

2020 BIFMA

FY2020 YEAR IN REVIEW

This time last year, as we were preparing for NeoCon, BIFMA took steps to put a finer point on the story we were telling—the story of our industry and the story of the ways the products our members make have an impact on people’s lives in ways both seen and unseen.

Three words became the foundation for the outcome of those efforts to establish BIFMA’s point of view: product, performance, and people. These words served as the theme for our presence at NeoCon, the structure for a refresh of our website and our social media pages, and a roadmap for our communication and outreach efforts over the past year.

As we look back on the passage of another fiscal year for BIFMA, those words still hold meaning to me. They acknowledge who we are as an organization, and an industry, and speak both to where we’ve come from and where we are going.

Our collective efforts to establish standards have a direct impact on the design, fabrication, and use of products people rely on at work and in other aspects of daily life. And for that, we have so much to be proud of.

But as I reflect on the challenges we’ve faced in recent months—from trade uncertainty and fluctuating energy and financial markets, to shifts in the way we learn, work, and play as a result of a healthcare crisis we’ve not seen in generations—there is another word that comes to mind: perseverance.

This report captures some of the many activities and accomplishments of the past year, most of which are essential to our ability to persevere through these uncertain times. It highlights our ongoing work to continuously improve on behalf of our industry and add value to our members and their customers. And it demonstrates how hard work, innovation, and efficiency can help us not only survive, but succeed.

In my tenure as Executive Director I have seen BIFMA and this industry weather ups and downs before. But as I prepare to pass on the reigns of the organization, I am certain that through collaboration and a commitment to doing the right thing our staff team, volunteer leaders, and membership will weather this chapter and that we will emerge stronger together.

For that, and for the opportunity to serve this industry, I am eternally grateful to you all.



Tom Reardon
Executive Director

Staying the course.

BIFMA's efforts to strengthen our organization and amplify our voice have positioned us to persevere for our members over the past year—especially in a time of great uncertainty.

Staying the course for BIFMA has meant continuing to invest in the advocacy, outreach, events, and programs our industry stakeholders depend on.

It also has meant approaching challenges and opportunities with creativity and flexibility as we passionately represent our industry and tell the story of the products and people who help us perform when we're needed most.



FY 2020 BIFMA ACCOMPLISHMENTS

BIFMA COMPLIANT

BIFMA's branded conformance program, covering nine safety and performance standards, is now expected to launch in early 2021.

Major milestones in the development of [BIFMA Compliant](#) have been reached over the past year. BIFMA staff, consultants and member volunteers have:

- Finalized Program Agreements and Scheme
- Revised BIFMA [Product Conformance Requirements PC-2020](#) (was PC-2018) to align with the BIFMA Compliant Program
- Engaged a program administrator
- Developed a BIFMA branded product registry for users
- Conducted a product registry user "pilot"
- Established program brand identity and associated assets
- Completed BIFMA Compliant Brand Usage Guide
- Promoted the program to potential user organizations

STANDARDS

A number of BIFMA standards were advanced, revised or refined over the past year and significant work was done to promote awareness and adoption where appropriate.

- ANSI/BIFMA X5.4 Public & Lounge Seating was approved by ANSI and published in May 2020.
- The ANSI/BIFMA X5.5 Desk/Table team worked to revise tests with focus on leg strength, height adjustable tables, and stability. Public review and an Association Ballot were completed April 1.
- The ANSI/SOHO S6.5 Small Office/Home Office revision team began work concurrent with the X5.5 team. The group proposed a name change to ANSI/BIFMA X6.5 Home Office and Light-use Office: Storage, Desk and Table Furniture. Test methods will be harmonized with X5.5 but performance requirements will be unique to X6.5.
- The BIFMA G1 Ergonomics team began revising the 2013 Guide and converting it to an ANSI standard. Completion expected late 2020 or early 2021.
- PODS - A team of volunteers began drafting an industry Guide for PODS (booths).
- LEVEL was required by Canadian Government, California State Universities, and U.S. Department of Energy GreenBuy Award Program, among others.

FLAMMABILITY

Continued engagement with stakeholders is an essential way to ensure standards and testing requirements are effective and workable for BIFMA members.

- BIFMA lobbied the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and the U.S. Congress in support of The Safer Occupancy Furniture Flammability Act. The bill would make California's Technical Bulletin 117-2013 a national flammability standard. It passed the House and, as of May 2020, is before the Senate.
- BIFMA worked successfully with the City of San Francisco to obtain waivers on behalf of our members after the City implemented a new regulation in 2019 for upholstered furniture to contain no flame retardants (<1000ppm) including electrical products.

MESSAGING & OUTREACH

BIFMA continues its ongoing work to better understand market drivers, forge relationships, and increase visibility.

