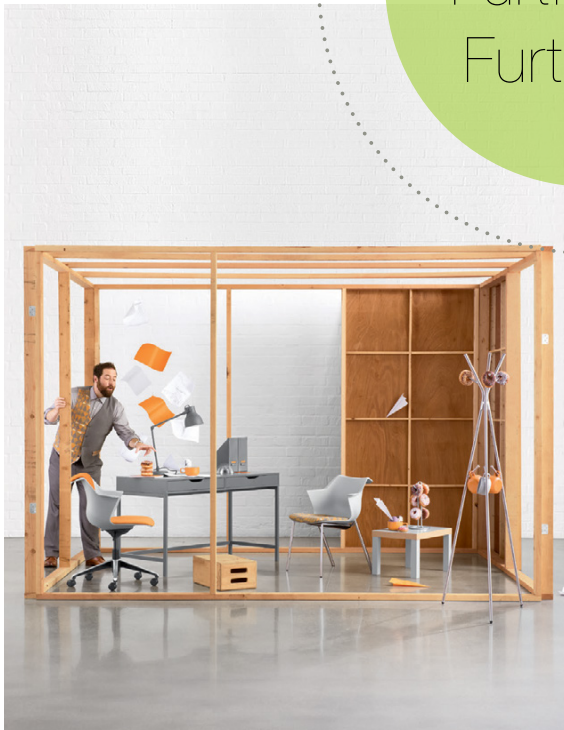


# BoF



omseating

Further up.  
Further in.



# Working Toward Wellness

Introducing INDEAL Cares; a charitable entity established by INDEAL.

Our mission is to support healthy workplace communities in the commercial furniture industry in North America, and to support other like-minded charitable organizations in carrying out this work internationally.

## *We need your help*

Please complete our **online survey** to provide critical information that will guide our initiative to support workplace wellness.

For every survey completed before June 30, 2020, INDEAL will donate \$1.00 to INDEAL Cares.



