WHO, WHERE, HOW WE WORK:
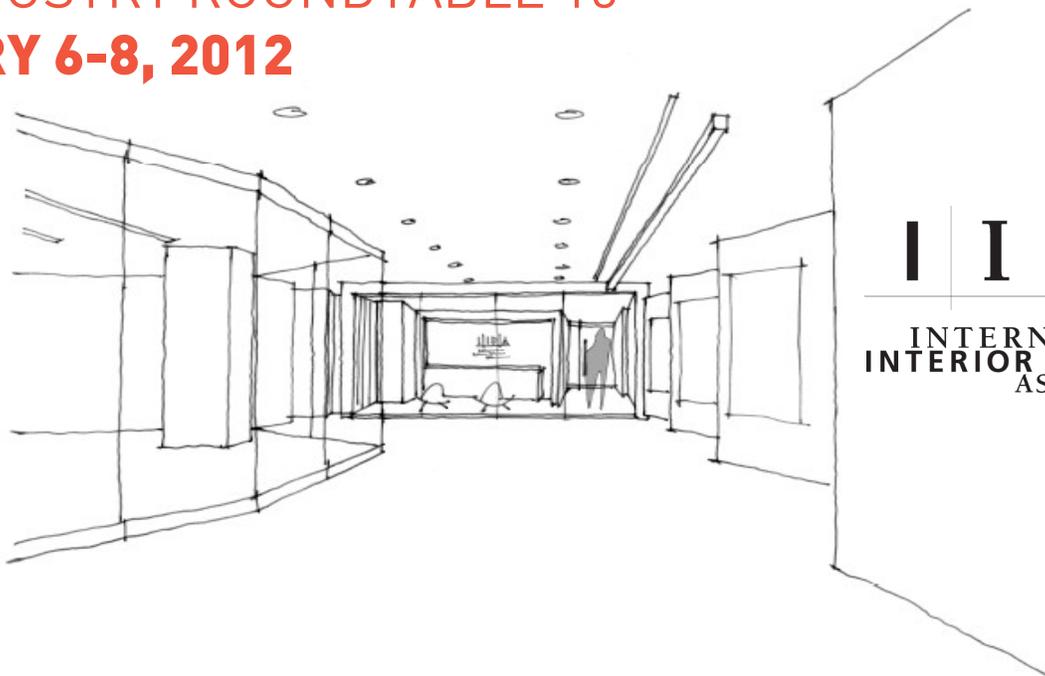
The Intersection of Culture, Workplace, and Social Media

IIDA INDUSTRY ROUNDTABLE 15
JANUARY 6-8, 2012

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BY JEANNE HELLER FISHER

Each year, an exclusive collection of the most prominent industry professionals and leading IIDA Interior Designers convene for an insightful, provocative gathering to explore industry issues. 2012 was no exception. The 15th Annual IIDA Industry Roundtable was hosted at IIDA Headquarters in Chicago, January 6 – 8, 2012. The Roundtable consistently strengthens the manufacturer/practitioner relationship through an open forum offering strategic perspectives on the changing business practice (whether due to research access, economic indicators, or shifting roles) for these prominent insiders in the profession of Interior Design. The roundtable was composed of representatives of major manufacturers, the IIDA Board of Directors and important Members from around the country, and was facilitated by IIDA Executive Vice President and CEO Cheryl S. Durst, Hon. FIIDA.

"Work is defined by getting it done. Period."

This year, the group focused on the changes in the industry, and in the world, their experience of the evolution of the workplace, and more importantly the way we work. They also explored change management enabled by positive collaboration and the shift in workplace culture that elevates work strategies. Of particular interest were the topics of use and access to social media in the workplace, the ways that social media has changed the definition of "work" and its specific potential to elevate a brand, and client dynamics in the new world of online transparency and access.

This summary provides a starting point for conversations to continue around the country, as IIDA works to ignite larger discussions within the design community regarding the state of the Interior Design profession. The following pages represent the discussion of the group, which gathered to explore the future of the workplace and the impact of social media, and does not necessarily reflect the position of IIDA, the facilitator or any individual roundtable participants. Ideally, it creates more a platform to continue the conversation across the country.

Facilitating the synergy between Interior Design practitioners and the manufacturing communities is an essential role of IIDA in order to enhance and shape the future of design. At its most basic level, the roundtable weekend event provides IIDA Corporate Members and leading Interior Design professionals with an opportunity to share experiences and engage in meaningful conversations about current issues concerning the design community as a whole.

