

delve

AUG 2022 V29

IT'S NOT ME, IT'S WE.
**THE STORY OF A
LEADER'S JOURNEY
TO SUCCESS**
AND THOSE WHO HELPED HIM ALONG THE WAY

Cover Photo:
Danny Davis, Ashley Davis Williams, Brian Davis.
Davis Furniture

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A PROFESSION FOR VISIONARIES

Susan Mulholland discusses the unique traits of the design profession that makes it perfect for visionaries to thrive.



DAVIS

COVER STORY: It's Not Me, It's We. The Story of a Leader's Journey to Success and Those Who Helped Him Along the Way.



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editor's note

Dear Reader,

Our industry is full of incredible stories of hard work and innovation across the board. However, in this issue, it is our goal to highlight some of the visionary leaders that have helped bring some of that hard work and innovation into their companies.

These leaders are driven and have unique visions that can disrupt the status quo, and usher in new trends that will shape our industry for years to come.

We invite you to dive in, and reach out to those whose stories inspire you!

Enjoy!

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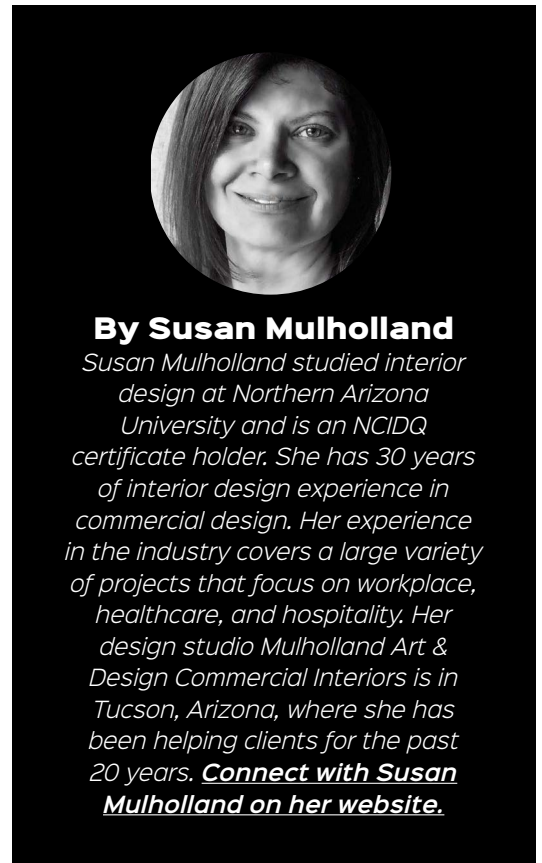
Interior Design: A PROFESSION OF VISIONARIES

I have written before that all interior designers by their nature are visionaries. Creatives that are driven by an unidentifiable force that compels them into a world that is unlike any other. This might seem a little bit like the beginning of a fantasy or science fiction novel, but if you have ever personally experienced it you know, your creative vision becomes you. Your design ideas and vision are always with you. All interior designers are visionaries, whether they know it or not; just by visualizing and reimagining what can be done in any space you are currently in makes you a visionary.

Everyone in this profession, whether you got into it by accident or if you always knew you wanted to be an interior designer, knows that your desire for creation stems from something that is deep within you. Many designers have often said that they were drawn to the world of design at an early age, and it was only after reading, seeing, or hearing about someone else's journey did they finally realize that is their true calling. Personally, I always knew I wanted to work in a field that allowed creativity, that creativity needed to have a purpose.

Interior design was not something that I knew about as a child. I did not realize that the profession existed until I was a senior in high school. This of course were the days before Martha Stewart, HGTV and Pinterest. I did not have these influences around me, what I had was my mother, who stayed at home with her three kids. My mother would get bored and when she did; the furniture would be rearranged, or a room would be a different color when we got home from school. I knew that she was redecorating but I never thought of it as a profession. It was something she did to make her interior space reflect her mood at any given moment.

My mother's home was her inspiration and her canvas. She read the women's magazines that were popular at the time and went shopping at department



By Susan Mulholland

*Susan Mulholland studied interior design at Northern Arizona University and is an NCIDQ certificate holder. She has 30 years of interior design experience in commercial design. Her experience in the industry covers a large variety of projects that focus on workplace, healthcare, and hospitality. Her design studio Mulholland Art & Design Commercial Interiors is in Tucson, Arizona, where she has been helping clients for the past 20 years. **Connect with Susan Mulholland on her website.***

stores that had home furnishings and accessories. She went to paint and hardware stores for paint chips and wallpaper. All of this was out of her need to create a comfortable space for her family. She never realized that her own creative vision was at play, helping her to see the result in her mind's eye before anyone else did. She was the visionary of her own domain. Her home was not going to be boring or lack inspiration. It would be comfortable and functional, but it would also be ever changing like the seasons, a reflection of her own creative vision. My mom was a natural born decorator- someone who had a talent for decoration and never realized it. She never took an art class or studied design. She did not learn any design skills or theories- she just let her creativity flow and she harnessed it by using her ingenuity and practicality that resulted in providing a wonderfully beautiful place to call home.

Artists create special places in which they can release their creative spirit. Usually these spaces are not defined- like an office or spare bedroom. They are not defined by the furniture style or finishes that are used for the flooring or walls. They are defined by what they do for the artist- these are the places that help them to visualize and release their creative spirit- like my mom's house. When I begin thinking of my creative place, the first thing I think about is the number of windows and how much natural light is there? The second thing I think about is what do I see when I look out those windows? What are the colors I see? What is the feeling I get when I am in this space? Am I creative when I enter it, or do I just let that creative spark emerge because I am in my special place? I am not sure, but what I do know is that when I am here my creativity is free to roam and I am able to visualize beautiful interiors without much effort.

Just like artists, interior designers need special places where they can be the most creative. Interior designers do their best work when they are in spaces that allow them to utilize their creative skills. Design Studios are often described as places of controlled chaos. Highly functioning designers usually like to work in spaces that have plenty of large surfaces so they can layout lots of materials that they can then "see" the space take shape. The final design is usually a composite of many ideas that begin in that chaos. Designers who like to have the materials in their hands often are the designers who can be the most inspirational for other designers. Practicality and function are not usually associated with the most creative- unless you are an interior designer.

If you think of your own personal spaces- where do you feel the most creative? Can you define that place that inspires you to use your creative skills more than someplace else? If you do not or cannot think of any place that inspires you, I highly recommend you make it a priority to find it - make it a personal quest to find that creative inspirational place that allows your inner talented and creative self to emerge. Think of this as a way of preserving

your soul. Designers who are either naturally creative or who are highly trained in design are inspired by the world around them. They need places where they can safely collect those objects and ideas that will someday become the inspiration for a beautiful interior space. Without that we will lose that creative spark.

Our profession is filled with people who have lost their creative edge. For whatever reason they lose that part of themselves, whether it is due to stress- being burnt out because of their workload or they are just not doing what inspires them. Designers, artists, and all creative personalities need a spark to help keep that visionary flame alive. Whether that spark comes from being inside or outside a physical place, without inspiration and drive, a design professional is in danger of losing that spark. If we become too focused on the demands and politics that non-creatives put on us during design projects, the spark most definitely will go out. It is important to understand just how fragile it is and that if we are to continue to create beautiful interiors, we need to recognize that. We need to understand what makes us the visionaries and do not become lost in the drudgery of the business of interior design.

