Experiential Design – Rethinking relations between people, objects and environments

• Paper / Proposal Title:
Exploring the Influence of User Wellness in Commercial Interior Design

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• Abstract (300 words):
Constructs of wellness are increasingly coming to the forefront of our consciousness—both in the design sector and in the broader societal landscape. However, we do not yet have a contemporary and empirically grounded understanding of its influence on the decisions of designers. This presentation employs survey results stemming from 184 interior designers practicing in a range of commercial market sectors (e.g., corporate workplace, health/wellness, and hospitality) to compare user wellness against a range of potential project drivers. Of the seven themes queried, user wellness scored as the fifth most important (M=3.33; 1 not important; 4 important), behind factors such as technology integration (M=3.71), employee productivity (M=3.64), and real estate efficiency (M=3.64). Conversely, wellness was deemed more important than accommodating regulatory changes (M=3.30) and environmental stewardship (M=3.19). When asked about their clients’ priorities, respondents indicated that user wellness was less important than budgetary restrictions and the integration of technology, though a higher priority than community image, and long-term return on investment. Similarly, free responses
suggested that wellness was increasingly emphasized by clients. The presentation will explore this and other qualitative themes including 150 domain-specific design strategies respondents suggested they used to enhance user well-being within their designs.

• **Author(s) Biography (200 words each):**

Amy Huber, IDEC, LEED AP, EDAC, CDT is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Interior Architecture and Design. Prior to entering academia, Amy was a project designer for award-winning corporate offices and airports. She is a LEED AP BD+C and EDAC accredited professional, Construction Document Technologist, and an NCIDQ-certified designer. Huber’s research has been presented in national and international venues, and she is the author of *Design Storytelling: Effective and Engaging Communication* (Routledge).