

# Office Interior Design Predictions



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- cover image source -

As we look back at the interior design shows of Milan, Stockholm and Clerkenwell 2019, there are clear themes and exciting trends emerging for office furnishings and interiors in 2020/21.

This ebook explores how many of the early adopters of these trends are influencing new ideas for architects, interior designers, coworking spaces and forward-thinking businesses. In particular, it looks at how wellness, materials, colour, technology and sustainability are driving the office interiors of the future.

# Key Themes Emerging from 2019

The overarching message of workplace wellbeing is still prevalent throughout office design as a result of the industry's increasing understanding of how environment directly affects productivity, health and happiness at work. Interior designers and furniture makers are building on that knowledge with new technology, innovative materials and a psychological approach to colour that taps into the emotions and motivations of employees.

With an eclectic palette that flits between invigorating bold colours and calming pastel shades throughout the commercial and residential world of interiors, office interiors are favouring organic materials and tones, with a continuing emphasis on nature and sustainability in response to an increasingly digital workplace.

The subject of office ergonomics continues to dominate, with all eyes (and ears) tuned into acoustic solutions as a way to solve the heavily-debated open-plan office argument. From screens and flooring to pods and booths, acoustic solutions will be the essential office furniture items of the 2020 workplace.

# The Emerging Office Interior Trends for 2020



If you're planning your 2020 office fit-out or refurbishment, be inspired by these top predictions from the leading trend forecasters, design fairs, magazines and innovators of 2019.

- image source -



# Workplace Wearables

2020 was always that point in the future where we envisaged hoverboards and robots. We may not be quite there yet but, as the year hurtles towards us at rocket-speed, so do many new technological advances that are almost as exciting.

With advanced AI, interior designers and architects are now able to gain new insights into human behaviour and how workers respond to their environment. Data will be informing many design choices over the coming years.

image source



Milan Design Week 2019 showcased a forward-thinking installation from collaborators Google Design Studio, Reddymade Architecture, and the International Arts + Mind Lab at Johns Hopkins University. As an exploration into neuroaesthetics, visitors were invited to wear wristbands that analysed how they responded, physiologically and mentally, to the colours, lighting, textures, sounds and smells around them.

Wearables aren't new, of course, but the recent interest in workplace wellness is taking this trend into the office, as data seeks to understand and improve health at work.

Expect to see new workplace-wellness applications and wearables, under-desk sensors and sophisticated environmental monitors in next year's offices.





# Colour Psychology

The advancing technological age is influencing the colour trends of 2020 with tones that seek to bring nature and science together. With the semi-artificial Neo-Mint hailed as the colour in 2020 by trend forecasters WSGN and Dezeen, the shade has both a futuristic freshness and naturally calming effect.

Neo mint and complementary shades of jade and celery sit alongside warm and mellow yellows, cantaloupe oranges and cassis throughout 2020.

- image source -



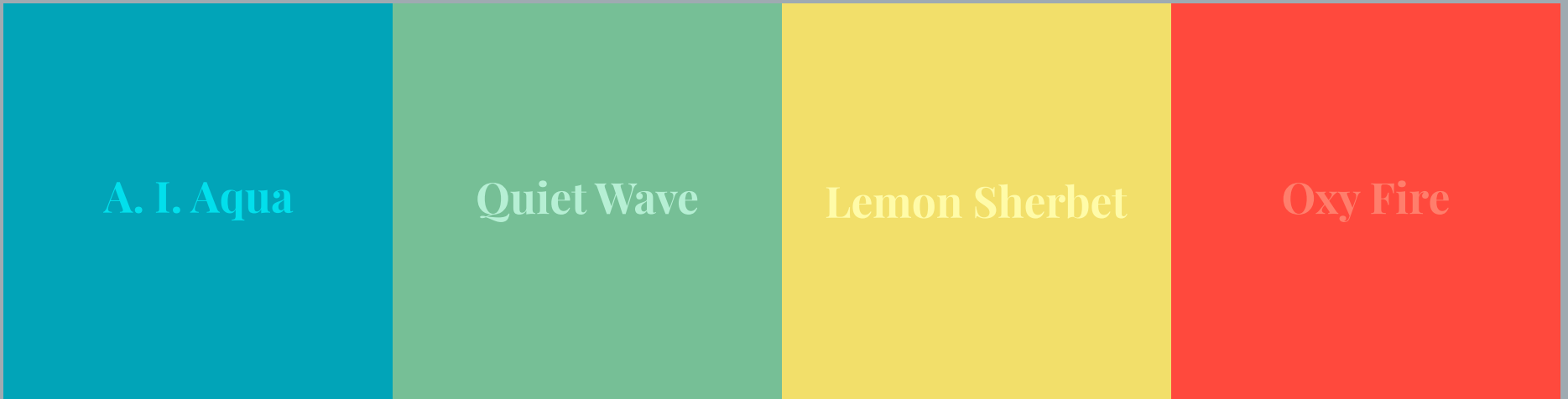
Looking further ahead to Coloro's 2021 predictions, wellness dictates cooler hues with a tech-inspired blue (A.I. Aqua) and tranquil green (Quiet Wave), joined by a bright, feel-good yellow (Lemon Sherbet), an energising, high-performance red (Oxy Fire) and grounding grey (Good Grey) for balance.

