

Surface Scene

INSPIRE | INFORM | EDUCATE

FALL 2025



DURASEIN

Stain, Impact, Scratch, and
Heat Resistant Solid
Surface

IS AI REPLACING THE A&D COMMUNITY?

How Artificial Intelligence
Is Taking Over The Industry

DESIGNING CONNECTIONS

A Survey From Designers
Across North America



HEALTHCARE SOLUTIONS

Healthcare designers aim to create calming spaces using soft colors and natural elements; however, these elements often fail to meet the durability and hygiene standards required for healthcare environments. The Devenney Group, located in Scottsdale, Arizona, required materials that could withstand heavy use and rigorous cleaning while still maintaining a soothing atmosphere.

The solution was Durasein Solid Surface, which provided the design team with flexibility for both flat and curved installations, such as check-in desks, wall panels, and lounge counters. Its seamless, thermoformable design makes cleaning easy and supports infection control.

WHY DURASEIN WORKS IN HEALTHCARE

Durasein is rugged, stain and water-resistant, and naturally resists microbes. Its smooth, non-porous surface withstands harsh cleaners without compromising its finish, making it ideal for demanding healthcare environments.

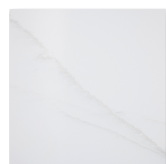


Architect: Devenney Group
Application: Reception and Wall Cladding

Product: Durasein
Number: DM5049

Color Name: Ever After

Distributor: Rugby Architectural Building Products



THE IMPACT OF AI IN THE BUILDING INDUSTRY

ChatGPT, Microsoft CoPilot, and Google Gemini are just a few of the thousands of AI software out there. As Artificial Intelligence (AI) grows, it inevitably affects all markets, and the construction industry is no exception. There are numerous talks, podcasts, and even forecasts about how AI will take over the industry, but here is our analysis of what's actually happening.

HOW IS AI BEING USED IN FIRMS NOW?

Billable hours are the hours that are often used in a firm, indicating that designers and architects have a tight timeframe to create a visually pleasing concept for their clients before moving on to the technical aspects of the project. Traditionally, designers had a vast library space of samples, but the aftereffects of COVID have affected office space and caused firms to downsize. Meanwhile, library space is now limited, making it more challenging to access samples.

With the use of AI, rendering and visualization have become significantly quicker, saving the firm a substantial amount of time and money on the front end of the billable hours. Firms are utilizing AI to create multiple concepts and schemes in minutes, whereas the traditional method might take a couple of days to a week. Conceptualizing has become a tool, rather than a replacement, for managing time. In addition to being a time-saver, larger firms are embracing AI as a collaborator while investing in how the interface can help team members be more efficient in their workflows. Other firms also turn to AI as a BIM integration to streamline design across all teams.

AI'S INFLUENCE ON TRENDS

The algorithm of AI has also evolved to establish trends. AI will generate a user's preference and continue to use those data points to create a trend. For example, if pink countertops are searched for numerous times, AI will push the narrative to designers that pink countertops are the new, hot, and trendy item.





AI's trend-setting capabilities can lead to a dynamic landscape in interior design. Trends that once took months to develop can now emerge in a matter of weeks, thanks to social media. This rapid change forces designers to be selective in their use of materials, ensuring the project remains relevant when it comes time to be built. As well as their urgency to constantly update their knowledge to keep up with the trends.