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

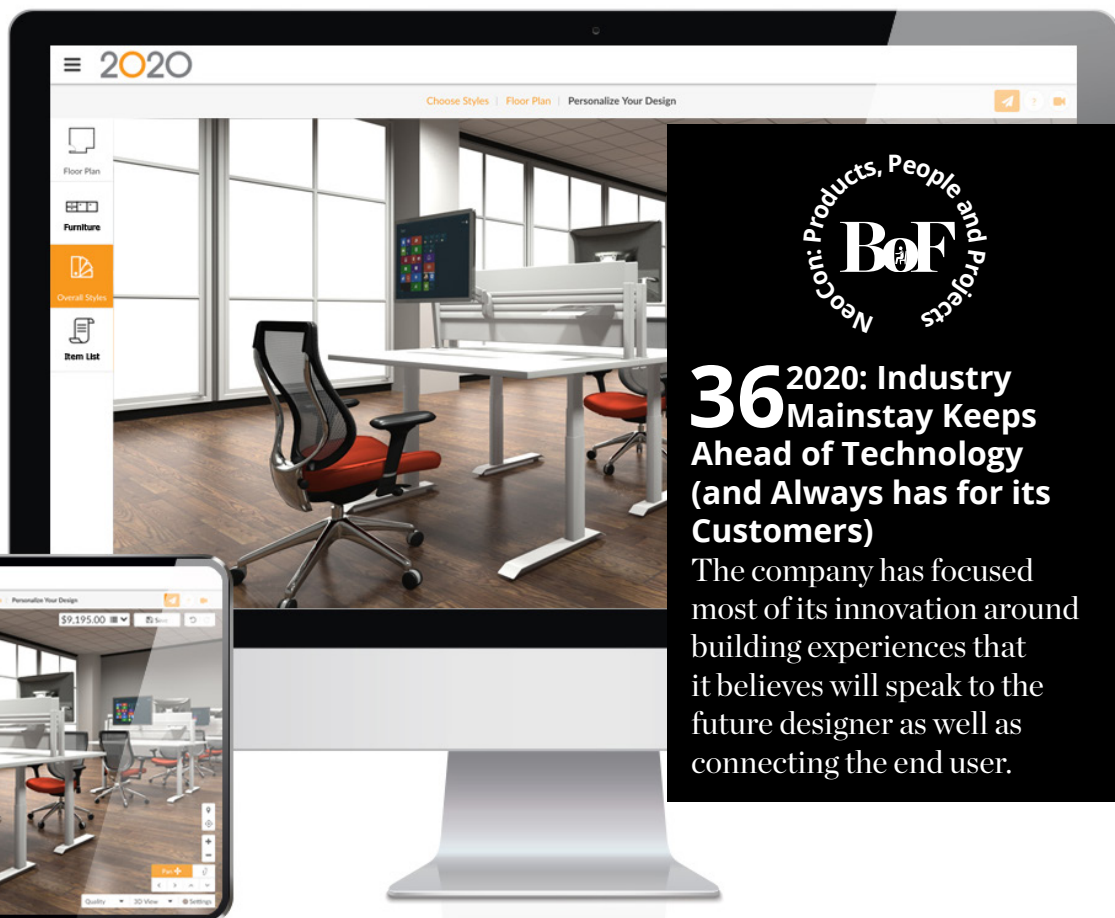
INDEAL  CARES





## 22 Never Stop Moving, Pushing or Striving — OM Digs Deep for Meaningful Change

Since its beginnings in 1986, Southern California-based OM has believed continual evolution creates a living company.



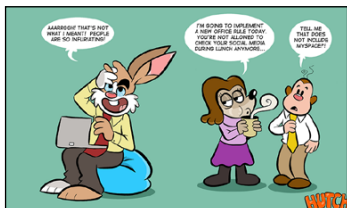
## 36 2020: Industry Mainstay Keeps Ahead of Technology (and Always has for its Customers)

The company has focused most of its innovation around building experiences that it believes will speak to the future designer as well as connecting the end user.



# Bof The Business of Furniture

June 17, 2020



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**12 | I don't Know About You, but I'll Never Take the Fun and Friendship of NeoCon for Granted Again.**

By Wednesday during NeoCon week, I'm sick of restaurant food, sick of talking to people and sick of Chicago.



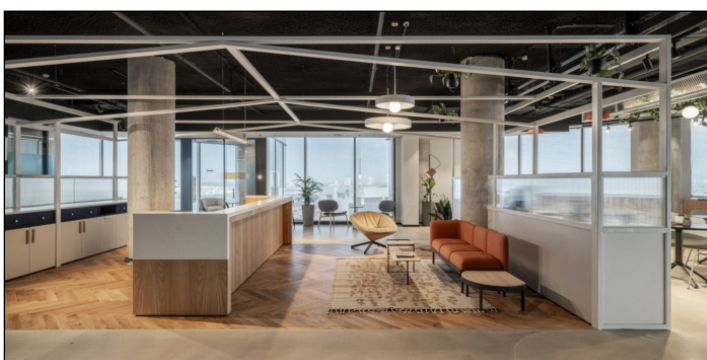
**16 | Steelcase CEO Jim Keane Speaks to Grand Rapids Economic Club about COVID and the Company**

Disaster preparation is important for any business, but leaders also have to adjust course as needed since there is no way to account for everything that might go wrong.



**54 | When Nothing is Guaranteed: Practical Ways to Reset your Career Trajectory**

With industry insiders optimistic about a rebound and a revamping of the office, there is still real fear about the now weekly announcements of furloughs, layoffs and "creative re-structuring" that's going on in the world of contract furniture.



52 PLACES Innovid Offices – Ramat Gan



56 FIRST LOOKS The latest product introductions



58 PULSE The latest industry happenings



We launched Products, People and Projects this year to help fill the gaps. We don't want all the information we would have learned about at NeoCon to be lost.

So we worked with theMART to come up with a program you have seen the past few weeks. For the rest of the summer, we will be presenting Products, People and Projects, a few companies at a time so as not to overwhelm the reader.

We're thrilled to present stories from OM and 2020 in today's issue. Make sure you read the stories to learn about what these great companies are doing.