Experienced interior designers who have been part of our profession for decades need to be inspiring to those who are just entering it. Younger designers who have limited project experience are not yet able to understand just how fragile their talent and creative vision is. We all need to have a place that nurtures our creative spirit. It takes time to recognize what that special something is; the creative muse is different for everyone. Making it a priority to nurture our creative vision is not a luxury, it is a necessity. Creative visionaries are not usually aware that they are special or that they possess something different than everyone else. They only know that being creative is like breathing- if they do not do it, they are not alive.

When I think about those days when I was younger and my mom was at her creative best, I suddenly understand what interior design really is; it is a profession of highly creative visionaries whose purpose is to elevate the interior space of our built environments to be more than just a place of shelter, but a place that goes beyond the boundaries of what is considered ordinary. The art of a great interior is more than just the color palette or materials, it is the manifestation of a visionary's creative spirit.



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6 MRL FAVORITE PRODUCTS FROM ACROSS THE LIBRARY

The following represent 6 of our favorite products currently on My Resource Library. The products are listed in no particular order. Can you guess the theme?

BOOST GO

CLEAR DESIGN

BOOST Go height-adjustable workstations empower you to take control of your health and productivity through improved ergonomics and flexible options. These workstations are fast, smooth, and responsive, making the transition between sitting and standing effortless.



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By Michelle Warren

Michelle Warren is President of Catalyst Consulting Group, a firm specializing in providing strategic solutions to the commercial furniture industry to enhance their sales, positioning, and distribution.

With 25 years of industry experience on the dealer and manufacturer side of the industry, Michelle has been recognized as an innovator in selling to the Federal Government, State/ Local Government, Higher Education and Cooperative Purchasing. Her expertise includes: sales strategies, strategic planning, 3-5 year road mapping, targeted marketing plans, distribution development, hiring reps, and training for reps and/or dealers.

Michelle is known as a "serial networker" in the furniture industry and enjoys meeting people and making connections happen. If you're interested in connecting - reach out at: Michelle@strategic-catalyst.com, connect on LinkedIn or visit

www.strategic-catalyst.com to learn more about her work.



Mythbusting in the Public Sector

MYTH: GSA ONLY PURCHASES PRODUCTS MADE IN THE US

While at NeoCon, I had the privilege to speak with many new contacts. I heard a lot of myths regarding selling to Federal. On the one hand, this is always heartbreaking to me. On the other hand, considering this series, it provided me with a lot of content we can explore together! My walk of the show was very limited and honestly not well planned after seeing the manufacturers I knew. I literally grabbed a friend, and we walked the 3rd floor, 10th floor, and 11th floor and stopped anywhere that looked interesting. This led us into a lot of great showrooms of companies we had never heard of before and a lot of products that were made outside of the US. This leads us to the myth about this issue: **GSA only buys products made in the US.**

Before we can 100% dive into this myth, I feel the need to dig into three specific government terms (which, of course, have acronyms!!!)

1. Trade Agreements Act (TAA): "The Trade Agreements Act (TAA) of 1979 was enacted to foster fair and open international trade. Under TAA, the products and/or services offered on your GSA Schedule contract are required to be only U.S. made or TAA designated country end products." A product that meets TAA is produced or substantially transformed in what GSA refers to as "Designated Countries." GSA's site details TAA and also links to a TAA Compliant Countries Listing <https://gsaschedule.com/reporting-compliance/trade-agreements-act/>

2. Buy American Act (BAA): Originally created in 1933, we have heard this more and more in the past six years as both President Trump and President Biden have announced executive orders to increase government spending with US companies. A general overview of what constitutes products that meet BAA is that they are Made in the US, and 55%+ (this percentage is something that will be increasing) of the cost of components are made in the US.

3. Buy America Act: This applies to purchases by the government of iron and steel and explicitly applies to infrastructure, not furniture.

Now that we are all on the same page with TAA and BAA let's dig into the myth that "GSA only buys products made in the US." I am not a lawyer, but I will present the information as best as possible, based on the recent discussions and calls I have been on. If you have specific questions, I recommend a good GSA lawyer or contract administration consultant to work with.

When a federal agency buys on a GSA contract, the TAA trumps the BAA because TAA is part of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and is legislation that supersedes an executive order. This does not mean that a Contracting Officer (CO) will not check the box for BAA, but legally TAA is what applies. This means any products that meet the TAA requirements- again, 120+/- countries- can be presented as a part of the solution to meet the RFP specifications. This does not mean the CO will not enforce BAA for the bid response, and then it is up to you whether you: 1. Want to respond or 2. Want to protest it after the award.

I do not have exact numbers, but everyone I asked agrees that about 60% of furniture is bought on GSA contract leaving about 40% to be purchased open market, below the micro-purchase threshold, as a set-aside, by a GC, etc. So, how do TAA and BAA work in those purchases? If the CO states that BAA applies, then it most definitely does. I recommend asking the CO if they would consider TAA products in the response and if they would give it any consideration if it were substantially less than other bids. If you do not ask, you can respond with TAA products and let the CO know that this is the solution you've chosen - you could actually win if the TAA products are substantially less than the BAA products. Still, you could also be wasting your time responding to the RFP, so you must evaluate if it is worth your time.

With all of the talk in the media about buying American and creating jobs in the US, I can definitely see why someone may think that GSA only buys products made in the US, but this is absolutely false.

If you have something you often hear that you know is a myth, and you want me to explore the topic, or maybe you have something you've heard, and you're not sure if it is a myth or not, please reach out, and we can explore it together in an upcoming article.





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THE STORY OF A LEADER'S JOURNEY TO SUCCESS AND THOSE WHO HELPED HIM ALONG THE WAY

Since becoming president of Davis Furniture Industries in 1996, Danny Davis has helped transform his family's furniture company into one of the most respected, design-driven contract furniture manufacturers. Choosing to place design at the center of every initiative is an ambitious vision, but it's been a goal that Danny has spent much of his career working towards. Alongside this vision, he has built a management team and company culture based on teamwork, problem-solving and pride in their craft. Danny is regarded for his extensive and impactful career; however, he remains humble, approachable and caring to everyone he interacts with.

Throughout Danny's career, the ability to forge deep, meaningful relationships with others has helped shape him as a design leader and visionary. Not only can much of Davis Furniture's success be traced back to him and the team he helped build, but he has become the leader he is today because of the lessons he's learned working at Davis Furniture. Like two interconnected components working together for the company's greater good, it is difficult to tell Danny's story

without sharing the history of his family's company and those that helped him along the way.

"Alongside our product designs, our unique company culture is one of our company's greatest assets. Yes, I've helped lead Davis Furniture, but Davis Furniture's culture is established through our leadership team and their values. So, finding the right people with values that align with our company is very important to me. If it were just one person trying to build the company's culture, it would be a disaster. It takes all our management team to create and maintain what we have."