THE PARTICIPANTS

INDUSTRY PARTICIPANTS

Crossville Inc.
Mark Shannon / VP of Sales

Haworth Inc.
Raymond Kennedy /
Director of North America Marketing

Humanscale
Jon Strassner / Director, A&D North America

Inscape
Sharad Mathur
VP, Business Development & Marketing

InterfaceFLOR
Jennifer Busch, Hon. IIDA,
VP of A&D Market Development

KI
Aiden McGuire
Marketing Communications Specialist II

Kimball Office
Jeff Fenwick
VP and General Manager

Mannington Commercial
Natalie Jones
VP, Brand Development & Creative
Product

Milliken
Barbara Haaksma
VP, Design + Marketing

Mohawk Group
Chris Stulpin
Director, Design & Development

Teknion
Kay Sargent, IIDA
VP Architecture, Design &
Workplace

INTERIOR DESIGNER PARTICIPANTS

Peter Conant, IIDA, AIA
Conant Architects, New York, NY
IIDA President

Jim Williamson, IIDA
Gensler, Washington, DC
IIDA President Elect

Viveca Bissonnette, FIIDA, Assoc. AIA, CID
Hollander Design Group, San Diego, CA
IIDA VP

Anne-Marie Gianoudis, IIDA
Gresham Smith & Partners,
Birmingham, AL; IIDA VP

Scott Hierlinger, IIDA
Nelson, Minneapolis, MN

Susanne Molina, IIDA
Klawiter & Associates,
Los Angeles, CA; IIDA VP

Rob Moylan, IIDA
SmithGroupJJR, Washington DC

Stacy Reed, IIDA
Gensler, Austin, TX
IIDA VP

Felice Silverman, IIDA
Silverman Trykowski Associates,
Boston, MA; IIDA VP

Jack Weber, IIDA
Gresham Smith & Partners,
Nashville, TN; IIDA VP

SOCIAL MEDIA PANEL PARTICIPANTS

Melanie Kahl
Perkins + Will

Lira Luis
atelier lira luis, LLC

Claire Monette
Nelson

Jessica Statz, IIDA
Gensler

ON BEHALF OF IIDA

Dennis Krause, Hon. IIDA
Senior Vice President,
International Interior Design Association

Jeanne Fisher
Senior Director, Communications & Marketing,
International Interior Design Association

Katie Leimkuehler
Communications Manager,
International Interior Design Association

Jeffrey Sanchez
Graphic Design Manager,
International Interior Design Association

**The event was moderated by Cheryl S. Durst, Hon. FIIDA,
Executive Vice President and CEO, International Interior Design Association**

This two-part discussion considered the landscape of work - who is doing it and where it is happening.

Roundtable facilitator and IIDA Executive Vice President and CEO, Cheryl Durst, Hon. FIIDA, opened the session with a playful yet powerful demonstration of how viral accessibility and social media have changed our daily routine, and the ways the design community is utilizing and accessing social media for professional advancement.

In an exercise to prove statistics about Americans and their "devices" from National Public Radio, Durst asked every participant to pull out and place in front of them all personal devices with an on/off switch, such as smartphones, tablets and cellular devices. Each participant was surrounded by a slew of "designer black" iPhones, iPads, tablets, e-Readers, laptops, Blackberries and cell phones. The majority of the participants carried with them, at least 2 devices; one participant had 4 devices.

WE ARE CONNECTED. CONSTANTLY.

According to NPR, the average American carries two electronic devices at all times, even when traveling. Many of people leave the devices on or charging at all times, and sleep within "reach" of that device allowing them to check email/Twitter/Facebook/texts before going to sleep, and upon waking, even before getting out of bed in the morning. Each of us, regardless of age, is tethered to some kind of device throughout the day. And for the 20-something generation that is now so influential in the workplace currently that device is not just a "phone" but an extension of themselves. Now that mobility has untethered us from the desk at work yet we are suddenly tethered to a device that keeps us in touch with work and life, 24/7.

CONNECTIVITY, REDEFINED

The way we relate to one another has changed. There is more cross-over between business and personal; more blurred designation between our professional selves and our personal lives. The way we communicate and relate with each other has been significantly influenced by technology.

Four years ago, the average conversation lasted 2.5 minutes. Now, the average exchange between people is 15 seconds. As a culture, we go right to the meat

of the conversation. We speak less, but we crave more information. While the concept – the activity of work can happen anywhere, those under the age of 35 go to work to see people they want to see and exchange ideas in person. Work has become the social network. There has been a shift in why/how younger generations want to work and what we provide to enable them to do that.

SHIFTING THE CULTURE OF WORK

Acknowledging the shift in the culture and format of work, Designers struggle to define the new direction--because it is still evolving. According to Susanne Molina, IIDA, Klawiter and Associates, "Collaboration," has ceased to be a buzzword and has become the norm. While every corporate client desires teaming and collaborative space, there is still a need for "heads down solo work." Yet, the rubberband of flexibility has been stretched almost too far – workspace lacks personal working areas for individuals. And the definition for solo work varies by generation – for some it is a door and walls, for others it is ear buds or a headset.