# NeoCon: Products, People and Projects

## BoF



**22** **Never Stop Moving, Pushing or Striving — OM Digs Deep for Meaningful Change**  
Since its beginnings in 1986, Southern California-based OM has believed continual evolution creates a living company.

**36** **2020: Industry Mainstay Keeps Ahead of Technology (and Always has for its Customers)**  
The company has focused most of its innovation around building experiences that it believes will speak to the future designer as well as connecting the end user.





# Never Stop Moving, Pushing or Striving — OM Digs Deep for Meaningful Change

**“Further up and further in” — this is the mantra of a company aiming to continually evolve with its customers and the furniture industry.** OM Seating, a national leader in mid-market seating solutions, believes a relentless push for change, endlessly adapting and developing afresh, is a necessity for a thriving, solutions-oriented company.

“I want us to have an inquisitive nature and to be constantly learning, improving, pushing,” said Wilson Chow, president of OM Seating. “At the same time, we also need to apply what we’ve learned — whether that’s to be better and better at seating designs or to the processes by which we run our company. We push ourselves, and we welcome push from the industry. Whether that’s from our reps who are hungry to build and sustain healthy sales or from fellow manufacturers. When we’re all coming from a particular perspective to ask how we can make work and the workplace (wherever that is) better, all of us win — customer, manufacturer, reps and the industry at large.”





## Since its beginnings in 1986, Southern California-based OM has believed continual evolution creates a living company.

Chow believes the yin-yang of good competition is healthy when it drives us all to thrive creatively.

“Of course, we want our products and our processes to be one of the best and for our OM Family to be driven to seek better answers,” Chow said. “Often, when competitors come up with something that I consider amazing, or genuinely good, my reaction is, ‘How about us? How are we also pushing for good and better?’”

Since its beginnings in 1986, Southern California-based OM has believed continual evolution creates a living company.

“Everyone needs to believe, ‘It’s my responsibility,’” Chow said. “What makes someone want to work with us is more

than simply because we are the best — at whatever today’s rubric is. They work with us because we offer all the baseline key ingredients, and on top of that they know we are always pushing to be even better, always going further up, further in.”

### Pushing further

A relentless attention to process and progress drives OM’s company culture. Nowhere is that more evident than in product design and development.

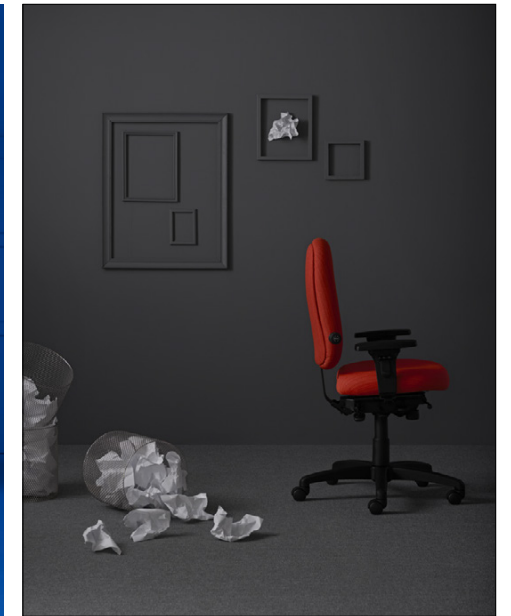
Eric MacDonald, product development and design manager, joined the company five years ago and has been an integral part of giving a voice to the in-house OM Design Group.