- Danny Davis, President, Davis Furniture

DAVIS FURNITURE

It is no surprise that Danny, being the third generation at the company, began his career journey in his childhood by "working" alongside other employees in the Davis woodshop. While these craftsmen were manufacturing wood-framed seating and tables for colleges and universities, Danny was beside them, chiseling away at small projects that satisfied his youthful desire for creativity and design. As he grew, Danny tagged alongside his father, John T. Davis Jr., on weekend furniture deliveries in the company's box truck, which took the pair up and down the east coast. Through these early experiences and more, Danny's endearing connection and devotion to Davis Furniture and its employees was unquestionably solidified. In fact, to this day, Danny still considers the company's employees an extension of his family.

"My family is only a part of Davis' heritage. I think it's a tribute to my father's leadership and our company's legacy to see our multi-generational staff. Some have worked here for 40+ years and will eventually retire from here. And like me, many second, third and fourth generations have come to Davis. It really shows the strength of our family-like culture."

- Brian Davis, Product Development, Davis Furniture

When it was time for Danny to attend university, he was accepted into North Carolina State's Furniture Manufacturing and Management program, which further educated him about engineering, leadership and the dynamics of the industry. During his summer breaks, Danny would return to his family's company and continue to do whatever it took to aid in its growth. One summer, he rolled up his sleeves alongside a local crew of bricklayers as they laid masonry blocks to construct Davis' second plant, which expanded the company's product offering into desks and credenzas.

One week after he graduated from NC State, Danny officially started his tenure at the company in early 1976. Having been well versed in the company's processes and heritage, his initial responsibility was managing the woodworking plant. This task was suitable for Danny, as it was the same facility he had grown up within. He now worked alongside many of the same craftsmen who had aided and guided him in his youth. More than ever, Danny recognized the importance of loyalty and upholding longstanding relationships. This keen awareness would shape his business practices as he grew his role in the company.

Not long after the construction of Davis' Plant 2, certain supply chain issues began to arise for the company. Danny and his team were tasked with solving these challenges involving sourcing integral raw materials and component parts. Fur



Danny Davis standing with two longstanding team members, John Covington and Rick Perryman.



The third and fourth generations of leadership at Davis Furniture. Left to right: Danny Davis, Ashley Davis Williams, Brian Davis.



Davis Furniture's employees are seen working on Plant 2's casegoods manufacturing line during the late 1970s.

**DAVIS
FURNITURE**

thering their understanding of these various manufacturing processes and techniques allowed them to produce many of these materials and components in-house. This decision led to the company's construction of two additional facilities; the first was devoted to manufacturing wood veneer panels, and the second was a metal fabrication plant. This solution has been recognized as a pivotal strategy for the organization as it steadily became more vertically integrated with its manufacturing and eventually within its product development practices. This can-do, resourceful strategy is something Danny continues to practice throughout the organization.

During the 1980s, as the contract furniture industry began to steadily shift from traditional wood-framed furniture to a more modern, sophisticated aesthetic, Davis Furniture started to partner with outside designers and manufacturers in the United States and Europe. Its goal was to help transition the company's product offering into something more on trend with the changing era. At this time, Danny combined his manufacturing processes and materiality expertise with his engineering education. By helping lead the product development process, Danny became the liaison between the designers, suppliers and Davis Furniture.

A chance encounter with Neils Risom, the brother of esteemed Danish American furniture designer, Jens Risom, began a lasting connection with European manufacturers and suppliers. Niels, also a furniture designer by trade, began consulting with Danny on identifying and introducing Davis Furniture to the European circuit of manufacturers so they could license European designs and then market and manufacture them in the US. This strategy allowed Davis to not only provide vogue European designs to the demanding US market, but also enabled the manufacturer to develop products more quickly than ever before.

"At this point, we discovered that we could develop products faster by licensing them than completely developing them ourselves because we were getting products that - for the most part - already had the kinks worked out of them. All we needed to do was figure out how to make them in the US, which was something that we knew we could do."

- Danny Davis

After a few years of successfully licensing these modern, European designs, the opportunity to develop an executive chair with the German designer, Burkhard Vogtherr, led Danny to create a direct relationship with the furniture designer as well as the European suppliers and product engineers needed to complete the project. The result was the Motion Chair. An immediate success, Motion became



Showcasing Davis Furniture's 1970s product offering which included wood-framed chairs, tables and desks.



Established in the 1980s, Davis Furniture's Plant 3 continues to manufacture metal components today.



Burkhard Vogtherr and Danny Davis meeting in Europe in the 1980s.

**DAVIS
FURNITURE**

recognized for its user comfort, style and versatility and remained in production for the next 20+ years.

“At that point, the Motion Chair was our biggest product development. We probably didn't have a million dollars, but we spent a million on the tooling and development of that chair. It was a big risk, but that project got us started in the mechanism development process while learning to work with engineers and sourcing parts directly with European suppliers. It was a game changer for our company.”

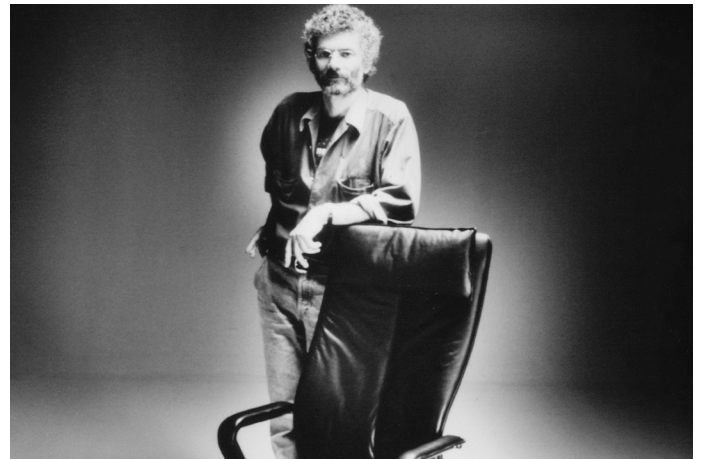
- Danny Davis

Following the Motion Chair, the strategic shift of working to create designs directly with European designers continued to grow and mature. Through attending trade shows in Europe, Danny and his development team continued to meet new designers, manufacturers and suppliers. Danny's ability to build long-term relationships has earned him the chance to develop products with some of the world's most talented designers, including Wolfgang C. R. Mezger, jehs+laub, Jonathan Prestwich, Justus Kolberg, LucidiPevere, Mario Ferrarini, Sebastian Herkner and many others.

“When walking through a trade show with Danny, we only have to take a few steps before someone recognizes him and wants to chat. He's created these meaningful relationships over the years; even if we've never done a project with them, he's interested in hearing what they have to say and seeing their latest designs.” – Rob Easton, Davis Furniture's VP of Design and Product Development

About ten years ago, Danny was presented with an exciting opportunity to license Davis Furniture's products to interested European manufacturers. Ever since, Davis has offered their designs to Europe, representing a key aspect of the company's path to success and international acclaim.

“It took a decade or so for us to mature in our product development before a European manufacturer even thought about licensing a product from us. When we started traveling overseas, they were leaps and bounds ahead of us, but we



Burkhard Vogtherr and the Motion Chair, released in collaboration with Davis Furniture.



