

The Business of Furniture | September 22, 2021

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The Business of Furniture

September 22, 2021

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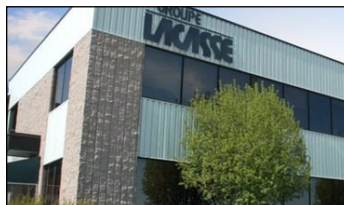
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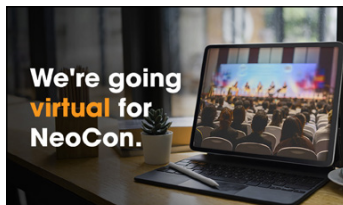
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It's very difficult to create social capital in remote settings. The ability to collaborate in-person, to build meaningful work relationships through informal interactions contributes to a thriving work environment.



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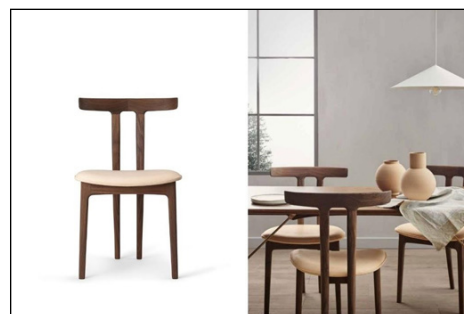
OM's story and those of its customers will be on full display at NeoCon, where books and words will play a central theme in the showroom's design.



48 PLACES Premico Offices – Helsinki | Mint & More Creative designed Premico Group's new office located in the heart of Helsinki.



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BoF Workplaces

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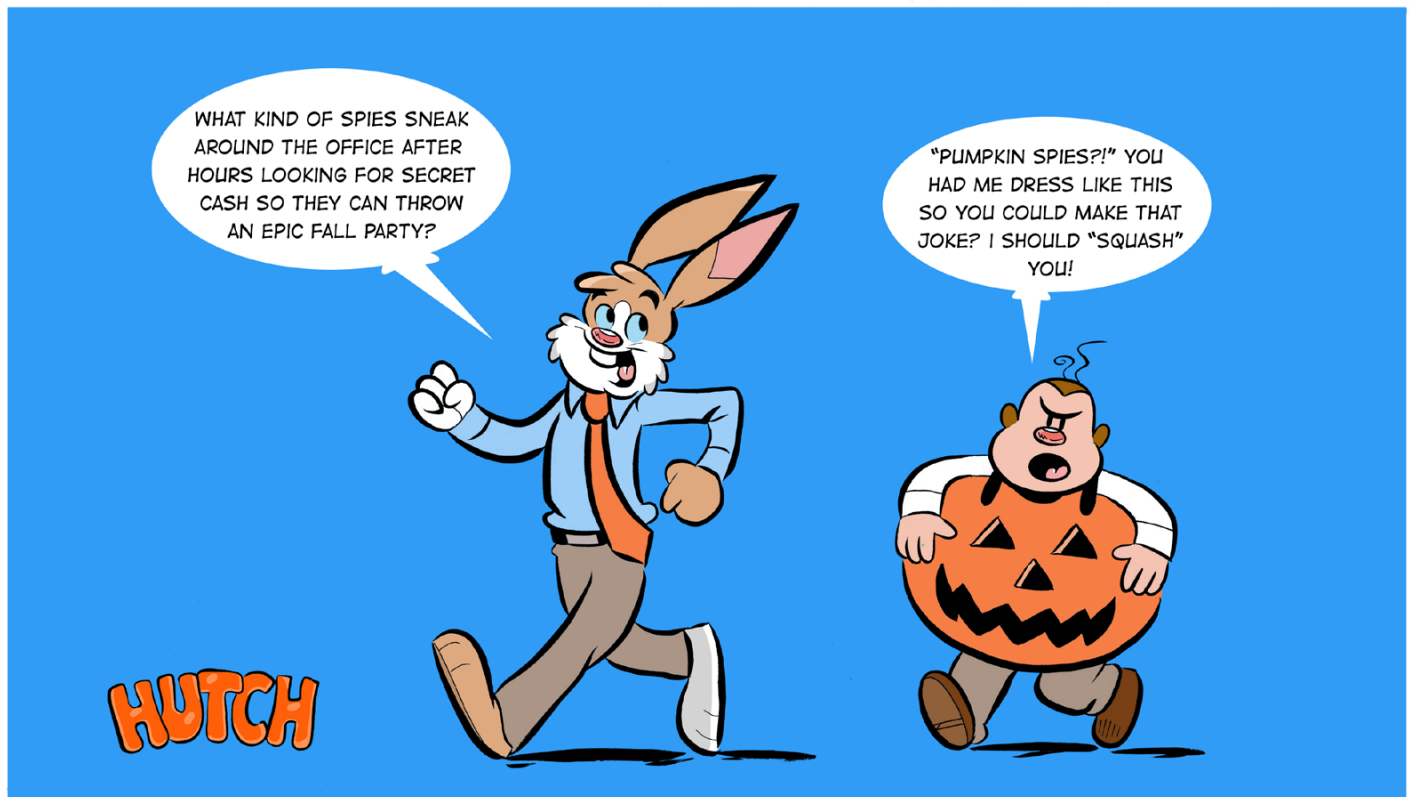
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OM Looks Forward with New Collections

OM'S STORY AND THOSE OF ITS CUSTOMERS WILL BE ON FULL DISPLAY AT NEOCON, WHERE BOOKS AND WORDS WILL PLAY A CENTRAL THEME IN THE SHOWROOM'S DESIGN.

by Rob Kirkbride

Wilson Chow isn't the kind of person to dwell on the negative. You'll always find him with a huge smile and full of positivity. So don't ask the president of seating specialist OM to reflect on the pandemic. He wants to focus on the future.