Rob Moylan, IIDA, SmithGroupJJR agrees. "We are seeing richer shared spaces in the environments we design, whether that's for a corporate headquarters, or a learning environment. All work spaces are becoming much more flexible to anticipate future technology and work habits."

BUZZWORDS WITH MEANING

The largest shift comes not in where/how workers are based, but the increase in demand for company leadership to be accountable for innovation, according to Anne-Marie Gianoudis, IIDA, Gresham Smith & Partners. She also points out that companies also need to find ways to support workers in their chosen work environments, cultivating a corporate identity without relying solely on physical space to do that.

That challenge was further asserted by Felice Silverman, IIDA, Silverman Trykowski Associates; "There are more mobile workers than ever before. The challenge for leaders and for us, in designing the space, is to maintain a corporate culture and spirit of collaboration. We must create space in the context of providing an enriching workplace experience for what is now a transient population."

Can space provide for collaboration and individual work? According to Kay Sargent, IIDA, VP of A&D for Teknion, workers are forced to go home to concentrate, stating they can't do their best work at work. "Workers are expected to collaborate and engage, but what designers and manufacturers have begun to forget is that it's not in our DNA to work together at all times. People are territorial – they want a zone for themselves, a place to claim. They are comfortable in

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their own zone. We have to teach people how to work in new spaces, collaborative environments." More and more, loyalty is to a "work spouse," more than to the corporation. People like people, and they especially like to work with people they like.

COLLABORATION 101

What do top companies all have in common? The employees like the people they work with. When workers like each other, productivity increases and distractions diminish, leading to more profits. But the sense of community, collaboration, teamwork – whatever we choose to call it, is not taught in school, or before we hit the workforce. Collaboration is the reverse notion of the education system, where we learn from first grade on to work individually. Once in the workplace, we "collaborate" (third graders are taught that this is cheating). There exists a disconnect between the two workstyles. Further complicating the effort to embrace collaboration by individuals, the workplace doesn't reward teams for collaboration, but rather individuals for their service/achievements.

Jack Weber, IIDA, of Gresham Smith & Partners, put it this way, "Collaboration as a concept is prevalent in the workplace, but people want to do own their work and have their own space, regardless of the size. Sometimes, that sense of ownership is its own reward, but it's always part of the collaborative experience." Weber also talks about attitude as an important change agent. "Attitude is one of the largest drivers of change in the workplace. New generations grew up in homes, schools and communities where the norm was a socially connected world and they expect to have the same connections – viral or personal – in their worklife. It's an adjustment to be able to work in different places. Generation Y perceives technology as 'space' while older generations prefer physical space."

If technology is the new workstation, there are specific expectations for each generation in the workplace. Meeting those needs is an evolution, not a revolution. "When firms take the steps to understand corporate leadership goals and help define the culture and different workstyles, they can create degrees and balance for the culture, including forced interaction and a space of one's own," said Peter Conant, IIDA, AIA, Conant Architects. "The worker needs three things: to be challenged, to be engaged and to be appreciated. How do we get back to our social community? In my life, I turn the equipment off. I push my staff out the door in the evening and encourage them to have a life outside, so that they can work well and be productive when they are in the office."

The key to interaction is finding the right balance of privacy and collaboration – it is the Designers' job to help clients determine this. Workers need space for their "self," not just their stuff. The modern office has seemingly become the place is now the place to house technology more than people.

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GENERATION BY GENERATION

As the group discussion elevated to encompass the roles and perceptions in the office based on age, focus turned to experience. Peter Conant, IIDA, AIA suggested that Designers, dealers, reps, or others need to keep a "double vision"; through the eyes of the client, and then through the eyes of the Design team. The younger generations are more self-aware and reward driven, diminishing the clients' viewpoint. And more than ever, companies are putting a high value on emotional intelligence.

Cheryl Durst, Hon. FIIDA outlined the generations in the workplace:

Silent generation - born 1947-1936, currently 75-82+ years old

Boomer generation - largest working generation, born 1946 - 1964, average age 55, currently 46-64 years old

Gen X - born 1965-1981, average age 37, currently 29-46 years old

Millenials - born 1982-2001, 75 million born in U.S., median age 19, currently 10-28 years old

Gen Z - 2002-today, will be the largest generation in our history, only generation that has had more than 4 million births – currently infant–9 years old

SUSTAINABLE WORKERS

With so much recent focus on designing sustainable space, the question arose about our quest to design to sustain workers. We heed the health of a building, but what about the health of its occupants? What about the sustainability of employees? If we were to query workers on their most productive work location, we might be surprised to learn it's not often in an office. Culprit number 1, being email overload/email derailment. According to Mark Shannon, VP of Sales, Crossville Inc., "I'm most productive in the morning, at home, in the shower or immediately after I get out of bed. If I stay home and concentrate on my work, I'm much more productive there than going to the office, where I check my email and immediately get pulled into different diversions and lose that opportunity to be fresh and creative."

