second, six-story building with 270,000 square feet of office space and 3,000 square feet of ground-level retail and restaurant area is planned in the project's second phase.

[Connect Phoenix](#)

## MIDWEST

## OPENING POSTPONED

MILWAUKEE — Advocate Aurora Health has postponed the opening of its new \$130 million health center in Pleasant Prairie because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The facility, which includes a 100,000-square-foot ambulatory care facility and three-story 100,000-square-foot

office building was slated to open June 8.

[Milwaukee Business Times](#)

## VIRUS DISRUPTION NOT SIGNIFICANT

TOLEDO — At least one major economic development project in northwest Ohio is at a standstill due to the coronavirus outbreak, but for now, most developers and officials remain optimistic about the future. Significant developments like the newly announced Amazon distribution center and mixed-use project in the old Colony neighborhood are progressing as planned. The city is working to keep the approval process moving along as much as possible.

[The Blade](#)

## DEVELOPERS BREAK GROUND



ROGERS, Ark. — Construction has started on a new 150,000-square-foot building along Interstate 49 in Rogers. The new building will serve as a regional operations center for Transplace, one of the country's largest providers of third-party logistics services. The three-story hybrid tiltwall is the first of its kind in Northwest Arkansas. The new development will feature courtyards, lighted pedestrian walkways, a retention pond and more than 1,000 parking spaces.

[Talk Business & Politics](#)

### NOT IMPACTED BY COVID

CHESTERFIELD, Mo. — Developer Jeff Tegethoff has secured 80 acres in Chesterfield with plans for a major, half-billion-dollar new development at Interstate 64. He plans to divide the 80 acres into nine parcels for Class A office space, retail anchored by a grocery store, and luxury housing that could include townhomes and apartments for lease and condominiums for sale. A lake located at the site will remain a prominent feature of the development. The COVID-19 pandemic has not impacted his plans and said he could begin site work this fall.

[KSDK](#)

### NORTHEAST

#### AEW LAUNCHES REVAMP

BOSTON — AEW Capital Management is evolving and expanding its offices in Boston's Seaport District. The real estate asset management firm has engaged Elkus Manfredi Architects to provide comprehensive interior architecture services for its existing headquarters at 2 Seaport Ln., while employees are temporarily relocated to the Financial District. Elkus Manfredi was tapped to reimagine AEW's current offices on the 15th and 16th floors of 2 Seaport Ln., and to design an expansion into space on the second floor and the creation of a work lounge on the mechanical floor above the 16th. The entire 75,120-square-foot project is expected to be completed in October.

[Connect Boston](#)

### SOUTH

#### LOOKING FOR INNOVATIVE WORKPLACES

RALEIGH, N.C. — With the influx of traffic in the Raleigh area, some companies are looking to establish

bases not only in downtown corridors, but in suburban areas as well where there's plenty of room for both expansion and amenities. This trend toward modern office space is not only driven by the changing desires of the workforce, but also by the suburban location of many of the campuses. "I think a lot of developers are doing it because of where they are located; being in the suburbs you do not have a lot of walkable amenities," said Jason High, an executive vice president at CBRE|Raleigh. "For a Class A office development to be successful in today's market, developers have to amenitize the buildings to attract tenants because tenants are focused on being able to offer those amenities to their employees, which assists in the attraction and retention of talent. Without it, businesses typically have a harder time recruiting."

[WRAL TechWire](#)

#### FACEBOOK SIGNS LEASE



ATLANTA — Hines has announced that Facebook will lease an entire floor — 35,900 square feet — at T3 West Midtown, bringing the development to 65% leased. The seven-story, heavy-timber T3 office building is the first of its kind in the market featuring more than 230,000 square feet of space, including ground-level shared social work-

space, fitness center, large outdoor terraces on each floor, a rooftop terrace and an adjacent pocket park.

[Atlanta INTown](#)

#### MIXED-USE COMMUNITY ANNOUNCED



CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. — Investors with the Burnside Development have announced that something new is coming to Chattanooga's Southside neighborhood. The project will initially include 60,000 sq. ft. of retail, commercial, apartments and restaurant space, as well as 42 townhomes. "We're bringing new life to an industrial site formerly used as a metal scrap yard," said investor DeDe Engelsberg. "This property will have a huge impact on the Southside. It was also important for us to find a location we could invest in where no one was being displaced from their home. We know that this next venture will draw even more residents to our favorite side of town."

[Channel 9 News](#)