Danny Davis with the German design duo, jehs+laub at one of the Davis facilities in High Point, NC.



Danny Davis introduced the company's latest Best of NeoCon winner, Zeno by Wolfgang C.R. Mezger, at the 1997 NeoCon..

DAVIS FURNITURE

were able to observe, forge relationships and learn from them. Now we've made it an easy decision for these companies to want to offer our products in their line – a nice design, created by a world-renowned designer and manufactured with components from the best international suppliers. Why wouldn't they want that?" – Danny Davis

Since helping transform his family's company from a small local furniture company to an internationally influential organization, Danny's children Ashley and Brian, the fourth generation of the Davis family, joined the organization's leadership in the early 2000s. With their help and support, Davis Furniture recently opened a new state-of-the-art corporate headquarters in 2021. This new facility, in the center of Davis' nine-building campus, has become a symbol of the company's bright future. Furthermore, it showcases the company's dedication and investment in the local community.

"We were born and raised here, so we have an allegiance to the city of High Point, North Carolina, and the greater community that it houses. We want our family's company to be a good steward to the local community, which is why it is so important for us and our organization to be involved and give back." – Ashley Davis Williams, Director of Textile Programs and Events, Davis Furniture

Since its humble beginnings in 1944, Davis Furniture has grown to an organization of over 270 employees. In an era when average employee retention stands at a few years, at best, Davis Furniture is proud to have many who have remained employed at the company for decades. Some have worked at the manufacturer for their whole careers, and many work alongside their family members, neighbors and friends. Danny has been a great example to the organization as a president who leads by example. Through countless scenarios, he has shown that he is willing to do whatever it takes for the betterment of his organization and staff. Their response is easily seen through their hard work and dedication to investing in the company's success.

"Our admiration for Danny is a direct result of his actions and work ethic within our organization. He's never asked anyone to do something he wasn't willing to do. He is the first one to arrive and the last to leave. Nobody works harder than Danny. He runs his business just as his father and grandfather ran it, with honesty, integrity and hard work."
– Jeffrey Rosner, VP of Sales, Davis Furniture



Danny Davis, Jonathan Prestwich and Burkhard Vogtherr critique the latest M75 chair prototype. Released in 2019, M75 is now licensed to Swiss manufacturer, Girsberger for the European market.



The Davis Family at the grand opening of their Corporate Headquarters in High Point, NC.



Danny Davis with two longstanding employees, Wanda Moore and Almeda "Cricket" Alley, both have been with Davis Furniture for 41 and 47 years respectively.

**PROJECT SPOTLIGHT
WITH SPEC**



PROJECT SPOTLIGHT WITH SPEC:

Colorful Employee-Centric Design

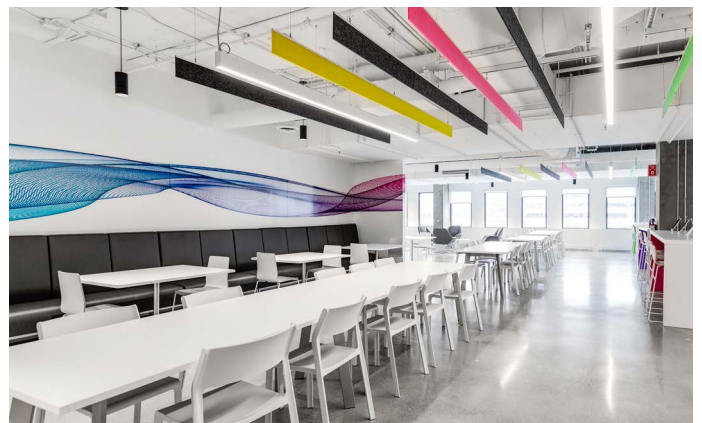
A Montreal, Canada-based Business Process Outsourcing company recently outfitted its offices with a colorful design that gives employees plenty of space to meet, collaborate, or catch up on work.

Spec products are found throughout the modern interior, including the meeting rooms, cafeteria, boardroom, and lounge area.

The design directive on this project heavily relied on using color to both accentuate and segment areas and create a stylish and comfortable employee-centric workplace. With an abundance of standard finishes and furniture designs to meet the customer's colorful vision, Spec was at the top of the suppliers' list for the project.

The interior achieves an open, airy feel by incorporating glass walls into the design. Stripes of bright colors are applied to the glass walls in the meeting rooms to add bold interest and visual separation between spaces. When designing the boardroom, Spec was challenged with manufacturing a table to accommodate the client's need for

built-in power, data, and media. [Tailgate](#) with plinth bases was an obvious choice with its dedicated power trough that spans the center of the table. Built-in microphones required custom cut-outs on both sides of the power trough. Narrow [EndZone](#) tables at standing height fit along the glass walls, creating a space for guest speakers and late-joiners to comfortably wait on the sidelines during meetings. This space also provides ample room for food and beverage hosting.



PROJECT SPOTLIGHT WITH SPEC

Tailgate was selected for other meeting spaces as well. With a double-column Manhattan base, this collaborative table's robust power trough and wire management offer easy connectivity for video conference calls. The bullet-shaped top provides all meeting participants with a view of the monitor. Again, color makes a substantial impact in this office space, with bold paint applied to the walls in each room.

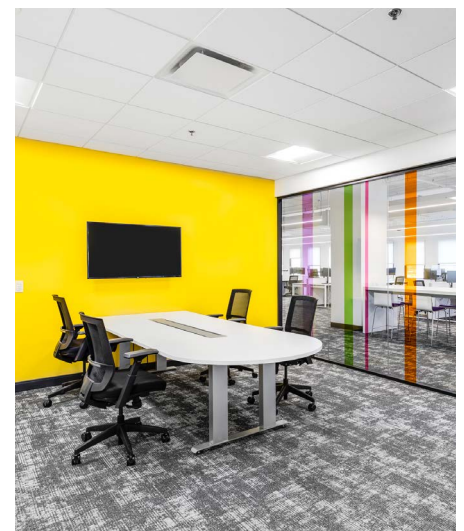
The new open-plan lounge offers plenty of room to disconnect and reconnect with coworkers and clients or catch up on work. The soft curves of Tailor Bench are used to create inspiring ancillary seating that has a residential feel with its upholstered seats. Chosen from 76 standard Spectone metal colors, bright blue, orange, green, and pink are featured on the bench frames to continue with the color design element used throughout the office.

As employees transition back to the office, designers are focusing on building spaces that foster relationship-building and cafeteria spaces are no exception. This large,

open-plan cafeteria achieves just that through varied dining heights, tech-ready spaces, ample seats, and abundant natural light. Tailor Booth is specified in banquet-style midback seating as a cushioned dining or working area. Dining height Parkdale tables stretch the room length, creating an old-school dining hall vibe. Parkdale's angled legs allow more room for chairs to fit at the table ends. EndZone tables and Jazzy chairs round out the cafeteria and act as a touchdown tech space. EndZone's interior panels are finished in bright laminate colors to match the vibrant accent colors of the acoustic panels. In contrast, Jazzy dining height stools are all white for a clean, crisp look that balances the bright tones.

