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magazine

summer 2020 / v3

THE RENOVATION ISSUE

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"An idea is salvation by imagination." – Frank Lloyd Wright



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Renovation and Wellness

As professionals in the commercial building space, we often focus our energy on newly-constructed spaces. But architects are gifted at seeing a space not for what it is now, but what it has the potential to become. Rather than writing off dated commercial spaces, we can breathe new life into them through renovation.

Transforming an old space does more than provide an updated design aesthetic, it improves the occupant experience. Studies are showing that access to daylight has a direct and positive effect on improving human health and wellness. By incorporating a proper daylighting system into these renovations, you can provide this vital, natural light.

In this issue, we explore how renovation can energize previously tired commercial spaces. We pay visit to the SMRT headquarters, where their team of renowned architects transformed an old bakery into a WELL-certified office building, preserving historic charm in their home-city of Portland, Maine. And in Toronto, see how Centennial College's Ashtonbee campus, previously a Volkswagen headquarters, is now a daylight-optimized space that fosters student learning and productivity.

So as you prepare to renovate, make sure to prioritize access to natural light and daylighting control. Your future occupants will be energized and happier for it.

On behalf of Legrand, we hope you're inspired by our Summer edition of Light&Shade.

Amy Hahne
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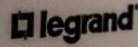
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PRODUCT INNOVATION



Working with Daylight

by Charlie Derk, Director of Product Marketing, Shading Systems

In the midst of the pandemic, commercial spaces, offices in particular, have been greatly impacted by social distancing requirements. As we look to our future return to the workplace, adjusting to new health and safety restrictions will require innovative solutions to keep employees safe.

Over the past six months, many of us have shifted to telecommuting – leaving our shared workplaces and commercial offices behind. This means we've been spending more time indoors and at home. It seems the consensus on telecommuting is split; some may be reluctant to give up the flexibility of a remote office, while others are eager to get back. Regardless of where you stand, one thing is certain: creating a safe workplace and keeping employees happy will be more important than ever. Our teams have been ideating on how light and shade and Legrand's suite of products could help ease this transition.

If you ask employees what they want most from their workplaces, you might be surprised what you hear. Though employers are always upping their game when it

comes to employee perks, a 2019 study from the Harvard Business Journal showed that comfortable light, temperature and a connection to the outdoors were all in the top five. All rely on shading. Upon returning to the workplace, ensuring employees have access to daylight will be crucial. With an automated shading system, you can give employees the access to daylight they desire. And even better, access to natural light has been shown to increase employee productivity.

On top of the benefits of daylight itself, an automated shading system removes the reliance on occupants to control their shades. By automating your shading and lighting control schedule, your employees can enjoy

"Adjusting to new health and safety requirements will require innovative solutions."



a completely touch-less system. They get all the perks of proper daylighting, without having to physically touch switches, shades, or user interfaces, reducing the spread of germs across shared office controls. Shading systems make use of daylight sensors to measure when it is time to lower or raise the shades. But they are not the only touch-less sensors that make sense in the office of the future. When it comes to reducing touch, occupancy sensors, automatic dimmers, timers and networked control systems are important to respond to changing interior light level needs. Facility managers should establish well vetted and researched lighting schedules based on occupant use of a space to reduce unnecessary touching. In this way, we can design healthy, smarter, commercial spaces unlike ever before.

And let's not forget that new COVID restrictions affect more than just office inhabitants. Construction is still underway on many commercial buildings across the

country, meaning people are on-site for installations while practicing social distancing. How can we help those installing our products? By making installations quicker and easier. Our Teleshade system installs in one-third the time of competitors shades, thanks to our cassette-style system that easily snaps into place. Our Digital Lighting Management (DLM) wired solution installs 66% faster than our competitor's component sensors and dimmers, with less wires. Our wireless DLM solution is even faster! Easy installation means fewer installers needed, allowing for ample social distancing inside new buildings.

There's no avoiding that changes will need to take place in the corporate office. Everyday occurrences, like switching on a light, may require a new solution. From installation to everyday operation, a proper daylighting system can help contribute to a safer workplace where employees can excel in a post-pandemic world. ☐



DAYLIGHTING 101:

THE LIGHTNESS OF WELL-BEING

by Jon Null, LC, LEED, Product Marketing Manager, Legrand Shading Systems

The main objective of lighting design, according to the Illuminating Engineering Society (IES), is “to serve human needs and enhance human experience.” But

most of us don't need this recognized technical and educational authority on illumination to help us understand the effect interior lighting can have on our well-being, behavior, and productivity. We have all experienced it for ourselves, often times without even knowing. Take for example this familiar scenario: You're arriving at a hotel after a long day on the road, and you step into the lobby to find a space that allows you to breathe a sigh of relief. Maybe it's the late afternoon sun shining through the atrium glass overhead that puts you in a relaxed state of mind. Maybe it's that sunlight integrated with the soft, recessed light panel over the front desk. Either way, you've just walked into the kind of welcoming, comforting environment you've been looking forward to ever since being squeezed into that overcrowded flight back in Atlanta.

