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Kimball Announces Design Hack Winner

Jasper, IN (Aug. 30, 2018) – Kimball, in partnership with Metropolis magazine, would like to congratulate O2U for winning the Kimball Design Hack, a Smart Furniture Design Competition. The competition was open worldwide and received more than 120 submissions during the 4-month competition timeframe with concepts that aimed to improve workplace satisfaction, comfort, engagement, health, wellness, and wellbeing.

You might wonder what a furniture company, magazine and a technology services company have in common? The answer is innovation. In conjunction with the Kimball Design Hack, a Smart Furniture Design Competition, earlier this year Kimball and Metropolis magazine hosted the Office of the Future Hackathon at Globant Seattle. The Hackathon invited engineers, developers and designers to transform the capability of the work place by integrating smart, cutting-edge materials and technologies, showing how the use of technology in furniture and its surroundings can help us be more productive, improve our work lives, make work more convenient, and help us solve other workplace challenges.

A panel of industry experts spanning design, workplace strategy, and consulting reviewed the submissions and after much discussion, one entry rose to the top. “There were many interesting and applicable concepts proposed and it was a tough decision, but ultimately we had to select the entry that would pave the way for a sustainable, healthy future for the workplace,” said Avinash Rajagopal, Editor in Chief of Metropolis.

The winning concept brings nature into the workplace through a modular, smart gardening system powered by machine learning for image recognition and IoT sensor technologies, O2U can monitor the growth of small crops or plants, providing a maintenance-free way of integrating biophilic elements into the office while also improving air quality and providing healthy food options.

“As a result of this competition, we have all learned a great deal about how technology might be leveraged to improve the work life balance,” said Jerry Croft, Chief Strategy Officer at Metropolis. “The live Hack gave us the opportunity to see how ‘techies’ would propose to change the workplace—a place where they are the primary target audience and the end users.”

The winning team, O2U, consisted of Dustin Wang, Aldo Torres, Tyler Jong, Eric Hong, Aaron Lim who will win a minimum of \$5,000 to be shared and a royalty of up to an additional \$25,000 if Kimball puts this concept into production.

“Kimball is proud of our forward-thinking approach to create new value in the workplace. By initiating the Smart Furniture Design Competition and first ever industry Tech Hack, we continue to demonstrate our focus and full commitment to designing solutions that adapt to the needs of the individual, support the organization and enhance the future of work,” concluded Mike Wagner, President of Kimball.

About Kimball

Kimball, one of the most respected environmentally-conscious and forward focused furniture makers, blends state of the art technology with a rich heritage of craft, to better optimize workplace performance and enabling customers to craft a truly authentic brand experience. As a world-class design-driven company, Kimball applies its rich heritage as makers to create environments for tomorrow’s workplace. Kimball is a brand unit of Kimball International, Inc., (NASDAQ:KBAL), a publicly-traded company dedicated to its Guiding Principles and recognized as a highly-trusted company and an employer of choice. Learn how Kimball is changing workspaces by visiting www.kimball.com for more information contact:

About Metropolis

For 35 years, Metropolis has been the architecture and design industry’s most compelling storyteller. Metropolis’s editorial scope spans design at all scales—from products to city planning. Metropolis has always sought out and featured the game changers in the industry, from emerging talent to established individuals and organizations. In addition to the printed magazine, Metropolis delivers the same highly relevant and thought provoking content via metropolismag.com and more than 50 live events each year. Across all channels, Metropolis links design to evolving cultural and societal trends, from big data to resilient cities. Metropolis readers and audiences rely on Metropolis to take them behind the scenes and share innovations, reveal breakthrough processes, and keep them ahead of the curve.