And why not? The company is launching five new products at NeoCon, opening its first permanent showroom at theMART and believes it has the right mix of products because of its careful planning and design strategy.

"Context matters — a lot," Chow said. "We do need to address that elephant in the room (COVID). But this is not that conversation. I think it's rather foolish to turn your whole operation based on any one thing, any one event or circumstance, even something as big as COVID, which is legitimately huge. It affects a lot of people and in very serious ways. But what I want to say is that we need to be responsive, not reactive. So the things that we're doing as a company are not necessarily because COVID is happening."



Lórien



OM5 Active Nest

Instead, the California company is working on things put in place before the pandemic and following its long-term operation plan and its goals. The work OM is doing is not episodic — like making plexiglas screens, for example. Its new products are thoughtful, responsive and not surprisingly, fit well in the market, even as COVID-19 continues to change the workplace.

OM has an interesting story, and storytelling will play a big part of OM's strategy at NeoCon and beyond, Chow said.

"We're extremely interested, as we've always been, in listening and eliciting your story," he said. "We're interested in hearing the stories of our customers, our dealers, our reps, designers and the end user, of course. And we believe that with our products, we can play a supporting part in your story."







Tibidi Stacker

The push toward storytelling goes well beyond marketing for OM. The idea of telling stories and listening to customer stories is part of what makes OM what it is as a company.

“What we’re going to be moving forward with into the next couple of years is the idea of bringing things together into harmony,” Chow said. “The idea of a workplace in harmony with its people. How does a chair company play any role in that? Well, we have to be able to see our product as something a little bit more interesting than a simple chair.”

OM is interested in making sure its products not only provide a great place to sit, but also help support the goals and aspirations of its customers. Chow said OM wants to create furniture that is flexible across spaces and places, whether that is in a busy office or the solitude of a home office.

That responsiveness includes building a new website, creating new tools to help dealers tell their stories, developing a chair builder and fitting out a new permanent showroom on the 11th floor. OM has invested in getting its products BIFMA level certified and added its products to the CET Designer platform. It’s almost as if OM is relaunching the company. And in a way it is. Everything feels fresh, new and, well, a bit different for OM. Each new product and service OM has added are emblems of what OM is as a company and how far it has come.



OM5 Active Nest

OM's story and those of its customers will be on full display at NeoCon, where books and words will play a central theme in the showroom's design. Books will appear as if they are moving through the glass front of the showroom. And as they move through the glass, it will look as if they are shredding down to the component letters of the book. The look of the showroom will change as more stories are added.

"We want people to understand that OM seating is not simply task seating," Chow said. "We are more than that. We have the imagination and the ability to go anywhere that your workflow will take you, your story will take you, and we want to be part of your story, like a supporting cast member."

OM is launching five new products at NeoCon, including:

The Lórien collection

Lórien is an all-mesh seating collection from OM that can be used for everything from a light task chair to a conference room option to mid- and high-back versions, depending on how it is specified.

OM5 Active Nest

OM 5 Active has been around for a while for OM, but the new Active Nest really does it all. It is a stacking chair, a nesting chair and an active chair that articulates and moves. All of this comes in a single chair with the same great looks and design of the OM 5 Active.

Tibidi

Tibidi is a 45-inch chair, high density stacker with high-end aesthetic in a stacking chair.



OM5 Active Nest





CE2

CE2

CE2 is a new take on an existing OM product. The CE2 is a conference and executive chair that has been “improved by light years,” according to Chow. It can be specified in a pillow top version for more traditional environments or without the cushion.

Ginny multi-tasker

The Ginny chair line is being filled out to include a multi-tasker. It is a lightweight task chair that can be used in a variety of settings. Ginny also comes in a multi-tasker stool, visitor and bariatric versions.

Of course, OM would love to celebrate a full NeoCon with the entire industry but COVID-19 is making that difficult this fall. Still, it is a company that is able to adapt and adjust to everything, including a worldwide pandemic.

“There are so many things we have to be able to roll with the punches on, this is another one,” Chow said. “That’s why I even talk about being responsive, not reactive. Right. So if it’s a long-term thing, and we need to have chairs that have this and that feature, OK. You know we will be up to that challenge ... but as far as what we need to do in terms of mindset, like I said, we have to keep living in that near-term space just beyond that horizon sometimes, too. And think ahead so that we don’t get mired into the sort of minutia of argument over what is today, what isn’t today or all that stuff. It’s important, but there’s many more smart people who can do that.” **BoF**