Everyone in the hospitality industry knows that a positive first impression is everything, which

is why that hotel lobby is going to be perfectly lit to affect your mood in the cheeriest, most reassuring way possible. Successful hotel managers around the world know that making the most of natural and artificial lighting signals to their guests a pleasurable and productive experience, particularly for the business traveler who may expect to work in their room or meet in an onsite conference space. And that same positive signaling has just as much effect on the well-being and productivity of the hotel's staff.

Previously in Light&Shade, I've talked about the energy and efficiency savings of daylighting in commercial real-estate. This month I want to focus on the personal health benefits to employees and occupants of that same commercial real-estate. As we continue to see improved integration between automated shading and controlled artificial light—in work spaces ranging from offices to hospitals and classrooms, and yes, hotels—we also find ever-increasing evidence that illustrates how the use of daylighting in the work place is only making our lives better. Take for instance a 2003 Public Interest

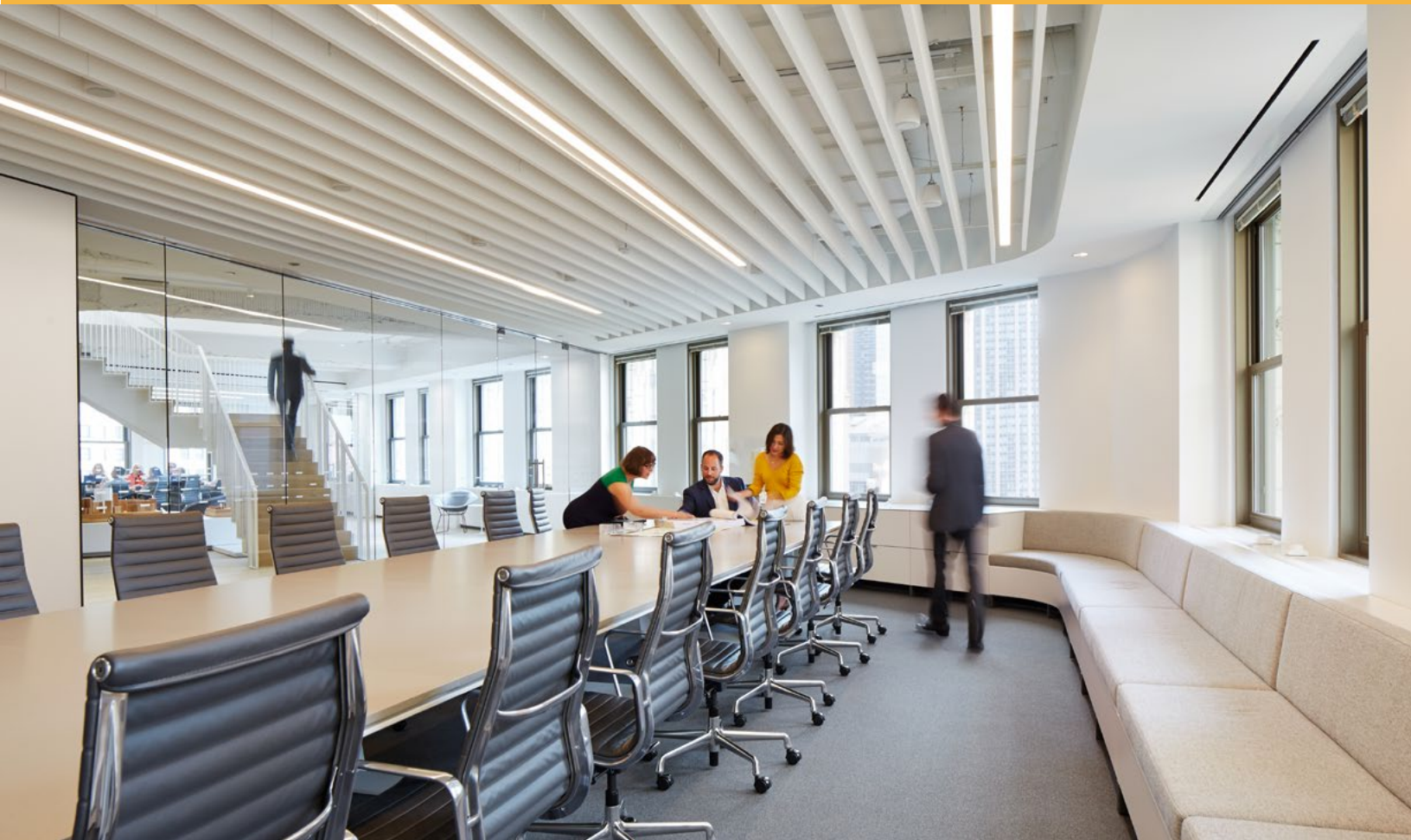
Energy Research Study from the California Energy Commission. Findings determined that having access to views from windows, more daylight, and less glare were all consistently associated with better office worker performance. Call center workers were found to process calls six percent to 12 percent faster, while office workers were found to perform 10 percent to 25 percent better on tests of mental function and memory recall. On the flip side, greater glare potential was associated with worse office worker performance, with their scores on