*Compiled by Emily Clingman*

**BoF**

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

CURRENT VALUE

**\$13,633.31**

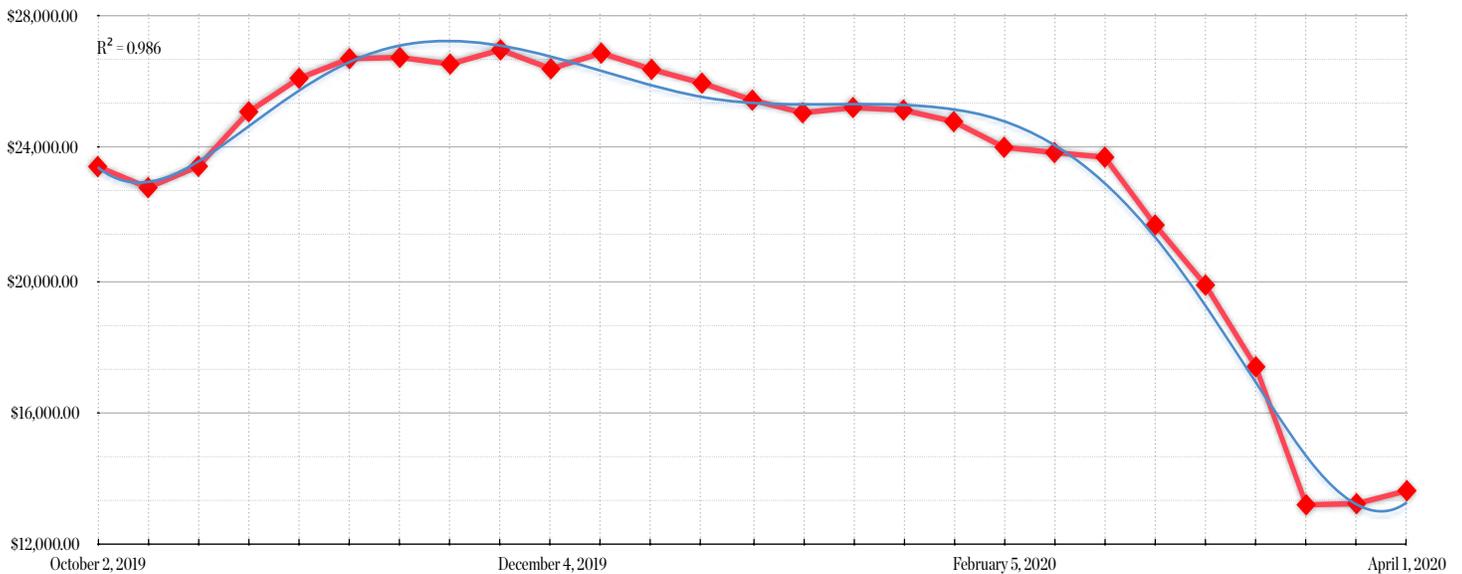
TOTAL GAIN / LOSS

**-10,746.23 (-44.08%)**

2020 YTD GAIN / LOSS

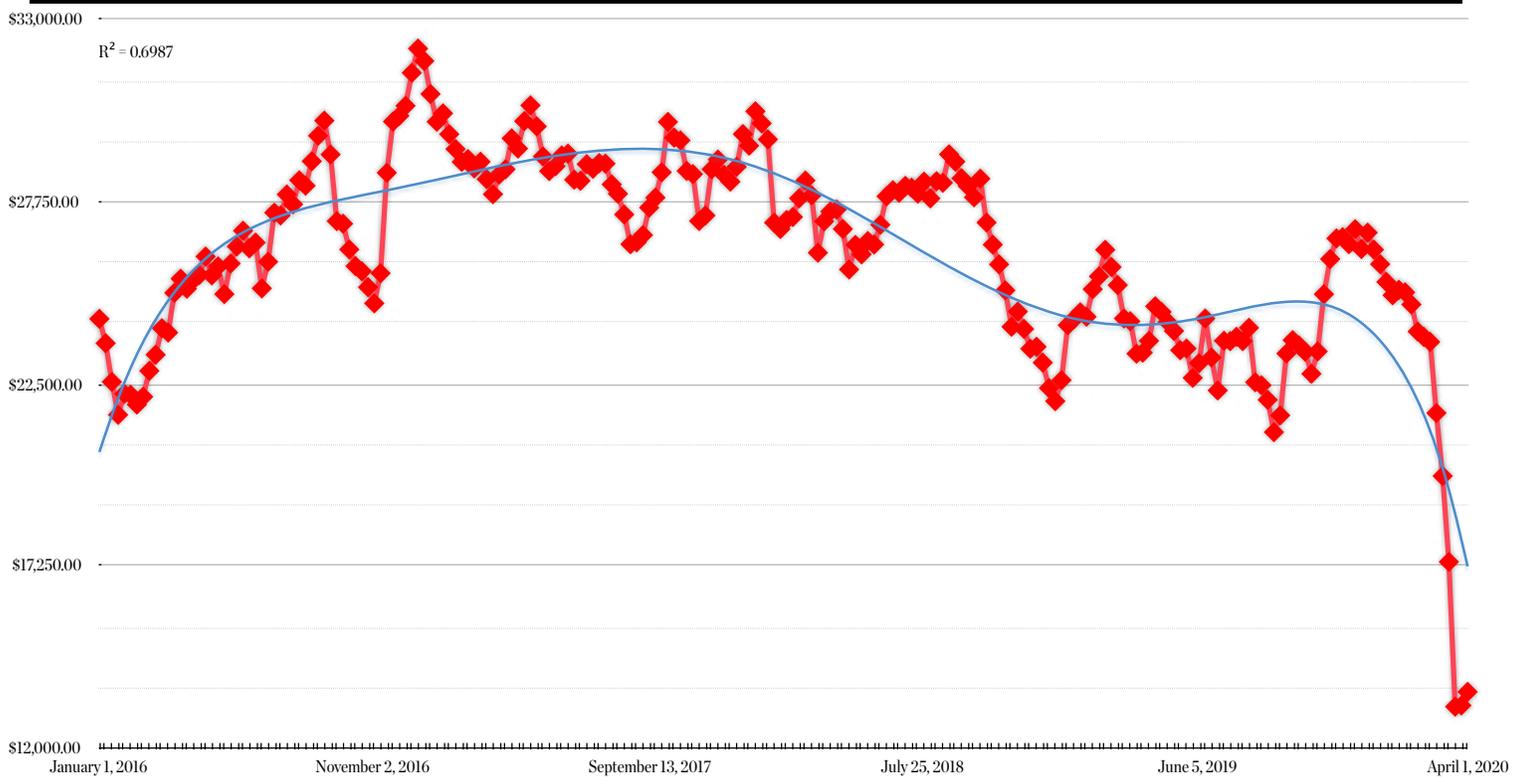
**-11,809.69 (-46.42%)**

▲ SYMBOL	PRICE ↕	CHANGE ↕	TOTAL GAIN ↕	1D GAIN ↕	OPEN ↕	PREV CLOSE ↕	VOLUME ↕	MARKET CAP ↕	DAY RANGE	52WK RANGE
<b>DRTT:US</b> DIRTT Environm...	1.02 20:00	-0.97% -0.01	-85.30% -592.00	-0.97% -1.00	1.05	1.03	52,723	86.37M	0.95 - 1.09	0.71 - 6.90
<b>FLXS:US</b> Flexsteel Indust...	10.96 20:00	+0.46% +0.05	-75.19% -3,322.00	+0.46% +5.00	10.57	10.91	40,017	87.58M	10.20 - 11.40	10.01 - 25.90
<b>HNI:US</b> HNI Corp	25.19 00:00	+1.78% +0.44	-30.14% -1,087.00	+1.78% +44.00	24.59	24.75	324,437	1.08B	24.03 - 25.77	16.61 - 42.90
<b>INQ:CN</b> Inscape Corp	0.78 00:00	-13.33% -0.12	-74.00% -157.42	-13.33% -8.51	0.78	0.90	1,000	11.22M	0.78 - 0.78	0.60 - 1.95
<b>KBAL:US</b> Kimball Internati...	11.91 20:00	+5.30% +0.60	+21.90% +214.00	+5.30% +60.00	11.27	11.31	305,113	438.32M	10.92 - 12.45	8.19 - 22.40
<b>KEQU:US</b> Kewaunee Scie...	7.97 20:00	+6.98% +0.52	-55.20% -982.00	+6.98% +52.00	7.44	7.45	7,737	21.92M	7.44 - 7.97	7.19 - 23.00
<b>KNL:US</b> Knoll Inc	10.32 20:04	+0.49% +0.05	-45.11% -848.00	+0.49% +5.00	10.16	10.27	546,211	513.98M	10.03 - 10.68	7.74 - 28.30
<b>LEG:US</b> Leggett & Platt L...	26.68 20:04	-4.95% -1.39	-36.51% -1,534.00	-4.95% -139.00	27.69	28.07	1,571,922	3.53B	26.41 - 27.98	22.03 - 55.42
<b>MLHR:US</b> Herman Miller Inc	22.20 20:00	-2.46% -0.56	-22.65% -650.00	-2.46% -56.00	23.00	22.76	750,941	1.31B	21.97 - 23.76	14.39 - 49.87
<b>SCS:US</b> Steelcase Inc	9.87 20:04	-5.73% -0.60	-33.76% -503.00	-5.73% -60.00	10.39	10.47	1,666,523	1.16B	9.63 - 10.75	7.02 - 23.02
<b>TILE:US</b> Interface Inc	7.56 00:00	-0.26% -0.02	-60.50% -1,158.00	-0.26% -2.00	7.48	7.58	432,162	440.74M	7.34 - 7.81	5.06 - 17.68
<b>VIRC:US</b> Virco Manufactu...	2.10 20:00	-1.41% -0.03	-36.94% -123.00	-1.41% -3.00	2.14	2.13	6,336	33.00M	2.10 - 2.16	1.82 - 5.00

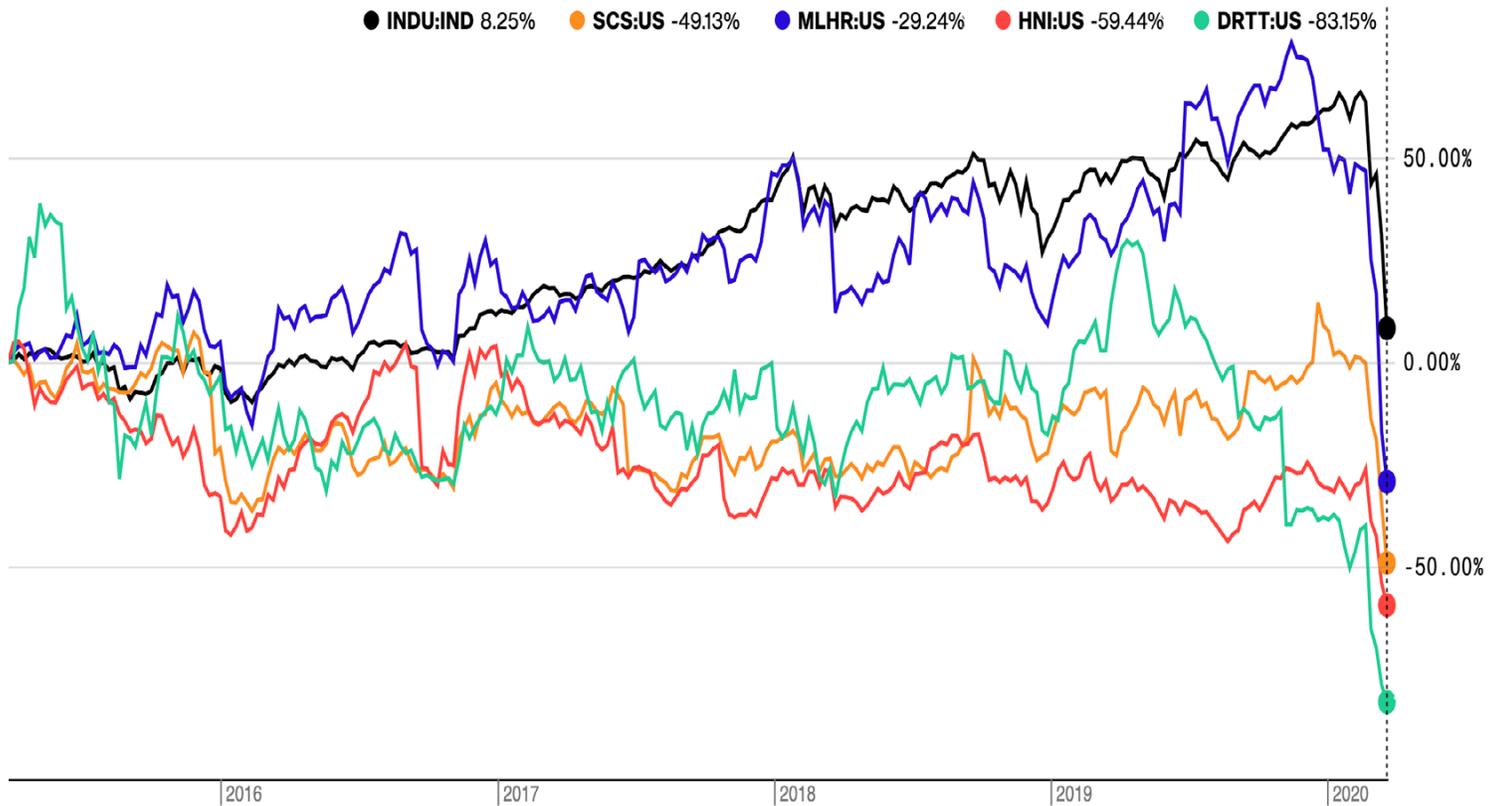


# STOCK GRAPHS

## BoF Industry Index - Since Jan 1, 2016



## Five Years - Major Industry Stocks



# The Perfect On Line Job Interview (and How to Have Better Internet Meetings for Anything)



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

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

Dear Stephen:

