

# Workplaces

MAY 2017 | YOUR GUIDE TO THE NEW ENVIRONMENT OF WORK • \$9

# STAD



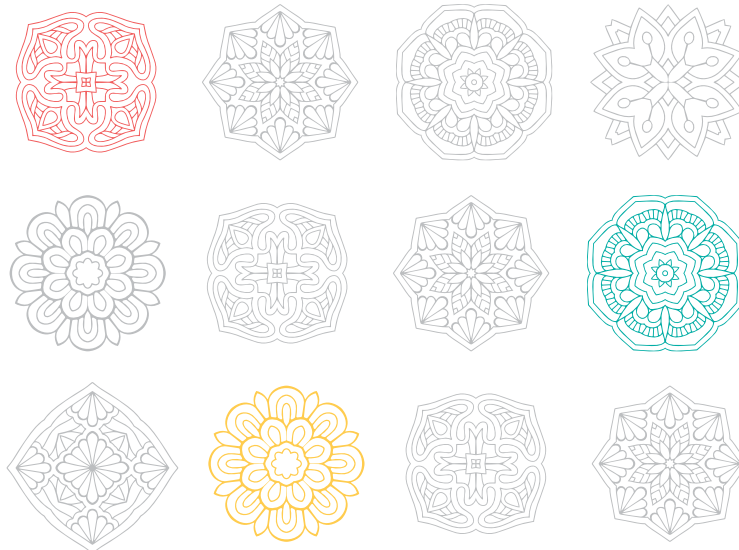
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JLL - Future of Work Study | Trends | Mythbusters

Trends | WORKPLACE 3.0/SaloneUfficio

CBRE Furniture Forum: Unraveling Furniture Frustrations

Why Seating Still Matters | OM puts the Fun and Function in Seating

Allseating's Name Says it All | Put a Positive Spin on Biking to Work

Refining Reefer: Could Cannabis Culture in the Workplace Bring Focus and Creativity? | Today's Workforce Craves Flexible Offices



# Workplaces

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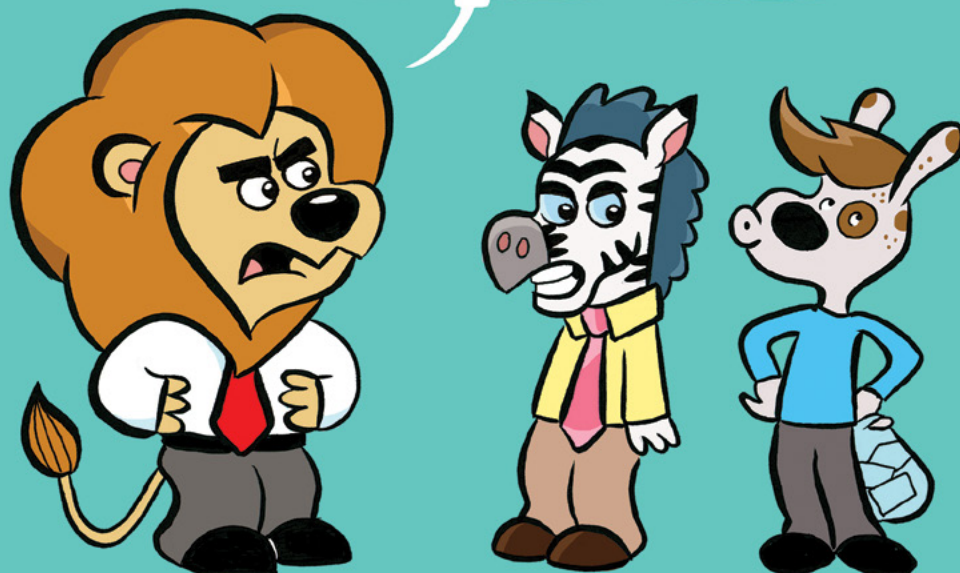
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will help you run a better, more informed company.

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

## PRIDE IN YOUR WORK

SNACK  
MACHINE  
ETIQUETTE





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Not all ergonomic office seating needs to cost an arm and a leg.

## 12. JLL - FUTURE OF WORK STUDY

Executives will look toward the future of work as an agile and adaptable model for achieving ambitions in an environment where stability is an illusion or, worse, a sign of stagnation.

## 14. MYTHBUSTERS

Challenging workplace assumptions.