mental function and memory recall tests dropping by 15 percent to 21 percent.

Sunlight is the best medicine. Making the most of natural lighting in an interior space can go beyond work performance to actually improving human health and well-being. As part of promoting its WELL Building Standard for buildings and communities across the world, the International WELL Building Institute advocates just how important adequate levels of sunlight can be on the health and well-being of a building's

CLOCK-CONTROLLED BIOLOGY

The exposure to natural light has a direct and well-documented effect on our body's internal clock. Otherwise known as our circadian rhythms, they determine when we are most alert and active, when we sleep, and pretty much every peak and valley between. Chronobiology research estimates that over one-third of the components of our genome are clock-controlled, illustrating the extent of influence light exposure has on human physical and mental health, as well as on behavior and performance.



occupants. Positive effects range from visual comfort to potential psychological and neurological gains. And those effects are perhaps most dramatically demonstrated

"Positive effects range from visual comfort to potential psychological and neurological gains."

in hospital settings, where multiple studies have shown that patients located in rooms with greater exposure to daylight have been noted to recover more quickly and require less pain medication. The July/August issue of Psychosomatic Medicine featured a 2005 study of patients undergoing spinal surgery with the finding that patients in brighter rooms used 22 percent less pain medication. Another study from the Royal Society of Medicine found that women

patients in east-facing rooms recovered faster than women in west-facing rooms. The psychological impact of sunlight is also positive, as studies have demonstrated a shortened length of stay of psychiatric patients and improved moods overall where daylight is plentiful, accelerating recovery from depression in many cases.

These days, to the benefit of us all, we're seeing more and more buildings utilizing daylight as a primary source of lighting to the greatest extent possible.


Proximity to windows, outdoor views and daylight in indoor spaces are some of the most sought-after elements of design. Which is why a proper window shading system, integrated with interior lighting controls is more important than ever. Window shades that reduce glare and heat gain while still providing outdoor views play a key role in maximizing the positive effects of a sunlit window. It's true, an interior lighting design does enhance our human experience. But let's not forget: a proper shading system can enhance that lighting design even more. ☐





THE RENOVATION ISSUE





There is no shortage of uninspired commercial properties that are as physically unhealthy to work in as they are to look at. However, a shade is lifting on that class of space as renovation transforms once forgotten commercial properties into bright, efficient spaces. This quarter, Light&Shade visits renovated commercial spaces in both the US and Canada to demonstrate how old buildings can take on a new life. By focusing on the future potential of a space, you can create healthy and inspiring spaces while preserving historic charm.



BAKING WELLNESS INTO INTERIOR SPACES

How a 136-year-old architecture firm made an old bakery into much more than a place to work



Embracing the inherited character of the building, SMRT utilized all of the available natural light they could, for a vibrant and energetic workplace.

SMRT Architects of Portland, ME are believers in the power of space.

And as a 136-year-old organization, they've learned a few things about how people interact with physical places. They are experts in seeing things for what they can be, not for what they are. This is how they happened to take over a retired, historic bakery and carefully kneed it into a place that embraces natural light and under the proper guidelines, welcomes employees for social, appropriately distanced interaction.

