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HAT Collective's New Work Solutions

by Anna Zappia

The HAT Collective brand recently launched in North America, and features contract office products with a focus on ergonomic design. Users can easily mix and match pieces that allow them to work comfortably and efficiently in a range of spaces. "At HAT Collective, our goal is to provide solutions that empower the worker. If a user is happier with the way that they are working, then they are also more productive. We're offering the right products that support people no matter where they choose to work," said **Libby Ferin**, vice president of marketing for Innovative Ergonomic Solutions, HAT Collective's parent company.

This new brand experience gives HAT Collective's dealers everything they need under one umbrella. With a complete line of furniture available in a number of styles and price points, clients are not limited to just the basics. "We have products that are affordable, but we can also customize them for a higher-end look. We're really a one-stop shop," Ferin said.

While some customers may be overwhelmed by an abundance of offerings, the HAT Collective philosophy is that more is more. As our needs and spaces change rapidly, corporations are going to want products that help them adapt to our post-pandemic lifestyles. "Everything's shifting, so we can't have the same mindset that we've had for so long. I don't think anyone's expecting to come back to the exact same office. We're starting to think about all of our spaces differently," Ferin said. We're considering the layout of the office, but also furniture that fosters health and wellness. For HAT Collective that means height-adjustable tables, sit-stand desks, and chairs that keep the body in proper alignment.

Preparing for the launch during the pandemic was a challenge that forced the HAT Collective team to rethink every aspect of the business. "We spent a few hard months in the summer figuring out how to package our products individually, how to freight them, how to offer our white-glove service, and building e-commerce sites for our dealers. It's been a really good time to learn as we build a brand that supports this new way of working and thinking," Ferin said. She shared her thoughts about what's next for work, and her favorite products to use at home or in the office.

A Hybrid Model

As people spent a significant amount of time at home because of the pandemic, they quickly learned that they didn't need to be in the office to do their job effectively. Workers want to be able to work from anywhere they choose. "A large percentage of people like the flexibility of being at home for a few days, and then going to the office or another place to work for the rest of the week. I think this will be the new way of working, and employers are going to have to provide new furniture options. What may be suitable for a 500-square-foot apartment in New York may not be right for a 5,000-square-foot home in Michigan. One size does not fit all anymore," Ferin said.

Workers are going to different environments regularly, and may have to change locations at a moment's notice. "You



Libby Ferin, vice president of marketing for Innovative Ergonomic Solutions, HAT Collective's parent company.

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The M-Series freestanding desk is height adjustable.



The Winston e-desk converts any surface into an effective workspace.

have to think about fixed or adaptable options now,” she noted. The M-Series freestanding desk, for example, is a fixed working solution that is height adjustable, so that a user can work in comfort. The Winston e-desk is a sit-stand desk that converts any surface into an effective workspace. Both of these pieces are functional but also durable. “These are commercial-grade products, so they have the durability and flexibility needed in a commercial or residential setting,” Ferin added.

Collaboration

Employees want to get back to the office so that they can partner with their colleagues again. “The office is not going away. We all want those personal connections with others, and it’s difficult to have really meaning-

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ful collaboration when we are apart. It's just not the same when you are on a Zoom call. People have missed coming together to synthesize information, brainstorm, and prototype," Ferin explained.

The new conference room in particular is going to be a unique, well-thought-out space where staff will gather for creative work. The M-Series nesting table is a mobile table with a manual sit-to-stand feature that doesn't require power to operate. There is also a dry-erase white board option that can be used to take notes or draw. "The M nesting table gives you a sense of security within a larger group. It allows you to collaborate safely and effectively because you can move it anywhere in a room to maintain a comfortable distance. When you are finished using the table, you can

just wipe it down and tuck it away," Ferin added.

Another piece from HAT Collective is the Ellehaven table, which is ideal for

group projects. Because of the large tabletop surface, it can be used to lay out a number of renderings, fabrics, or models for presentations.



The Ellehaven table is ideal for group projects.



The M-Series nesting table is mobile and compact.

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Mobility

We've always had chairs and tables on casters for work and education spaces, but today they are popular for use at home as well. Furniture needs to be as mobile as its users, designed to move from room to room—or even outside—quickly and easily. Pieces have to be lightweight but sturdy, with styling that complements all types of interiors. “The Movel is a great laptop solution. It has a nice lift so that your computer doesn't fall, and you can bring it outside if you want to,” Ferin noted.

Another portable, grab-and-go piece is the L-Unit four-pack, also known as the Mesa slide divider. This divider is an affordable choice for those who don't want to spend a lot of money to change their existing space. “You can take the Mesa slide divider and place it between you and the team member next door. It creates the sense of dis-

tance and privacy that's so important to us. If you move to another office,

you can just pick it up and take it with you,” Ferin said. ■



The Movel laptop table can be used indoors or out.



The Mesa slide divider easily slides into place for added privacy and distance.