*I am interviewing for a new job. Yes, it seems many companies are still hiring but they are just not interviewing in person. Everything on a video meeting. All via WebEx, Google chat rooms, Zoom Rooms, sometimes Skype and others Facetime. I am working in outside sales and now we use the same technology while home officing, so I am familiar with the technology but talking to my colleagues or supervisors and peers is not the same as an interview. I feel like I am having a hard time establishing chemistry with a video interview. Any tips?*

Signed,

*Not Ready For Prime Time Interviewing*

Dear Primetime,

You mention something I want to share with all our readers. Many furniture manufacturers are considered a life-sustaining business due to their many health care, government and financial services customers, so they have permission to operate their plants. They may be at a reduced schedule but are still operating.

Right after keeping their employees and their employees' families safe, as companies prepare themselves for the eventual economic recovery, they know they will need new salespeople to generate revenue. So both manufacturers and dealers are still hiring salespeople. Employers now recognize the best salespeople with the best relationships will generate new sales the fastest. That's why they continue to recruit these people, even in this trying time.

Smart HR departments and sales managers realize this is an ideal time to get an otherwise hard-to-reach candidate's attention. Smart companies want to jumpstart sales as busi-

ness resumes, and they already know they need the very best salespeople in place. I predict there will be many outside salespeople in particular that will leave the sales field after this. Not because of the economy but because they are scared of going back to work. The idea of making in-person presentations is now scary to some salespeople. Many have told me: "Who needs it!"

So companies will have unexpected openings they will need to fill fast. And lots of early retirements. Now to your question — participants on a video meeting report getting distracted by what's behind the person speaking. A pet, toy or a family picture. You are inviting people into your homes for these meetings so make the best impression possible. No need for a blank wall, but have a neutral setting, quiet with proper lighting. A business meeting is still a business meeting, and there should be no loss

---

of professionalism in the way you look either. Dress for the meeting. And never dress nicely just from the waist up. What if you have to get up to let the dog out, or someone comes to the door? Be fully dressed.

Here is another tip. Choose a desk lamp as opposed to an overhead light — shading from above is unattractive. Adjust your chair, then again your light and rehearse. For minimum echoing, choose a room with carpeting or drapes. And it cannot be said enough: head-to-toe dressing. If it is an interview, dress like an interview. That's my advice, and now I am sharing some advice from a friend from my TV world who coaches TV hosts like myself, Barbara Bana Abel:

### **The Checklist: On-Camera Basics**

**Speak to serve:** It's not about you, it's about the audience. Look outward, not inward. Be generous. Focus on the listener, the viewer, the audience. What do they need? What are their expectations? What problems do I solve? What value do I offer? How can I help?

**Smile:** Relax your facial muscles and engage, engage, engage!

**Eye contact:** Know where the camera is on your device and focus there.

**Mirror work:** Study your face in the mirror while brushing your teeth and practice the range of facial expressions in your tool kit.

**Set your intentions:** How do you want to show up? If you want to appear warm and engaging ask yourself what you need to do to achieve that (energy, looking into the camera, facial expressions, vocal intonations, vocabulary) ... and then do that.

**Be present:** Be an active listener (but avoid vocalizing i.e. hms and uh-ha's) and don't do anything you wouldn't do in an in-person meeting.

Practice makes ... success!: Don't worry about getting it right or perfect. You will get the hang of this quickly.

### **The Mechanics**

**Framing/distance/eyeline:** You want to look into your camera (avoid the instinct to look at yourself in a little box on your screen). Put your laptop on a stack of books or a box to improve your eyeline. If you're using a smartphone or tablet and don't have a tripod you can do the same thing by propping up your device so you are looking directly at the screen. Avoid looking down.

Here's a visual description.

### **Lighting**

- Natural light is a good thing. Use what you have.
- DO sit facing a window if you can.
- DON'T sit with your back to a window – that causes you to be backlit and in shadow or silhouette, and we can't see you.
- DO move lights around as needed. Best positions are ten o'clock and/or two o'clock in front of you. If you want to get fancy you can put a light slightly behind you at four o'clock.

**Audio:** Your computer/phone audio should be fine. Test to see how your levels work. Know how to turn your microphone on and off (mute). It varies from platform to platform and device.

### **Production design**

Simply put, know what's in the frame. Do a test shot. Everyone is making do – we understand – but be professional and appropriate for your business or school. Books and art are nice. So are uncluttered spaces. No one wants to see your pile of laundry, dirty dishes or the inside of your bathroom.

### **Recording your video calls**

Skype has been standard in the casting-industry for several years (Fun fact: Jennifer Lawrence auditioned for Silver Linings Playbook via Skype) and Call Recorder for Skype is an extremely useful, easy-to-use tool (\$39.95) to record your Skype calls to QuickTime Files. Skype for Business has different protocols so check What those options are

<https://www.ecamm.com/mac/>.

Zoom and Blue jeans both allow recording calls from the platform

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362473-Local-Recording>

<https://www.bluejeans.com/meeting-recording-record-video-conferences-bluejeans>.

### **Display documents on screen**

On Zoom roll your cursor to the bottom of the screen and a series of icons will appear (microphone to mute/un-mute, camera to record, people to invite, a handy chat box and more). A bright green box labeled "share" allows you to share documents, power points, spreadsheets, photos and lessons. The key is to open the documents in advance of your meeting (although you can search in real time by clicking files). There is also a handy whiteboard feature that allows you to write and share notes IRT.

Got it everyone? Thanks Barbara! And thank you all for your kind letters and response to last week's column. Together we'll all get through this rough time.

TVG is happy to speak with readers of BoF about your career concerns on the phone or by email. Be sure you follow The Viscusi Group and me, Stephen Viscusi, on LinkedIn and see our daily job tips at [www.viscusigorup.com](http://www.viscusigorup.com).

Stephen

LAS VEGAS

## HDExpo

May 5-7, 2020



**HD Expo** is designed to take your professional development to the next level. It's where leading manufacturers unite to debut their latest and most innovative products, share inspiration and knowledge on the show floor; and where networking leads to game-changing connections.

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

**CANCELLED**

CHICAGO

## NeoCon

June 8-10, 2020



**NeoCon** is the world's leading platform for commercial design and the annual gathering place for over 50,000 design professionals and end-users. In its 51st edition, NeoCon will serve as the commercial design industry's launch pad for showcasing game-changing products and services from leading companies and emerging talent, and providing unparalleled access to the most cutting-edge solutions.

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

**CANCELLED**

NEW YORK CITY

## ICFF

May 17-20, 2020



For over 30 years, **ICFF** has built a solid reputation as North America's platform for contemporary design. Attracting visitors from 40+ countries, ICFF brings together remarkable design through its exhibitors showcasing what's next and what's best for luxury residential and commercial interiors.