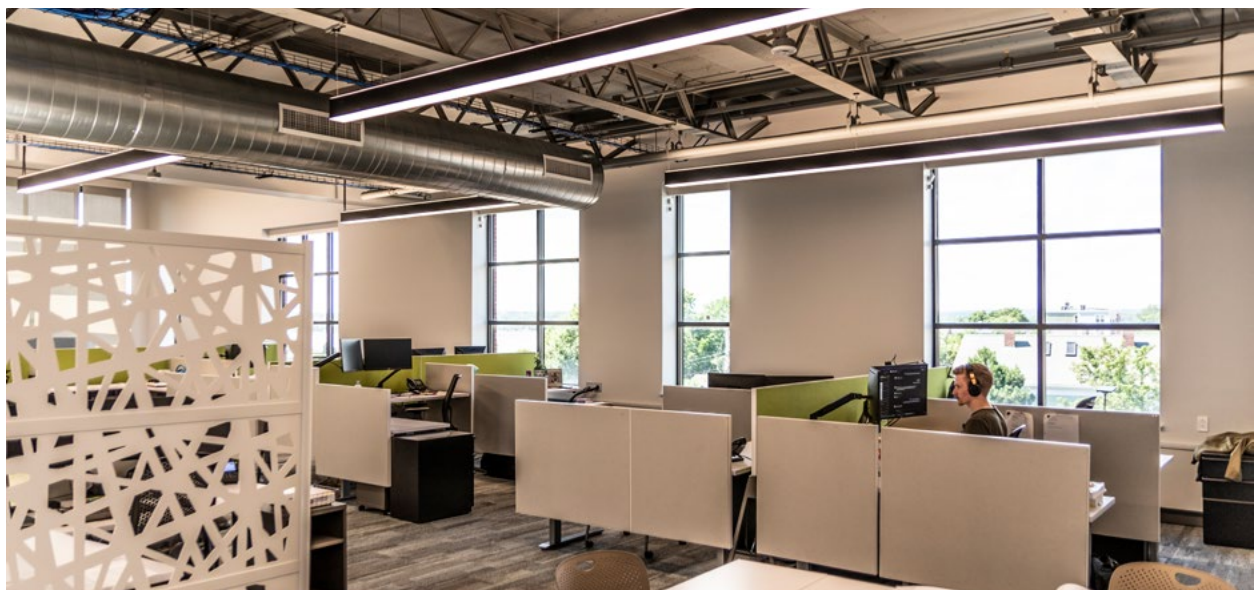
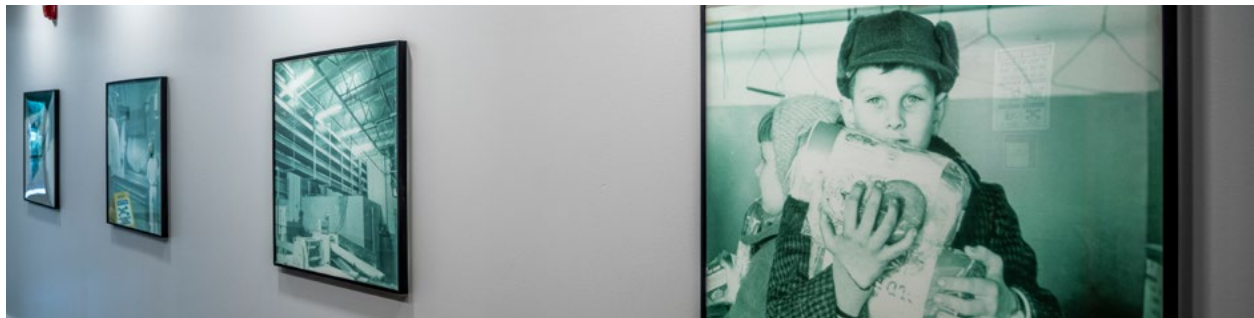
The Nissen Bakery Building rests comfortably on Washington Avenue, a mixed-use community blossoming with creative business owners repurposing industrial storefronts, symbolizing that what's old is new again. The team landed on the property after an exhaustive search for space left them wondering if they'd have to leave an area that's been home since their inception. Inspired by its expansive windows, brick-red bones, and open space, SMRT's design team began peeling back the building's past to uncover its future.

"SMRT's design team began peeling back the building's past to uncover its future."

No doubt, the company had some pressure to perform in the endeavor that was to be their new location, given their reputation

as a forward-thinking, pro-people team of creatives. It had to be active and energizing, and demonstrate a commitment to the overall well-being of employees, and the business.

Greeting you at the entrance are a montage of photos detailing a different era, while inside the space opens to a friendly, light-filled workplace.