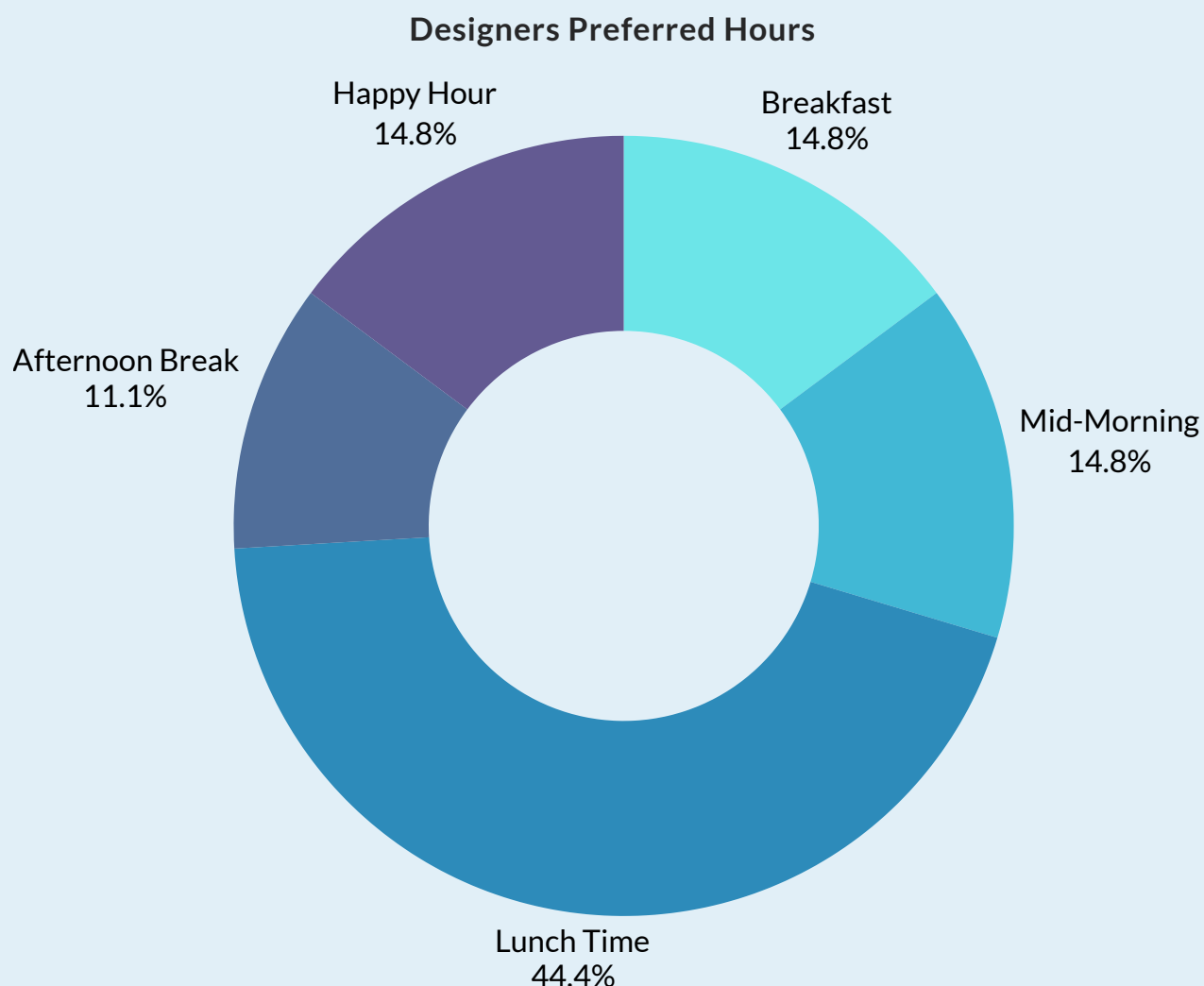
The City of Seattle asked a local architecture firm to create renderings to reenvision what the future of the city could look like. This sparked conversations and utilized AI-driven renderings to demonstrate how public spaces could attract visitors to the downtown area.

In summary, AI is not just a buzzword; it's become a powerful tool that is reshaping how architecture and design firms operate. From accelerating the conceptual process to enhancing communication through cross-collaboration, AI has become a strategic work partner rather than a replacement, as its technology continues to advance.