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

**CANCELLED / POSTPONED**

LONDON (NEW DATE)

## Clerkenwell Design Week

July 14-26, 2020



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

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

COLOGNE, GERMANY

## Orgatec 2020

October 27-31, 2020



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

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

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

## EDSPACES

November 11-13, 2020



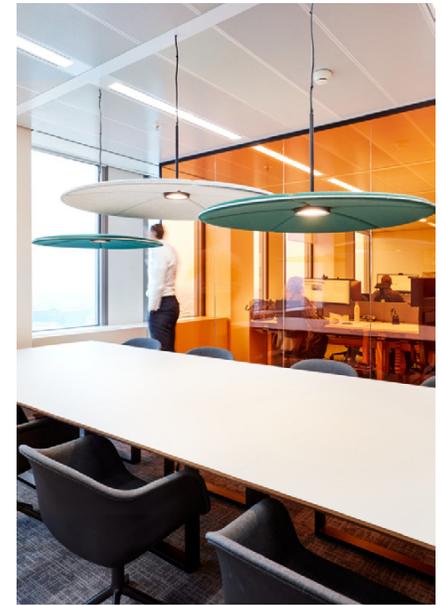
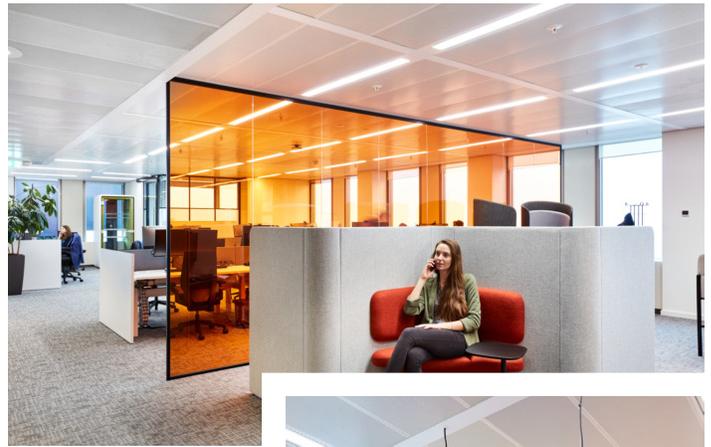
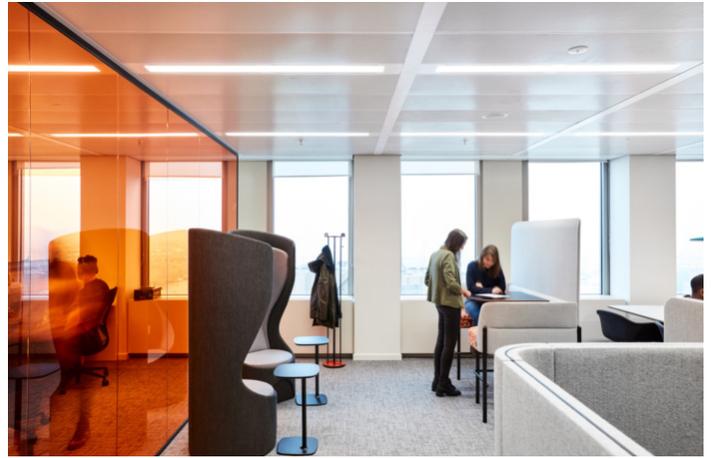
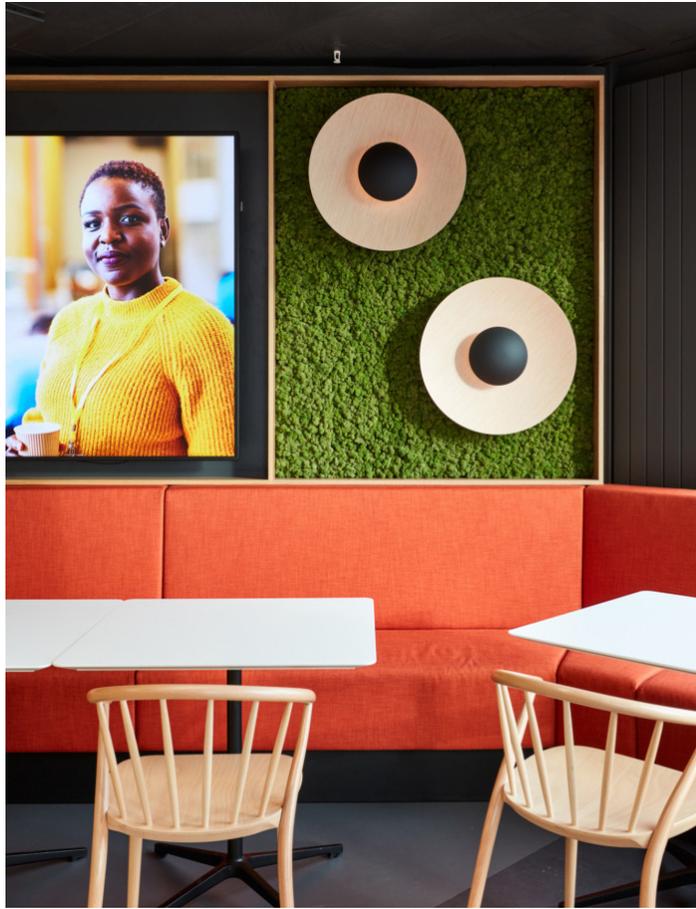
**EDspaces** is where innovations are unveiled and collaborations form, bringing together education's creative change agents who plan, design and manage innovative learning spaces. Leaders from school districts and colleges, architects, interior designers, distributors and exhibitors will engage and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

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

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

## Cancelled / Postponed Notes:

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



Photography: Tom Fallon

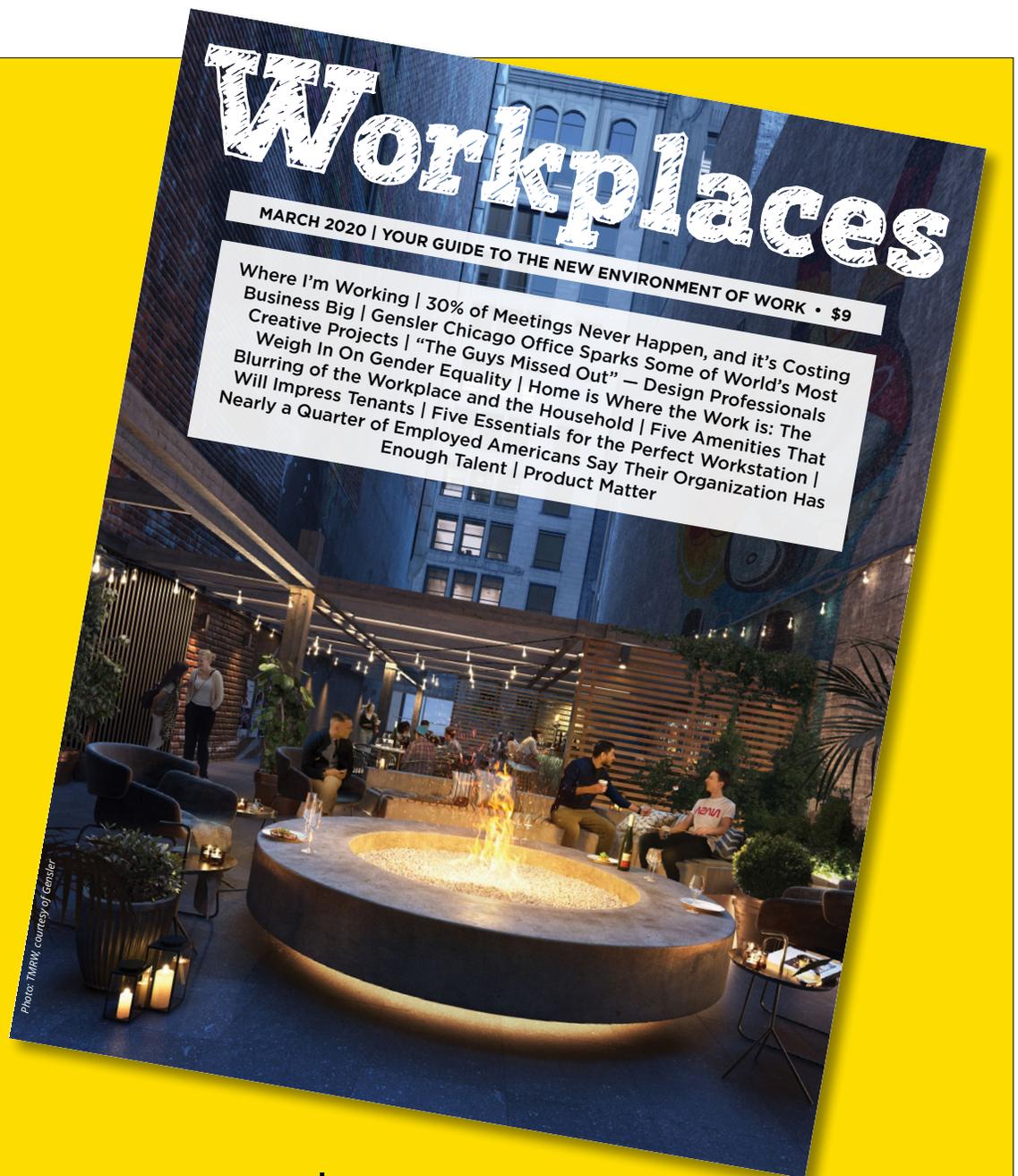


## Private Global Asset Management Company Offices – Amsterdam

AIS completed the design for the offices of a private global asset management company located in Amsterdam, Netherlands. As an organization that challenges businesses to reach higher standards, our client upheld this same attitude when it came to the design and build of their own workplace. Located in the iconic Rembrandt Tower in the Amsteldorp neighborhood of Amsterdam, their new workplace is a full refurbishment of an existing space based on their organizational design standards. These guidelines allowed our concept to maintain a consistent aesthetic with the client’s other offices around the world.