"Our new space is centered on community, collaboration and creativity. At the same time, we committed to pursuing WELL certification. WELL is a building rating system focused on the health of the occupants," wrote SMRT's Nicole Rogers in a company blog post.

WELL was established in 2014 to establish the highest possible standard for building and interior space designers to promote health and wellness. It's a proactive, measurable effort requiring forethought and a commitment to more than the bottom line. It's a conduit between people and space. "Health and wellness in the office is going to be paramount," said SMRT Workplace Studio Leader and Certified Interior Designer Jeana Stewart, "You're not going to be able to get people to return to the office unless they feel safe. Whether you're thinking about cleaning protocols, or making sure the surfaces within the space are easy to clean, and the aspects of WELL."

"People need to feel comfortable, that the space is safe, and that their health is paramount to us," said Kate Everett, Principal at SMRT, and Director of Operations. "Wellness [in commercial space] is a trend that's going to extend well past us getting back to normal, and we intentionally designed the space to meet the WELL standards, because we wanted to be a healthy place to work."

In the company's pursuit of WELL certification, Everett said access to natural light is critical to how people feel in a space.

"Natural light was a big part of our conversation about where to locate our conference rooms," said Everett. "We have these huge phenomenal windows on each side of the structure, and in

our old space, we had some rooms with no windows or natural light, and people just didn't want to go in. The popular ones all had natural light, so we lined our conference rooms up against these great windows, and that required us to have shade control."

Legrand's line fit well into SMRT's plan, providing the company with exceptional control over the historical building's brilliant, brick-encased windows. Customizable in fabric and infinitely programmable, Legrand commercial shading gave SMRT a new, innovative option for controlling the interior's balance between light and shade.

Stewart said the company created natural light environments around internal work areas with glass fronts, "So they can still get that access to natural light."

The Curtain Shop of Maine came in to assist SMRT on their commercial shading, recommending a Legrand installation. They also helped the firm understand its benefits for future use in client projects.

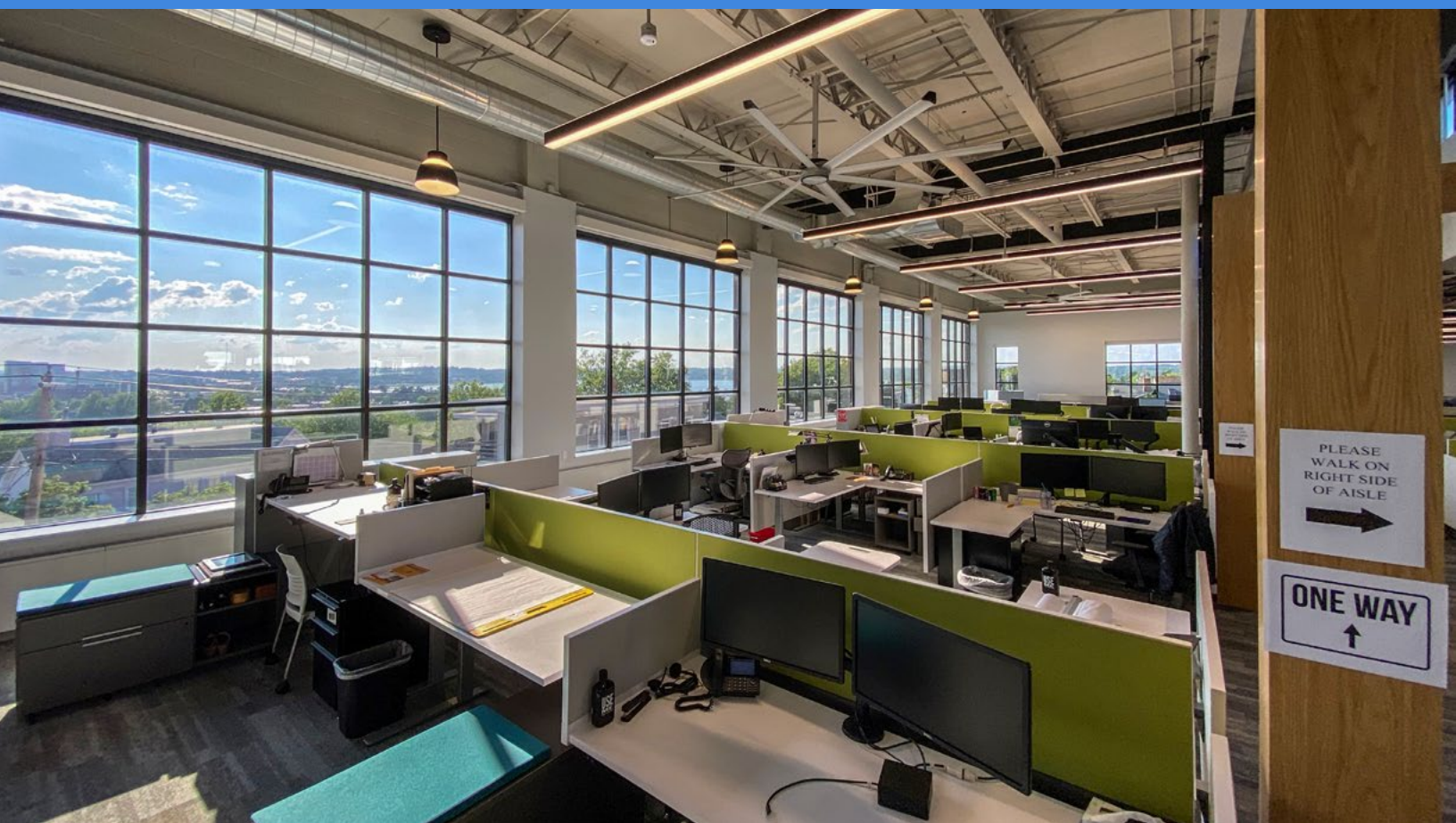
"We're building this space for 100 people, and we've got this huge exposure of natural light, and you have people who love the light and others who may be sensitive to it," said Everett. The Legrand system, she said, helped them avoid "shade wars."

