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## Steelcase and Microsoft Showcase Technology-Enabled Spaces Designed to Boost Creative Work at NeoCon 2017

### Company wins IIDA/Contract Magazine Showroom Competition; Releases New Research Finding a Macro-Shift to Creative Work

CHICAGO, June 13, 2017 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- [Steelcase](#) today announced it won the 22<sup>nd</sup> annual IIDA/Contract Magazine Showroom and Booth Design Competition for large showrooms at NeoCon 2017. Winners are selected based on the originality of design, effective use of materials and their ability to make a lasting impression with attendees. This year the Steelcase showroom features Creative Spaces, a range of technology-enabled workspaces designed to foster creative thinking at work, which were jointly-developed with Microsoft. Introduced earlier this year in New York, Creative Spaces are reinterpreted in the Chicago showroom to demonstrate an even broader range of products and features to foster creative work. Steelcase also released new research today that uncovers the drivers behind the shift toward creative work and the struggles many organizations face as they work to build a creative culture. The company's findings are presented in its [360 Focus](#), Creativity, Work and the Physical Environment.

Steelcase and Microsoft bring their respective expertise together to develop holistic spaces specifically designed to optimize Microsoft Surface device technology and support diverse stages and work modes within the creative process. Creative Spaces include places for individual focused work, pair-based collaboration, group ideation and experimentation as well as diffused thinking.

"Work used to be a linear process focused on efficiency, repetitive tasks and division of labor. But the problems workers and organizations face today are complex, requiring creative thinking and a different work process in which people and ideas diverge, converge and iterate," said Sara Armbruster, vice president strategy, research and new business innovation. "Yet, most employers say their organizations aren't creative enough and most employees say they're not living up to their creative potential on the job."

Earlier this year, Steelcase and Microsoft announced a strategic partnership aimed at solving the challenges organizations and people face as they try to engage in more creative work. At NeoCon 2017 the companies are showcasing an expanded range of Creative Spaces.

"Microsoft believes creativity fuels productivity. We build Surface devices to help people bring ideas to life and encourage new ways to work, create and collaborate," said Julia Atalla, senior director, Surface marketing. "Bringing our family of personal and collaboration devices together in a thoughtfully designed space -- Creative Spaces -- can inspire creative problem solving and foster employee engagement."

This announcement comes as part of [NeoCon 2017](#) in Chicago where the company previews its latest designs for the new office and celebrates its 105 year-old heritage. Steelcase is also showcasing Umami™, a flexible, modular lounge solution; Steelcase Series™ 1, ergonomic, high-quality seating attainable for everyone and everywhere; and Bassline™ Tables by turnstone, a one-of-a-kind table with residential feel and unique customization capabilities.

"Creativity is fundamentally about problem solving. It's difficult, iterative and messy — an exploration of unknowns. It also means creative work is intensely demanding — physically, cognitively and emotionally. We need a range of solutions to support the range of people's needs," added Armbruster.

#### [Creative Spaces](#)

Creative Spaces are on display now at the Steelcase WorkLife Center in Chicago. Spaces include:

**Focus Studio:** Individual creative work requires alone time to focus and get into flow, while also allowing quick shifts to two-person collaboration. This is a place to let ideas incubate before sharing them with a large group, perfect for focused work with Microsoft Surface Book or Surface Pro 4.

**Duo Studio:** Working in pairs is an essential behavior of creativity. This space enables two people to co-create shoulder-to-shoulder, while also supporting individual work with Microsoft Surface Studio. It includes a lounge area to invite others in for a quick creative review with Surface Hub or to put your feet up and get away without going away.

**Ideation Hub:** A high-tech destination that encourages active participation and equal opportunity to contribute as people co-create, refine and share ideas with co-located or distributed teammates on Microsoft Surface Hub.

**Maker Commons:** Socializing ideas and rapid prototyping are essential parts of creativity. This space is designed to encourage quick switching between conversation, experimentation and concentration, ideal for a mix of Surface devices, such as Surface Hub and Surface Book.

**Respite Room:** Creative work requires many brain states, including the need to balance active group work with solitude and individual think time. This truly private room allows relaxed postures to support diffused attention.

For more information on Creative Spaces and the partnership between Microsoft and Steelcase, visit [www.steelcase.com/creativity](http://www.steelcase.com/creativity) or [www.steelcase.com/neocon](http://www.steelcase.com/neocon) or [www.microsoft.com/en-us/devices/business/steelcase](http://www.microsoft.com/en-us/devices/business/steelcase).

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