[READ MORE](#)

FIRM: AIS  
 CLIENT: Unnamed  
 9,700 sqft  
 SCOPE: Office  
 LOCATION: Amsterdam  
 INDUSTRY: Financial / Investments



## Workplaces | March 2020

Where I'm Working | 30% of Meetings Never Happen, and it's Costing Business Big | Gensler Chicago Office Sparks Some of World's Most Creative Projects | "The Guys Missed Out" — Design Professionals Weigh In On Gender Equality | Home is Where the Work is: The Blurring of the Workplace and the Household | Five Amenities That Will Impress Tenants | Five Essentials for the Perfect Workstation | Nearly a Quarter of Employed Americans Say Their Organization Has Enough Talent | Product Matter

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



MAKERS

# Building a Dream — Gebesa Sets Sights on Growing Its US Market

THE COMPANY SPECIALIZED IN KITCHEN CABINETS AT FIRST, EVENTUALLY ADDING MORE PRODUCTS AND FINISHES TO ITS OFFERINGS.

by Emily Clingman

**In the Laguna region** of northern Mexico, Boyardo Salmón is cultivating a family legacy. He is the vice president of Gebesa, which was started by his father (the senior Boyardo Salmón) in 1973, and is now the largest contract furniture manufacturer in Mexico with more than 600 employees.

The company specialized in kitchen cabinets at first, eventually adding more products and finishes to its offerings. In the '80s, Gebesa added an office furniture line. In 1995, it began exporting its products to the U.S. and has worked with companies like Nike, Coca-Cola, General Motors, Whirlpool, Walmart and Forbes. Apple is the number one customer of Gebesa's Ascend height-adjustable table. Gebesa also supplies military bases and universities with high-quality, sturdy furnishings, and recently it created sleeping pods for homeless people in Los Angeles. Sales in the U.S. tripled in 2019, and the company is ramping up its efforts to hire more sales reps in the U.S. and hit higher goals in the coming years.

This wasn't always Boyardo Salmón's dream. He majored in marketing and has always been interested in business. He worked some summers over the years sweeping floors and assembling furniture, but it wasn't necessarily expected of him to take over the business.

"But I wanted to work with the company," Salmón said, and he joined Gebesa in 2009.

His father said he could do whatever he wanted, even change the name.

"I said no, because we had a legacy," Salmón said. "But my point is that he doesn't have an ego to get in the way. He's pragmatic, humble and frugal. So, he let me try a lot of things and make mistakes. When you have your father, he's your father, but now we are business partners working shoulder to shoulder building a dream."



Boyardo Salmón (left), his son, little Boyardo Salmón (center), and his father Boyardo Salmón, Sr. (right)

With Salmón on board, Gebesa beefed up its brand message.

“I felt the engineering arm of the company was very strong,” he said, noting his father (who has stepped away from most of the day-to-day duties of the business, but currently serves as Chairman of the Board) is a mechanical engineer. “But the commercial and marketing arm was like a T-rex.”

Gebesa shifted its focus more toward the why behind its product rather than the what.

“It’s one thing to put furniture in offices, but to be able to make a product that will help people in a deep and meaningful way is something we’re very proud of,” Salmón said. “We want an organization to be better after we work with them — to work better and meet their goals. And, of course, it’s not like the furniture is magic; it’s a part of the equation to help you attract and retain your talent and better engage your staff.”

Gebesa wants to be a real solution for the market and not making products just for the sake of making them.

“We want our customers to really want the products,” Salmón said. “We have to understand how our customers function. Not every office needs to or can look like Google or Facebook. Law offices, for instance, that need to have status and confidentiality, security, privacy — that needs different design. The open office has been a solution forever, but who really needs them? We need to give the customer what’s best for them to become a better organization, solutions that will solve their needs.”

Gebesa’s extensive catalog offers a full range of products, including seating, desk and table, filing and storage, technology and office accessories and other unique workflow and ergonomic solutions. The company’s value proposition is not just one thing, like offering the best price, for instance. It’s a combination of the what and the why, design, price, lead time, flexibility, customer service and the durability of the product.

Gebesa aspires to be the world’s most-admired Mexican brand of commercial furniture and equipment with its high-quality solutions with the best cost-benefit ratio in the market, and leading with values like integrity, commitment, passion, empathy. “The company has to stand for something,” Salmón said.

Geographically, Gebesa is in an interesting market position. Salmón describes it as having the best of both worlds with a lot of influence from the U.S. and a lot of influence from Europe. What results is a style that is not specific to Mexico, to the U.S. or to Europe.

“Our products are in a sweet spot between North American and European trends,” he said.

As Gebesa moves forward in developing its brand through expanded markets, there’s one message Salmón wants to emphasize: “We have a great team of people both in Mexico and the US. We have all worked very hard for many years to make things happen and I would like the team to take credit. We are a true manufacturer,” he said. “We’re not just assembling parts and pieces. We start from scratch. We have a lot of innovative products and this jewel of a factory, and we want to show it to the world.” **BoF**





OFFICE DESIGN

# The Brandywine Experience: Touchdown Spaces for Tenants of Brandywine Realty Trust Make a Successful Play for Reaching Company Goals in a New Way

USING A BEX SPACE AFFORDS WORKERS THE ABILITY TO WORK WHERE THEY WANT.

by Stef Schwalb

**The Brandywine Experience** (Bex) is a coworking and meeting space created exclusively for tenants within Brandywine Realty Trust's office buildings. Available in locations within Tysons, Virginia; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Radnor, Pennsylvania, the amenity allows larger companies to have a piece of the coworking pie. These touchdown spaces are for working, recharging and connecting.

Using a Bex space affords workers the ability to work where they want. If tenants want to work near home but not at home, the option is ideal. In the same vein, if they are traveling to a different region, they can reserve a touchdown desk by the hour or by the day via the online concierge service. Bex spaces come with lounge and kitchen areas, conference space and private offices.

The Bex concept came about because the company saw the growth of coworking and how it related to productivity, so opting to embrace its evolution was a no-brainer, said Jeff DeVuono, Brandywine Realty Trust executive vice president and senior managing director. "Bex is a continuation of Brandywine's commitment to providing high-quality, amenity-rich spaces designed for productivity," he said. "Keeping pace with the industry and its trends, we understood that a coworking boom reflected increased demand for flexible workspaces among companies of all sizes, not just startups. We saw an opportunity to respond to that demand by embracing our own flexible workspace model so that our tenants and their employees could experience a new way to work."

Bex has found success within today's workplace culture due to several factors. "Many industries have been experiencing an evolution in the way people want to work that's largely predicated on the need for work-life balance," DeVuono said. "Bex meets that growing demand by providing employees with access to a workspace that is convenient, easily accessible,



relaxed and stylish. Bex offers people the opportunity to work remotely, which lends to its success because tenants can reserve space while traveling, allowing them to forgo working from hotel rooms or loud coffee shops. Changing your surroundings during the workday has been proven to benefit productivity levels and boost creativity.”

Feedback thus far has been positive. For tenants, Bex has been integral in enhancing employee relations – current and potential. It has also been lauded for its convenience.

“Our tenants use these dynamic spaces to empower their employees and advance their goals,” DeVuono said. “Many organizations have noted that offering Bex as an amenity to employees has been a value-add for talent attraction. Bex also allows tenant employees in the D.C. Metro area to have a touchdown space in Philadelphia and its suburbs and vice versa. This allows tenants to have a convenient office away from home when they are traveling for business.”

Among the workplace trends DeVuono anticipates for the new decade is the integration of wellness as top of mind.

“Employee experience is vastly important to the generations who are looking for human connection and access to outdoor space to reap both mental and physical benefits,” he explained. “At Brandywine, we are seeing this trend resonate in the real estate industry as we continue to put employee health and wellness at the forefront of our projects.”

