officefurniture
&DESIGN

FutureVision
2019
A DECADE OF TRENDS

Future Vision:
design in 2019

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Looking ahead a decade to predict the future of interior design, is an attempt to address two main questions: Who will our clients be ten years from today? And what areas and types of services will they need, be it for offices or residential? Let's start by taking a closer look at where the forecast is heading toward the year 2019.

CHANGING TRENDS REQUIRES ANTICIPATING OVERLAPPING LEVELS OF INFLUENCE:

- ### Long term (10 years)
  Looks at the possible evolutions in lifestyle and technology

- ### Mid-term (5 years)
  Looks at socio-cultural developments

- ### Short term (2 years)
  Considers contemporary trend-setters–individuals, processes, groups, events, etc.
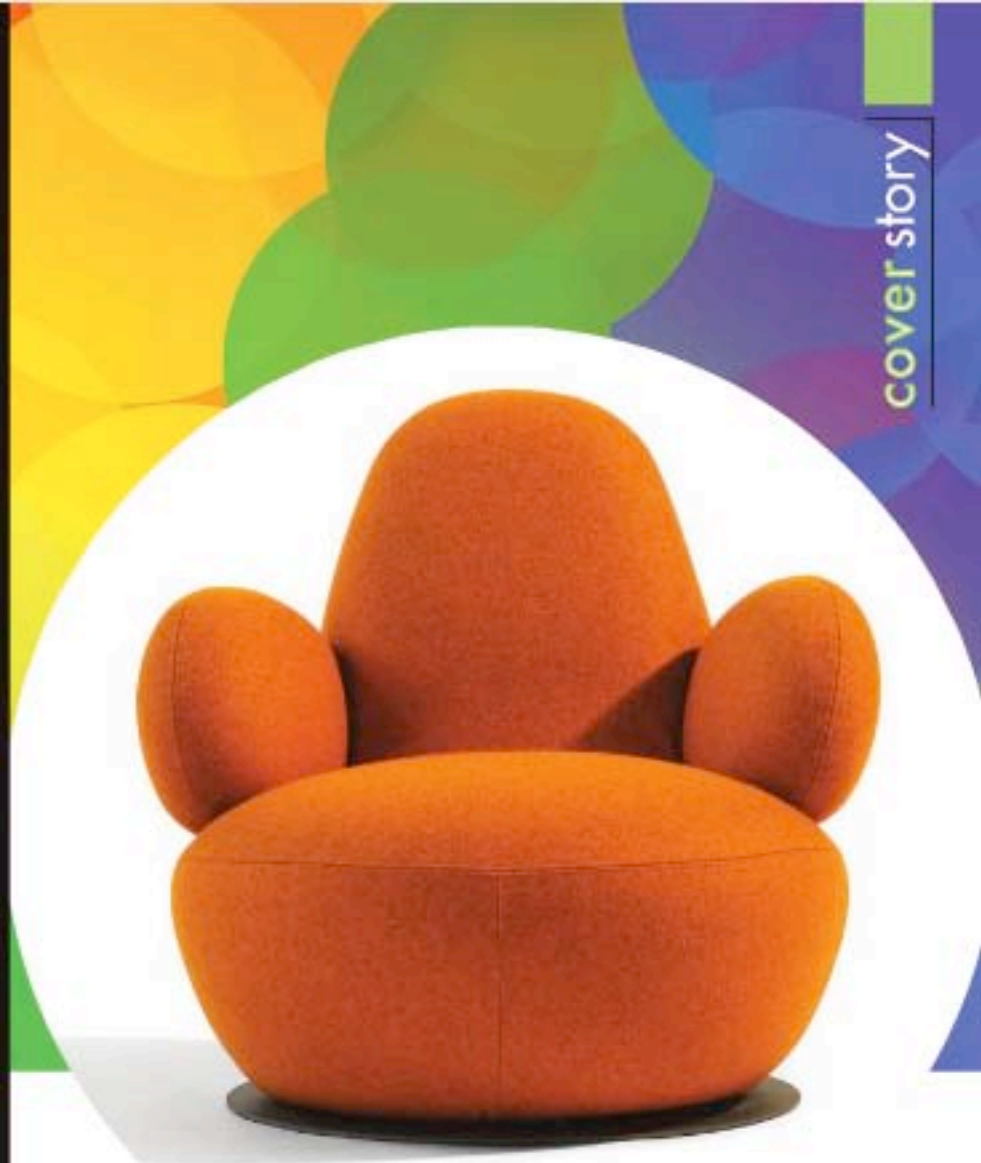
UPCOMING OFFICE & WORKPLACE
TRENDS