In office designs, these colours will likely feature as accents in furniture against a more organic palette of greens, browns and neutrals. Cork, wood veneers and natural soft-touch textiles will be popular in open-plan offices, according to furniture designers, Knoll.



- image source -

# Looking ahead: Coloro's 2021 colour trend predictions



Good Grey



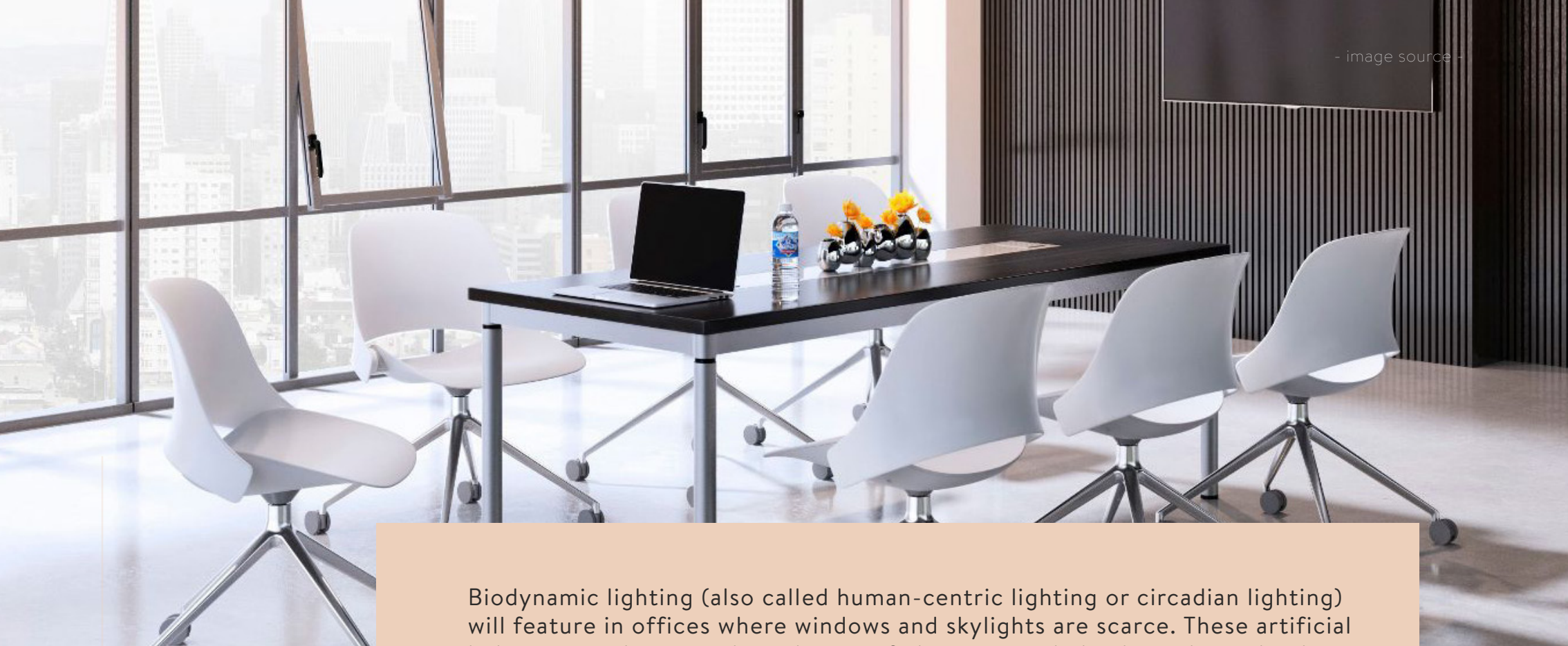
# Beyond Green Walls

Biophilic design featured heavily in 2018 office interiors and the 'living wall' has moved from coworking spaces to many offices throughout the world. Connection to nature will continue to grow in 2020 as workplace designers explore new ways to bring the outside into the office.

Whilst moss walls bring a beautiful feature to the work environment, eyes will be glancing upwards and outwards in 2020 to lighting (natural and artificial), hanging plants and nature-inspired shapes, textiles and panels hanging from the ceiling.

Image source -





Biodynamic lighting (also called human-centric lighting or circadian lighting) will feature in offices where windows and skylights are scarce. These artificial lights mimic the natural conditions of changing sunlight throughout the day, which in turn help to regulate human circadian rhythms.