What does it take to create a sustained worker? Seventy percent of college graduates believe they have the right to work via mobile device(s); that their employment package should include more than one device. And studies support that people want to be in an office environment. New grads and candidates most often inquire about a gym/workout space on premises. Viveca Bissonnette, FIIDA, Assoc. AIA, CID, Hollander Design Group, summed it up well. "Students believe that because they haven't studied 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in school, they shouldn't have

"Seventy percent of college graduates believe they have the right to work via mobile device(s)."

to work that way. They understand and have experienced that work can happen at the same time that they are eating dinner with friends, working out, etc. Where older generations gained status with the size of their office, the new generation of workers values freedom. They want flexibility to work without a supervisor looking over their shoulder."

THE CREEP

Yes, Virginia, there is a creep factor. Work has crept into our personal lives. Big time. And although corporations tried to ignore it, and deflect it for quite a while, the reality is that personal life has crept into professional work. Workers must be trusted, to be sustained, and at the same time must find balance between deadlines, expectations and personal needs. New generations of workers want to be recognized for the work they do, in the timeframe that they do it, but not necessarily in their cubicle, at the office, at 2 pm. Creep, it turns out, is a good thing.

MILLENIUM TRIBES

On the other hand, when employees are working on a team project, when they are engaging as a team, there is a need for subtle, and sometimes not so subtle, mentoring. Jim Williamson, IIDA, of Gensler, references team projects in his own office, where there is strong talent in design, but lack of experience dealing with clients, budgets or other aspects, and the opportunity to align with a more experienced member of the office to learn. The trend to find an independent mentor is on the rise, and it's not just with "elders."

The "We-volution" has arrived – packs and teams or tribes of 24-year olds banding together to figure it out. Dynamic interaction is nearly always the outcome, but as Williamson cautions, there's the gap where younger Designers haven't had as much experience "reading" faces, body language and subtleties of clients, which is a prime example of how working with a mentor can fast track their career. In fact, when Scott Hierlinger, IIDA, of Nelson, meets with clients for the first few times, he encourages the client to bring everyone, or representatives of every group, to the table. In this way, they can feel out what the leaders want, what the junior staffers need, and where there are gaps in interpretation. A recent international study of 24-year olds surveyed provided insight that that generation wants to work in packs – near each other, in similar space, but not for collaboration, rather to work individually, due to the comfort level of working near friends.

TEACHING NEW TRICKS

As we prepare for the upcoming generations, how can we prepare space for maximum benefit? Cheryl Durst, Hon. FIIDA pointed out that the current education system consists of teachers instructing in the same format as teachers did in 1929. Students sit in rows facing the teacher and more often are "taught to the test," because schools receive funding based on standardized testing and teachers are pressured to attain high test scores.

What changes can we make now that will impact these future workers? What are the ways they will bring new insight yet have to adjust to older generations' wisdom and knowledge?

Now, more than ever, emotional and intellectual stimulation starts at birth. Parents are teaching children to read earlier, so by the time they arrive in the classroom, they are bored.

Is a college degree worth what it once was? Young professionals are taking alternative routes, and finding that Native intelligence will get them where they want to go. What lacks is the wisdom to apply that knowledge.

Chris Stulpin, Director of Design & Development at The Mohawk Group, summarized the cross function of generational wisdom this way, "We value younger generations not for "knowing" things, but for being able to "access" things. We know things, so they don't need to know everything, but we need them to know how to figure things out. Then together, we can apply knowledge."

21ST CENTURY APPRENTICESHIP

One of the special guests, Lira Luis, AIA was an apprentice at Taliesin where she learned architecture. The most prevalent journey to careers in the 20's and 30's was apprenticeship, and has been more of a recognized tradition in Europe. The concept of learning by doing has lost appeal to post high school graduates, but has gained steam through formats of blogs, YouTube, etc. So many things can be learned online with access to the internet and an open mind. Where is the sweet spot between classroom learning and learning by doing? With the speed of access to all types of knowledge, people are impatient and want to do what they want to do when they want to do it. But all recognize that knowledge and "how to" is not the only source for a solution, and that's where mentoring becomes such an important component to learning a trade and a profession.

ARCHETYPES

IIDA research shows that Interior Design is the first choice as a second career for people. And inconsistent with the Boomer generation, people now have up to 6 careers by the time they are 65. There's not the same sense of loyalty that there was in the 50s.'s; either is correct, just clarify, here as this could refer to age or to the 1950's) And with more online content, access to blogs and search engines, it's easier to conceive new directions. There is no more "typical" when it comes to who can be identified as a future Interior Designer.