- BIFMA's benchmark brand awareness survey highlighted the association's positive reputation in the market and a desire to have BIFMA engage in the important trends in commercial environments, including sustainability, wellness, safety and 'residentialization.' This data will inform efforts for the coming year.
- BIFMA participated in a number of industry events to amplify our voice including:
 - » Metropolis Think Tank (Washington DC)
 - » IIDA Leader's Breakfast (San Francisco and Chicago)
 - » IDC Design Symposium (Vancouver, BC)
 - » [Improving Our Industry](#), interview with Tom Reardon on BIFMA Compliant, October 2019 print edition of Contract
 - » Contract Design Forum (Carmel-By-The-Sea, CA)
 - » Contract + ASID + BIFMA Amenities Roundtable (Atlanta)
 - » Interiors Awards, hosted by Contract (New York)
 - » Designers and Architects Talk Series, IIDA + AIA (Chicago)
 - » SCALE Student Conference, hosted by ASID (Seattle)
 - » GIANTS of Design, hosted by Interior Design (Palm Springs, CA)
 - » [What To Know Before You Specify](#), contributed article, May 2020 print edition of interiors&sources
 - » [How to Specify Sustainable Furniture](#), podcast hosted by interiors&sources
 - » BIFMA began publication of a monthly newsletter to highlight, summarize and recap recent association activities, news and alerts.

ADVOCACY

BIFMA staff, consultants, and members continue to advocate on behalf of the commercial furniture industry on a number of national, state and local issues.

On behalf of the industry, BIFMA:

- Lobbied members of Congress and the Administration opposing tariffs and urging resumption of negotiations with China.
- Lobbied the U.S. Congress for passage of the USMCA Trade Agreement updating NAFTA. It was passed by Congress and signed into law by the President.
- Through participation on the GSA Quality Partnership Council, advocated for adherence to American National Standards in all furniture purchasing systems.
- Along with ANSI and NIST representatives, met with GSA to discuss the eCommerce pilot (Commercial Platforms Initiative). BIFMA's position is that ANSI standards should never be waived, and that the safety and performance of products used by the federal workforce should be the highest priority.
- Presented to Canadian government procurement and acquisition officials on BIFMA's sustainability standard and the BIFMA Compliant program.
- Presented to the General Services Administration's IWAC staff on the ANSI/BIFMA e3 Furniture Sustainability Standard and the [LEVEL Certification](#) Program.
- Authored a [Baltimore Sun Op-Ed](#) on Maryland flame retardant legislation.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

BIFMA's ongoing work to invest in its education programs means more and more people learn about BIFMA standards and furniture's role in sustainability rating systems each year.

As part of this work, BIFMA:

- Expanded Ambassador program in the Northwest to deliver CEU content and connect with that market. San Francisco area program enhanced with addition of a second person.
- Developed new BIFMA CEU, **Attributes of Contract Furniture**, launched for BIFMA faculty.
- Updated flagship **Standards That Matter** course, launch expected summer 2020.
- Updated **Demystifying Furniture's Role in Sustainability** and launched on-demand learning through ASID's Learning Academy.
- Launched [BIFMA Learning](#) a new training portal hosted on bifma.org. Enables on-demand training for BIFMA faculty (member company associates authorized to deliver BIFMA courses to design professionals).
- Hosted four educational Roundtable discussions with design professionals and dealers in San Francisco, New York and Atlanta. Topics focused on changes in the furniture specification process and BIFMA's support of the design community through LEVEL certification and the upcoming BIFMA Compliant program.
- Presented NeoCon 2019 CEU, **BIFMA Standards: Prove It! And presented at CET Experience on Standards Matter—Do They?**
- Reached approximately 1,000 individuals in 40 different markets with BIFMA's range of educational content covering safety & performance standards and furniture's role in LEVEL and other sustainability rating systems.

CONFLUENCE

The development of [Confluence](#), a joint venture initiative between BIFMA and NeoCon (announced Oct 2019), was the focus of much development and planning in anticipation of launching the new creative summit alongside NeoCon in June 2020.

Global events necessitated postponing both NeoCon and Confluence until 2021. However, the groundwork laid will be immediately built upon once circumstances permit.

These accomplishments include:

- Developed and executed a new brand identity
- Developed a dynamic 3-part program, including content, speakers, and venues
- Secured major sponsorship commitments

OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Statistical Data Reporting - BIFMA realized voluntary reporting increases in all of our Statistical reports, thus improving the percentage of the industry represented in the data.
- 360 Leadership Conference - Over 210 industry leaders from 115+ companies joined us for the 2020 leadership conference, a record high.
- BIFMA Membership - the association total member count increased in FY 2020 to an all-time high of 250 dues-paying member companies.

2020 BIFMA

BIFMA Annual Meeting

June 17, 2020

Virtual Meeting

Given the decision to cancel NeoCon 2020, this year's [BIFMA Annual Meeting](#) will take place virtually on Wednesday, June 17. Join us as we reflect on the year and discuss emerging challenges and opportunities for the commercial furniture industry.

BIFMA Furniture Summit

October 21–22, 2020

Virtual Meeting

Standards development activities, legislation, and regulations have never been more intricately linked than they are today. The [Furniture Summit](#) will once again bring together BIFMA's committees to consider the current state of important projects and establish priorities and plans for the year ahead.

Please join us for an invaluable exercise in cross-committee collaboration, education on industry issues, and recognition of the people behind the process.

360° Leadership Conference

With a strong, thought-provoking speaker line-up, supported by the right mix of industry leaders, the BIFMA 360° Leadership Conference continues to make its mark as a must-attend industry event.

For more information, visit bifma.org/events.