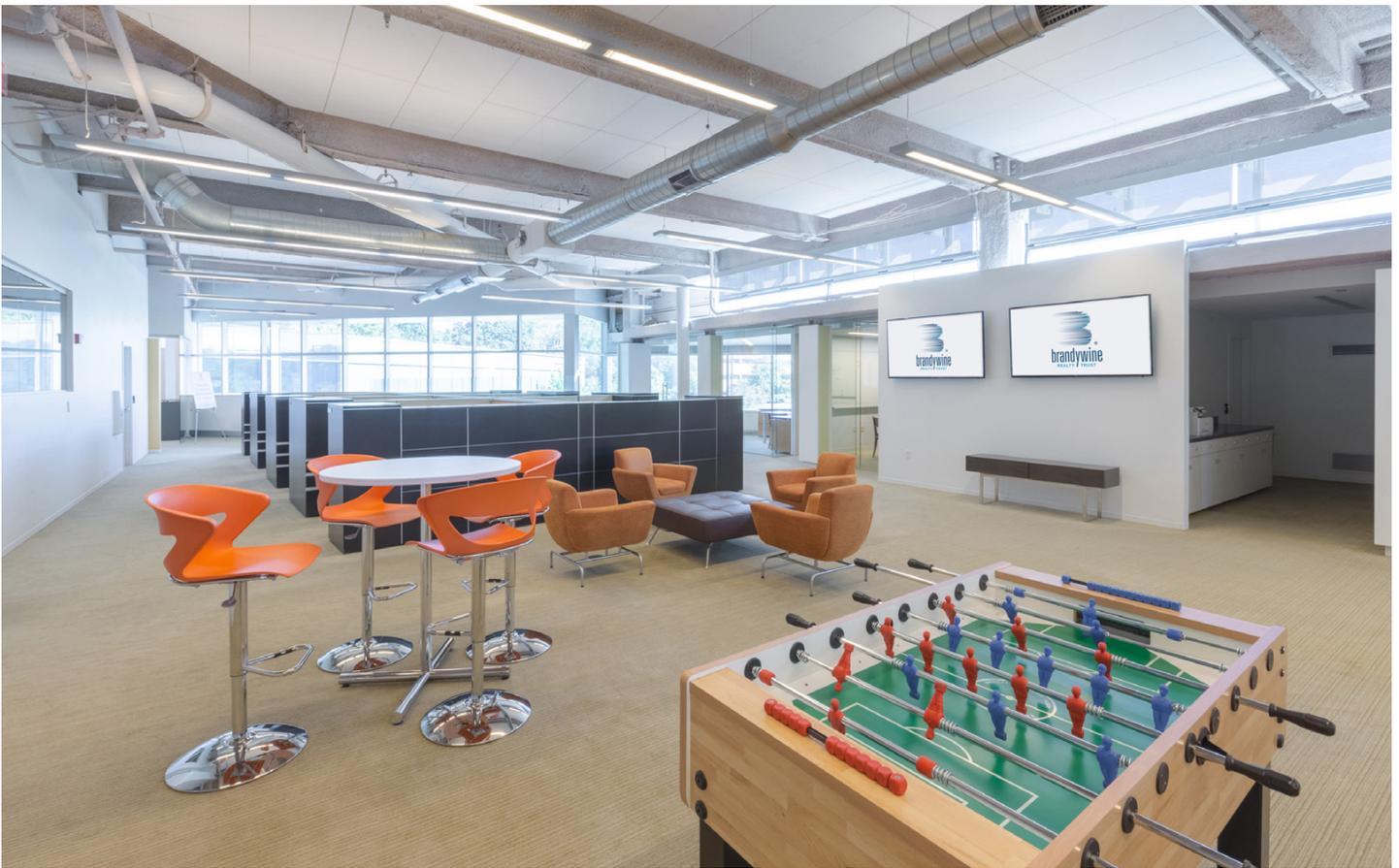
DeVuono cited as an example the visionary ground-up re-development of 650 Park Ave. in King of Prussia. The completed development will feature an abundance of open-air amenity spaces and communal work environments designed to promote team productivity, individual wellness, leisure and evening gatherings. The property will sit atop the first-of-its-kind 2.6-mile First Avenue Linear Park and trail, a new public recreational amenity Brandywine will help deliver in collaboration with Upper Merion Township.

DeVuono also mentions 155 Radnor, an innovative office building that’s part of the 26.6-acre Penn Medicine Campus in a highly coveted market.

“As the first new office building constructed in Radnor, Pennsylvania, in more than 30 years, 155 Radnor brings new amenities to the business-driven, Philadelphia suburb’s office landscape by prioritizing people through an emphasis on work-life balance and wellness,” he said.

Standout amenities are heavily focused on blending the natural world and the built environment, setting 155 Radnor on grounds surrounded by more than 250 trees, two-foot tall wildflower meadows, a seasonal micro farm and three rain gardens to serve as stormwater management systems.





Brandywine will also seek to achieve building wellness standards with projects such as the FMC Tower. This iconic, mixed-use tower in University City, Philadelphia, earned sustainability achievements and new designations in tenant wellness. It has been awarded Fitwel's Best in Building Health and WELL Core Certified (bronze), both designating a level of wellness focused on tenant health.

“To achieve such standards, FMC Tower's systems are optimized to improve air and water quality, natural light exposure, create ideal thermal conditions, as well as provide environments that promote movement, mental well-being, healthy eating habits and more,” DeVuo said. “The building is also home to a luxury lifestyle club — Level28 — which offers access to a beautifully landscaped outdoor terrace, and Cira Green, an urban park in the sky (95 feet above street level) that boasts blue-green roof technology.”

Within the coming year there are no concrete plans to add more locations. The way Brandywine's Class-A and Trophy-Class buildings are designed, DeVuono said it's easy to scale Bex across the company's portfolio, adding any expansion will be based on market demand. **BoF**

# Remote Work Tips for the A&D Industry

ON THE A&D FRONT, BUSINESS IS ANYTHING BUT USUAL.

by Amanda Schneider



We began 2020 with the same unbridled optimism with which most new years start. Then our world was unexpectedly turned upside down by coronavirus. In a matter of weeks, we went from a thriving economy, and record low unemployment and vacancy rates in the U.S., to a world nearly shut down by a global pandemic. At the time this article was written, there were more than 450,000 confirmed cases globally, with the numbers increasing daily by the thousands and a world marked by social distancing and quarantines.

And still, the story is not one of all doom and gloom — nitrogen dioxide levels over China have dropped since the mandated quarantine, marine life is returning to the waterways in Italy, and families across the world are forced to slow down and enjoy family dinners, game nights in and more quality time together.

On the A&D front, business is anything but usual. As an industry that thrives on creative inspiration and human interaction, we've been forced almost overnight to transition to a near-complete remote existence.

As we tread forward, ThinkLab would like to share insights to help your team transition. Much like our typical research approach, we couple our firsthand knowledge of the topic with crowd-sourced information to distill succinct insights as to how to make this easier on you and your team. Here are some thoughts and newfound silver linings in our current scenario from a team that has been 100% remote since its inception in 2015.

## Recognize the physical and emotional adjustments

While it is natural to focus on things like ergonomics, lighting for our newfound affinity for video calls and other tools to do our job, the physical transition is just the tip of the iceberg. There's also a mental adjustment when you have to completely (and quickly) reframe your workflow from in person to digital as well as — in this instance — a very real, underlying emotional one.

While our team has always worked remotely (and thus the physical and mental transition is near nonexistent for us), we have had to recognize and acknowledge intense emotions caused by this rapid

transition. But after seeing your CMO call in from his daughter's "Frozen 2" bedroom, interruptions from 2-year-old "coworkers" and the joy of "furry roommates" now on work calls, perhaps this will serve to rehumanize the work experience in the end.

### **Remote work for designers: Actually, we can!**

As part of humanizing, we are also hopeful this makes more room for flexibility for the dual-working families, hobbyists and empty nesters that love to travel but also love to work. In the past, we were told our industry couldn't exist remotely. After all, the creative process feeds on interaction with peers. But in a few short weeks, we're proving the naysayers wrong, and in a very positive, productive way.

As one designer shares, "Management's typical excuse for not allowing work from home is that the work needs to be done in the office because of team collaboration, software availability and keeping an eye on people working. I'm happy to say that we are blowing all of those misconceptions out of the water! Now they don't have a leg to stand on, and I'm hoping it will lead to more flexibility industrywide."

While the thought of a digital product preview or an online client presentation may have been unheard of in the past, today it's the only way we can keep business moving. And we are taking notes along the way, with the hopes of implementing some real change for our industry's method of working after the dust settles. We just hope the immersive part of this transition doesn't scare people away from the idea of flexible remote work.

The biggest shift in remote working is transitioning from owning your time to owning your results.

While many focus on where time is spent, we suggest instead focusing on agreed-upon deadlines and timelines, then ensuring those deliverables are hit.

And while it's natural for employers to be worried about the underperformers getting their work done when they are not physically seen, our advice

is to instead worry about burnout. In scenarios like these, it's oftentimes your type A's you may want to worry about most. In this uncertain time, these workers often resort to their job as a sense of relief and forward progress as a reprieve from their feeling of helplessness, and the burnout factor can become prevalent. Whether they are facing the many newfound distractions of kids/spouses/roommates at home, deafening silence of a N.Y. studio apartment in quarantine or simply the lack of marked starts and ends to the days with commutes to the office, our surveys suggest many employees are feeling the constant overhead guilt of "Am I doing enough?" Management's desire to stay in touch and over-communicate can add to the guilt factor by making employees feel the need to respond day and night. Work "anytime, anywhere" can become work "all the time, everywhere."