This large-scale project put thoughtful design at the forefront to give employees a wide selection of spaces to support various types of work—all without compromising style. Whether in a conference call, board meeting, or grabbing a bite in the cafeteria, this office will inspire employees with its one-of-a-kind design.

The new open-plan lounge offers plenty of room to disconnect and reconnect with coworkers and clients or catch up on work.



**A VISIONARY LEGACY
WITH KIMBALL INTERNATIONAL**

Kimball International - Historic Board of Directors



A HISTORY OF VISIONARY LEADERSHIP WITH KIMBALL INTERNATIONAL

As makers — not just furniture makers — Kimball International's entrepreneurial spirit guides us to discover what's next and bring it beautifully to life. We know that the place we work is more than just windows and walls. It's so much more.

Our story started in 1950 as an upstart company with a vision to be more. That vision became the foundation that guides us today and inspires the culture we cultivate. With an ambitious drive to create unique chapters throughout our history and dare to find new and relative solutions, our story continues to evolve.

Kimball International was founded in Jasper, Indiana, a town bustling with woodworkers. Driven by the vision of our founder, Arnold Habig, a man who found his start as a

janitor in a local manufacturing facility. But, he dreamed of so much more. His entrepreneurial spirit led him to start a business, seek growth, establish a brand, and create future opportunities for his employees

After 20 years within the wood industry, from janitor and assistant bookkeeper to plant manager and a member of the Board of Directors, Mr. Habig dreamed even bigger. In 1950, Mr. Habig purchased 51% of the Midwest Manufacturing Company, later to be renamed the Jasper Corporation. As the Manager, Director, and President, Mr. Habig lead this company to great growth. This contract manufacturer of occasional tables provided the core capabilities that launched us into manufacturing television cabinets and hi-fi stereo phonograph cabinets. As always, Mr. Habig looked to the horizon and seized opportunities. This new phenom

A VISIONARY LEGACY WITH KIMBALL INTERNATIONAL

enon, called television, turned into a great opportunity to showcase the capabilities of the company and craftsmanship of its people.

With an eye to growing the company, Mr. Habig began looking for a product or company to acquire which could provide more production stability, increase diversity, and create even more growth potential – a product that married the demands of the market with the skills of our people. With his love of sustainable forestry, wood craftsmanship, and maximizing manufacturing capacity, it seemed like a harmonious match.

In 1959, Mr. Habig purchased the W.W. Kimball Company. Founded in 1857, Kimball was one of the largest manufacturing operations in the world. From jazz halls to living rooms, the Kimball name brought music to the millions, earning our hallmarks of excellence and beauty, craftsmanship and quality.

During the 1960s and 1970s, we manufactured approximately 100,000 pianos and organs a year. Based on the quality reputation associated with the Kimball name, this success fueled the growth of the Jasper Corporation and Mr. Habig continued with his dreams of creating even more. For the organ portion of the Kimball brand, Kimball Electronics Manufacturing Company was developed to produce organ components for the home entertainment market. Under Mr. Habig's direction, the piano and organ company was rejuvenated and, once again, began to grow.

In 1970, the company, fueled by the acquisition of a wood cabinet manufacturer, decided to manufacture and market office furniture under the Kimball brand name. This strategic decision profoundly affected the company's future. Upon its introduction, the Kimball office furniture brand quickly achieved success in the marketplace, building a reputation for fine craftsmanship and high-quality products in that market.

In July 1974, the Jasper Corporation changed its name to Kimball International and in 1980 once again expanded to form National Office Furniture. This new creation targeted the larger mid-market segment of the office furniture



market and offered customers better value with shorter lead times. In 1985, Kimball International grew into the hospitality market. Kimball Hospitality is a premier supplier of custom-designed, specialty furnishings for hotels, luxury properties, and resort destinations worldwide.

Nurturing what makes us strong will always be our way. Mr. Habig instilled that in our company through a set of guiding principles and purpose that carries through each and every decision that is made today. We were made to seize the moment.

Mr. Habig was an innovative entrepreneur with a firm belief that if you take care of your employees, they will take care of the customer. He attracted the best manufacturing talent in the area by offering uncommon benefits to experienced woodworkers, from major medical insurance and an incentive pay system to a profit sharing retirement plan. He instilled a culture of trust and believed that employees should share in the financial success of the company. A scholarship program, started in 1963 that still remains today, has helped many Kimball International employees' children obtain a college education. He also created longstanding traditions like annual family picnics and Christmas parties for the children of employees.

Kimball International has a tremendous history as an environmentally conscious company. The ideas of conservation and sustainability, of sensitivity toward our environment, were deeply ingrained in our culture by Mr. Habig. Over time, we've made continual progress as a responsible

**A VISIONARY LEGACY
WITH KIMBALL INTERNATIONAL**



steward of resources and an agent of sustainable change in our industry. In fact, Kimball International reached a point of owning over 27,000 acres of hardwood timberlands and continues the commitment to not only meeting current environmental and social standards, but also setting new ones.

Prior to his death in 1999 at age 91, reminiscing about his experience in the world of business, Mr. Habig did not concentrate solely on sales made or profits earned, but on what his company had done for its employees and the community. "A lot of others like to take but not give," said Habig. "To be successful, to have a good community, you have to want to give rather than take." To this day, all Kimball International employees receive a birthday card that includes two \$2 bills. Mr. Habig believed these bills were unique and memorable and he began giving them to employees as a

birthday treat. This is a tradition that continues over 70 years after its inception as an enduring connection to Mr. Habig's legacy. He also established the Kimball International Habig Foundation as the giving arm of the company. This foundation, which still continues today, donates to charitable causes in the communities where we operate and to broader causes that align to our values and purpose.

From woodworking to pianos, electronics to furniture, Mr. Habig saw opportunity where others did not. That's why we recognize the resourceful, promote the perceptive, and celebrate those who not only conquer challenges, but embrace them. In a world of constant change, we must be open to opportunity and evolve to meet new needs. While our founder's ambition made us who we are, it's now our time to Dare to be Makers of Possibility.



MAYER FABRICS CELEBRATES MILESTONE 125TH ANNIVERSARY



Mayer Fabrics, a family-owned textile company serving the interior design community since 1897 is celebrating their 125th anniversary. Mayer Fabrics has a rich history that spans longer than most in its industry.

Beginning in 1897, George L. Paetz started the Paetz Company to fill a need for a local product supplier to manufacturers of custom designed buggies and repair. In the early 1900s, the company transitioned to a supplier of fabrics, vinyl, and upholstery for residential applications.

A new division of the Paetz Company, Mayer Fabrics, was created in 1988 to offer the contract market highly durable fabrics at price points that were previously unavailable. The success of the original offering led to dynamic partnerships with a select handful of mills and ultimately expansion into the hospitality and healthcare markets.