In response to the negative effects of an always-on, digital world, circadian lighting counteracts the well-reported screen fatigue seen with excessive screen use. When positioned above, to work with our eye's natural response to overhead sky light, research shows it positively affects the nervous system, helping to reduce stress, too.



# Recycle and Reduce

With the all-natural trending heavily in office interiors and workplace wellbeing, furniture designers have revealed new innovations that put sustainability centre stage. 2020's workplace architects will be encouraged to recycle and reuse where possible.

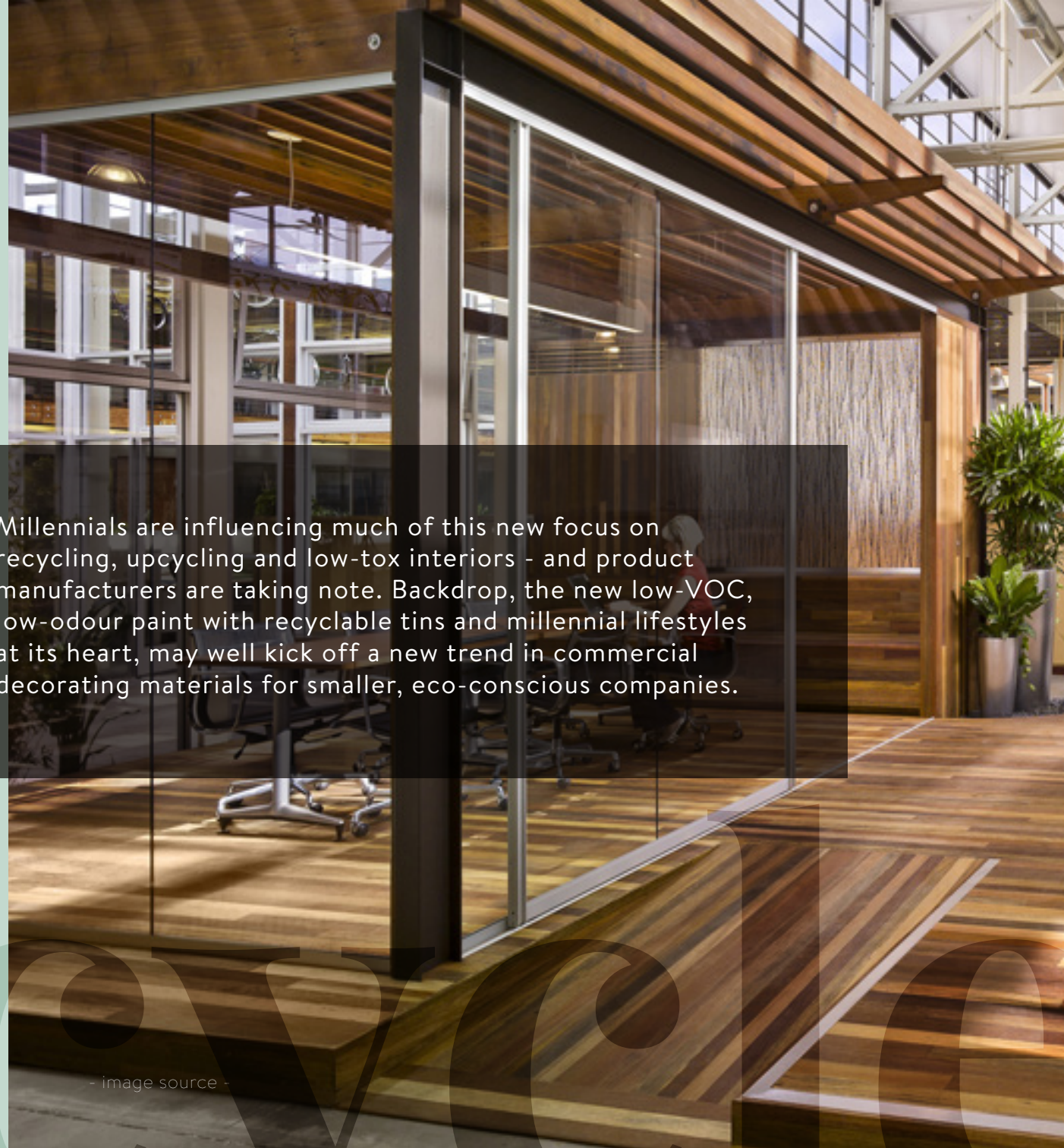
In 2018, Humanscale launched their new ergonomic chair: Smart Ocean. Their new take on the already popular Diffrient Smart chair, features a form-sensing seating mesh made from recycled, discarded fishing nets. Interface, in collaboration with Aquafil and the Net-Works initiative, have also utilised recycled fishing nets in the production of their Net-Effect carpet tiles for the office. We expect to see many more environmentally conscious inventions in 2020 and beyond.