"We wanted to take the human element out of it, and so we needed automation with solar control," she said. "And Jeana's team executed on it."

Little touches add up when an organization makes its people their priority—a promise often made but rarely delivered to this extent.



“We wanted to take the human element out of it, and so we needed automation with solar control.”



In addition to precise control of their shading, the new space is designed to be flexible, and physical, with work stations that convert from stand to sit, and dedicated areas for bike storage and even showers, the absence of which often negates a person's willingness to bike or run-commute.

A wellness room calls to moms who may need space with their children while at work. It can accommodate yoga and other classes oriented to recharging and wellness pursuits.

"The WELL certification moving forward is going to be really important for organizations to stand out, and to let that tell their people who important employee wellness is to them," said Stewart.

Everett said it's important for them as an organization to lead the conversation with their clients when it comes to creating a healthy workplace, especially as it relates to sustainability, carbon footprint, and WELL.

Technology helped shape many of the decisions SMRT made throughout the renovation process.



Space should be more than a place business, Stewart said, noting that it can help attract talent, encourage productivity, and build teams.

"Everyone wants the best and brightest, and having space as a tool is huge," she said. "Access to a place to workout, and being close enough to local spaces for happy hours and going out to eat together, really help people feel supported by their organization. I think there's a shift in the way people are looking at their space."

The company has multiple offices, and has committed to remaining in urban communities to remain vibrant and stay walkable as evidenced by their upcoming move from an office park in Latham, NY, to the downtown walkable community of Schenectady, NY. News of the relocation has spurred recruiting.

Relative to their new Portland office, Stewart emphasized the importance of history connected SMRT and the Nissen Bakery.

"We both have a rich history here, and our founder John Calvin Stevens, designed a lot of the buildings in Portland, a lot of the beautiful historic buildings that have created the fabric of the city," she said. "For us, it was really enticing to celebrate the history of this building with our own."

Even when their contractor joked that it would be easier to design a new building, the company didn't falter in its goals.

"It cannot compare to the quirks and historic character we get in this building," said Everett. ☐



At Centennial College Ashtonbee Campus, the afternoon sun partners with Legrand Commercial Shading to create a perfect study of daylighting interior.

BRIGHT IDEAS

Centennial College's Ashtonbee campus is a lesson in daylighting optimization



Located in the bustling Toronto suburb of Scarborough, Ontario, Centennial College's Ashtonbee Campus is home to its School of Transportation and one of the largest automotive and aircraft technology training centres in Canada. So it's no wonder that the award-winning design of its library building is meant to integrate the busy pedestrian and vehicular traffic outside with the study and research of transportation inside.