In January 2001, Mayer Fabrics acquired Lucia Cassa Textiles and the Lucia Cassa Convergence Collection marked a commitment to product attractiveness in both design and price. Mayer became one of the first UPS Carbon Neutral shipment companies in 2010 and by 2011, Mayer was a Carbon Neutral certified company. Most of Mayer Fabrics' woven products became Greenguard certified in 2010, including panel fabrics, privacy curtains and seating upholstery. In 2020, to support material demand during the Covid-19 crisis, Mayer temporarily shifted product focus to PPE textiles.

"We could not have reached this milestone without everyone that has loved and supported our company in the past

125 years. It is humbling to have the 4th and 5th generations managing the business today", said Rob Mayer, President & Co-Owner of Mayer Fabrics. "We believe those that have come before us would be proud of the company that has developed from the corner of a horse stable in August of 1897. Throughout this year we want to celebrate and thank everyone who has made Mayer the company it is today. To our associates, customers, partners, and anyone who has touched the Mayer brand, we thank you and we look forward to what lies ahead."

Today Mayer Fabrics' operations spans the U.S, Canada, Mexico, and internationally. Their corporate headquarters, located in Indianapolis, IN acts as their main distribution point for products and office personnel. As their product offerings have grown so has their passion for the industry and the commitment to its customers and employees.

"Not a week goes by that a customer doesn't say to me, you have exceeded my expectations more than anyone else has ever done", stated Jen Fallis, Mayer's Sales Service Manager. "And I always say, that's what we do, that's what we do at Mayer Fabrics. And it's true. It's what we have done for 125 years and it's what we will continue to do for the next 125 years."

For more information on Mayer Fabrics and their products please visit mayerfabrics.com.

MAYER FABRICS
Celebrating **125** Years



Steve Rozeboom, Chairman & Owner of Special T

Many great companies are born from a wild idea and someone with a whatever-it-takes attitude. Steve Rozeboom is no exception to that rule. Steve is currently the Chairman and Owner of Special-T, a family-owned business, the largest table-only manufacturer in the United States. Organically growing the company through multiple recessions and obstacles, perhaps Steve's greatest example of leadership was spearheading the way for Special-T to survive, and even thrive, during the pandemic. But there's also a deeper reason why the success of Special-T is so important to the Rozeboom family.

Special-T has supplied tables and bases to the Contract Furniture Industry for almost 25 years, but what many people don't know is that we also build community and rebuild lives of individuals in need, one table at a time. Special-T offers jobs and support to those with barriers to employment through our Workplace Recovery Program. This program is the hidden heart and soul behind what we do at Special-T

because, as Steve himself would say, "I was one of them." After Steve began his journey with recovery, he realized how many obstacles and roadblocks exist for people in recovery with when trying to rebuild their lives, and he wanted to help.

Throughout the history of the company, Steve has strategically and intuitively made the right moves at the right time. Special-T began as a bases-only company offering high quality yet affordable bases, with an emphasis on speed and service to make life easier for the dealers. (Being the son of a former furniture dealer, Steve learned at an early age about the stressors most dealers face.) As the business grew, we expanded our offering to include tabletops. From there, we added government purchasing contracts, power & data accessories, wire management options, multiple heights, and even added an on-site fabrication option with full powder coating capabilities. Behind each decision was the vision of growing the company to create more opportunities for those with barriers to employment.

A COMMON VISION WITH SPECIAL T

Then in 2020, the world as we knew it stopped and the new COVID-era began. Within a matter of days, dealerships across the entire country were laying off hundreds of employees, orders stopped being submitted, and lockdowns began forcing unforeseen amounts of people to work from home. Immediately, Steve called the leadership at Special-T into a room and said one thing: "We'll do whatever it takes, but we are not letting one single employee go." Because of Steve's vision, we didn't.

The "S-Curve Pattern of Innovation" occurs whenever a product or business model reaches its potential and therefore, the time comes to either innovate or deteriorate. This shift is often characterized by unprecedented risks, untested product offerings, or even fundamentally altering a business practice. That type of innovation is what Steve consistently does best. So when COVID crippled our industry, Special-T began offering new products that not only expanded our reach beyond Contract Furniture but also that shifted our transactional business into large-project specified business. We went from selling tables and bases, to selling medical-grade Air Purifiers and Plexiglass Privacy Screens – something all of us had no prior experience or expertise selling.

Steve wanted our employees, and our customer, to be safe and feel safe when coming back to work. Initially, Steve purchased a comprehensive set of vitamins for every employee with direct contact information for a doctor they could call anytime day or night for help or questions about a COVID-19 diagnosis. Next, he created this idea of "3 Pillars of Safe-T." (1) – Stop it from entering the building with our Clear-2 Symptom Monitoring App. (2) – Prevent it from spreading from person to person by installing Plexiglass or Polycarbonate screens between workstations or desk. (3) – Capture and kill it with air purification in between workstations to constantly clean the air around employees and keep them safe. Steve and the leadership of Special-T worked tirelessly during the early days of COVID to find the right solutions for each of these ideas. To this day, Steve will not put his name behind a product that he would not use for himself or his family. Then he decided that we should patent this idea and sell these products to protect the positions of our workforce. Because of his background in easing the stressors of dealers, Steve was adamant that each solution had to be affordable, but also more effective than anything else in the consumer market.

From March of 2020 to December of 2021, Special-T sold over 6 million screens all over the United States with countless air purifiers while our table business was put on the backburner. All our employees shifted seemingly overnight from being table experts to air purification and plexiglass authorities. Steve challenged the entire company to launch all three of those new products lines within a matter of weeks – a process that usually takes much longer. We all felt empowered and emboldened to give our best effort for Special-T because Steve has given so much for us.

"Steve Rozeboom is a perfect example of a visionary and how impactful some "wild ideas" can be – big or small. When I graduated with my Bachelor's, I basically still had no idea what I wanted to do. All I knew was that I wanted to help people and I wanted to work for someone and a company that was honest and had good intentions. Taking the first job I got I ended up at Special-T and haven't looked back ever since. Working for Steve and Special-T is beyond rewarding. I know that every day, my effort is directly translated into helping someone else. Because of Steve's leadership and innovation, it is a privilege to come to work every day. Steve Rozeboom fully exemplifies what it means to be a servant-leader and proves that it doesn't require power, fame, or fortune to make a real difference in the world around us. "

**- Kristen McVey,
Project Manager / Special-T**





ZGO TECHNOLOGIES AND WORKSPACE TECHNOLOGY

Zgo Technologies is reinventing how we work with technology through a new design discipline called Workspace Technology. Workspace Technology provides a more effective use of technology, computer and required devices, in the workstation. The goal is to improve user performance and strongly emphasizes the universal need to accommodate every employee and any equipment that will be used at the workstation now and into the future.

The office landscape has changed and the need for a universal workstation design that supports all employees and the equipment they require has never been greater.

We still completely rely on our technology to perform our jobs, but the equipment can differ greatly from employee

to employee. In addition, the new hybrid work model has us sharing desks more than ever. Also, with increased turnover in this business climate, today's desk design likely must accommodate new employees that have yet to be hired along with the equipment they require.

Today's technology-dependent jobs place significant importance on the workstation to optimize the work experience for performance. The speed in which we can personalize the desk to our physical needs and the ease in which we can accomplish required tasks dictates the effectiveness of the workstation.