DESIGNING CONNECTIONS

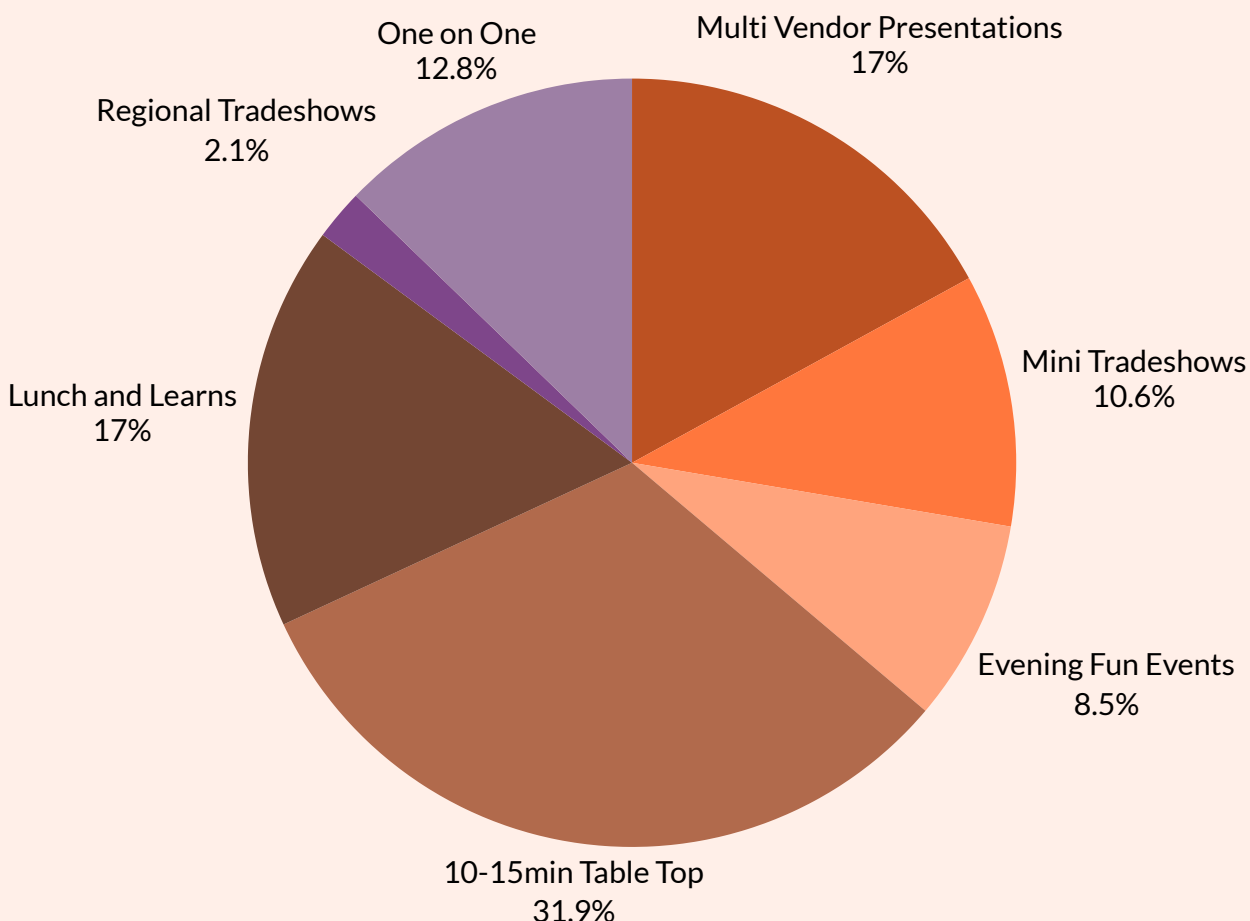
As architects and designers have adapted to new office hours, their office days are always full of deadlines, client meetings, cross-disciplinary team meetings, and problem-solving. When it comes to learning about new products and trends in the industry, they want their experience to be tailored and meaningful to how they actually work now, not how they used to work. A recent poll taken with the A&D community across North America revealed some telling shifts on how they prefer to engage with their local reps and learn about new products, and here is what they had to say:



BEST TIME TO CONNECT

We asked designers which time of day they like to see new product! While the traditional Lunch and Learns still hold firm with nearly 45%, the landscape as we know it has changed. With designers adapting to more flexible and hybrid schedules, mid-morning and Happy Hours are new preferences that designers are requesting.

Designers Favorite Formats



While timing is important, so is the format. Manufacturers have become creative in how they showcase new products, and some of these formats have resonated with the A&D community. The most popular style across the board is a 10-15 minute tabletop presentation. They are quick, tactile and fit into the workflow without disrupting it. Lunch and Learns are still found to be valuable as they allow designers to dive deep into products that are curated to meet their project needs. Multi-vendor presentations and mini-tradeshows also rank high, as they offer a chance to see non-competitive products within a specified time frame without having to commit to a single product line.

In a recent panel discussion held in Toronto and Calgary, designers discussed how product representatives function in their day-to-day work and how we can be a better resource to them. They revealed candidly how the evolving role of a product representative is still valued, but only if they bring relevance, reliability, and authenticity to the table. Today's designers want to know why and how a product will fit into their current project needs. They're looking for thoughtfulness, not generic sales pitches. And while Material Bank has been an excellent resource for their daily needs, it has not replaced the need for human connection.

MEETING DESIGNERS WHERE THEY ARE - NOT WHERE THEY WERE

As the A&D community continues to redefine how they work, it is clear that product engagement must evolve alongside the. Designers are mindful of their time and seek products that bring them genuine value and not just a quick sales pitch. Whether it's a quick tabletop presentation, an allotted lunch-and-learn hour, a joint presentation, or a curated event, the format matters, but so does the approach.

Reps who bring relevance, reliability, and authenticity are essential in this industry. In a world where digital tools are prominent, the human connection remains irreplaceable. The future of product representation lies in being a thoughtful representative, one who understands the designer's workflow and delivers meaningful solutions, not just materials.

EDUCATE



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