## 16. TRENDS - OTTO CAMPUS COWORKING OFFICES - HAMBURG

Around the heart of the space – an arena for presentations, speeches or panel discussions with over 100 guests – there have been built meeting areas, lounges, quiet rooms, work- and flex benches as well as a café.

## 18. WORKPLACE 3.0 / SALONE UFFICIO

There are some cool new products, lots of ideas and a fair number of visitors to the office area of the show (actually, iSalone is made up of many events running together).

## 24. CBRE FURNITURE FORUM: UNRAVELING FURNITURE FRUSTRATIONS

The topic was explosive: How can we improve the furniture buying process? The idea was to gather designers, office furniture dealers and manufacturers at CBRE's Chicago office and hash out a process many believe is, at best, inefficient and at its worst, broken.

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Since the introduction of the task chair decades ago, office dwellers have had many options to choose from, but almost all of them came with a large price tag. There are still plenty of affordable chairs around.

## 34. OM PUTS THE FUN AND FUNCTION IN SEATING

OM believes in sweating the details so when their chairs make it to offices around the country, they will be perfect for the workers sitting in them.

# 34

Office seating is one of the most competitive segments in the commercial furnishings industry, and OM knows building solid chairs that are fun isn't enough.



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## 50. PUT A POSITIVE SPIN ON BIKING TO WORK

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## 56. REFINING REEFER: COULD CANNABIS CULTURE IN THE WORKPLACE BRING FOCUS AND CREATIVITY?

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## 62. PRODUCT MATTER

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## 68. CHARTING: IMPROVE YOUR WELLNESS IN THE WORKPLACE

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## 72. ENDMATTER

It could be that the Chinese have the perfect napping product for the old-fashion cubicle centered workplace.

# WHY SEATING STILL MATTERS

STORY BY ROB KIRKBRIDE



**D**r. James Levine, director of the Mayo Clinic-Arizona State University Obesity Solutions Initiative and inventor of the treadmill desk, is credited with the asinine assertion that sitting is the new smoking and that it is “more dangerous than smoking, kills more people than HIV and is more treacherous than parachuting.”

As I ponder this claim from the comfort of my highly ergonomic office chair, I wonder how many cobwebs are forming on his treadmill desk, the kinda cool, really gimmicky product that got a lot more traction in sensational headlines than it did sales.

No matter how much Levine believes we should be working while walking on a hamster wheel, sitting — and the products that make sitting safe — are a necessary part of any office environment. And they’ve never been better. When one considers where ergonomic office seating has come from since the 1980s, it is astonishing how much progress has been made in making office workers safe and productive while seated.

Since the introduction of the task chair decades ago, office dwellers have had many options to choose from, but almost all of them came with a large price tag. There are still plenty of great chairs around if you have some money to spend.

For those with a budget, Vitra ticks all the boxes — great looks, great design heritage and great comfort. And they’ve been doing it a long time. Vitamat, the very first office chair developed independently by Vitra, was launched in 1976.

Edward Barber and Jay Osgerby developed one of Vitra’s newest chairs, the Pacific. Development of the chair followed the guiding principle of “full performance, quiet design.” Its appearance is strongly defined by the backrest, which extends so far down that no mechanical components are visible from behind, with the exception of the base. And it will cost you about \$1,500 to sit in your own.

Not all ergonomic office seating needs to cost an arm and a leg. For those looking to buy a really good office chair that won’t break the bank for a company (or even an average home office worker), there are more and more good options. Here are a few brands worth examining:



## 9to5 Seating

Some very nice chairs have always been made by 9to5 seating, and it has an extensive line (one of our favorites is its Cosmo collection, which is especially beautiful in leather). But what makes them really unique is the company's commitment to "Made in America." The company recently opened a new plant in Union City, Tennessee, has another in Hawthorne, California, and might just be the first seating maker ever to ship parts from its U.S. plant to China for chair assembly.

Of course, you've got to have good products, made in America or not, and 9to5 definitely does. Though Cosmo appeals to European design sensibilities with its sleek looks, Aria is the chair we think would appeal to the largest audience in North America. It is as comfortable as it is good looking.



## Allseating

Not everyone sits in a chair all day, so we like Allseating's Tuck Collaborative, a swivel-base chair that has the same functionality as a task chair with the simplicity and light scale of a side chair. It is best used for quick conference meetings, in training areas, labs and touchdown spaces rather than all-day use.