Over the last few years, the focus on technology for performance has led the workstation to become a worktool

ZGO TECHNOLOGIES AND WORKSPACE TECHNOLOGIES

specifically for the use of technology. But now, the work environment must also be flexible, scalable, and future proof to accommodate all that will use it.

Workspace Technology goes beyond applied ergonomics, though ergonomics is clearly an integral part of it. But whereas ergonomics itself focuses essentially on the human body in terms of working postures and the comfort, health, and well-being of people, Workspace Technologies is performance-based and focuses on the entirety of the user experience with respect to technology utilization. In doing so, it bridges the gap between furniture and technology.

Workspace Technology not only reduces the time taken to get to work in the most optimal way, but it provides all the workspace that is required, eliminates any cable clutter, and provides immediate access to all charging power, regardless of the device. It makes the desk versatile and scalable to accommodate any user's physical needs along with their technology requirements, whether working with a notebook, PC, or multiple monitors.

Workspace Technology also accommodates recent changes in workplace safety requirements. It ensures that the desktop is sanitized daily for the protection of employees to prevent them from exposure to harmful viruses. This eliminates the cost and disruption of viral outbreaks that can send entire departments home. It also gives employees the peace of mind they need to work without the fear of getting sick and potentially passing a potentially dangerous virus to their families.

Workspace Technology additionally customizes the workstation design to accommodate any environment or application in a variety of beneficial ways. Customization can include signage or any form of workstation labeling, promote the company's brand for internal or external branding, or they can be used to compliment any design accent or graphic and integrate into the overall office design scheme; all while preventing the worktools from appearing as a visual afterthought.



There are 5 specific requirements to implementing the Workspace Technology Design Methodology:

1) Instantly personalize the desk to the employees' physical characteristics

Basic ergonomic principle dictates that employees require different monitor placement based on their various heights and eyesight characteristics. Thus, wherever there is shared desking, it is imperative that the monitor be easily adjustable both in height and depth for comfortable, unstrained, and effective viewing for all users of any desk.

But Workspace Technology also requires a scalability to accommodate whatever technology with which the employees work. This not only includes multiple monitors of varying sizes (up to 49") but also includes notebooks or even tablets, which may be used as secondary displays, that need to be adjusted concurrently with the main monitor display(s).

As personal videoconferencing becomes routine, notebooks, with cameras, must be adjusted to align with people's faces. During these meetings, we key, take notes, lean back, etc., An easily adjustable notebook support with handle will align with the other monitor(s) while promoting easier positioning and increased comfort.

As the different employees that use the workstation work with different equipment, Workspace Technology requires that every employee, regardless of size or equipment, can instantly personalize the desk to their individual performance requirements.



Optionally, a handle available for every monitor will make the adjustment easier and more intuitive. The ability to grasp the handle and instantly position the monitor for optimal comfort without even thinking about it, is beneficial in getting to work quickly and efficiently.

2) Provide ample and uncluttered useable workspace for effective task completion

Our desktops are typically sufficient in size, but often they are cluttered with cables making a fair amount of workspace unusable. This creates a disorganized, messy, unsightly work area, in which the user must work around the limited usable workspace.

With insufficient workspace, we cram our desktop requirements into the limited space in front of us. It is uncomfortable, takes time to “create” space to work, requires straining to access space outside of the primary reach zone, and productivity suffers. Insufficient workspace is inefficient, unproductive, and unnecessary.

A completely empty desktop, free from any cables or other clutter, provides the freedom to work in the best possible way for our jobs. This is a mandatory element of Workspace Technology.

A typical desk with 2 monitors has 24' of cable (two 6' power and monitor cables), mostly cluttered around the docking

station. The dock, which all cables plug into, is often placed in the center of the desk. The process of eliminating cable clutter starts with a good monitor arm, which should completely conceal the cables from monitor(s) to base. Monitor Arms that simply “manage” the cables in clips provide a messy appearance that detracts from the aesthetics of the station.

After hiding all monitor cables through the Monitor Arm, an integrated docking station at the base of the monitor arm will allow the cables to extend downward behind the desk: the power cables to a wall outlet and the monitor cables plug into the rear of the dock.

The dock is the connection point for all cables. Affixing it at the base of the arm, at the rear of the desk, allows all excess cables to fall directly behind the desk and not accumulate at the center of the desktop, which creates clutter and limits usable workspace.

3) Provide Instantly Accessible Charging Power for all Devices

Today's job requires numerous devices, which have different charging connections. Some charge with AC outlets, some with USB-A and some with USB-C. To universally accommodate any employee working with any equipment, the workstation must accommodate these 3 charging ports in an instantly accessible position on the desktop.

A COMMON VISION WITH SPECIAL T

Based on job description and personal preferences, most companies are supporting employees who are using different types and ages of notebooks. Therefore, the workstation must also accommodate this so any user can instantly connect.

Thus, a universal integrated docking station and desktop charging modules with AC outlets, USB-A and USB-C positioned within an arm's reach of the employee is a critical element of Workspace Technology.

4) Daily Sanitation

The pandemic has changed workplace safety requirements. The Coronavirus is still spreading and sending employees home and new viruses, such as Monkeypox, are increasing in frequency. OSHA requires that employers provide a safe work environment. Employees with any type of virus can exhale infected droplets onto the surface, which can live on the surface for up to 3 days. With hybrid work and shared desking, others can inadvertently touch these infected droplets and become infected.

To prevent this, and the potential outbreak that can stem from it, desktops need to be sanitized every day. This can be done with UVC light, which disinfects the desktop every night to ensure a sanitized and virus-free workstation the next day. Daily sanitation will prevent potentially costly and disruptive outbreaks in the office and provide employees with the peace of mind of a safe work environment. This will allow them to be as effective as possible without fear of getting sick or passing a harmful virus on to their families.

5) Design Customization

Monitor Arms often appear as mechanical devices that jut up from each station and detract from the aesthetics of the workstation and overall office environment.

Today, corporate design is much about internal brand promotion, connecting employees to the company's identity, culture, and external messaging.

With the ability to customize the arm's design, no longer does the visually dominant monitor arm have to be excluded from the design process. Now, it can significantly add to it. That sea of metal worktools can incorporate the design elements that were so painstakingly crafted to represent a company's brand in concert with the look and feel of the entire organization.

Using the monitor arms and Workspace Technology worktools to create a high-performing, safe workstation environment with the visual consistency and improved aesthetics as the rest of the office environment, offers the perfect blend of form and function.

The design element of monitor arms is also a unique opportunity to use as a functional tool, be it for signage or for workstation labeling.

Designing with intent, which may include logos or corporate colors for external or internal messaging, matching existing design accents, workstation labeling and signage, will all offer unique design attributes to the office. This not only compliments the office decor but ensures that the workstations and

all accessories have an integrated design and functionality that will never look like an afterthought.

In conclusion, integrating Workspace Technology into today's workstation design will allow better utilization of expensive technology outlays and increased user performance. The improved employee experience will make job performance easier, safer, and more enjoyable, which increases productivity. Factor in the enhanced aesthetics and Workspace Technology is fast becoming the next evolution in contemporary workstation design.





