

Interior Design Trends 2019: What Can We Expect?

Elizabeth Levine
Interior Design Director, Workplace Studio

Terre Paller
Design Director, Tenant | Landlord Studio

INTERIOR DESIGN TRENDS 2019: WHAT CAN WE EXPECT?

Happy new year! And congratulations on surviving the 2018 holiday season. The past year has flown by in a frenzy with countless projects and deadlines, and we have found a few minutes to clear the boards for a fresh new batch of projects. As we complete our year-end organizing, we're looking forward to what's next and what will shape the year to come.

Market Overview

2018 ushered in a strong economy, a stock market rollercoaster and some controversial trade policy decisions. How has this impacted our industry? The labor market remains strong and interest rates are beginning to rise. We expect end users to start asking for materials that last longer than a short-term lease, as we witness occupancy costs rising. Trade tariffs are prompting interior designers to pay attention to where a product is manufactured. Many foreign manufacturers are raising prices to protect their profits and to stay in business. We expect that this issue will be top-of-mind for many of our clients in 2019.

We now have plenty of projects to go around, but we don't necessarily have the labor pool to construct them. We would expect to see construction costs rising and general contractors to become more selective on which assignments to produce.

What does all of this mean for interior design projects in 2019? Let's have some fun and take a shot at what we can expect to see this year!

Interior Spaces

Experiential Design – Taking inspiration from objects, clients are looking to design an “experience” for visitors to their space. Striving to go beyond the visual aesthetics of an interior environment, we are now concerned with how a space smells, sounds and feels. Engaging all of the patrons' senses provides for a memorable and lasting encounter. Clients are figuring out that it's the tie that binds patrons to the brand, allowing for a faithful following and prolonged corporate success.



Many modern workplaces have no private offices or traditional workstations

Escape Rooms – Are you wondering why this has made the list? No, we are not designing escape rooms in office spaces, but we are taking pointers from movies like “Escape Room,” a 2019 American psychological horror-thriller film, which, when you pay close attention, really centers on experiential design. Every clue, every piece of furniture, all the art, music, sights and sounds all contribute to the experience and are key to successful navigation and ultimate escape from each of the rooms. If you are interested in learning about experiential design, watch “Escape Room.”



The evolution of experiential design goes beyond visuals and now emphasizes how a space smells, sounds and feels.

“All Lounge” Space – Imagine an office space with no private offices and traditional workstations. Picture an office that looks like a coffee shop or restaurant. An office comprised of varying height tables, chairs, sofas and lounge chairs. An office of varying room types that are focused on tasks and acoustics. Open spaces, enclosed spaces and third spaces fill the floor plate and are all linked by intuitive, easy-to-use technology. This is the “all lounge” space concept and we see this as an emerging trend in 2019. We will expect this to be common by 2022 and beginning to level off in 2025. We can expect to see more and more products that support this type of office design.

Technology-Driven Design

Well, it’s happened. Design and technology have become equal partners in creating thoughtful and well-designed projects. At every turn, technology advancements are allowing the workplace to become a tool for the end-user’s efficiency and effectiveness. Here is what we are seeing:



PoE (Power over Ethernet) – We have seen an increase with the use of PoE technology in the corporate workplace. The most common application is including “firewire” connections at conference tables and other fixed furniture. This paired with an adjacent USB connection enables most office patrons to work anywhere in the office. We will continue to see advancements at breakneck speed this year.



Wireless Charging – Advancements in wireless charging have become commonplace and we are seeing furniture manufacturers offer wireless charging as an option on many furniture pieces. We expect this to become even more common, with wireless charging moving beyond automotive and furniture applications. We can’t wait to cut the cord!

Ultra-Short-Throw Projectors – Remember when every conference room had to have a massive video projector pole mounted from the ceiling? Those days are behind us. We are seeing ultra-short-throw video projectors being used all over the workplace. Some of these projectors look like a standard pendant light fixture and come in handy in reception and break areas. Tech companies favor them for projecting brand standards and statistics all over the workplace as a branding element. Color and image perfection advancements have made use of ultra-short-throw projectors a no-brainer.

Many clients are investing in ultra-thin bendable flat screens and using them as event and welcome signage, as they can be relocated effortlessly in the workplace.

