

The Orgatec 2022 Tradeshow Points to a Mid Century Modern Vision for New Office Furnishings

What are the latest trends in European office furnishings? We flew to the Orgatec tradeshow in Cologne, Germany, to find out.

AUSTIN, TEXAS, UNITED STATES,
December 12, 2022 /
EINPresswire.com/ -- The Orgatec Furniture Tradeshow Returns To Cologne After A Long Absence Due To The Covid Pandemic

Now that the major furniture trade shows have reconvened after the height of the Covid pandemic, it feels good to get on the road and see some of the latest industry developments in person.

Our first stop, of course, was our Formaspace Contract showroom at NeoCon in Chicago back in June.

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Formaspace

While NeoCon is the largest furniture show in America, the world’s largest (by attendance numbers) is the Orgatec tradeshow in Cologne – so we flew to Germany to uncover the latest European design trends in the [office furnishings](#) industry.

Orgatec is normally held biennially, but it marked its first return after several years of absence due to Covid.



Making the trip this time were Aaron Stoneburner (Industrial Design and Engineering Manager), Brett Gray (Product Manager and Industrial Team Lead), Mehmet Atosoglu (Formaspace Director

of Marketing), and team members Alejandra Garcia and Simon Gonzalez.

After such a long hiatus, it felt good to see our European colleagues face-to-face, as well as to see and touch the furnishing displays in real life – and not via a Zoom call.

MCM Styles With Soft, Desaturated Palettes And Natural Wood Finishes Dominated The Showrooms At Orgatec 2022

There were nearly 700 exhibitors at Orgatec 2022, with an estimated 45,000 visitors from 130 countries.

So, what were the major design trends at the show?

One thing that struck us right away from a shift away from shiny surfaces. Brass, gold, and mirrored finishes that once dominated everything – from light fixtures to accent bezels to support frames – have been replaced with matte finishes.

The color palette was much more subdued as well:

- Exposed frame elements were predominantly finished in gray tones, from light gray, through charcoal, to nearly black. White frames made an occasional appearance.
- Gray fabrics also predominated, with many sound-deadening panels, room dividers, and seating elements covered in a felt-like medium gray fabric.
- Among the non-gray fabrics, desaturated, complementary tones, such as orange or green, were favored over the use of strong primary colors.
- Natural (or fake) wood tones surfaces were in great abundance, especially plywood. In some cases, we saw bent plywood. Unlike past years, bold accent patterns were generally absent.

Repeated use of wood strips (or slats) mounted on a black background to create a reveal pattern also found favor among many of the exhibitors.

Collectively speaking, what can we say about the style direction based on these individual elements?

At a high level, we sensed a strong retro revival harkening back to the Bauhaus-influenced International Style of the late 1940s to the mid-1950s.

Many of the furnishings on display would look very much at home in the Mid Century Modern homes and office buildings designed by the MCM master architects Craig Ellwood, Pierre Koenig, and Mies van der Rohe.

But then we began to realize that quite a few pieces on display were unmistakably direct descendants of some of the great furniture designs of that period as well.

For example, the curvaceous free-form upholstered chairs reminded us of Finn Juhl's 1940 Pelican Chair of 1940 or Arne Jacobsen's Swan Chair of 1958, while the many hard seating designs on display were liberally inspired by the Ray and Charles Eames Lounge Chair Wood (LCW) or Arne Jacobsen's stackable Model 3107 Chair dating back to 1955.

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