Fortunately, our research shows the industry is responding well — 72% found the transition to be easy or very easy and only 7% found it difficult or very difficult. Many of the biggest difficulties are coming from factors that don't relate well to what typical work-from-home scenarios look like. This transition was rapid, immersive and had the distraction of children at home to boot.

For more tips on how to use this new remote transition to empower your introverts through virtual brainstorming, how to streamline (over) communication and tips and tricks to get through this crazy phase with the kids (or roommates or [surprising discoveries about our spouses' work habits](#)) at home, we invite you to watch the recording of our full webinar, which can be found here. **BoF**

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

## SURFACES

## 3form Releases New Collection, Varia

3form has announced a design collection with a curated palette of patterns and colors to make the challenge of material selection less time-consuming, but no less creative for its flagship line of resin, Varia.

Varia is known for its ability to allow designers to create virtually any look by adjusting color, pattern and translucency. However, custom designs take a considerable amount of time to specify, and designers are increasingly asked to do more



with less. In response, 3form considered how to more effectively assist designers in their material choices. The result is a Varia collection assembled by Christian Darby, 3form's vice president of design and former Nike director of design, that expertly pairs color and pattern.

"We recognized there was an opportunity to streamline the creative process for designers when using the Varia platform," Darby said. "The Varia system allows for enormous creativity but we understand it can sometimes feel overwhelming. For Spring 2020 we've curated a collection that leverages color and pattern, and provides a really good entry point to the Varia system. We believe this will allow designers to more easily work with the Varia platform."

3form materials have always brought color to life within the built environment. Whether a designer is looking for strong, saturated colors for hospitality, calming cool tones for health care or a span of sophisticated neutrals for a corporate setting, the colors offer plenty of choice and were designed to pair well with each other.

Varia is at the center of 3form's recently launched, ambitious sustainability program: Align. The program represents a commitment to sustainability and a promise to continue to pursue every effort to be an environmentally and socially responsible design company. The company now boasts multiple products with Declare labels including Varia, Chroma and Sola felt. All of these items are Red List Free, the highest level of Declare Label certification.

The design collection includes 43 total patterns and 14 colors. Varia panels are offered in 4-foot-by-8-foot and 4-foot-by-10-foot sizes. A 5-foot-by-10-foot size is also available, though some restrictions apply. It is available in gauges from 1/16 inch to 1 inch.

3form recently updated its website to make it easier for clients to find the right materials in one place, enabling online sample ordering and making the ordering process as smooth as possible. The lead time on the new collection is two weeks.

## TEXTILES

## Luna goes 'Off the Grid' with New Spring 2020 Collection

Inspired by off-the-grid communities that pledge to live more sustainable lives all over the world, and playing on its history of offering forward-thinking solutions for today's commercial interiors, Luna Textiles is bringing its design ethos to life in five new fabric patterns this spring.



Luna has designed a collection of grid-inspired textures that pull from the principles of off-the-grid, sustainable, low-cost living. Comprising three upholstery fabrics and two wallcoverings, Luna merges metropolitan and rural influences to create a mix of high performance, sustainability minded and value-driven textiles with recycled and/or bio-based materials.

Metro was inspired by New York's subway tiles and has an urban texture with a refined yet durable woven structure that can withstand high-traffic environments. Engineered for upholstery and panel applications, the fabric is offered in 25 trending colors.

Beacon is a mix of the natural and the engineered, a hospitality-focused fabric featuring a bi-color, crocheted novelty yarn which adds to creating a sequined shimmer effect. It contains Recover — upcycled cotton created from pre-consumer apparel waste — and is available in 10 colorways.

Mason is a felted wool with a colorful grid design. Its construction and vibrant yarns are diffused by the felting process. Comprised of 100% bio-based and rapidly renewable content, its seven earthenware inspired colorways add warmth and nuance to commercial or crossover projects.

As Luna's next generation in value driven, high performance wallcovering, Lumina has a smooth finish featuring a pearlescent polyethylene tape yarn. This clean construction is offered in a neutral, seven-color palette that will add style to interior walls.

Offered as a counterpoint to Lumina's smooth surface, Candela brings luster and performance to Luna's Wallcovering combination. Available in nine neutral colors, it's comprised of a mix of matte and lustrous yarns and provides a subtle sheen across its crepe-like surface.

## TABLES

## SurfaceWorks Introduces Dax Training Tables

Dax is a new flip-top training table from SurfaceWorks. Designed by Eiji Kano, its ultralight aluminum legs and silky smooth casters allow the table to glide effortlessly into whatever configuration you can dream up.



Dax's six top shapes include rectangle, concave rectangle, trapezoid, rounded trapezoid, half-squircle or a 30-degree arc. For any meeting, classroom or collaborative environment, Dax allows the user to find an arrangement that works for them.



The base has a unique finish with a polished aluminum lower leg and a powder-coated metallic silver upper leg. The sleek leg design allows tables to nest straight-on while the top flips easily with left and right release mechanisms, allowing the tables to be nested and stored when not in use. Multiples tightly nest together with a mere 4-inch density. The optional wire mesh modesty panels swing clear when nesting.

Dax also offers options for power and technology. The optional Slim Wire Raceway provides effortless wire management. Additional table support maximizes table rigidity, allowing the tables to be arranged and rearranged as many times as needed.

## SEATING

## Source Introduces Everwood

The Everwood chair's curved, clean lines highlight the marriage of organic and man-made materials. Each is continuous, making the sculptural form visually appealing from all angles. The solid ash frame gives stability to the lightweight poly seat and backrest



The minimal form can be credited to the chair's German designer, Andreas Ostwald. "The natural beauty of the wood plays against the plastic harmoniously," Ostwald said.

Scandinavian sensibilities are evident through its aesthetics and resourceful use of materials. Everwood uses minimal materials, and its plastic seat and back are recyclable.

The multi-use chair works across corporate, hospitality, education and health care spaces. As its wood frame gives visceral warmth, its ergonomically shaped seat and backrest provide maximum comfort. Source offers 23 finish options for the wood frame and six colors for the poly seat and backrest. An upholstered seat pad is optional.

## TEXTILES

## Concertex Warps Perception of Performance Fabrics with New Collection

Concertex's spring 2020 Warp collection blurs the lines between coated fabrics and wovens with its new technology called Tekloom and the introduction of 3 products: Apex, Flux and Parallel.

The groundbreaking technology chemically bonds a woven product with the durable components of a coated fabric to create an innovative, fused textile. Suitable for the rigorous demands of all high-traffic areas, the Tekloom textiles are bleach cleanable and impermeable to liquids.

Bold and graphic, Apex packs a powerful punch. The small scale pattern is created with solid-colored yarns in the warp and the weft to provide clean color combinations and sharp lines. Flux is constructed with a combination of multicolor filament yarns in the weft to achieve a strié effect and fluctuation in tone. Parallel's large-scale striped pattern is constructed with a striped twill reminiscent of a wool, and it combines multicolor yarns with solid yarns in the weft to provide color depth and dimension.

Offered in a wide range of comfortable colorways, Apex, Flux and Parallel are curated toward health care facilities, educational buildings and government institutions.



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**CAREERS**

## Kimball Announces Promotion of Wendy Murray to Vice President of Marketing

➤ Kimball has promoted Wendy Murray to vice president, marketing.



Murray

Murray's responsibilities will include leading product development, product marketing and brand marketing, with a focus on new product introductions, design partnerships and growth of Kimball Health. Over the course of her career with Kimball as director of brand marketing and most recently, director of marketing and product, Murray has expanded the Kimball brand in the marketplace through her strategic thinking, customer-centric focus and ability to assess needs and trends of markets. She brings more than 20 years of extensive industry experience to this new role.

"Wendy has been an instrumental member of our Kimball team over the last seven years," said Phyllis Goetz, president of Kimball.

**CAREERS**

## Scandinavian Spaces Hires Local Representative to Cover Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio

➤ Scandinavian Spaces' curated line will now be represented by Eliana Lauren & Associates in the states of Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan and Ohio.

"We couldn't be more pleased to be partnering with Eliana Lauren & Associates as we continue to build a first-class salesforce," said co-owner Thomas Jonsson. Rooted in Nordic design, Scandinavian Spaces is quickly expanding across the North American market.

**CAREERS**

## Spellman Brady & Company Hires Jessica Flannery as Office Manager

➤ Jessica Flannery has joined Spellman & Brady in the new role of office manager. In addition to providing support to HR, IT and senior management, she is responsible for organizing, streamlining and coordinating office administrative procedures.