According to Jonathan Reed-Lethbridge, UK design director of Ergonom, Matthew Harrison, senior associate at the Helen Hamlyn Centre, the design & innovation department at London's Royal College of Art; Nick Vitalari of nGenera, John Vasellina of Genentech, and Dorianne Cotter-Lockard, an information and systems management consultant, their collective predictions are:

• The comforts and advancements that were introduced to the individual work stations starting 10-15 years ago–ergonomics, accessibility, flexibility, attention to materials and wall space, etc. — are now being applied to the offices' social spaces. The money will be spent on improving social spaces.

• Social spaces no longer mean only the fancy lobby, guest washrooms, visitor boardrooms; the "first impression spaces" etc., but the increasing need for intra-company social and communication spaces. These spaces can also work to help better integrate out-of-office workers into the corporate environment when they do come in. This will include lunch rooms, break room, meeting spaces and more.

• Environments that work with a multi-generational workforce. For older employees—maintain the social and academic aspects of work — for younger employees, a space they are proud of and comfortable in — for flex employees, a space where they can feel "at home" even though they are not at the office fulltime.

• A "knowledge economy" puts high value on thinking and communication. It's important for office design to facilitate this process, not hinder it; i.e., savvy product and uses.

• North America is still amazingly conservative when it comes to office design; many miles of cubicles with 5 foot partitions. Imagine what the U.S. could do if they dropped the panel height and started talking to each other! Think open spaces, modern lighting, streamlined workstations with corresponding equipment technology.

• Scandinavia, Australia and even recently the U.K. appear to be more progressive in terms of office layout, space planning, etc. Researching why and translating that methodology of success in design, efficiency and cost-effective measures to the North American market could be quite advantageous.

• For new buildings or gut rehabs, sustainability will be key. One of the biggest efforts will be about keeping the sunlight out (excessive heat/harmful UV rays), but the daylight in (brighter light and/or solar uses) and natural ventilation. It's about energy and resource control at a lot of different levels.

• Staircases are important connectors rather than elevators. Visual, emotional connectors help facilitate conversation with co-workers more than fast elevators, and are an excellent means for almost daily easy-access exercise.

• A continued blending of residential elements into commercial design, materials and features that are part of home design—rocking chairs, garden plots, "homey" materials such as knits, etc. invade offices looking to create an extension of the casual home environment.

• In reverse, overall greater levels of domesticity where work has invaded the home, i.e. the home office will colonize the office environment for a more professional ambiance.

• Due to increasing technology and cost, offices will need to answer this question: If people can work from anywhere, where can they do their best work? (Then support that environment in product, design, communication technologies, etc.)

• However, technology plays an ever increasing role in the concept of comfort. Sensors embedded into materials will monitor & maintain micro (i.e. "personal") environments. For example, an ergonomic task chair that detects tension in your back and works to adjust your posture or even provides a massage will be popular.

Note: people are spending more time at work and the companies that make an effort to make attractive, comfortable work spaces will be those that lock onto the best qualified talent. Think stylish break rooms, daycare or social area for children (even pets); cafe or cantina environment for after-hours client networking.

By 2016, 47% of **the US workforce will be Gen Y or younger;** digital native workers will react and interact differently than the Boomer generation.

• Think of change as a process & a function. It's regarded differently by Boomers/Young Seniors vs. the younger generation coming into the workplace. For older employees, change is something you have to adjust to. For younger workers, change just is. It's progressive, etc.

• Younger workers will often not wait for change to happen but will effect it with/to/on themselves.

• The idea of a "corporate culture" will need to change from the "one way we all think" to the many ways of individuals working together, no longer just one way.

• The group following Gen Y will bring to the workplace their own set of personal networks that are themselves, a valuable and expected asset to their company.