It is worth noting Allseating is entirely focused on seating and has been since 1982. It has developed a reputation for quickly adjusting to the changing needs of customers. As the company says, Allseating always has its customers' backs.



## HON

Over the last several years, HON has quietly been making some of the best affordable seating products you can buy. Solve is one of our favorites. It is the kind of seat that works well for a variety of users and has enough options to keep even the most picky interior designer satisfied.

It is an easy chair to use since its responsive design adapts intuitively to the user's movement, ensuring that it provides continuous comfort and ventilation through one of three unique back materials. The chair comes in either: a ReActiv Back, a flexible material with a distinctive hexagonal design that has the breathability of mesh, but plenty of comfort; upholstered ReActiv Back, with an optional upholstered front in addition to the aforementioned back; or a mesh back, a breathable ilira-stretch mesh that provides responsive support and leverages the user's weight to create a softer sit.

Three ergonomic tilt controls provide a higher level of customization and the chair is available with optional adjustable lumbar support and arms. HON isn't done yet. Look for new chairs from the company soon.

## OM

Truly. is OM's latest offering and the best chair the company has ever designed. The California office-seating maker continues to bring the mid-market up with a focus on quality and design usually found in products twice as expensive.

Truly. marks a real turning point for the company because it adds some real design chops to a company that already makes really good seating products. More than two years in the making, Truly. is truly good.



## SitOnIt

SitOnIt was one of the first mid-priced, office-seating makers that took design seriously. The company has several really beautiful chairs that can compete on the design level with chair makers at any price level.

Its latest hit is the Novo chair, which starts at \$469, half the price of a similar chair from one of the large office furniture makers. Yet for that price, you can personalize Novo, from frame sizes, frame colors, accent colors, features and textiles. It is an award-winning chair, recognized for its daring design, innovative features, noticeable comfort and low price point.



## Groupe Lacasse

Groupe Lacasse, the Canadian office furniture maker best known for its desks and credenzas, is opening eyes with its United Chair brand. The company acquired United Chair and has quickly improved the design of its products.

The Affinity collection offers intuitive ergonomic features like optimum back support with six-position height settings and an adjustable seat depth for individually tailored comfort. The soft mesh back fabric is available in four colors and is easily interchangeable. And the price is right.

If you don't want to sit in a traditional way, there are other options. More and more companies are offering seats that aren't seats at all, but rather "perches" that allow users to take some of the weight off while they are using sit-stand desks.

## Mayline/Safco

Two products from Safco and its Focal Upright Furniture brand are good choices for times when you don't want to sit, but don't feel like standing either. Focal's Mobis II is the next evolution of the ergonomic task seat. It offers the ideal level of healthy support for your body, keeping your spine in a neutral posture and your major muscles engaged. Safco's Twixt is a great option as well, a good seat for use while at a standing height workstation or as a easy-to-use side chair in the office.

What Levine seemed to forget when disparaging sitting is that no chair works perfectly for everyone. Of course, it would be nice if we didn't have to sit in front of a computer screen all day. And it would be nice if every ergonomic office chair worked perfectly for everyone. But that's not the case.



*Twixt*



*Mobis II*

It could be argued Herman Miller is one of the most influential seating companies in the world, yet even its research shows not everyone sits the same. According to one of its countless research papers on sitting, “The early notions of ‘correct’ posture gave way as evidence made it clear that idealized postures were not necessarily healthful — especially not in a work environment dominated by the computer. Yet dynamic changes in posture, healthful in themselves, cannot compensate for the problems of poor workstation design, layout, equipment, lighting, acoustics, or job process. Researchers are finding that relatively minor adjustments to the entire ‘work envelope’ can be significant. While this holistic view makes intuitive sense, it frustrates those who seek a cut-and-dried solution to the influx of problems being associated with knowledge work. It is probably accurate to say that these are now, or soon will be, everyone’s problems. The solutions are just as likely to come from users as they are from researchers and designers.”

Herman Miller does not say it directly, so we will: It is not the fault of the office furnishings industry that workers are sitting in front of a computer screen all day, yet it seems to take the brunt of the blame when it comes to obesity and lack of activity in the office. Heck, office chair makers are just trying to help. It is kinda like blaming a seat belt manufacturer for a driver that dies from running head-on into a large oak tree. It doesn’t make sense.

So by all means, get up and move around a bit. Movement in the office is critically important. Just know that when you are ready to sit down, there are many options out there. **WPM**