Known on campus as "The Hub", the building is home to the 31,000-square-foot Ashtonbee Campus library, along with multiple professional learning spaces, and offices dedicated to student life and career enhancement. The Hub is the center of campus activity, and its material palette of stainless steel and fritted glass give it a feel of coming and going—with a warm welcome in both directions. On a sunny afternoon, walking



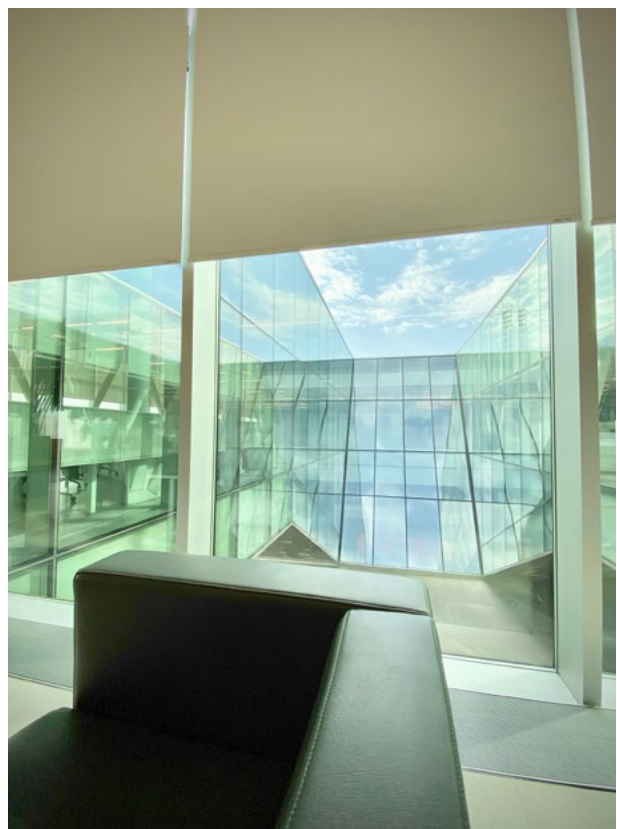
To take full advantage of daylighting benefits both in the library and student meeting spaces, the Ashtonbee Hub is outfitted with customized Legrand Shades that can be easily operated by library staff to best meet the needs of its patrons.

through the place is an experience of being indoors and out at the same time. Its floor-to-ceiling windows surround you with dynamic street views and a sun-filled interior space that would inspire student and educator alike.

The Library building is the most recent addition to the Ashtonbee campus, one of ten campuses that comprise Centennial College, which in the 50-plus years since its founding, has grown from a local community college to an institution with an internationally diverse fulltime student body of 25,000, and consistent ranking in the top ten of Canadian Research Colleges.

Taken as a the whole, the Ashtonbee Campus is a lively, vital example of architectural renovation. Located on Centennial College's oldest property, the campus has seen the successful transformation of the former headquarters of Volkswagen Canada into two-storeys of learning space, with full-size transportation labs and workshops, as well as a bookstore, cafeteria and 300-seat auditorium.

The Ashtonbee Library building was added as part of a campus expansion that got underway in 2013 and was eventually the recipient of multiple architectural design awards, including the 2016 Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia Award in Architecture and the 2017 Ontario Association of Architects Award for Excellence in Design. ☞





FOCUS ON FABRIC

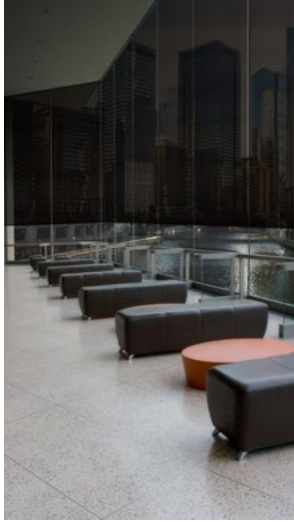
Understanding Openness Factor

by Stephanie Lee, Marketing Manager, Shading Systems

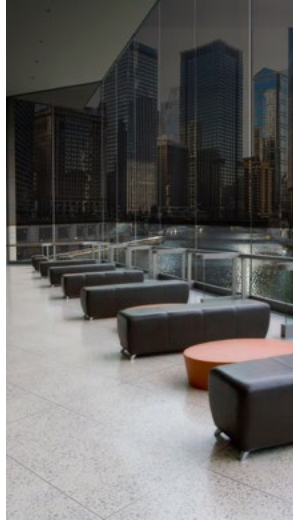
When planning your shading system, choosing your fabric is a crucial step in the process. The right fabric does more than add aesthetic appeal, it contributes to the overall success of your shading system. Often times, it can be overwhelming to select the right fabric. From color to composition, there are several elements to consider. One of the most important features to consider is the fabric's openness factor.

What is Openness Factor?