- image source -

In parallel, recycled plastics will continue to feature in flooring, table tops and furnishings as the spotlight on plastic pollution fuels new innovations.

Millennials are influencing much of this new focus on recycling, upcycling and low-tox interiors - and product manufacturers are taking note. Backdrop, the new low-VOC, low-odour paint with recyclable tins and millennial lifestyles at its heart, may well kick off a new trend in commercial decorating materials for smaller, eco-conscious companies.



- image source -



# Multi-purpose Spaces

Shared offices have come under attack over recent years as the effects of open-plan working have emerged. However, togetherness and collaboration are still popular in the agile workplace and work well for creativity, problem-solving and connection with colleagues. Rebuilding the cubicles of the 80s is not the solution.

Instead, the answer lies in versatility. In 2020, offices, meeting rooms and break-out areas will be designed to be easily reconfigured to suit the task of the people. In buildings and cities where space is at a premium, it makes sense to view the workspace as one that can evolve and re-shape as required.





These multipurpose rooms will use manoeuvrable room dividers, panel, desks and storage furniture to zone smaller activity-based spaces within the much larger office. The Talent Desk from Actiu is a great example of how multipurpose furniture can create a versatile space. The desk, which is stackable, foldable, mobile and height-adjustable, can also double up as a white board.

Research carried out by the University of California found that office employees are interrupted by humans or technology every three minutes, on average. It then takes up to 23 minutes to refocus the brain again. The task-focused workspaces of 2020 are critical if we are to avoid that level of stress and unproductivity.

# Multi-Purposes



# Saddle Stools and Balance Boards



As multi-purpose rooms become the new open-plan in 2020, so too will furniture become multi-functional. We've already seen the sit-stand desk movement take hold as employees embrace the health benefits that come from a change in posture throughout the day.

The new ergonomics of 2020 will encourage further movement with saddle stools and balance boards. These wobbly seats and rocking platforms were seen throughout Stockholm Design Week '19, as the complementary furniture pieces to the standing desk.

