

ARCHITECTURAL LIGHTING

# PROFILES IN LIGHTING | Koerner Design

In addition to product development, KOERNER DESIGN consultant Brad Koerner seeks inspiration at the intersection of architectural lighting and digital displays for immersive and interactive experiences.

[Carrie Meadows](#)

Sept. 14, 2023



Original rendering enhanced with the aid of Midjourney generative AI software.

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Koerner Design founder Brad Koerner has spent more than two decades in the architectural lighting and construction industries, spanning roles in global matrix organizations, design consultancies, and startups. Since obtaining his master's degree in architecture from Harvard Graduate School of Design, Koerner has designed architectural lighting projects in addition to developing new LED lighting products and market categories that have earned in excess of \$350 million. Based in Amsterdam, Koerner has spent plenty of time traveling around the world seeking inspiration and sharing his experiences and ideas at industry events, in addition to writing on future trends in lighting design and immersive digital experiences.

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Brad Koerner has spent two decades bringing together architectural lighting and creative digital experiences.

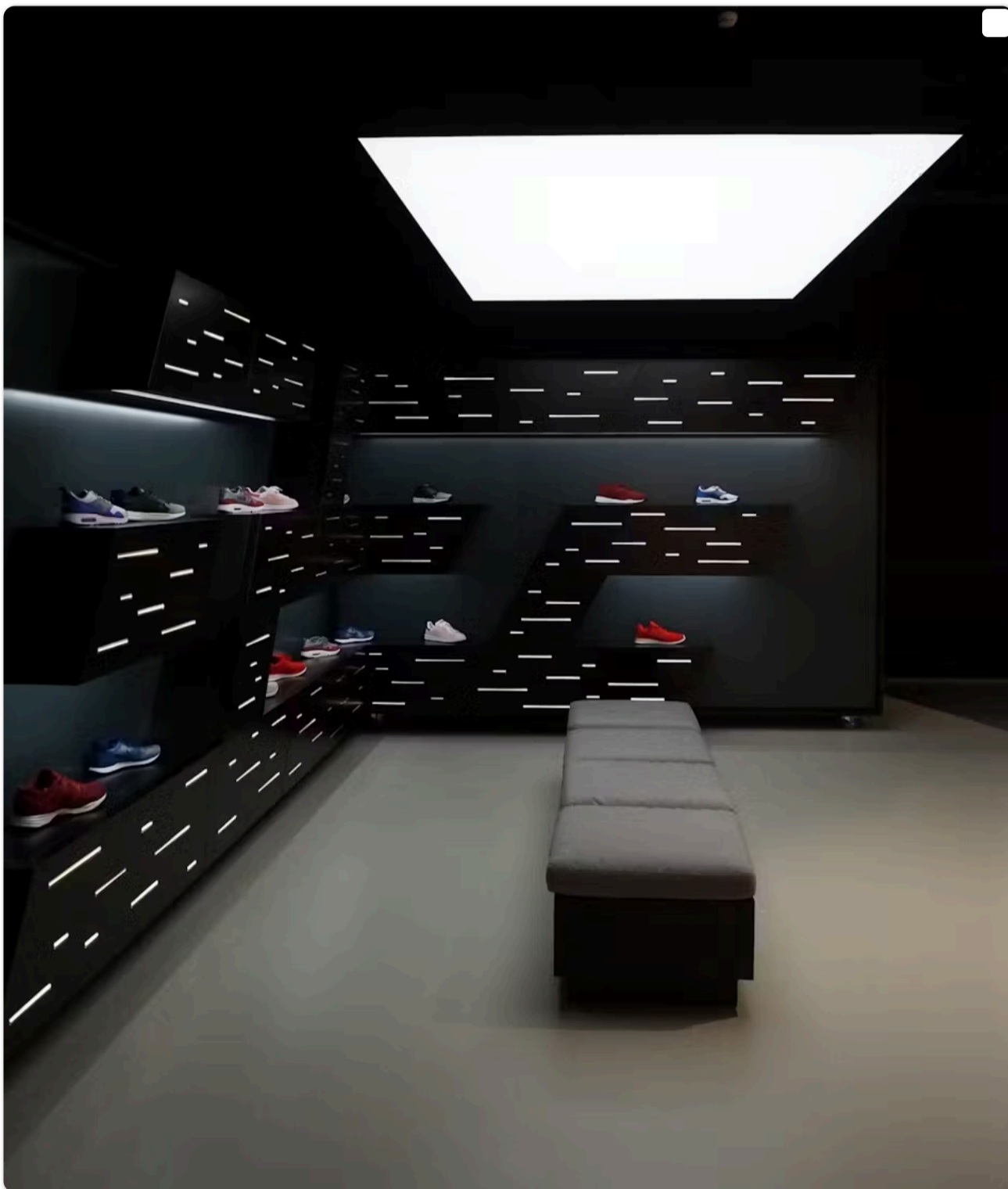
**Firm mission, in layperson terms:** I help lighting and A/V companies dramatically improve their innovation processes. I enjoy focusing on the intersection of architectural lighting and digital media systems, and helping clients develop innovative product lines to create new experiences in the built environment.

