

# The new normal

With work from home being the new normal, S Cube sees rising potential for ergonomic products in India



**W**orking from home, which has now become the new normal for most, can be extremely stressful. Rotating oneself from the bed, sofa and dinner table, to a chair and finally the floor, is potentially bad for health – the most common physical issues being a stiff neck, hunched back, aching wrist and fatigue.

During the last few months, the lockdown and social distancing have seen thousands of employees in India setting up office in their own homes. According to reports, the Covid-19 pandemic could lead to ‘work from home’ (WFH) becoming a regular mode of functioning among the new generation – and some in the old gen too.

“In this scenario, finding the perfect chair and a desk that are well-integrated with other ergonomic tools that meet the WFH requirements is an absolute must,” explains Sathish Nandagopal, founder & director, S Cube Ergonomics, the Bengaluru-based exclusive India distribution partner of Humanscale, a New York-based company, which is the global leader in the design and manufacture of high-performance ergonomic products.

S Cube Ergonomics was established in 2014 and now operates with a team of 30-plus members, aiming at an ergonomic India. The company has been growing at the rate of 75 per cent year on year, from ₹42 lakh (2014-15) to ₹64.35 crore (2018-19).

Prior to establishing S Cube, Nandagopal was with brands like Interface, Alucobond, Honeywell, Ceasefire, Krueger International, etc. “Currently,

95 per cent of S Cube clients are in B2B projects and the remaining 5 per cent in B2C retail, with clients

like Google, Wells Fargo, Visa, Microsoft, State Street, Citibank, Goldman Sachs, JP Morgan and Credit Suisse, to name a few,” says Nandagopal, who has announced the national launch of its ‘Plug & Play’ ergonomic home office set-up.

## Complete workstation

This WFH executive package consisting of an ergonomic task chair, height adjustable desk, monitor arm, docking station, keyboard tray and a cable management system. “It is a complete workstation providing ergonomic support and comfort, while working from home,” adds Nandagopal. “One just has to connect to a power socket and connect their laptop to the dock cable, and, voila! It’s ready to use and can be positioned anywhere in the house”. Subsequently, with a view to protect ‘Study From Home’ (SFH) students from physical hazards and musculoskeletal disorders, S Cube announced the national launch of its ergonomic home study station.

In addition, S Cube has also announced the national launch of its ‘eRental’ wherein individuals, start-ups and large companies can rent at affordable prices. “So, why buy when you can rent?” asks Nandagopal. “Through ‘eRental’, we bring you an affordable and flexible rental option (3-24 months) to

build the perfect workspace to boost productivity and enhance performance.”

Today’s modern workplace is dominated by an increasing presence of technology. Employees spend much of their time answering emails, writing reports, and participating in web conferences – all of which require prolonged periods of computer use. For the average worker, this has led to an increase in musculoskeletal complaints such as eyestrain, lower back pain and wrist discomfort.

A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association surveyed roughly 29,000 computer users and found that 52.7 per cent of them were working with at least one form of daily musculoskeletal discomfort. The average lost productive times of those experiencing discomfort was more than 5.2 hours per week. “These

eye-opening statistics shed light on the growing number of work-related issues stemming from prolonged computer use. Proactively addressing discomfort levels therefore becomes an important business strategy,” says Mumbai-based interior designer Nikita Mevada.

Meanwhile, the market is witnessing a new surge in ergonomic designs as ergonomic furniture, for instance the office chair, helps in maintaining correct back posture and is comfortable for long sitting hours. Based on various reports, the office furniture market in India is quite fragmented, and the top 45 players hold less than 40 per cent of the market share. The unorganised and informal sectors still prevail in the country. With a value exceeding \$2.5 billion, the office furniture sector in India accounts for almost 17 per cent of the total Indian furniture market. In fact, Indian demand for office furniture is currently almost 50 per cent higher than the previous year.

As a first step, S Cube will be focusing more on the B2C and SME segments in major cities for its Humanscale range of ergonomic products. After Bengaluru, S Cube has made plans to move to Hyderabad, Pune and then Delhi – the whole programme to be completed by the end of next year. ♦

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