- image source -

The well-documented health concerns that come from a sedentary lifestyle apply to prolonged periods of sitting and standing, which is why future-focused product manufacturers are innovating with active chairs that engage the core muscles and encourage small movements throughout the day - even while sitting (much like the gym ball concept). The same is achieved while standing on the wobble boards.



image source

# Booths, Pods and Hoods

Noise pollution has been found to be a significant factor in how employees feel and perform, according to various studies including the Wellness Together research commissioned by Humanscale, Bisley et al.

The research found that noise from colleagues ranked as one of the highest distractions affecting productivity and retention of staff. Consequently, the profitability of companies is also impaired. The study discovered that 'the availability of quiet spaces is found to be one of the biggest differentiators between low and high performing companies.'








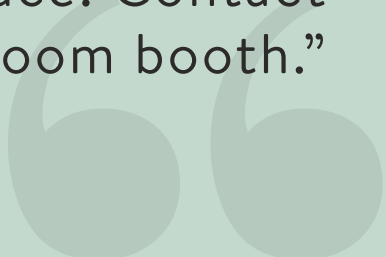
In response to the pressing need for privacy and quiet escape within open plan, shared offices, there has been a spike in demand for acoustic pods, phone booths and hooded chairs. These small private boxes and high-topped seating areas provide a visual and acoustic screen for individuals who require uninterrupted concentration or a place to converse away from the ears of others.

There were no shortage of examples and innovations throughout Stockholm Design Week 2019, with a refreshing range of noise-reducing products that, in true Scandi style, managed to achieve aesthetic beauty and performance (something that has lacked in acoustic solutions of previous years).





“Mikomax, Hush booths have been leading the way in Acoustic booths with sizes ranging from Phone booth to 6 person meeting pods. Equipped with ventilation, power and data, they can also be moved easily within an open office space. Contact M2 Office Interiors to view our showroom booth.”



# Sculptural Dividers and Artistic Panels

Acoustics solutions are dominating office interior trends in 2019 and 2020. As well as pods and booths, it was the modular meeting rooms, wall panels and dividers that can be erected, moved and stored on demand, that featured heavily in the design fairs.

These sound-absorbing screens work by zoning open-plan offices and contribute to the enhanced wellbeing of employees with differing tasks and needs.