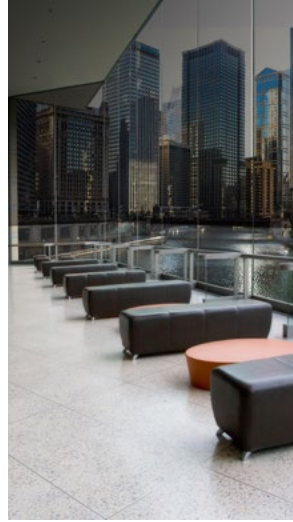
The openness factor of a fabric refers to the percentage of the fabric weave that is not covered by thread. This percentage can range anywhere from 0% to 10%. Lower openness factors indicate a more tightly woven fabric. These fabrics create greater privacy while blocking sunlight from entering your space. On the opposite end, a higher openness factor indicates a looser weave which will allow for more sunlight and greater visibility.



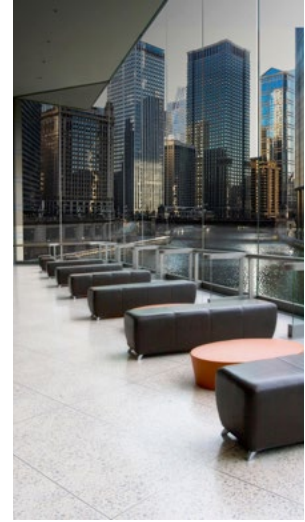
1%



3%



5%



10%

Photos provide by Mermet Corporation

Which openness factor should I choose?

When selecting your fabric openness factor, consider the needs of the room and its occupants. Imagine your space has large open windows with abundant natural light and scenic views. If your goal is to darken the room by blocking out the light, a lower-openness factor fabric is the right choice to minimize light filtration. If occupants enjoy the natural light and need only the benefits of UV protection, a higher openness factor is the right choice.

Light transmission isn't the only factor to consider when selecting your fabric openness. The transparency and level of privacy should also be considered. As we noted, a lower openness factor features a tighter weave. This means that the visibility or view-through of the fabric will also be lower. If maintaining outdoor views is important to your occupants, you'll want to make sure you choose a higher openness factor fabric which will better maintain your outdoor view. If privacy is important in the space, a lower openness factor is the right choice.

"Consider the needs of the room and it's occupants."

Although fabrics with lower openness factors can darken a room and lend to greater privacy, it's important to note that even a fabric with 0% openness isn't necessarily opaque. For projects where you need total light blockage, select a black-out fabric, a distinction given to fabrics that are completely opaque and will block all light from entering the space.

Above all, make sure to understand the needs of the occupants and how they will interact in the space. This will help guide your fabric selection and make sure your shading system is beneficial for those utilizing the space. ☐

LEGRAND SPOTLIGHT

on post-pandemic commercial spaces with Wiremold® Furniture Power

THE POWER TO CHANGE

Commercial spaces will never be the same again. With new regulations and requirements due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many facility teams need to make quick changes now and continue to respond to ongoing ones. Most are working with existing buildings and furniture as leases continue—while budgets tighten. Despite everything else, the need for power is still a primary concern.

Facility leaders don't have the luxury of waiting to see how this pans out. As social distancing continues to be top of mind, they're redesigning

current spaces for lower population density. These changes come with many other defining features of the "new normal." Staggered work schedules. Routine temperature checks. Closures for meeting rooms and common areas. Desks moved at least six feet apart with partitions between each one. To help lessen the potential of virus spread, each workstation can also be equipped with its own power source.

Sabrina Snyder, director of Wiremold product management, sums up how this unparalleled uncertainty requires truly flexible power: "Although no one can say for certain how the future will look, it is likely that the needs





of commercial spaces will be vastly different and it's best to prepare to adapt. After all, the first step is recognizing how to adapt—and that conversation can start now. It's important for power solutions to be flexible enough to quickly install and uninstall. When they are, facilities can move connections to meet future needs however they may shift due to new regulations and trends. No matter where these changes take us, the need for convenient power connections won't be far behind."

Wiremold Furniture Power offers a wide variety of modern options that can be installed and removed easily—right in the furniture that's already there. There are many potential areas

to place power units: either attached on the surface or nestled in the surface of existing furniture. Most facility teams have explored desks, table surfaces and even upholstered seating. Quick installation means that these spaces can remain truly flexible for whatever comes next, as the power units can easily pop in or out if the arrangement changes. When times are uncertain, flexibility is even more important. With power options that can adapt quickly, we're ready as commercial spaces continue to evolve.

To learn more, visit [legrand.us/power-to-change](https://www.legrand.us/power-to-change). ☐

PARTING SHOT

Stay safe everyone!





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