Flannery

Flannery has a Bachelor of Science in leadership/management and a Master of Business Administration from Maryville University. She also is Lean Six Sigma Green Belt for Government certified. As a Green Belt, she has a comprehensive understanding of Lean Six Sigma principles, methodology and tools for identifying and eliminating any unnecessary waste in business processes and procedures. Most recently she provided similar services for the Missouri's Department of Natural Resources and brings 14 years of experience to her new role at Spellman & Brady.

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## REPRESENTATION

### Nevers Industries Picks Aligned Reps for California Rep

➊ U.S. commercial furniture manufacturer Nevers Industries has selected Aligned Reps as its new product line representative firm for northern and southern California and Nevada (not including Las Vegas). The firm offers many services to assist its dealer partners with maximizing profits throughout the project life cycle.

Aligned Reps maintains two regional offices, one in San Mateo and the other in Newport Beach, California. It is managed by principals Mark and Gavin McGregor.

Nevers CEO Chris Evenstad said of the move, “Aligned Reps offers fantastic services for dealers, plus they are perfectly positioned geographically within one of the most important furniture market regions in the U.S.”

## SURFACES

### The Hudson Company Partners with Schotten & Hansen

➋ The Hudson Company, which offers premium hardwoods milled in Pine Plains, New York, has announced a partnership with Schotten & Hansen, a leading, sustainable German producer of wood for flooring, paneling and interiors. The integrated collections will debut this spring and be shown side by side in The Hudson Company’s three showrooms in Manhattan, Ridgefield, Connecticut, and Pine Plains, New York, and at the Architectural Digest show.



By partnering with Schotten & Hansen, The Hudson Company adds new treatments, species, 20 standard colorations and the ability to customize.

Sourced responsibly from a range of European woodlands, including the Black Forest of Germany, Schotten & Hansen uses tree trunks to preserve the natural characteristics of trees, a cue taken from the Japanese methodology of Wabi Sabi, which appreciates Mother Nature's beauty and quirks. Carefully guided by a practice focusing on sustainability and quality control, the collections are hand-finished using organic materials like beeswax, minerals and oils.

“The partnership with Schotten & Hansen came as we share a mutual respect for craftsmanship, artisan-made materials, sustainability and natural beauty,” said Jamie Hammel, president of The Hudson Company. “With the Schotten & Hansen collections, we will be able to provide designers and architects in the U.S. with an even wider range of aesthetic choices for their interiors, from contract projects to residential designs.”

Schotten & Hansen already has been installed in some high-profile projects in the States, including the GOOP store and The Crosby Street and Whitby hotels with Kit Kemp of Firmdale Group. The Hudson Company's marquee projects include The Whitney Museum of American Art, 1 Hotel Central Park and Brooklyn Bridge, The High Line and Aesop Boutiques.

#### ASSOCIATIONS

## ASID Announces 2020 College of Fellows Inductees

➤ The American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) has announced the 2020 inductees to its College of Fellows. They are Rose Mary Botti-Salitsky, program coordinator and faculty at University of Massachusetts Dartmouth; Benjamin Huntington, owner of Veritate Design LLC; and AJ Paron-Wildes, national director of Design Public Group.

This year's Fellows were supposed to be honored March 29 at a luncheon together with ASID's Ones to Watch at The WELL Conference. A future date for the presentation has not been announced yet, but The WELL Conference has been rescheduled to next year.

“Fellowship is the highest achievement by ASID awarded to those in the design community who've shown consistent and selfless contributions to the profession,” said Patrick Schmidt, ASID College of Fellows chair. “Education, wellness design and legislation are hallmarks of the Society, and these designers and educators excel in each category.”

Fellowship or Honorary Fellowship is granted to less than one percent of all ASID members.

Botti-Salitsky has worked in the interior design field for more than 30 years as an academic, design professional, author and advocate. She was at the forefront of the effort to recognize interior design as a profession in Massachusetts and across the country, advocating that interior design-

ers should be registered alongside their architectural and engineering brethren. Botti-Salitsky served as the president of the Massachusetts Interior Design Coalition from 2005-2010; its director of legislative affairs from 2011-2015 and is currently the director of government affairs ASID NE. She is the author of “Programming & Research: Skills and Techniques for Interior Design.”



*Botti-Salitsky*

Botti-Salitsky was a tenured professor and department chair for the Interior Architecture + Design programs at Mount Ida College from 1991 to 2018. After the college’s abrupt closure, she worked to relocate the students and faculty to the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. Launching the only CIDA and ANSAD accredited public program in New England. Botti-Salitsky has spent her career expanding opportunities to underrepresented individuals by promoting accessible education that will contribute to expanding the diversity in the design profession.

For 40 years, Huntington has worked on a wide variety of design projects, including Hamptons houses, ski chateaus, brownstones, Manhattan apartments, offices, an art gallery and several U.S. and international spaces. After nine years with a London-based architectural firm, Huntington moved to New York, founded his design studio and joined ASID. Huntington has trained with some of the great Western Feng Shui masters and has achieved Feng Shui Master status. He has served as an ASID NY Metro Chapter board member and president and is currently the ASID NY Metro Chapter president-elect.



*Huntington*

Huntington has long sought to advocate for the design profession at large. He served as president for the Interior Designers for Legislation in New York (IDLNY), where he oversaw the development of legislative initiatives allied with the ASID NY Metro Chapter. He also worked on the CIDQ Ambassadors Task Force as a co-chair to work locally and in the state capital to support design students’ legislative efforts. In 2018, Huntington received the ASID National Medalist Award.

Paron-Wildes has acquired significant experience working in the design/build industry. She has created and led a multimillion dollar, award-winning design/build firm, developed national programs for ASID, developed and funded design research programs for the University of Minnesota and pioneered various charitable programs. She, and her work, are featured in many television segments on HGTV, PBS and Bob Vila.



*Paron-Wildes*

Paron-Wildes helps clients look to the future when designing their spaces and facilities. She specializes in design implementation and collaboration, environmental initiatives/LEED, WELL certification and change management. Paron-Wildes has also been a design consultant for interiors in health care and education, specifically dealing with autism. From school settings and therapy environments to her most noted work on the building for the MIND Institute in Sacramento, California, Paron-

Wildes has used her skills as a designer and blended them with her experience of raising a son with autism. More than 30 publications have published her projects or articles, including Forbes and Harvard Business Review. Professionally, Paron-Wildes is serving the design industry as the national director for Design Public Group, a technology contract furnishings platform.

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## MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Solomon Coyle is a business management consultancy serving contract office furniture dealers and their primary manufacturing partners through our focus on dealer performance and profitability improvement.

### Position Overview

We seek a proven, hands-on B2B communicator to work full-time in leading our brand advocacy, content strategy, marketing and business development communications, media relations, and communications support for our manufacturer partners. The position also calls for contributing editorially to the firm's proposals and written deliverables.

This is a remote-work position with a minimal amount of required business travel. Solomon Coyle will supply appropriate hardware, software and furniture as needed.

### Major Responsibilities

- Working in consultation with key stakeholders, develop and lead the firm's B2B communications programs and activities.
- Handle the ideation and creation of compelling content including website copy, blog and social media posts, email campaigns, press releases, service/product descriptions, and digital advertising.
- Develop email campaign strategy, planning, scheduling and lists.
- Take end-to-end responsibility for email automation, coordinating the use of internal and external resources as needed.
- Provide day-to-day interface with external resources such as branding, digital media or web development professionals.

### Minimum Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in English, Journalism, Public Relations, Marketing, Digital Media or another relevant discipline.
- Consistent ability for high-quality writing and editing with a strong sense of the audience and their information needs.
- Good working knowledge of email marketing, SEO, web analytics, CRM-based audience segmentation, WordPress content authoring, and basic HTML and CSS.
- Practiced user of Outlook, Teams, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.

### Preferred Additional Qualifications

- B2B writing/editing experience in the office furniture industry.
- Technical experience creating automated email campaigns. Experience with Dynamics 365 and ClickDimensions preferred.
- Experience with Photoshop, InDesign and Illustrator.
- Familiarity with WordPress e-commerce integration.

### Work Environment

We are a small, virtual organization where personal productivity is high and daily effectiveness demands personal accountability and integrity, good interpersonal communications, time management, adherence to deadlines, and commitment to client success.

### Compensation and Benefits

Salary will be set by mutual agreement to reflect relevant experience, competencies, and potential to further the achievement of the company's business objectives. Benefits include flexible work schedule, healthcare, and paid time off.

### Inquiries

The Marketing Communications Specialist position is available immediately. Send statement of interest, résumé, and three writing samples to [gkosovic@solomoncoyle.com](mailto:gkosovic@solomoncoyle.com).

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- 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.

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

#### **Inquiries**

For further information and in order to receive a teaser, and confidential information memorandum that further describes the opportunity please contact bicion investment banking in Colombia:

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