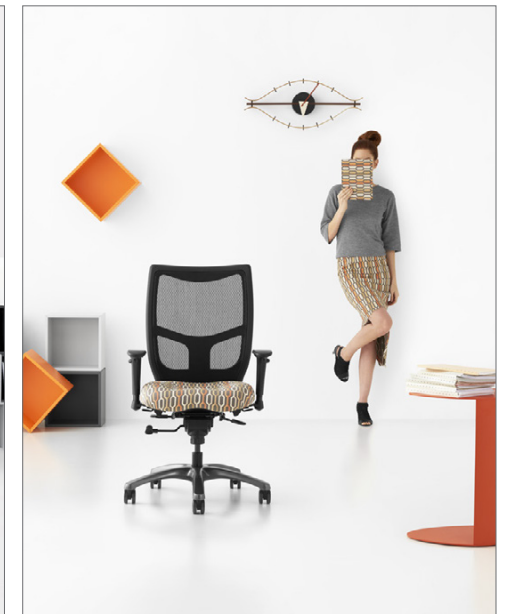
Werksy® Collection



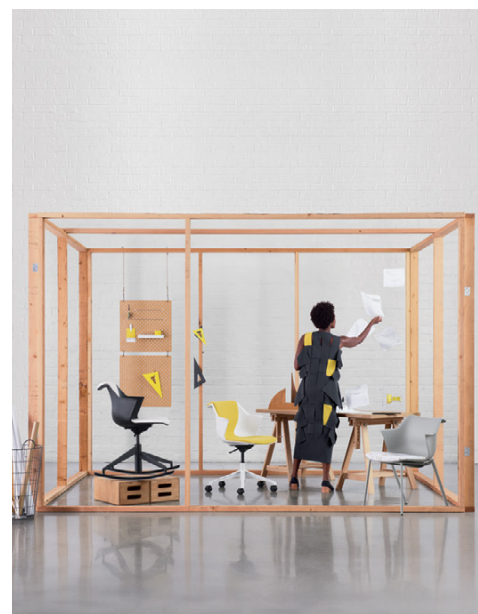
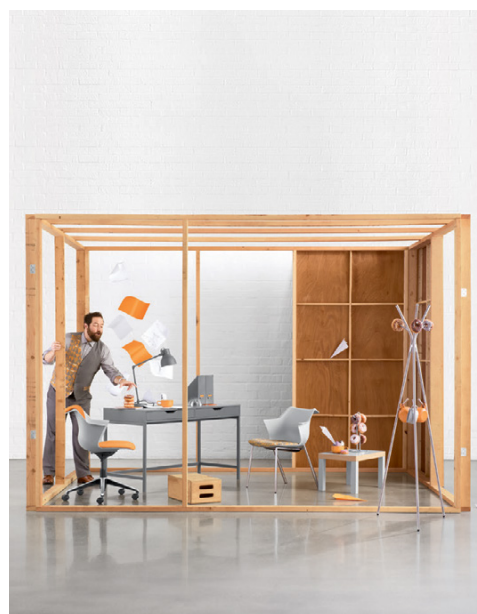
# OM AD CAM PAIGNS 2015-19



2015-2016: Introducing the World of OM.



2017-2018: OM Becomes You.



2018: Create Your Space. (introducing Werksy)



2019: Color Your World.



## Focusing on multiple disciplines means OM seeks to partner with designers who also embody this spirit of collaboration.

"The design process involves much more than just industrial designers," MacDonald said. "We take pride in having multiple disciplines engaged in a single focus. Whether that's graphic design, marketing, mechanical engineering or manufacturing, each member of the team brings new light during the process. This drive for a new perspective is not only leveraged during in-house developments but also how we work with outside design partners."

Focusing on multiple disciplines means OM seeks to partner with designers who also embody this spirit of collaboration.

"Francisco Romero of Phide-sign is a perfect example," MacDonald said. "He holds degrees in both architecture and mathematics, and brings an incredible level of detail and focus to each new product. Over the past 10 years, he has developed OM5 Series®, OM5 Active and Truly.® with us. Each one of these products has proprietary innovation,

cleverly enhancing a user's experience."

The OM5 Series proved to be a watershed moment for the company. Challenged by then president Wallace Hwang to take a risk and push beyond off-the-shelf solutions, the company invested in the tooling for a ground-up, unconventional design for a mid-market work chair. This gutsy play resulted in OM5, which in its West Coast pre-launch debut took home one of the top prizes at the National Ergonomics Conference and Exposition: the ErgoExpo Attendees' Choice Award.

The company pushed further forward with 2013's launch of the OM5 Active, daring to aggressively enter a lightly traveled market (for OM) with a bold design. Like its namesake, this evolution of the OM5 Series was again one of the top vote getters for the Attendees' Choice, beating out competition from several larger, higher profile companies to be that year's only seating winner.



