

Steven R Wilcox

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Furniture / Industrial Designer - Product Development Executive

Twenty-five years of progressively responsible experience in industrial / furniture design, product development, and project management. Highly developed skills in concept identification and development, design, engineering detailing, three dimensional modeling, and product rendering. Deadline driven management experience in the marketing, merchandising, and public presentation of new products. Have effectively led and been an agent of change within the corporate environment (staff and freelance) regarding the product development process and product selection. Valuable background in general business – including the areas of sales, customer service, warehousing, and distribution. Strong consensus building skills, team building, and problem solving expertise. Qualifications:

Project Management
Engineering Review Management
Marketing / Merchandising
Product & Technology R&D
Excellent Finish / Color Skills
Vendor / Freelance Relations

Design / Design Management
Cross-Functional Team Leadership
Material Selection and Management
Market Analysis / Trend Management
Field Installation Management
Global Product Development Perspective

Excellent skills in design sketching, CAD Software, Rhinoceros 3D Modeling Software, Arion Rendering Software, Microsoft Office Software, and Photoshop.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Furnishings Design Incorporated, Spring Lake, MI 2005 to Present
Full service product development and design consultancy for the global furnishings markets. Specializing in strategic product design and development.

Principal

Furnishings Design Inc. produces all necessary design and development information to bring a concept to market. This information can include: strategic design direction, new product category identification, current product line review, concept development, concept sketches, CAD drawings, photo-realistic computer renderings, product introduction assistance, sales material development, advertising copy, and showroom design, marketing assistance, sales assistance, and public introduction of new products.

American Signature Furniture, Columbus OH 1998 to 2005
Vertically oriented retailing organization with 100 retail outlets - selling low to mid priced furnishings in Residential Bedroom, Dining, Occasional, Bedding, and Accessories.

Staff Designer / Product Development

Recruited to direct the in-house design efforts (a first for the corporation) and create a corporate product development process. Design complete, stand-alone furniture collections in all categories. Design product line extensions and expansions. Manage the corporate design committee; act as liaison with outside design sources. Travel worldwide supporting all efforts of the merchandising, design and development efforts. Design and implemented a product development database that centralizes all product development information for the furniture division – also instructed other executives in its use, benefits and features.

Wrote and implemented finish quality guidelines and procedures for offshore vendors, improving overall finish quality and acceptance.

Hekman Furniture Company, Grand Rapids, MI

1994 to 1998

Mid to High End Manufacturer of Freestanding and Modular Office, Home Office, Bedroom, Entertainment and Occasional Furniture.

Staff Designer / Product Development Manager

Hired to design in-house products and manage relationships with freelance design sources. Worked within the marketing department developing the strategies and products used to fulfill marketing goals. Identified consumer, market, and product trends. Specified new materials, finishes, and decorative manufacturing techniques in order to gain greater customer acceptance of products. Traveled internationally as a “Buyer” to secure products for sale that extended our product mix outside of our manufacturing expertise. Oversaw the production of 60 to 80 product samples and prototypes every six months. Actively supported other departments within the organization with product development information. Revised and managed the modifications to the High Point Showroom maximizing the effect of new products in the show space. Recognized by one of the company owners as not only being a good “designer” but also a good “merchant”.

BIFMA, Grand Rapids, MI

1992 to 1994

The Business and Institutional Furniture Manufacturer’s Association

Contract / Office Furniture Trade Association – Represents the office furniture industry in areas of official industry statistics, governmental relations, and safety and performance standards.

Standards Manager

Hired to manage the industry’s committee efforts regarding safety and performance standards. Implemented the ANSI process for creating and gaining national acceptance of voluntary industry standards. These areas included the durability of office products, safety issues such as stability, racking, flammability, and ergonomic effectiveness. Actively tracked and reported on issues of importance that impacted the office furniture industry. Developed relationships with member manufacturers to represent their unique similarities and differences to other industries and governmental agencies. Participated in the development of engineering testing devices and the acceptance of US industry standards in Canada. Clarified the role of the BIFMA technical committees within the international standards development organization (ISO). Represented the industry at European standards meetings - helping to initiate a dialog and furthering the development of common safety and performance standards.

John Widdicomb Furniture Company, Grand Rapids, MI

1989 to 1992

High End Manufacturer of Bedroom, Dining, Entertainment, Office, and Occasional Furniture

Staff Designer / Engineer

Recruited while still a design student on a temporary basis to assist in the design department on the recommendation of an instructor. Hired full time upon completion of design school. Created sketches, design details, engineering drawings, factory route packs, and parts drawings. Designed and detailed decorative hardware drawings, veneer patterns, and carving details. The real value in this job was being able to observe master sample makers, finishing gurus, marquetry and parquetry artisans, decorative painters, and veneer log buyers all do their meticulous work. Was also given valuable “instruction” by the engineering and sample departments on how to improve my designs – critical information for a new designer. Truly a unique company that produced heirloom quality furniture. Wonderful experience for a new designer, great first job.

EDUCATION / ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE:

•**Bachelors of Fine Arts**, Furniture Design, Kendall College of Art a Design, Grand Rapids, MI 1990
(Private design college supplying over 90% of furniture designers to industry.)

Additional Professional Experience

Following my graduation from Aquinas College, I worked in the following retail management positions before deciding to return to school for design training in 1988.

Marks Photo Shop, Wyoming, MI 1987-1988
(Retail and Professional Photography Supplies Company)

Warehouse Manager

Directed the pricing, warehousing and distribution of products. Developed a respect for detailed record keeping and deadlines.

MC Sporting Goods, Grand Rapids, MI 1986-1987
(Multi-Store Sporting Goods Retailer)

Assistant Manager

Managed the sales associates and answered customer questions and concerns. Also directed different departments within the store in regards to sales, pricing, stocking, employee training, hiring, inventory issues.

•**Bachelors of Science Degree**, Business Management, Aquinas College, Grand Rapids, MI 1986
(Private liberal arts college specializing in Management and Accounting)

•**Associate of Arts**, Business Concentration, Grand Rapids Junior College, Grand Rapids, MI 1984

PERSONAL:

Married 30 years with three daughters

Former President of Kendall College of Art and Design Alumni Association

Continue to be involved with Kendall as an Alumni speaker and Adjunct Professor

Currently teach trending and professional practices as an adjunct professor at Kendall College of Art and Design

Holder of several US Patents.

In my spare time, I enjoy camping, photography, small British sports cars, and the beach.