

NeoCon®

NEOCON REACHES 50TH MILESTONE MARK *Leading Platform is Incubator & Catalyst for Future of Design*

(Chicago, IL – June 2018) NeoCon, held June 11–13 at The Mart in Chicago, rang in a historic 50 years as the leading platform for commercial design, serving as an incubator and catalyst for the future of the industry. This year’s event further established itself as a launch pad for innovation and thought-leadership. Record attendance and increased volume over the duration of the show underscored exactly how important this annual gathering is for members of the industry to come together and share, learn, and inspire one another.

Breakthroughs in the fields of sustainability, materiality, integrated technology, and acoustical performance were some of the top trends seen throughout the show. An overall commitment to a softer, more comfort-based approach to workspace design was evident. The movement was further solidified by exciting announcements including Herman Miller’s acquisition of contemporary Danish furniture brand, Hay, and Steelcase and West Elm’s partnership—set to provide a more expansive array of workplace furniture. A marked yet diverse focus on wellbeing in the workplace also took center stage. From privacy solutions to biophilic design, workplace solutions exhibited a people-centric approach.

NeoCon 50 also added ten new permanent showrooms and 100 innovative 7th floor exhibitors to its already robust line-up. Conference program attendance was strong thanks to thought-provoking marquee presentations featuring Art Gensler, Cheryl Durst, Nick Thompson, Cindy Allen, Robin Klehr Avia, Gisue Hariri, Lauren Rottet and Carol Ross Barney, as well as over 100 accredited seminar sessions. Dynamic installations, activations, and interactive exhibits rounded out the show. Tuesday night’s The Future is Party, presented by Mohawk, was a high energy affair with more than 3000 guests celebrating NeoCon’s 50 years.

The 50th edition also marked the launch of a new, aptly titled podcast, NeoConversations. It will serve as the voice of the industry throughout the year, featuring insight into new trends, design solutions, and relevant, impactful issues.

According to Byron Morton, VP Leasing, NeoCon Shows, “NeoCon 50 had a remarkable energy. The permanent showrooms, 7th floor exhibit hall, and seminar spaces benefited from three solid days of traffic. In an increasingly digital world, these face-to-face meetings and meaningful interactions are not only essential, but imperative.”

Designers, showrooms and exhibitors shared some of their observations:

- “We could tell from the energetic crowds at The Mart that the excitement of NeoCon was at an all-time high this year! We loved that there was such a focus on acoustic solutions—it’s an undervalued component when it comes to privacy, workplaces, and open environments. We also noticed

there were a lot of natural materials and finishes, a welcome return after the influx of the cold, industrial materials of the past few years.” - John Hopkins, Principal and Design Director, IA Interiors Architects’ Chicago office

- “This year’s NeoCon exhibited a fundamental shift in how we think about workplace design, the elements that we developed in the Steelcase showroom exhibited how surface, form, and materiality combine to create and inspire the way we feel. As a result, we have a refreshed view of how design improves our lives.” - Joey Shimoda, FAIA, FIIDA, Shimoda Design Group
- “I have attended NeoCon for the last three years and continue to be impressed by the immense energy and creativity of the manufacturers, designers, and associations. I saw a range of products implementing unexpected, thought-provoking uses of color, pattern, and texture.” - Angie Lee, AIA, IIDA, Principal, Design Director-Interiors, FXCollaborative Architects LLP
- “Every year we’ve exhibited, we’ve continued to see more traffic and more excitement surrounding the show. That energy was palpable and evident across ALL the floors this year, including the 7th. The number of new and innovative products that are adding previously unknown value to projects is on the rise, and architects and designers are spending more time on the 7th floor to find these hidden gems. We’re proud to be leading the wave of acoustic solutions, and we’re grateful that NeoCon gives us the platform to properly show and offer an opportunity for attendees to experience our products.” - Michael Dardashti, Executive Vice President, North America, Snowsound
- “As a new exhibitor we have been looking forward to participating in NeoCon and could not be more pleased with how this year turned out, with all the honors and the traffic to our showroom. We had expectations (for traffic) and this blew it out of the water. We were honored that the attendees flocked to our showroom en masse, to the point we had a line out of the door on Monday and early Tuesday. We have gained a lot of interest in the products, which have already been specified for upcoming exciting projects. NeoCon 50 has definitely reestablished the buzz around NeoCon and contract furniture in North America and we are excited to take part.” - Thomas Jonsson, Partner, Scandinavian Spaces
- “What a phenomenal Neocon 2018! We were thrilled to celebrate the 50th anniversary of NeoCon and welcome many attendees to the reimagined Steelcase Chicago WorkLife experience. We found attendees were interested and engaged in how Steelcase and our partners demonstrated an ecosystem of spaces that enhances the employee experience. Our spaces showcased a diverse range of applications, aesthetics and price points which supports all of the places and ways people work today and we were delighted with the high traffic and positive reactions.” - Katie Pace, Spokeswoman, Steelcase

- “NeoCon this year—at least on the 3rd floor—seemed to me to be a solid verification of the growing focus on ancillary offerings. Work stations/surfaces and performance seating continue to be improved and enhanced. These work settings were surrounded by colorful/textural/shapely/comfy furnishings helping create a more residential ‘I want to work there’ vibe. Exciting times. I don’t think anyone who attended NeoCon would say this was a dull year.” - Tim Bell, Director of Global Customer Experience, Herman Miller
- “This year, we used the show as a platform to launch new products across a range of categories, including seating, lighting and monitor arms, with introductions that accommodate the way we work today and address the broader context of our natural environment. The Humanscale showroom feels busy every year, but this year was busier than ever. We’re already looking forward to NeoCon’s 51st!” - Tina Brennan, Senior Brand Director, Humanscale

NeoCon 2019 will be held from June 10-12 at The Mart in Chicago.

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Media can find additional details and images [here](#). For showroom, exhibitor and general NeoCon news, images and real-time information, follow NeoCon Shows on the following social media channels: [Facebook](#) (@NeoConShows), [Twitter](#) (@NeoCon_Shows), and [Instagram](#) (@NeoCon_Shows).

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