

## **Defining Activity-Based Furniture & Redesigning of a Laptop Stand for HeijltjesAkkaya**

Wieke Willemsen

This study focuses on the question: “How to expand the Activity-Based Furniture line of HeijltjesAkkaya for (home)offices?”.

Activity-Based Furniture is designed for the (home)office environment as a reaction to global increasing sedentary behavior, which means that people are increasingly physically inactive during their occupational and leisure time. The main goal of Activity-Based Furniture is to make doing work, particularly office work, healthier. Activity-Based Furniture allows the user to adopt a more active posture while working and makes the user more aware of their posture and the activities they are carrying out. An additional goal for Activity-Based Furniture is that they are hybrid in design; they function well in a home environment, even though they are primarily built for the office environment.

Hybrid furniture is even more relevant when looking at the consequences of the global Covid-19 pandemic that started in 2020. Remote working from home or any other place was already slowly becoming more of a trend, and due to the pandemic, the need to work remotely has expanded enormously in the last two years. However, many people do not have the right office furniture and tools to allow themselves to work at home properly. Additionally, many people do not have the space to incorporate designated office furniture at home or want to save space. HeijltjesAkkaya wants to expand the Activity-Based Furniture series and deepen its knowledge of trends in the (home)office environment. To expand the series, design research concerning the different possible concept directions within the category of Activity-Based Furniture was conducted.

An internal analysis was done to determine the core values of the company and additional values for Activity-Based Furniture. First, the core values are described with the help of the information obtained from the website of HeijltjesAkkaya and an interview with Simon Akkaya. This interview aimed to gain more profound knowledge about HeijltjesAkkaya, the company's design philosophy, and Akkaya's personal view on the brand and Activity-Based Furniture. Next, a selection of the portfolio of HeijltjesAkkaya was described to get a feel for the company's design philosophy. Then the added values of Activity-Based Furniture are described with the help of takeaways from the interview. The existing Activity-Based Furniture products were extensively analyzed and compared to the previously found values. Secondly, in the external analysis, the target group was defined and broad market research in both 'active' and 'aesthetic' design was done.

This analysis was followed by literary research and a trend report to put the research question into a broader perspective. In this research, the importance of the topics of 'sedentary behavior and its consequences', 'ergonomics within the office environment', and 'aesthetic desirability of an object' was established and discussed.

Finally, a practical design study follows this theoretical framework. One part of this practical study is focused on an additional proposal for Activity-Based Furniture. The practical part of this study was approached with an emphasis on experiment and creativity to trigger unexpected results. The exploration was done by brainstorming about Activity-Based Furniture. Collages were made to explore both conceptual and practical directions within Activity-Based Furniture. Finally, visual sketches were made combining the previously acquired information to illustrate possible ideas and directions for Activity-Based Furniture. After a problem redefinition, the study focuses on redesigning a laptop stand for HeijltjesAkkaya. The laptop stand was an existing prototype within Activity-Based Furniture. The results of this process are product concepts with different activating functions.