

The Business of Furniture | September 11, 2019

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**CIFF Shanghai
Opens Under Cloud
of Tariffs and Talk
of Trade Wars**



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HIGHLIGHTS

08 **UPFRONT: Award-Winning Designer of Branded Environments Returns to Perkins and Will in Austin**

A familiar face and known leader in the Branded Environments design discipline has returned to global architecture firm Perkins and Will to expand its services in the Southwest.

10 **CIFF Shanghai Opens Under Cloud of Tariffs and Talk of Trade Wars**

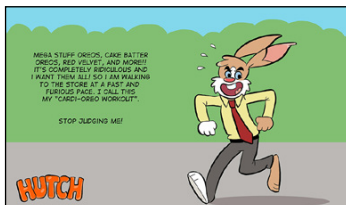
No U.S. manufacturers tout a “Made in China” label on their office furniture products, but almost all of them have products and components that are made here.

34 **NeoCan’t Event Provides Networking Opportunities and a Glimpse into the Future of Design**

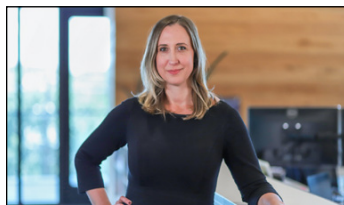
< Herman Miller and Vitra Collaborate for Eames Eucalyptus LTR Tables p30

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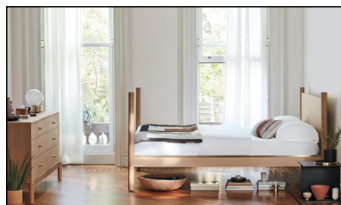
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10 | CIFF Shanghai Opens Under Cloud of Tariffs and Talk of Trade Wars

The office furniture industry in the U.S. and here in China are intimately tied together with Chinese suppliers and manufacturers connected to many of their counterparts across the Pacific.



18 | Designing for Designers: Dyer Brown Transforms its Own Headquarters

When not engaged in heads-down work, Dyer Brown's staff has choices for meetings, eating, relaxing and personal care.



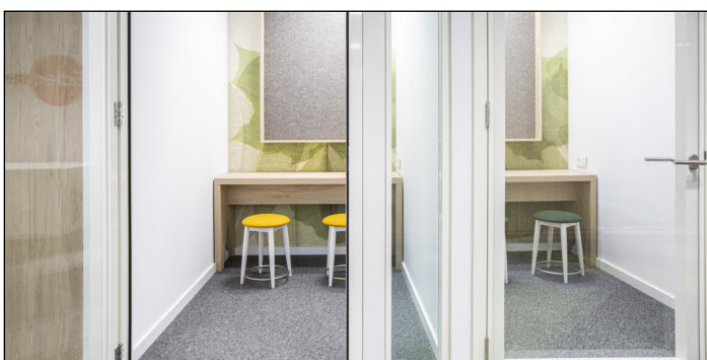
30 | Herman Miller and Vitra Collaborate for the Limited-Run Eames Eucalyptus LTR Tables

The tables feature solid tops made from eucalyptus trees harvested from the Eames House property.



36 | Put A Smile On Your Feet – Floortex Solves Standing Desk Strain With New Line Of Tactile Mats

Two years ago, Floortex leveled up its offerings with a new line of AFS-TEX Active anti-fatigue mats. Today, the mats are the company's best sellers.



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The Business of Furniture



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Please include high resolution photos along with your release; at least 300 dpi.

https://bellow.press/SubmitNews

Business of Furniture and *Workplaces* magazine are the go-to sources for keeping you informed about everything that is happening in the industry. From trends that affect your bottom line, to new products that will help your customers work better, to stories that will help you run a better, more informed company.

ROB KIRKBRIDE, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

MEGA STUFF OREOS, CAKE BATTER OREOS, RED VELVET, AND MORE!! IT'S COMPLETELY RIDICULOUS AND I WANT THEM ALL! SO I AM WALKING TO THE STORE AT A FAST AND FURIOUS PACE. I CALL THIS MY "CARDI-OREO WORKOUT".

