

NeoCon[®]

NEOCON 2025 WRAPS WITH AN ENERGIZED INDUSTRY AND A CLEAR VISION TO “DESIGN AHEAD”

(Chicago, IL - June 17, 2025) The 56th edition of [NeoCon](#), the largest and longest-running trade show serving the commercial design industry, took place at THE MART in Chicago, June 9-11. From the bustling showroom and exhibition floors to interactive installations and captivating programming, the atmosphere throughout the building was charged with energy and inspiration. Nearly 50,000 design professionals from around the world, including decision-makers from leading architecture and design firms alongside prominent corporate end-users, actively engaged throughout the three-day event. More than 450 exhibiting brands showcased innovative solutions across workplace, education, healthcare, retail, and hospitality—reimagining how we work, learn, heal, and connect.

“Connection and collaboration are a huge part of the NeoCon DNA—and this edition delivered just that, leaving a lasting impression on the industry,” comments Byron Morton, VP and Co-Head of Leasing at THE MART. “NeoCon 2025 was a powerful demonstration of design’s impact and potential. The building was buzzing with bold ideas, brisk business, and meaningful networking. It’s where new ideas come to life, in real time under one roof.”

Nicole Zack, Design Manager and Workplace Strategist at Ted Moudis Associates, adds: “The magic lives in the in-between moments, those spontaneous hallway run-ins and the after-hours chats where we recap our days and the most notable finds.”

Human-Centered Innovation: Colorful, Circular, Smart, & Sensory

NeoCon 2025 spotlighted forward-thinking products that addressed some of the most pressing priorities in today’s commercial design landscape—including circularity, neuro-inclusion, biophilia, multi-functionality, and smart sustainability. From fractal-based, stress-reducing wallcoverings to biodegradable materials and intelligent digital tools for collaboration, the show demonstrated how design can be both technologically advanced and human-centered. Many standout solutions embraced soft, organic forms, soothing colors, and tactile finishes, underscoring a shift toward emotionally intelligent design that appeals to the senses and supports well-being. Others leaned into modularity and mobility, offering systems that flex and adapt with shifting occupancy patterns and spatial functions. Concealed technologies enabled streamlined aesthetics and intuitive experiences. Collectively, the show illustrated a human-centric future of the built environment—one that is adaptable, emotionally resonant, and aligned with the needs of both people and the planet.

“NeoCon was fantastic this year!” exclaims Tom Polucci, Firm-wide Director of Interiors at HOK. “I loved the level of creativity in product design and finishes, especially the bold use of color—saturated tones alongside softer palettes (seafoam is back!). Best of all was reconnecting with colleagues and dear friends.”

Immersive Experiences & Activations

NeoCon pulsed with immersive, in-person experiences. The show weekend kicked off with Perkins&Will's cinematic [ART on THE MART](#) projection, a luminous tribute to Chicago's creative spirit that lit up the Riverwalk and will remain on display through July 6. On THE MART's ground floor, the new gallery-retail hybrid **PAVED STATES** showcased local and international talent. Inspired by Chicago's brutalist architectural heritage, the installation featured statement pieces in stone, glass, brick, and iron by a diverse roster of designers, many with ties to the city's thriving creative scene. "I've been going to NeoCon for years throughout my career—first as an interior designer, client side and dealer—and this is exactly the kind of energy and direction our industry needs," observes Alma Lopez, Creative Director, Studio Alma Jimenez Lopez.

Elsewhere in the building, the **AFTERNOON OASIS** sound baths on floors 6 and 14 offered moments of calm, while **Turf's DJ-led takeover** of the Freight 22 elevator brought a festive energy to end-of-day show floor routes. Additional standout spaces included the Gensler-designed **Design Creates Joy** pop-up by Project Color Corps, and the **Haworth DesignLab**—a collective of designers breaking convention and forging new paths to explore emotive, unexpected, and immersive experiences—anchored by a striking centerpiece designed by Patricia Urquiola.

"Every time I attend NeoCon, I'm inspired by the upcoming design trends, emerging products, and the energy of the design community," emphasizes Erin Kelly, Interior Designer II at SmithGroup. "It's a celebration of creativity and innovation and a powerful source of insight that helps us design more thoughtfully and effectively for our clients."

Global Debuts & Domestic Growth

This year saw a wave of investment and growth at THE MART, with more than 175,000 square feet of leasing activity bringing in a strong lineup of new permanent showrooms and major expansions. Among those who expanded their presence: storied contemporary furniture manufacturer [Davis Furniture](#); sustainable leather manufacturer [Green Hides](#); and specialty surfaces company [Wolf-Gordon](#). Spanish furniture leader [Andreu World](#) doubled its size with a 20,000-square-foot showroom. "As you approach the new Andreu World showroom from the corridor, there's a sense of brightness and openness," shares Jon Otis, FIIDA, Professor at Pratt Institute and Founder of O|A Object. "The space feels expansive and welcoming, with a thoughtful layout, rich materiality, and layered storytelling. It's a pleasure to experience, and a great platform for the 70-year-old brand's product offering."