Media Walls – Thankfully, the days of a single large flat screen in a reception area are gone. We are now incorporating large multiple media



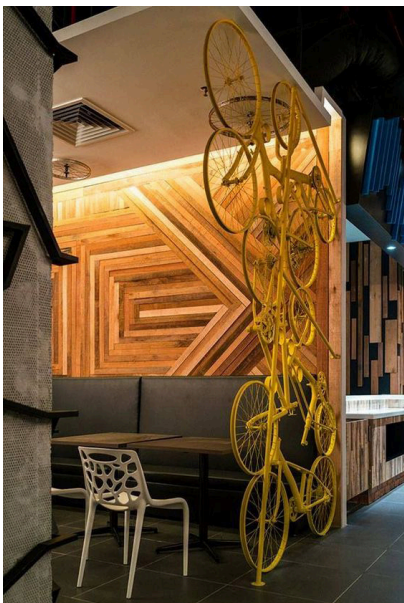
Phone booths fulfill a need in the open office for private, acoustically sealed rooms; they provide a “reservation not required” place for taking calls and conducting small video conferences

screens, double-sided flat screens, ultra-thin bendable flat screens, motion walls, and interactive video experiences to convey brand and to provide a sense of space. Many clients are investing in ultra-thin bendable flat screens and using them as event and welcome signage, as they can be relocated effortlessly in the workplace.

Furniture and Fixtures

Phone Booths – Have you heard about the Warley Museum in West Yorkshire, UK? It’s the world’s smallest museum, operating out of one of the UK’s iconic but disused red telephone booths. It’s a charming example of something that its trending heavily in corporate interior design. Playing on nostalgia and fulfilling a need in the open office for private, acoustically sealed rooms. When placed strategically within the open office, they provide a “reservation not required” third place for taking calls and conducting small video conferences. Look to Zenbooth, Ahrend, TryThinkTanks, Loop, Framery, TalkBox, and ROOM... and many, many, more!

Branding Objects – Have you noticed the wooden spoon door pulls at your local Kentucky Fried Chicken store? How about thoughtful product placement in the office space used in interesting ways? Branding of corporate spaces has gone beyond logo color and name placement. Wanting to provide a fully immersive experience, clients are moving beyond typical branding efforts, mixing actual products with multimedia presentations that provide a fully immersive brand experience.



Clients are moving beyond typical branding efforts in order to provide a fully immersive brand experience.

The Slouch Posture – This is a new trend that is blending the home and office and creating several new types of corporate spaces. Do you require a more informal type of space for your meeting? Are you looking for a creative space that allows for idea generation? Do you want to remove the hierarchy of meeting participants seated around a traditional conference table? Hence the rise of the Slouch Posture in the corporate office. Look for traditional large meeting rooms outfitted with sectional sofas and lounge chairs. Going, going, gone are traditional conference tables and they have been replaced with standing height tables and soft seating groups. Look for the ability to quickly transform a room based on current meeting needs or the ability to transform the room as the conversation ebbs and flows.

Materials

Concrete – Last year, we commented on the popularity of gray and concrete tones in corporate space. This one has not stopped in popularity,



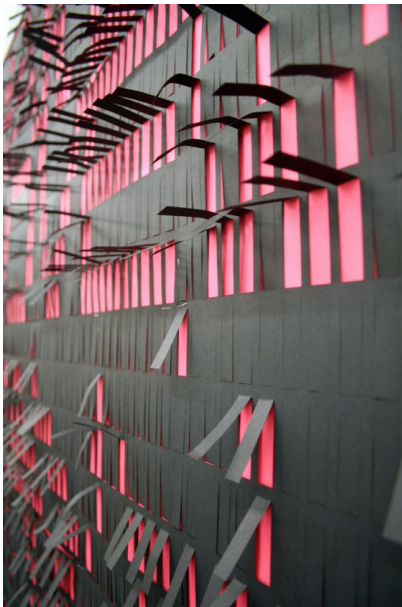
Exposed concrete continues to appeal in its use of honest architectural materials.

as exposed concrete continues to appeal in its nod to the use of honest architectural materials. This one will not go away and we are curious if the material is not taking its place as a sacred cow of architectural materials. We will know next year!

Unusual Textures – The Hygge Danish Design movement has caused this one to explode in corporate interiors. As home and office continue to merge, comfort and coziness are driving this trend. Fur pillows, thatch textures, wool, cashmere, chunky knits and velvet give interior designers a new way to spell “welcome!”

Metallic – Hygge has not only brought us interesting textures, but also the use of metallics in the corporate environment. It’s all about light reflection, and we are utilizing surfaces to reflect light to provide additional space interest and sophistication. Think of it like flicking light from a candle flame. We hope this one sticks around for a while!

