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JOEY RUITER STANDS IN FRONT OF THE SMALL DOWNTOWN PLOT OF LAND HE PURCHASED TO BUILD HIS STUDIO - BRIAN KELLY

Development News

New furniture company in Holland crafts innovative pieces for public spaces

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Deborah Johnson Wood

A hip new furniture startup in Holland plans to spark up the way people use public spaces with the launch of the company's initial furniture line geared for a technology-driven society.

[Sparkeology](#) is a combined effort of longtime library furniture-maker [The Worden Company](#), architecture and design firm [Via Design](#) and its sister company [Viable](#), and graphic design firm [Square One Design](#). The company operates out of Worden's headquarters at 199 East 17th St.

"We saw that public spaces have become community hubs where people gather," says Worden spokesperson Robin Hendrick Lane. "On campuses, students gather in coffee shops, in hallways between classes, in lounges in dorms. We see opportunities in all of those spaces where people need to sit down and plug in, and the need to create little spaces where people can work."

Lane says users can plug into built-in electrical connections in the furniture, as well as "plug into" engagement with any group that gathers – the furniture is lightweight and designed to fit a number of configurations.

For example, [Flip](#) can be a table or a stool, or flip it over and it holds your briefcase and coffee – off the floor and upright. And there's [Ty](#), a space divider that "ties" everything together and doubles as a central power hub. Add a [Ty-Pad](#) backrest and [Ben](#), a coordinating bench, and you have seating, a power source and a divider that can become a display piece.

"We're looking at ways to accommodate a laptop in terms of a tablet arm that can be folded away," Lane says. "And our display pieces double as space dividers with interchangeable interiors that go from cubbies to shelves and you can hang a flat screen TV or monitor off the interior."

Worden will manufacture the furniture in its FSC-certified facility, using wood veneers, low-formaldehyde wood cores, or metals made of recycled and recyclable materials.

Sparkeology's first nine products will make their debut at [NeoCon World's Trades Fair 2010](#), a decision made just six weeks ago. Flip will compete in the [Best of NeoCon](#) competition for office accessories.

Source: Robin Hendrick Lane, Sparkeology

Deborah Johnson Wood is development news editor for Rapid Growth Media. She can be contacted at deborah@rapidgrowthmedia.com. Development News tips can be sent to info@rapidgrowthmedia.com.

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