STOP JUDGING ME!

HUTCH



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PRODUCTS

Put A Smile On Your Feet – Floortex Solves Standing Desk Strain With New Line Of Tactile Mats

AS THE STANDING DESK REVOLUTION EMERGED, FLOORTEx FOLLOWED THE RESEARCH AND USER BEHAVIOR SURROUNDING THESE NEW DESKS AND FOUND MANY OFFICE WORKERS REVERTED TO SITTING NOT LONG AFTER TRYING TO STAND AND WORK.

by Emily Clingman

Two years ago, Floortex leveled up its offerings with a new line of AFS-TEX Active anti-fatigue mats. Today, the mats are the company's best sellers.

Since 2001, Floortex — beginning with its flagship product, a polycarbonate chair mat — has been at the forefront of innovation in the manufacturing and marketing of surface protection products for the office, industry and home. The company has a network of partners and distributors in more than 40 countries. Its corporate headquarters are based in the U.K., and Floortex also has a U.S. base in Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

As the standing desk revolution emerged, Floortex followed the research and user behavior surrounding these new desks and found many office workers reverted to sitting not long after trying to stand and work.

“We understood all the health benefits of the standing desk, but we were also learning about all the downsides of excess standing,” said John Barker, Floortex marketing manager. “With major installations of standing desks in offices, workers would report that after standing for about a half hour, their knees were hurting, their ankles were hurting, and they had backaches. So, people got turned off, but the company has spent tens of thousands on these headline products.”

Barker says standing is good, but standing still is not good. And if standing desk users don't have the right ergonomic accessories to get enthused about using the desks, companies might find the investment a waste.

This was Floortex's cue to design several different styles of anti-fatigue mats for the active office sector, including the popular 4000x and 5000x AFS-TEX mats. The cushion, texture and ergonomic features encourage users to practice NEAT — non-exercise activity thermogenesis or activities that burn energy but aren't genuine exercise.

“You need to keep moving, even if it's micromovements, like stretching your ankles and moving around,” Barker said. “We know that when these



AFS-TEX Dynamic

mats are put in, users are able to stand longer and be more comfortable with the whole sit-stand concept. And it has been found that when you are standing, you're more alert, you're more productive."

The AFS-TEX series includes nine mat variations with similar features, including a contoured, non-linear profile for numerous standing positions, foot-massaging contours and raised massage pods, a recess for stretching feet and legs, an ergo bar for foot flexing and calf stretching, a durable polyester cover, an anti-slip base and an active antimicrobial ingredient to protect the product from microbial deterioration. All of the mats are cushioned and comfortable.

"It's compatible with walking down the road in a pair of solid work shoes versus walking down the road in a pair of Nike trainers," Barker said.

"You're actually standing on something with a bit of compression. You're not so jolted by every single move. Your joints aren't as stressed."

AFS-TEX includes two other unique products — a platform surface with foot-massaging roller balls and the Dynamic Active Footrest. Shaped kind of like an American football, the Dynamic is a cylinder to be used under the desk while seated in a chair. The idea is to roll, wobble and nudge around the footrest with one's feet to stimulate lower body movement, thereby reducing fatigue and some of the negative aspects of sitting for a long time.

"We believe we have unique offerings," Barker said, adding Floortex has put years of research behind its products.

The company hasn't gone the route of third-party testing. Instead, Floortex monitors the research already available in the industry and equally relies on feedback from ergonomics specialists, users, facilities managers and others that use AFS-TEX mats.

"What we've been doing is offering our mats to companies that have installed standing desks, so the workers can try them," Barker said. "Because we know that if they have the mats onsite for just a few days, they are going to quickly get it, see the benefits, and they'll want to keep on using them — which is great for us, obviously, because we want to sell products — but the key thing is, if you're going to spend thousands of dollars on stand-up desks, you've got to have the right ergonomic accessories. Otherwise you're only giving your employees half a solution."

Barker said adding foot mats to standing desk setups is a relatively small expense versus the cost of the desks.

"The mats make the desks work better," he said. "The employees feel better about work. The company is getting more productivity. Everyone's a winner." **BoF**