Acoustics innovator [Turf](#) also significantly deepened its commitment to THE MART, unveiling a new 18,000-square-foot location on the 10th floor that houses the brand's flagship showroom, corporate design offices, and prototyping space. "After four years exhibiting as a permanent showroom in THE MART, I can confidently say that NeoCon is the leading trade show for our industry, consistently evolving and improving with each passing year," says Rob Perri, President, Turf and VP, AS Studio Brands, Armstrong World Industries. "The grand opening of the new Turf Design Experience Center during NeoCon was met with overwhelming success,

providing visitors a space to engage with our products and brands, and reaffirming our decision to continue our invaluable partnership with THE MART.”

[Keilhauer](#) also announced plans to more than triple its footprint with a new third-floor space debuting in 2026.

Newcomers making permanent showroom debuts included Norwegian ergonomic seating manufacturer [HÅG](#), Australian acoustics group [Baresque Group](#) ([Zintra](#) + [FUNC.](#) + [Botton + Gardiner](#)), [West Elm Work](#), Spanish brand [Vicarbe](#), architectural systems and ceilings solutions provider [Arktura](#), Swedish visual communication and acoustics brand [Lintex](#), and K-12 education furniture specialists [Smith System](#) and [Steelcase Learning](#). These additions signal long-term growth strategies in the North American market and underscore NeoCon’s continued global momentum.

“The energy of THE MART, the steady stream of visitors, and the overwhelmingly positive response to our permanent showroom and new collections across all brands made every bit of effort worthwhile,” comments Angus Blaiklock, Executive Director at Baresque Group. “The conversations, the connections, the creativity—it all reaffirmed the impact of what we’re building.”

Fabian af Ekenstam, Marketing Director at Lintex, adds: “The response to our showroom and products was outstanding. We met key people in the industry who share our belief that even the most functional tools deserve great design. NeoCon gave us the perfect platform to make an impact, and this is just the beginning.”

A Launchpad for What’s New & Next

The 7th Floor Exhibit Hall was a vibrant hub for discovery, featuring a compelling mix of first-time and returning exhibitors that underscored NeoCon’s international scope and multidisciplinary reach. A diverse range of exhibitors unveiled fresh concepts, innovative collections, and groundbreaking material advancements—from sustainable surfaces and modular furnishings to advanced acoustic solutions and hybrid innovations that seamlessly integrate physical and digital elements for today’s flexible, tech-enabled environments. The floor’s thoughtful new layout—with four curated zones organized by key product categories—enhanced navigation. Eye-catching hospitality spaces by Chicago-based Elise Metzger, founder of experiential design firm Forward Fruit, elevated the attendee experience, including the new **Bright Day Café** and other inviting settings to network, recharge, and conduct business.

“Being at NeoCon 2025, in the heart of THE MART, means joining a community that lives and breathes design,” states Elettra de Pellegrin, CEO and Founder of Slalom. “It’s an inspiring key moment of the year where we connect, share, and celebrate what drives our industry forward. Being here isn’t just about showcasing—it means being part of a global movement shaping the way we live and work.”

Caroline Walker, Director of Sales at Spoonflower, notes: “Spoonflower’s anticipated debut at NeoCon was met with welcomed enthusiasm by the commercial design community, who share a passion for deep assortment, sustainable practices in the US, one-of-a-kind customization, and a celebration of the unique artistry behind Spoonflower prints. The rich history and architectural roots of THE MART set the stage for both flagship and disruptive brands like ours to showcase their lines to those most appreciative of design innovation.”

Future-Facing Programming

NeoCon’s robust educational program reflected the same future-forward spirit found on the show floors. Attendees packed keynotes and sessions led by industry changemakers, with standing-room-only crowds for this year’s headlining talks. On Monday, **Annie Jean-Baptiste** opened the show with “Designing for Global Innovation,” presented by IIDA, highlighting the power of inclusive, human-centered design across cultures. Tuesday’s keynote, “Design as an Attitude,” presented by ASID, featured **Alice Rawsthorn**, who made a compelling case for design as a flexible tool for social progress. On Wednesday, **Chris Barton**, founder of Shazam, wrapped up the series with “Bring Impossible Ideas to Life,” presented by BIFMA, delivering insights on basic truths, creative persistence, and emotional connections as a way to bring revolutionary ideas to life.