Quilted – Anyone who’s endured a harsh winter knows how crucial a puffy coat is. Believe it or not, it’s an aesthetic that’s crossed over into corporate interiors in the form of quilted/puffy textiles. Quilted everything is a trend, and we are seeing quilted fabric introduced on furniture upholstery, wall materials, acoustical treatments and carpets.



As home and office continue to merge, we are seeing more and more unusual textures finding their way into the workplace.

Palette—The Year Ahead: In Color

Pantone has selected Living Coral 16-1546 as the color of the year. The Pantone color selection is always a very popular driver of color language across the globe. We can expect to see this vibrant tone just about everywhere in 2019.

Sherwin Williams also issued their color forecast for 2019 and have provided us with even more color options that will begin to influence our projects this year:

- The Aficionado family is dominated by a saturated purple entitled Alaea SW 7579.
- Wanderer takes inspiration from world travel and is led by Cavern Clay SW 7701.
- Navy blue fans will be smitten with Shapeshifter, especially Endless Sea SW 9150.



Pantone has selected Living Coral as 2019's Color of the Year.

- Those of us that crave bold color will enjoy the Enthusiast group which is led by a gold hue called, Gold Crest SW 6670.
- Naturalist includes a beautiful soft silver gray tone called Misty SW 6232.
- Raconteur is comprised with many beautiful neutrals including Dhurrie Beige SW 7524.

As we look at these color groupings, we can expect the popular 2018 colors of pink, green and gray to get deeper in hue and ultimately become more sophisticated. As we approach 2020, expect this trend to continue with a complete shift of focus towards the start of 2021. Pink, green and gray will be the time stamp of the late 20-teens. Every decade has them, so you can thank us later!

Pastels – We stated in 2018 that the year would be about pastels and jewel tones of any of the primary colors. We saw and will see shades of rose, aqua, cornflower, seafoam and teal in all interior projects. 2019 brings coral as the color of the year. We expect softer tones and pastels to remain strong for this year and beyond into 2020. The next US presidential election will usher the end of the popularity of pastels which will be replaced with strong dominant saturated color.

Big Picture

The Death of 1990s Corporate – The economic boom of the 1990s was followed by a period of office building in most American cities that left substantial marks on the architectural landscapes of Atlanta, Miami, San Diego, Houston and Charlotte. Everyone created watered-down postmodern structures that celebrated medium-toned wood, highly figured marble and granite, reveals and overstated light fixtures. Every corporate office ended up looking the same, and now (30 years later) we are fighting to correct the transgressions of the past. We call it the “Death of 1990s Corporate,” and the battle is the reason for current trends in exposed concrete, mixed metals and the use of unique materials. The celebration of Corporate America has now become a stand-alone architectural statement with a very specific time stamp. Every building owner is trying to neutralize the dated look out of their portfolios.

Resurgence of Postmodern – As we report on the death of 1990s corporate, this trend may feel contradictory. The postmodern architectural movement started almost 50 years ago, in the 1970s, and hit its height in

the 1980s and 1990s. The theories and teachings of Denise Scott Brown and Robert Venturi are now seeing a resurgence and spaces designed by Phillip Johnson, Charles Moore, and Michael Graves are being recognized as symbols of the architectural movement. As we cleanse many of the later postmodern spaces and structures from memory and existence, a distinct call for purity and historical preservation is currently underway. Understanding the historical pedigree of the building/space you are designing becomes ever more important.

Happy new year, everyone! We are optimistic that 2019 will be a great year. Let's roll up our sleeves and DESIGN something!

Many modern workplaces have no private offices or traditional workstations and are blurring the lines between the home and workplace.



NELSON

White Paper

Elizabeth Levine

Interior Design Director, Workplace
Studio

e elevine@nelsononline.com

t 404.969.3649

Terre Paller

Design Director,
Tenant | Landlord Studio

e tpaller@nelsononline.com

t 404.400.8469

Atlanta

1170 Peachtree St. NE – Suite
1700 Atlanta, GA 30309

NELSONworldwide.com

© 2019 NELSON Worldwide, Inc.

Alpharetta

Atlanta

Boston

Chicago

Charleston

Charlotte

Cincinnati

Cleveland

Dallas

Jacksonville

Los Angeles

Miami

Minneapolis

New York

Orlando

Philadelphia

Pleasanton

San Francisco

San Jose

Seattle

Tampa

Vienna