Part of generative space is a community of philanthropy. Participating in community service enables people in the office to feel like they are part of something bigger. It further blurs the line between doing work and working with friends. The process enhances synergy, between coworkers, Designers and clients or manufacturers and Designers. Jennifer Busch, Hon. IIDA, VP of A&D Market Development for InterfaceFLOR, suggested that in our close knit community we lose the opportunity to engage and impact others involved in our process, such as brokers and real estate professionals. If Designers can be involved with broker training from the beginning, the process of evolving the understanding and perception of Design work will be better.

SOCIAL MEDIA...

Designers and manufacturers see social media as both a marketing and branding tool that allows people to collaborate, communicate, investigate and educate on a digital level. Companies are utilizing social media to develop their brands by building relationships with clients and creating a strategy that conveys the public image and voice of the company that can react and engage with its audience. It is seen as something that needs to be constantly maintained and made relevant and cannot be an afterthought. Specifically sited is the example of personal endorsement. Social media is used to research clients and investigate the personality of potential clients and companies. Designers are also sharing perspectives about design and using it to network and collaborate.

OR SOCIAL ME?

On a personal level, designers use social media to communicate with friends and family through Facebook and to stay up to date on trends. Barbara Haaksma, VP Design & Marketing at Milliken, sees social media as creating an opportunity for a conversation. "When we see the trends for what goes viral, it demonstrates specific personality of an individual. We've created Inspirational Mondays on our website to entice and provoke thoughtful conversation about the directions we're

exploring in a product." Haworth, on the other hand, put a product in the hands of the design community, presented them a challenge with it and posted the results on their website. "The best way to see, and share, authenticity is to give the product to users and let them interact in the local community, then share their images. A picture tells 1,000 words, and this was an organic way to launch a new chair for Haworth," commented Ray Kennedy, Director, North America Marketing for Haworth.

There is a crossover of coworkers and industry professionals seeking connections from designers through Facebook, but most are hesitant to connect on the platform for professional purposes. Aiden McGuire, Marketing Communications for KI, shared the ways KI is furnishing knowledge virally. "Some of the most powerful learnings we find come from letting the Design firm lead the discussion. Last NeoCon, we hosted a "NeoConfessional" for anyone to talk about their frustrations with our industry, and we have been able to repurpose those key findings into new initiatives." More often, there is expressed individuality on both the focus of manufacturers and Design Professionals. Natalie Jones, Mannington Commercial, summed It up well, "social media blurs the lines between the individual and the business for true transparency."

MORE THAN A PRETTY FACEBOOK

Other channels such as LinkedIn provide opportunities to share opinions, thoughts and ideas, while seeking new career opportunities and maintaining professional connections. Pinterest, one of the newest social media channels, has become a platform that designers are harnessing for inspiration by gathering images in support of the creative process. It also is starting to provide opportunities for designers to showcase their project work. Those who have figured out how to make 140 characters work in a tweet also use the Twitter channel of social media.

The value of social media from a personal and professional standpoint has allowed designers to stay connected, seek new opportunities and expand their audience. It has also allowed designers to form their own personalized brand, style and voice.

Professionally designers are using social media channels to expand their brand presence, create connections with potential or targeted clients and to build and foster relationships. Most firms are utilizing social media channels as a marketing tool for updates, news and events that work to enhance communications and sharing of knowledge. However, it is challenging to control the response to posts, especially negative feedback, when anyone is free to say anything. With full transparency, this can be an opportunity to respond well to negativity and give insight from a personal perspective. The essential goal is to create and build relationships in the digital world that can be reflected in the real world. Firms that post a variety and mix of news, projects videos and photos of people in their

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office and work events have seen a higher interaction rate than firms posting strictly business promotions.The way companies are monitoring and measuring the effectiveness and impact of social media is conducted through various channels such as Facebook insights, Google Analytics, tracking followers and polling clients on their usage of social media. Some firms are currently measuring progress based on increased number of fans, as well as fan posts. Most firms are taking advantage of social media from a marketing standpoint, but not all of them are tracking the impact it has. Social media is currently seen as a way to broaden the audience of potential clients and create conversations with followers, but the value that it brings to firms is only at the early stage of being realized. And for some firms, company blogs provide another way to reach prospective clients, colleagues and resources with corporate stories.

ATTITUDES, APPROACH AND SOME HEALTHY TENSION

While past industry Roundtable events have typically skewed to an audience with more advanced career experience, the addition of four emerging Design Professionals added an in-depth look at how the Millennial generation is actually using Social Media.

Four design firm employees, one an architecture principal, one a social media leader for a major firm, and two associate Designers, all under the age of 40, openly and graciously shared their experience of social media in the work place. This is the group that reaches for their iPhone/iPad/iPod before they get out of bed (as all use it as an alarm, too), and has responded to more emails and tweeted, posted and checked in more than any of us before we get our first cup of coffee.