**What the firm is known for:** I invest heavily in understanding the state-of-the-art in a broad range of topics in order to distil future trends. I think many people in the industry know me for my thought leadership over the years, either through my blog and other contributed writings, or from the many conferences at which I've spoken, on topics ranging from embedded lighting to sustainable lighting to immersive digital experiences.

**What people don't know about me:** When I was young, I dreamed of being a Disney Imagineer and building immersive attractions and experiences. That led me to study architecture along with theatrical lighting, which led to my two-decades-long career in architectural lighting and creating innovative lighting systems. Innovation always fuses the best of multiple worlds.



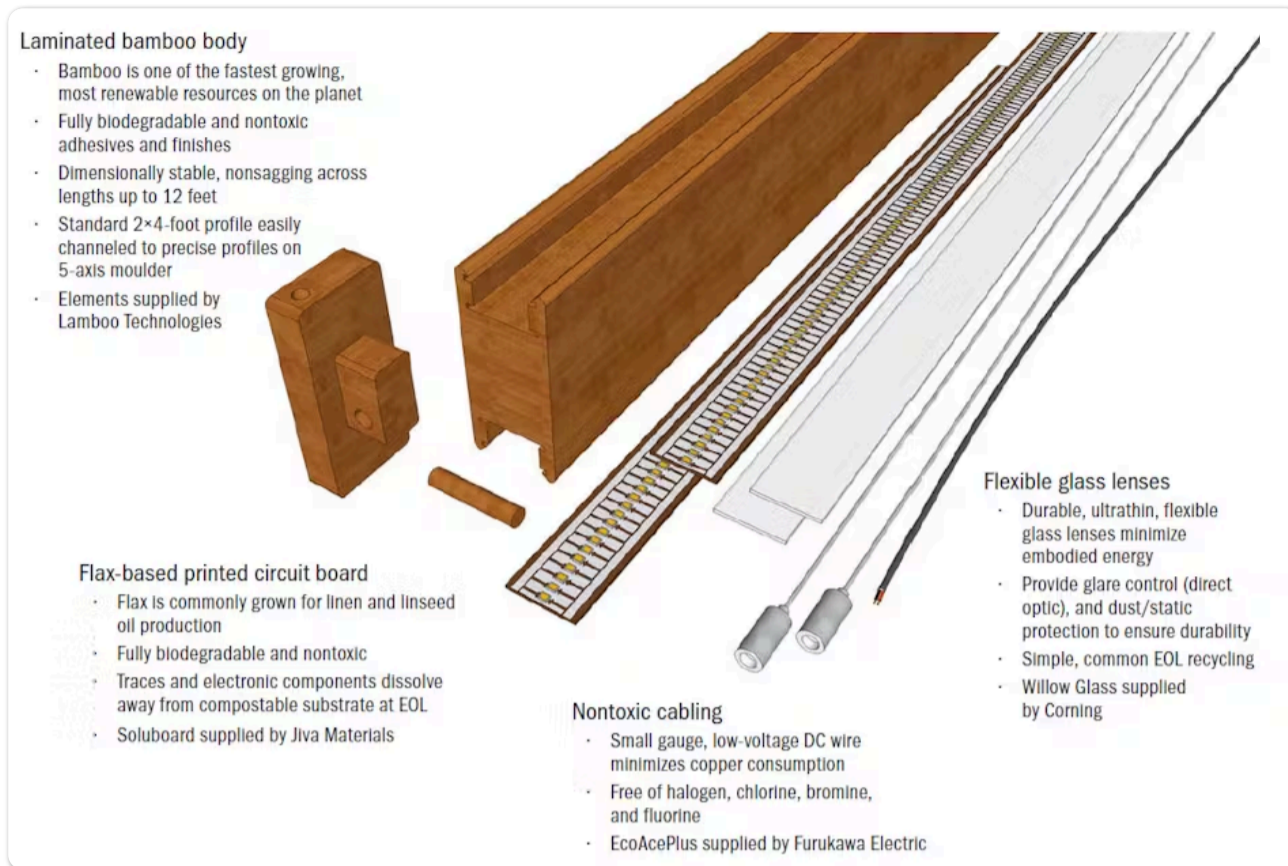
Luminous patterns developed for the former Philips Lighting showcase a broad range of embedded lighting possibilities, from warm and inviting lounge spaces (top) to streamlined retail displays (bottom).



**First commission:** After leaving the Corporate Ventures group at Philips Lighting, for my first commission I helped DigiValet, a fast-growing tech startup with an innovative app-based hospitality experience control system, explore how to integrate branded lighting moments into its product offering.

