

Latvia provides glimpse into "new normal" through lifestyle design

As one of the countries with the lowest infection and mortality rate, Latvia is showing the world what the "new normal" looks like.

RIGA, LATVIA, August 20, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Latvia has continually been lifting restrictions that were put in place in March 2020 due to the spread of COVID-19. As a country that has one of the lowest rates of infection and mortality, Latvia is ahead of the curve in terms of controlling the spread of the virus and implementing bare-necessity restrictions. These conditions provide a look into what the "new normal" will look like when other nations gain control over the novel virus.

The window into the "new normal" demonstrates how environment design is impacting how individuals interact with the spaces around them. That includes through the products being created, the systems in place, or the technology inextricably linked to our contemporary lifestyles. For Latvians, the design aesthetic is heavily nature-driven.



Latvia provides a look into what the "new normal" will look like



Spraybox hand sanitizers unobtrusively meld with environments

Unobtrusive Integration – "new normal" tools in existing environments

As we adapt to the "new normal", we could all strive to keep Dieter Rams' good principles of

design in mind. Particularly – that of unobtrusiveness. Successfully integrating new tools into the surrounding environment is key to ensuring adoption – a critical aspect to safely returning to public spaces.

In Latvia, we're seeing the development of an artistic [hand disinfecting stand](#) mimicking nature's curves. Being placed in business lounges and entrances to public spaces, these stands blend effortlessly into modern environments.

The stands have to be beautiful, and they can't be a hindrance to use. Otherwise, they won't fit the function. This design thinking has led to these no-touch, aesthetically minimal hand sanitizing stands that make your (now) regular hand sanitizing a ritual that isn't a chore.

Grassroots community design

The #stayhome movement is a grassroots movement designed to support those most vulnerable. A digital platform was built where those unable to leave their homes, either due to being in a risk group or who are under quarantine, are able to register their requirements, and volunteers will help implement them. Those requirements could be picking up groceries, walking the dog, or even providing companionship via telephone call for the lonely.

Although the priority of the #stayhome movement was ensuring the safety and health for the people at a higher risk in a way that kept them more isolated, the movement also played a significant role in community-building for those involved.

Corporate pivots and adaptation

Existing companies have shifted their focus and ventured into new product development to address the current requirements of society at large. Ranging from the largest Baltic 3D printing company shifting to produce up to 20,000 [face shields](#) per day to sensor companies developing minimalistic thermometers to offer [mass temperature measuring](#) in hospitals, companies are adapting to the current local requirements.

What these products have in common is the minimalist approach, making do with only what is absolutely necessary, working with lean development principles. The results is the launch of utilitarian, minimalistic, and affordable products built for real use.

Designing the future

As many industries and life as we know it have been significantly disrupted due to the insurgence of the coronavirus worldwide, it draws attention to how we as a community will collectively move forward. What will that future look like? The highly contagious nature of the virus shows us that we likely won't be returning to what we used to know as “normal” any time soon.

And as Latvia heads back to work, to restaurants, and to schools, other communities could learn from a few of the lessons. Most notably – the “new normal” is totally doable, but those designing the products and systems for that future have to keep in mind unobtrusiveness and utility, and they'll be on their way to success.

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