"Younger Designers have grown up with technology, and have a very open attitude to incorporating it into their work/life."

Younger Designers have grown up with technology, and have a very open attitude to incorporating it into their work/life. This generation is very focused on designing a user experience. Engaging in social media conversations enables them to vet peer recommendations from trusted online colleagues, and translate that to the experience. They are intentional in the way they watch online happenings, conversations, and excellent at identifying solutions with online communications.

Jon Strassner, Director of A&D North America, Humanscale, raised an interesting point, saying he doesn't want to be "friends" (on Facebook) with his clients, he wants to provide service. "What does it mean to be friends with a professional? What would you most want to see from manufacturers on sites, blogs, Twitter, Facebook and more? And more importantly to my leadership, how can I demonstrate value from that?

INFORMATION TAPAS

The social media experts at the table responded with requests for inspiration, in the ways Mannington and Milliken post to their website, photos recapping social events, interesting installations, with minimal copy and anything that mimics the site Coolhunter.com. Content, as a source of relevance, is requested as "information tapas" – small bits of easily consumable content, a trend, according to Durst, that will be pervasive in this industry and multiple others. Most importantly, emerging professionals use social media to find information where they are already engaged, including Twitter, Tumbler, Pinterest, Google Reader, Facebook, YouTube and blogs. What's next is what's important. And for every young professional, their hierarchy of use is different and independent.

"Telling these stories, giving a glimpse of the reasons for a design process or resulting product, that's the story of our stuff. And it's the story we try to tell to different audiences in a voice they hear best," said Sharad Mathur, VP of Business Development & Marketing, Inscape.

Perkins & Will's Melanie Kahl summed up the benefits she finds in social media, "I am best able to understand stories through pictures, and to teach through illustration. I have an innate graphic focus, and if social media appears to be a distraction, I would counter that it is a productive procrastination technique, because I can experience design, and content, more deeply, with social media."

Stacy Reed, IIDA, Gensler assented, "It is evident that social media will evolve from where it is today, and it's not going away. I don't have to believe in it, but I have to acknowledge it and recognize that my peers and team members are engaged with it. What I like is the transparency and authentic nature of content."

"I am best able to understand stories through pictures, and to teach through illustration."

EXPANDED SCOPE OF OPTIONS

The way people get their work done has changed dramatically over the last few years. Clients, especially corporate and healthcare clients, are being challenged by the fast advancements in technology and the ability to keep up with it. Technology has allowed spaces to be more versatile and leaner, and this has in many ways enabled the mobility of the work force.

Firms are being challenged to be more forward thinking than ever, and to design solutions that will accommodate the current needs of clients, while being flexible enough to accommodate the future developments. Whatever those may be. As always, clients are trying to change their workplace to enhance productivity, increase efficiency, attract and retain employees and offer more flexible work solutions. Clients are also seeing increased competition and therefore need to have their space "say" and "do" more in regards to customer and employee loyalty as well as work harder for them. On the design side, this is most often accompanied

by a lower budget, so creativity with costs in mind is even more important than ever before.

"Right now, it's a little bit like Whitewater. Or not such a little bit," said Jeff Fenwick, VP and General Manager, Kimball Office. "We're all riding this wave of 'what's next' with as much knowledge and targeted response as possible in ever-shifting terrain."

Most designers are expanding the scope of their Interior Design services to accommodate clients by including change management, branding, graphics, real estate analysis and workplace strategies consulting. Design firms are partnering with client teams, to look inside organizations to understand people's current needs, beliefs, and processes and then are looking outside to best-in-class examples and future trends. The result has been an integrated, efficient approach to total design service packages.

LASH BACK OR BACKLASH

The current business climate is one of challenge – redefining everything we do. Where older generations rely on credentials and titles for credibility, the social media world it begs the question "is your title indicative of who you are or what you've done?"

"...as technology increases our values shift."

Are we busy doing work or are we doing busy work? Or are those things the same? Peter Conant, IIDA, AIA referenced an image of "running down the road with my hair on fire," as what happens when getting caught up in urgent yet unimportant tasks. The choice is difficult, as everything continues to move faster and faster. And – it would seem that we don't want to do it anymore.

Will backlash be the new norm? Will there be a technology backlash? In our highly digitized world, we no longer know how to use maps anymore. What will happen when the GPS goes out? Devices have become our "third arm." According to Jack Weber, IIDA, "There's a pendulum that swings through every new thing. We experience a 'craze,' which subsides and some things stick (Facebook), some things fade away (Betamax)."

2012 CONCLUSION

This year's roundtable brought together Designers and manufacturers who shared their perspectives on the latest industry trends in social media, the emergence of a new generation in the workforce and the future of the workplace.