OM5 Active





Werksty® Collection

## **“Progress is not a thing that theoretically happens, but a thing we must doggedly drive to actively, consciously do.”**

Again, in the spirit of further up and further in, OM continued its innovative product development with 2016's Truly. While re-imagining the engineering of a task chair, the design team devised a living backrest. The resulting TruFit™ technology forms the literal backbone of a modern-aesthetic, high-end design work chair. Like the OM5 Series, Truly. has been recognized with numerous prestigious awards, including a resounding round-up of Interior Design's HiP Award, HCD's Nightingale Award, Ergo Expo Attendees' Choice Award and the Chicago Athanaeum's Good Design Award.

### **Further in**

Despite — or perhaps because of — these accolades, the product design and development team continue to push.

“Progress is not a thing that theoretically happens, but a thing we must doggedly drive to actively, consciously do,” Chow said.

Last year OM Seating debuted one of the most visually provocative, playful line-ups

in the industry — the Werksty Collection (think work plus easy), a networking tasker, a stackable visitor's chair and a freedom-of-work inspiring rocking chair.

“We worked with the award-winning designer Henner Jahns of Gecco Vision on the collection,” MacDonald said. “During the development, we knew each chair configuration was going to help users collaborate. And because Henner knew that we never want to settle, we were able to challenge each other to pivot from the original intent, then work together to design and develop a brand new way to engage with a product and with each other. The pinnacle of this striving, this engagement with our process, is the rocking base that also swivels and has adjustable seat height. No one had done this before. Our goal is not just to be different, but to outdo ourselves. I like to think the Werksty Collection accomplishes both.”

### **OM hasn't stopped moving**

This spring, OM launched a Color Bloom campaign, developed to refresh and re-acti-



## Focusing on multiple disciplines means OM seeks to partner with designers who also embody this spirit of collaboration.

vate frame and fabric stories for two popular collections. OM5 Active enjoyed a color refresh, which replaced its original primary color scheme with a more sophisticated palette, while the Werksy Quilt Collection introduced a new range of splashy, custom colors to the delightful Werksy frames.

Queenie Wong, marketing and branding supervisor, said the goal was to introduce something fun in the spirit of what's next.

"We push even on those designs that are already in the market, already popular," Wong said. "The entire marketing and product design teams gather for brainstorming sessions. We have an opportunity to be genuinely raw in this creative process — to throw out ideas no matter how wild, to critique and question each other. And because there is so much respect in the room, and so much enthu-

siasm for the process, we're able to be free and to each contribute our own flavor and voice. It's a vulnerable process. But because we've agreed to think collectively, we can push for more and our solutions — whether a product or a service — can be so much more meaningful and impactful."

OM's messaging is another testament to the team's focus on process. Whether the outcome is a new logo with seven threads, each representing the elements that keep the company strong, quirky trade show themes or an ever-evolving ad campaign that can be read as chapters in a book, OM keeps pushing forward and developing the story further.

### Process of meaningful messaging

Though the company is forward-thinking by intention, OM is attentive to its past and



Truly.®





OM5 Series®

## As OM Seating keeps designing its way into the future, one element that Chow hopes will never change is the company spirit, the constant drive for meaningful changes and impactful designs.

to the people who bind the company together.

"I think of the OM business that my father [William Chow] built, then his co-founder Wallace Hwang, and now myself — with me as just the latest chapter — as a long-evolving business. I realize that each of us, not only me but everyone who works here, invests our time, our talent and our effort over and over, in the particular ways each of us can, and together we all build a company that is a representation of our individual personalities, aspirations and talents," Chow said.

As OM Seating keeps designing its way into the future, one element that Chow hopes will never change is the company

spirit, the constant drive for meaningful changes and impactful designs.

"We're all committed to the process and the progress of discovering what our passions can help to create," he said. "If we work on our work like we live our lives — naturally curious, constantly self-improving and pushing for the ever-critical execution, we can't help but to do better and at times, even reach being the best. As Queenie tells me all the time, 'We're all here to inspire, show some personality and encourage fun.' The passion shows in all of our work. Okay, so, that's what keeps us going. And I think you'll see that in everything that we do." **BoF**