Amy & Kyle Rudkin, Founders of Kin

Getting to Know Kin

Q & A SESSION

Kin is an independent manufacturer representative firm for the commercial interiors market.

KinReps.com

Q: Tell us a little bit about how your rep group got started?

A: Kin was started by Kyle and Amy Rudkin in 2016. Our company name pays tribute to Amy's father, Russ Fuller who founded Fuller Associates in 1990 and who brought Amy into the business more than 20 years ago. Upon his retirement, Kin was launched and was named so because we are truly the next of Kin.

Q: How has the company changed over the years? How hasn't it?

A: When we started the group, we set our sights on A&D recognized products in the mid-market to upper market segments. In our first couple years of business, we more than doubled the size of our team and shuffled manufacturers to find the right blend of product solutions. Once we settled into these lines, we moved from the "jack of all trades" to focused product experts. Our long-term vision remains the same – take a focused market approach with strategic manufacturer partners.

**REP FEATURE:
KIN**

Q: What do you think is the secret to your longevity and success?

A: We consider ourselves more than reps. We are advocates, educators, marketers, customer service, warranty and more. We also pride ourselves on knowing our lines inside and out, responding quickly and working as long as it takes to get the job done. We attribute the bulk of our success to our focus on a select number of lines, commitment to long term relationships and strategic market approach. Kin is on a growth trajectory and we look forward to what comes next.

Q: What makes you most excited about working in the contract and hospitality industry?

A: Right now, in the post-COVID era, it's the people in our community who make us most excited about our jobs. It's energizing to finally be meeting in person again. We love diving into complicated projects and being a part of the team.

Q: How do you think your group will evolve over the next 5-10 years?

A: Our core values will remain; focus, know your products and respond fast. We are growing and actively seeking to add team members in multiple markets and roles. These roles include specification and design services in addition to sales. As we grow, We look forward to expanding our reach and engaging in more community organizations like IIDA and NEWH throughout the territory we cover.

Q: If you could use just one word to describe your rep group, what would it be?

A: Focused.



Ollie

*Oliver the French Bulldog.
Kin's team mascot and business strategist.*



KEEPING CONNECTED

With the challenges that 2020 and 2021 brought, it is more important than ever to "Keep Connected" to our clients, friends and colleagues. We have been simply inspired by all of the innovative ways our Rep Group friends have found to do just that! The pandemic hasn't slowed them down one bit, and relationships are still at the center of their strategy.

In the "Keeping Connected" section of Delve Magazine, we will highlight inspirational snapshots of what our Rep Group partners are up to, and how they are finding innovative ways to stay connected to their clients.

We hope you enjoy this new feature, and are inspired as much as we are!



Core Office Interiors Tequila Club

By Kimball International and Tequila Herradura

With over 50 attendees from the CRE, GC, and A+D communities, Kimball International co-sponsored a tequila tasting event with our dealer partner, Core Office Interiors-Houston and Herradura Tequila. We provided light bites from one of Houston's famous restaurants, El Tiempo. The event was filled with networking and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the educational tequila tasting/science experiment. Our team had the opportunity to meet a lot of new contacts and reconnect with some they hadn't seen in some time.

[Core Office Interiors](#)

Core Office Interiors Tequila Club (CONTINUED)



TEQUILA HERRADURA
EXTRAORDINARY AWAITS

<p>HERRADURA® SILVER Description: Aged for 41 days in American white oak barrels. Color: Pale straw. Aroma: Neutral, cooked agave and fruit, with a light presence of vanilla and wood. Flavor: Sweet, mild cooked agave with a touch of oak. Finish: Smooth, clean, gentle and soft at the end.</p>	<p>HERRADURA® RESPECHO Description: Aged for 13 months in imported white oak barrels. Color: Golden with shades of copper. Aroma: Cooked agave with a touch of citrus, fruit and spices. Flavor: Smooth with sweet notes of cooked agave, vanilla, butter and dried fruit. Finish: Smooth, sweet and a touch of spiced.</p>
<p>HERRADURA® AÑEJO Description: Aged in American white oak barrels for 24 months. Color: Amber with shades of copper. Aroma: Intense aroma of cooked agave and notes of spices, toasted oak with notes.</p>	<p>HERRADURA® ULTRA Description: An exclusive blend of Herradura Añejo and Herradura Selección Suprema, filtered to create an ultra-smooth crystal clear tequila. Color: Platinum. Aroma: Notes of wood, vanilla, caramel, citrus, cedar.</p>

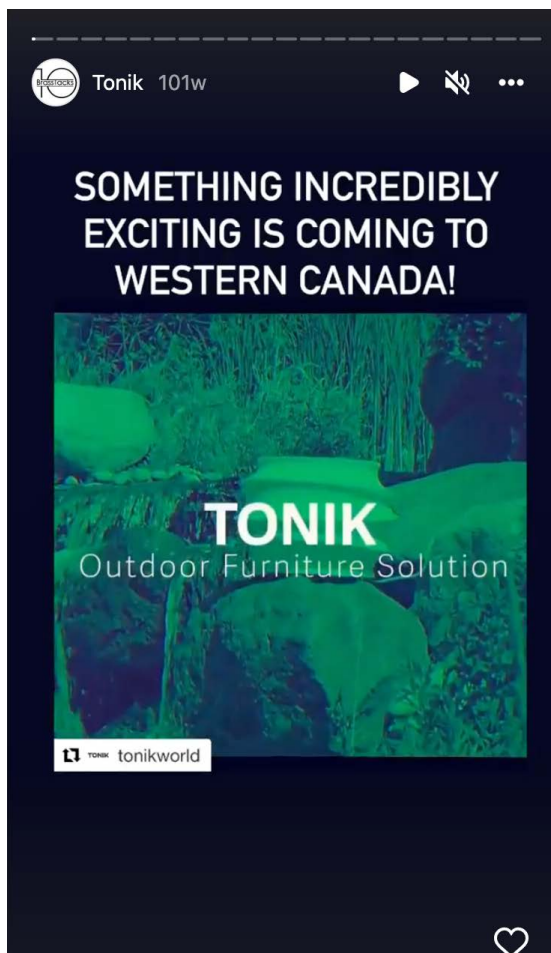


Getting Creative On TikTok!

BrassTacks Design Source came up with some creative ways to keep the conversation going during the pandemic and beyond!

Fist up, they went to TikTok..

[View the TikTok post HERE](#)



BrassTacks Design Source

BrassTacks Design Source is a Calgary based, independent contract furniture agency serving Western Canada.

We realize clients, designers and contract dealers have many options when it comes to furniture and architectural products. We hope that our unwavering commitment to customer service, product knowledge and quality product offerings will keep you coming back to us time and again!

BrassTacks Design Source was founded to make your job accessing, ordering, and follow through for your interior design projects simple and straightforward.

[BrassTacks Design Source](#)

Instagram Fun

BrassTacks Design Source also held Tonik Tailgates with G&T to design firms in Calgary. Check out the whole story below.

[View the Instagram story HERE](#)

delve^{MRU}
AUG 2022V29

Published by
MYRESOURCELIBRARY.COM