Designers and manufacturers agreed that technology has not only changed the workplace, but the way we work. Employees can and will work from anywhere because they are enabled and empowered by their mobile devices. Wireless internet and real-time data sharing allows them to communicate seamlessly and be virtually present yet physically remote. By 2013 there will be nearly 119.7 million mobile workers in the U.S. and with the mobile workforce on the rise there are fewer and fewer employees working in a traditional office. Their new offices are coffee shops, hotels and homes and it doesn't stop there. Wireless access is everywhere and soon enough that wireless network will be in nearly every public places—connecting us even more.

The Millennial generation is changing the way companies define the work that they do. This is the generation that grew up with technology at their fingertips who have become masters of instant communication and social networking. Designers and manufacturers want to attract the best and brightest employees—and these young workers want not just a great company, but a great company with benefits that gives them ample opportunities to maximize work/life balance. Today's 20-something wants to go to work to see their coworkers who have turned into friends, they want to work flexible hours in collaborative spaces and gain valuable experience by working with community leaders. Employers are faced with the difficult task of creating workspaces that accommodate the four distinct generations in the world of work. Companies are paying close attention to the need for flexibility in the widening disparity of work styles, habits and social interaction between the different generations that will lead to new workplaces strategies and dynamics.

Social media plays an integral role in how people share information, exchange ideas and research content and conversations. It is a tool that allows consumers and clients to get a glimpse of a company's core—the people, products and values behind it. This opens the door to turn fans into friends and then into followers who then become the ultimate brand advocates who engage in discussions with the company, share posted content and spread the word to their friends. The Design industry is taking advantage of the force and influence of social media to increase brand awareness and reach their clients and customers in a more authentic and effective way. Social media enables Designers and manufacturers to get feedback in real time, to gauge industry trends and most importantly build relationships that have the potential to extend beyond the digital realm and develop into further integrated experiences on a virtual and personal level enriching the commitment, value and engagement of clients and customers.

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"Right now, it's a little bit like Whitewater. Or not such a little bit."

WHAT WE LEARNED AT THE
2012 IIDA INDUSTRY ROUNDTABLE

And and this by no means is everything —
summary from the Facilitator, Cheryl Durst, Hon. FIIDA

1. Levels of engagement and estrangement at work and in life have never been at a higher level.

2. That thing or concept of "the office" or the workplace continues to proliferate, but increasingly it's the embodiment, the very brick and mortar manifestation of brand and culture.

3. Most of us will work until we die or until age 107 – whichever comes first.

4. The workplace may kill us first. Designers should expand their definition of sustainability and inform their clients that while "green is good" so is the health and well-being of the people that inhabit the workplace. Sitting for prolonged periods of time is bad. Stress is worse. So is constantly reacting and responding and hitting the "reply all" option. Incidentally, that last one could get your ass kicked.

5. Stand up, walk around and think. It might make you happy (or happier). "A desk is a dangerous place from which to watch the world," said John Le Carre.

6. Demographics continue to shift and U.S. culture is getting older. The U.S. workplace culture, however is getting "younger, browner and female." Shout out to Cheryl and to Sharad.

7. Collaboration is overrated. At least the word is. What people want is "community," engagement and highly effective opportunities to work with highly effective people who can get things done. And if those highly effective people are kind of cool and kind of smart they will become your "work friends." Then they will your Facebook friends and you will have Thanksgiving Dinner with them because it's way more fun and much less stressful than hanging with your own family. And you will be happier at work, and therefore stay longer and then that big nameless, faceless, well-branded corporate entity that signs your paycheck will continue to prosper and thrive, making bazillions of dollars, and then it can hire a phenomenal design firm to build a "campus" for its happy workers, who will stay longer and work more but won't mind as much because they have a dry cleaner, fitness center and their best friends all within 10 feet of their desk. See how this works?

8. Mobile working requires a mobile mindset. Yes, you can work anywhere, but do you really have to or want to? You still need a place to put your stuff and still want to feel part of culture and a team. And a cool chair would be nice, too.

9. That "place to call your own, where you put your stuff", is shrinking. But many workers are satisfied with that, if their employers are reinvesting real estate in shared spaces for teams and project rooms.

10. The right-brained will rule the earth. And the Earth will like it, too. The abilities that matter now and in the future include empathy, visionary-big picture thinking, artistry and creativity, the ability to intuit, absorb, predict and anticipate. You want to be this person and you want to hire them, too.

11. Four Millennial females with Internet access can change the world and disrupt traditional thinking. With incredible ease, grace and maturity. I'm just saying.

12. Social Media is vast, elusive and real. Whether you ignore it or wake up and dive into before getting out of bed, we need to find ways to accommodate incorporate and participate. It has changed the worlds of business, communication and human relations.