FUTURE CLIENTS:

Generation C

Here is the new consumer; a type that cuts across demographic and geographic boundaries demanding a different relationship…Generation C.

C stands for:

Create + Curate, Content + Communities with Conscience

CREATE acknowledges the consumer or client as Co-Creator. Companies immersed in Gen C are creating goods, services and experiences in close cooperation with (or for) the savvy, experienced and creative customer. A need for creativity explodes & content-creating tools help unleash it.

CURATE means consumers/end users are following a new type of style setter. These contemporary curators of style and taste are well connected with their audience through blogs, chat rooms, open-access file sharing sites, leading to a sharing of information.

CONTENT development is no longer expensive - technology allows us to create internationally available content almost instantly. The most compelling content is now personal and emotional, not just disinterested third-party observations.

COMMUNITIES now flourish on-line while sociologists still despair over the anonymity of much of contemporary life. Vibrant communities consist of like-minded consumers, including online.

CONSCIENCE filters from the both the eco-sustainable, green, recycle crowd and the localvist communities that were flourishing even before the economic downturn. The conscientious consumer is socially responsible, with purchases based on a brand's ethics & perceived value.

FUTURE SERVICES:
The Experience Economy
Clients are more sophisticated in 2019; more informed & demanding. In order to capture their attention & ultimately their dollars, transactions must be sensory, engaging, personal, and contribute to the psychological or physical well-being of the end user.

The Design Economy
The contemporary production of goods is based on the intersection of 'utility' and "significance." Utility means that the product or service must work. Significance

means that it must have some other, more transcendent quality. For many consumers, technology has become so well-integrated into their lives that most technological advancements are considered ordinary and expected; it's often the actual design (and even color) that makes the real difference. In an economy where innovation will rein supreme, you need to think like a designer!

High-Concept to High-Touch
High-Concept is the ability to create artistic beauty; to detect patterns yet build on opportunities, to combine seemingly unrelated ideas into a novel invention. High-Touch is the ability to understand the actual subtleties of human interaction, in the pursuit of purpose & meaning. Interrelated skills will be needed by designers & vendors.

FUTURECONNECTION:
Consumption Competition
Consumption habits dramatically change. Luxury is widely available yet more intangible as "must-have" items such as electronics, accessories & clothing are readily available at rock-bottom prices. Providing services to clients that don't want to be pegged "spendy" yet use to getting quality items at less cost, will be the strategy needed.

Design Sense & Experience
Gen C population is still conscience-driven due to tougher job markets; do-it-yourself

(DIY) movement gains new-found prestige. Advances in technology make it possible for novices to do space and color planning, some product design and other previously "restricted" aspects of design. So, what key roles are left for trained professionals?

Though trends will affect the market to some degree, clients will continue to rely on professionally certified & qualified individuals and manufacturers to produce goods to their specifications and to compliment their temperament. Large scale facilities such as healthcare, education, legal, government, insurance, banking, and other specialty organizations will continue to demand office furniture and accessories that are sustainable and eco-friendly, non-toxic & natural with ergonomic elements of design. The future will have a conscience, and products and services will need to provide "meaning" besides function.

MASLOW'S PYRAMID REDEFINED
Looking to consumer behavior in the next 5-10 years, we can take (sociologist) Maslow's Pyramid and recreate it using potential marketing motivational categories:

OTHER
Emotional self-fulfillment, spirituality, desire for deeper meaning, connection to others: family, friend, community

PLEASURE
Discovery, customizations, hedonism, narcissism, excitement

ORIGINS
Identity, ecology, ethics

ERGONOMICS
Mobility, autonomy, comfort, assistance, practicality

WELL-BEING
Energy/vitality, wellness, anti-stress, anti-aging, individual control

• **OTHER.** New family & work models; seek products / services to help us maintain contact with other people.

• **PLEASURE.** Dominated by advancing technology, pleasure is a refuge; is at the core of creative development.

• **ORIGINS.** Globalization /

technology separate us; identity, ecology & ethics re-awaken desire to know origins.

• **ERGONOMICS.** Young seniors want products that allow autonomy while younger earners will insist on practicality.

• **WELL-BEING.** Population lives longer; seniors shape products for anti-stress/anti-aging, wellness & comfort.