Beyond the keynote stage, complementary Featured Presentations, Workshops, and NeoCon Talks throughout the show delved into topics ranging from algorithmic design and adaptive reuse to inclusive workspaces and the role of storytelling in architecture. With CEUs available both on-site and virtually, the program ensured broad access to critical professional development and timely conversations.

Celebrating Breakthroughs at Best of NeoCon

The 35th annual Best of NeoCon Awards continued to spotlight trailblazing products in commercial design. A total of 96 awards were given across more than 40 categories, recognizing excellence in performance, sustainability, innovation, aesthetics, and user experience. HALCON’s ASTORIA collection took home **Best of Competition** for its sculptural bases, premium materials, and concealed casters that merge form and function for today’s workplace needs.

Keilhauer and Andreu World were among the top honorees, each receiving multiple Gold and Silver awards for exceptional seating and table designs. Innovation awards went to Arktura, DARRAN, Extremis, Formica Corporation, Mizetto, Momentum Textiles & Wallcovering, Safco, and Shaw Contract, for products that introduced game-changing features and fresh approaches to familiar challenges. Sustainability awards were presented to HÅG, Haworth, Isomi, KFI Studios, Nienkämper, Patcraft, Stinson, and The Good Plastic Company, for solutions reflecting a strong commitment to environmental responsibility.

The fourth annual **Business Impact Awards** recognized products with the potential to positively affect business outcomes—enhancing workflows, reducing costs, or optimizing space. Ten awardees were selected by a panel of business journalists from *Bloomberg*, *Newsweek*, *Vogue*

Business, *Forbes*, and *Morning Brew*, as well as facility managers from Northwestern Mutual and Aflac. Honorees included Clarus' Lynk™, CMS Electracom's Freedom FR210, Framery's Framery One Lounge, Haworth's Closed-Loop Manufactured Fern, Keilhauer's Unifi, Kwalu's Ellie Recliner + Sleeper Sofa Collection, Momentum Textiles & Wallcovering's Renaturation, Safco/Onsemble's Modix System, Schiavello's Focus Quiet Room Plus, and Visplay's Omnio Office.

"Receiving a Business Impact award for our Ellie Recliner had an immediate and measurable impact on our healthcare business at the show," comments Damion Van Slyke, Vice President of Marketing for Kwalu. "Shortly after our win was announced, we received interest for two large hospital projects."

New for 2025, the Best of NeoCon **People's Choice Awards** invited the design community to vote for their favorite winning products on-site. Honorees included Arktura's Tapestra, Clarus' Lynk™, Formica Corporation's InDepth Surfacing™, Framery's Framery One Lounge, and Global Furniture Group's Open Spaces.

"Returning for my second year as a Best of NeoCon juror and hearing stories directly from the product designers, artists, researchers, and owners was fantastic," comments Michelle Kool, Facility Planning Senior Specialist, Northwestern Mutual. "As someone who is continuously looking for fresh ideas in art, architecture, furniture, and cultural events, NeoCon is so diverse, fun, and energizing."

The 57th edition of NeoCon will be held June 8-10, 2026, at THE MART in Chicago.

Recordings of keynotes and select presentations are available at neocon.com. Registration and access to Virtual CEU sessions will remain open until October 1. For showroom, exhibitor, and general NeoCon news, images, and real-time information, follow NeoCon on: [Instagram \(@NeoCon_Shows\)](https://www.instagram.com/NeoConShows), [LinkedIn \(@NeoCon-Shows\)](https://www.linkedin.com/company/NeoCon-Shows), and [Facebook \(@NeoConShows\)](https://www.facebook.com/NeoConShows).

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About NeoCon: NeoCon is the world's leading platform and most important event for the commercial interiors industry, held each year at THE MART in Chicago. Since launching in 1969, NeoCon has served as the annual gathering place for the commercial design world's manufacturers, dealers, architects, designers, end-users, design organizations, and media. The three-day event showcases game-changing products and services from more than 400 leading and emerging companies—providing unparalleled access to the latest and most innovative solutions. A robust educational program of keynote presentations and CEU sessions offers world-class expertise and insight into today's most relevant topics as well as the future of commercial design. www.neocon.com

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About THE MART: THE MART is the largest privately held commercial building in the United States: It encompasses 4.2 million gross square feet, spans two city blocks, rises 25 stories, and is visited by an average of 30,000 people each business day (or nearly 10 million people annually).

THE MART serves as the home to Chicago's most creative and technologically innovative companies, including Motorola Mobility, PayPal, Avant, and MATTER, as well as Fortune 500 companies Conagra Brands, Allstate, Medline Industries, Beam Suntory, IPG, and Grainger. It is also the largest and most important center for design in North America, with more than 250 premier design showrooms offering the latest resources for both residential and commercial markets.

Media Kit:

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