13. Backlash (to social media) is inevitable and enriching. Revel in authenticity and celebration of what is genuine, real and honest. It is what makes us human.

14. Experience is simply and frankly, everything.

15. Jeff Fenwick has created "what's next" – the "InterWeb." Look for it at NeoCon.

16. Design professionals are the best arbiters and managers of "evolution" for their clients. Evolution in all of its incarnations – cultural, technological and societal.

17. Learning and discovery starts with all of us. Everyday. Just because we talk about this a lot, doesn't mean we know all the answers. Yet.

18. Devices and technology rule the workplace. But design and human behavior will insist and demand that rather than multiple tools, we have one device that allows us to communicate, navigate, explore game, surf and get work done. Very few people can successfully carry off wearing a tool belt, so having the world at your fingertips (or in your hands) or at least access to the world in a single elegant, useful and usable device is necessary.

19. Facts are awesome and intriguing. Depth and breadth of knowledge is better. Wisdom rocks.

20. Remember, the future is here. It just hasn't been widely distributed.

INDUSTRY ROUNDTABLE 15
RESOURCE LIST

IIDA
INTERNATIONAL
INTERIOR DESIGN
ASSOCIATION

CHERYL DURST RECOMMENDED BOOKS

IIDA RESOURCES

The IIDA interactive blog
for extraordinary content;
iidahq.wordpress.com

The IIDA blog for
emerging professionals;
iidastudents.wordpress.com

A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius; Dave Eggers

Design Your Life, The Pleasures and Perils of Everyday Things;
Ellen and Julia Lupton

Design Revolution: 100 Products That Empower People; Emily Pilloton

Encounters - Architectural Essays; Juhani Pallasmaa

Oh, The Place You'll Go; Dr. Seuss

PostSecret; Frank Warren

Talent is Overrated; Geoff Colvin

**The Culture Code, An Ingenious Way to Understand Why People Around the
World Live and Buy as They Do**; Clotaire Rapaille

What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains- The Shallows; Nicholas Carr

Microtrends: The Small Forces Behind Tomorrow's Big Changes; Mark Penn

**Super Freakonomics: Global Cooling, Patriotic Prostitutes and Why Suicide
Bombers Should Buy Life Insurance**; Steven D. Leavitt and Stephen J. Dubner
Designing Interactions; Bill Moggridge

Travels in Siberia; Ian Frazier

Emotional Design: Why We Love (or Hate) Everyday Things; Donald A. Norman

**Change by Design: How Design Thinking Transforms Organizations and
Inspires Innovation**; Tim Brown

**The Ten Demandments: Rules To Live By In the Age of the
Demanding Consumer**; Kelly Mooney

**Generations at Work: Managing the Clash of Veterans, Boomers, X-ers and
Nexters in Your Workplace**; Ron Zemke

Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mom; Amy Chua

The Next Decade; George Friedman

You Are Not A Gadget; Jaron Lanier

Alone, Together; Sherry Turkle

A History of the World in 100 Objects; Neil MacGregor (And the British Museum)

RECOMMENDED WEBSITES, BLOGS AND PUBLICATIONS

The Bill Taylor Blog/Harvard Business Review - http://blogs.hbr.org/taylor

Slow Lab - slowLab.net

DesignMilk - http://design-milk.com/

Object Blog - http://www.object-blog.com/?page_id=2

WorldHum, The best travel stories on the Internet - http://www.worldhum.com/

MAGAZINES

The Financial Times

VanityFair Magazine

FastCompany Magazine

Monocle Magazine

**"GENERATION FLUX," NEW WAYS OF WORKING, THINKING AND SURVIVING
CHANGE AND CHAOS:**

http://www.fastcompany.com/magazine/162/generation-flux-future-of-business

**"RETHINKING CAREER PATH" ON WHAT "CAREER PATH" MEANS AND
STAYING AGILE WITHIN YOUR CHOSEN PROFESSION, OR THE ABILITY TO
ALLOW YOUR PROFESSION TO MORPH OR LAUNCH YOU INTO WHATEVER LIFE
MIGHT HOLD FOR YOU NEXT:**

http://www.fastcompany.com/magazine/162/average-time-spent-at-job-4-years

MANUFACTURER SITES

www.crossvilleinc.com

www.haworth.com

www.humanscale.com

www.inscapesolutions.com

www.interfaceflor.com

www.ki.com

www.kimballoffice.com

www.mannington.com/commercial

www.millikencarpet.com

www.mohawkind.com

www.teknion.com

NOTES

IIDA

INTERNATIONAL
INTERIOR DESIGN
ASSOCIATION

IIDA Headquarters

222 Merchandise Mart, Suite 567 / Chicago, IL 60654

312.467.1950 / www.iida.org