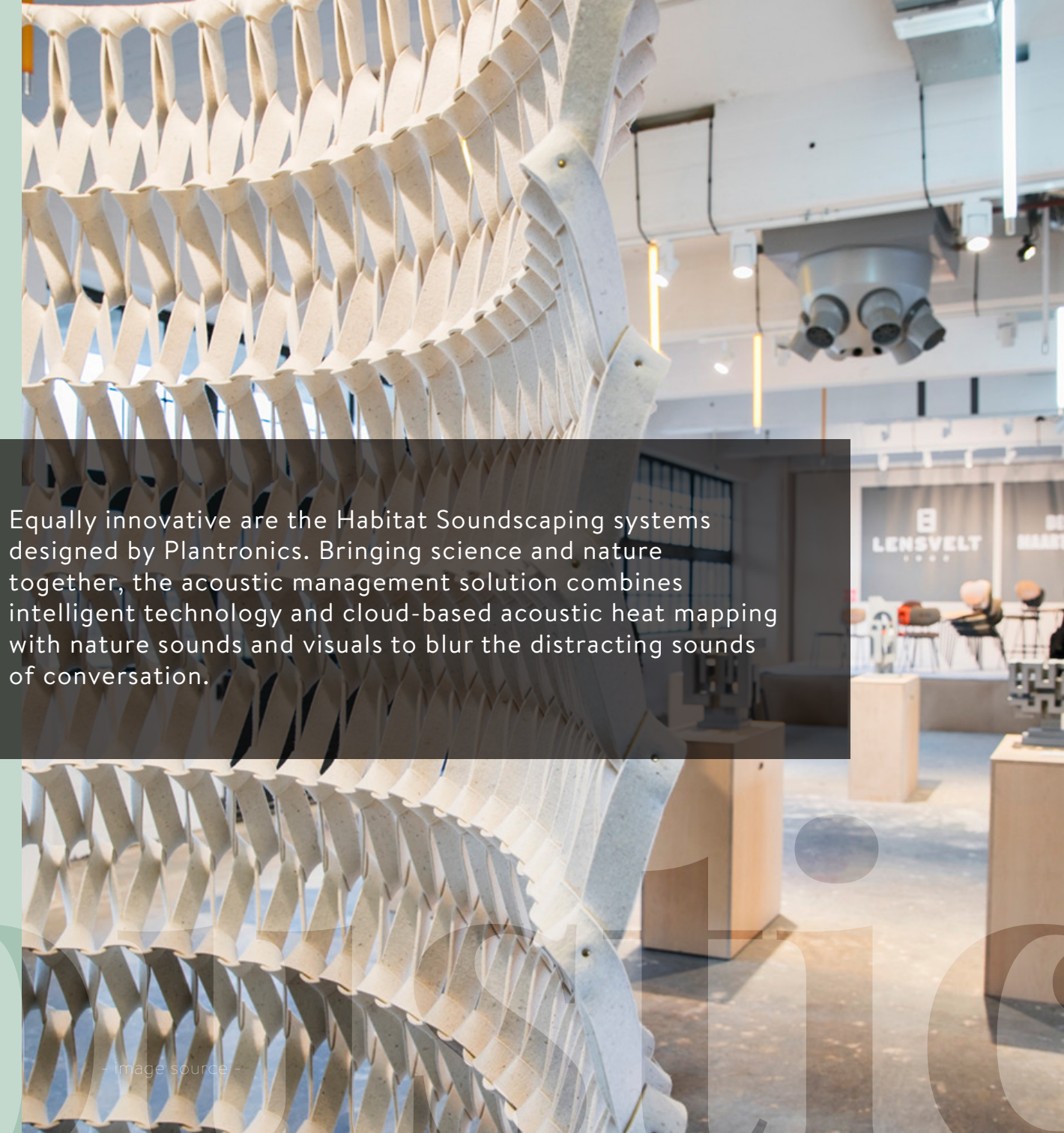
Designs have moved on from the ineffective, unattractive panels of early years. Hush Acoustics, for example, has created soundproofing blocks, screens and towers in colours and shapes that can be positioned to form complex, geometric wall art.



“The possibilities are endless with Hush Acoustic panels, easily installed to any surface, with a huge range of colours and shapes. Bespoke designs are available to incorporate a brand logo shape and colours into the acoustic wall tile.”

Acoustic panels are now shaped to complement interior design in materials and fabrics that bend and follow the form of a room. Shiny surfaces that bounce sound are used sparingly.

The Studio of Petra Vonk is taking acoustic panelling even further with the Plectere Curtain, which was showcased at the Object Rotterdam in 2019. These sound-absorbing felt curtains are 100% bio-based and hand-woven to form beautiful fabric structures. As well as making a stunning, sculptural statement in the office, the dividers absorb both high and low frequency sounds.



Equally innovative are the Habitat Soundscaping systems designed by Plantronics. Bringing science and nature together, the acoustic management solution combines intelligent technology and cloud-based acoustic heat mapping with nature sounds and visuals to blur the distracting sounds of conversation.

- Image source -



# Office Interior Design in the Next Decade

The health of the employee and that of the planet is driving the look and feel of office interiors in 2020. As people seek workplaces that offer comfort, wellness and relaxation in return for their efforts, we will continue to see exciting innovations in office ergonomics and furniture design.

These workplaces of the future are no longer responding to fleeting interior fashions. Instead, they seek to enhance the lives of the people within them for long-term health and enjoyment of all.

- image source -

# 2020

M2 Office Interior Project managers can be hired either directly by the client, architect or building contractor. Depending on the project requirements, M2 Office Interiors can work with the architect in designing spaces & furniture that meet the client's needs and budgets in a functional and aesthetically pleasing way.

Alternatively, for smaller projects, M2 Office Interiors can work with the client on new office space, office space expansions, reconfigurations or refurbishments. The service includes site visits, floor plans, 3D visuals and furniture concepts.

Contact the sales team at [sales@m2.ie](mailto:sales@m2.ie) to discover more about office space reconfiguration, acoustic solutions, glass partitions, flooring and furniture design.