**Favorite product/project by your company and why:** Helping Sean Darras and his team develop and launch [Lightly](#), a new lighting brand focused on sustainable bio-based specification grade LED fixtures. I have advocated for bringing genuine sustainability to architectural lighting for over a decade, including developing a couple

of beautiful sustainable products at previous companies that never made it to market. So to see the Lightly team having a wildly successful market launch with the reps in North America is incredibly rewarding and validating. They are making genuine steps toward cleaning up the toxicity and carbon emissions from the LED lighting category.



Koerner's drive to achieve beauty, simplicity, and sustainability led to the DOE R&D grand prize-winning bamboo pendant design, which helped to drive the launch of bio-based luminaire developer Lightly.

**Summarize your firm culture:** I help clients dream big but execute practically. I understand how scarce resources are for all of our clients. Together, we explore exciting new concepts, but I aid them in realistically defining their ambition and setting precise goals through practical project scoping exercises. With a firm scope of work, I practice strict task focus, project management, and realistic resource planning.

**What are you currently working on?** I'm always looking for the next project or role helping leaders drive innovation at their firms!



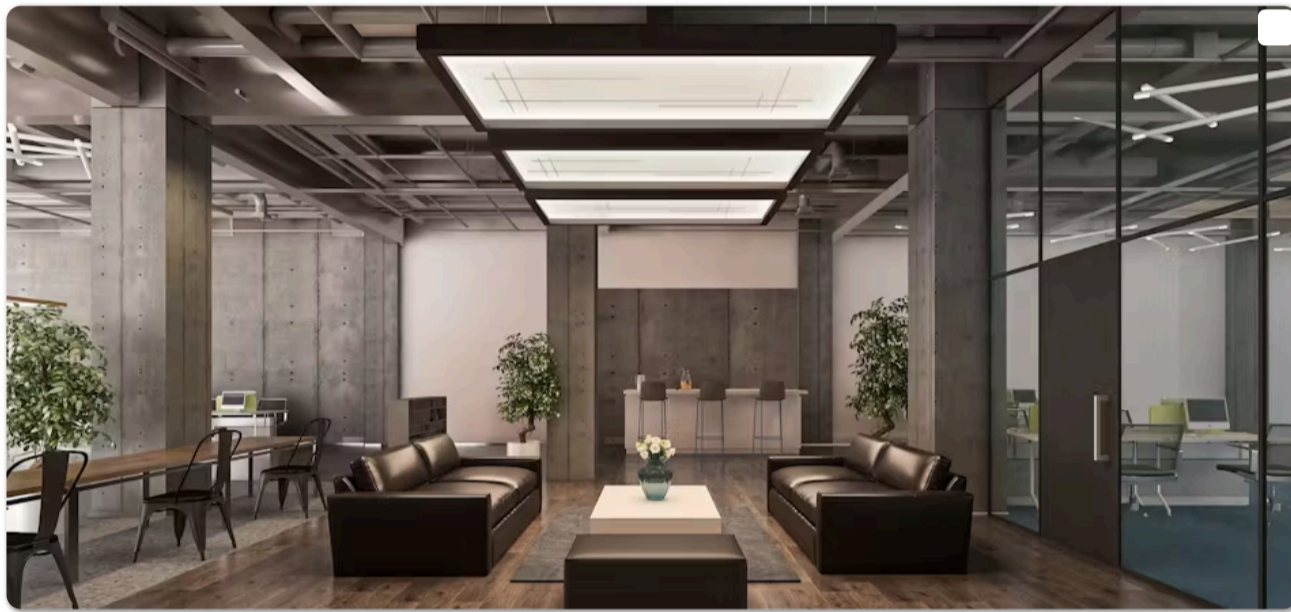
For Koerner, decorative lighting presents an opportunity to fuse technology and allure. For example, these enclosed luminaires mimic the simplicity and soft glow of tea lights while conveying a modern, sculptural glamour.

**A lighting trend to leave behind:** Needlessly complex lighting controls based on antiquated technology standards.

**A tool or product you want to invent:** Where to begin? I'm deeply creative and constantly produce endless ideas for new product lines. I have so many product concepts waiting to find good homes.

As one example, I want to reinvent ceiling systems in commercial construction, fusing circadian lighting with acoustics and biomaterials to create gorgeous new aesthetics. The product concept is supported by several interesting technology trends, such as parametric design, digital manufacturing, novel biomaterials, and DC power.

Don't get me started on all the ideas I have for decorative lighting, [embedded lighting](#), workstation lighting, immersive digital experiences...



Koerner has shaped development of solutions-oriented product lines such as Cima Cove, an indirect luminaire in a panel form factor, available with customizable materials, finishes, and color temperature options to meet project needs in new buildings and retrofits.

**Advice to anyone interested in entering the lighting industry:** Take a very broad view of what you define as "lighting" to ensure you are future-proofing your skills base and building your professional network in the market category you really enjoy.

Make sure to spend the time and money on attending a broad range of tradeshow and conferences to expose yourself to the various market segments of lighting. If you are in North America, these include LightFair for architectural lighting, LDI for theatrical lighting, InfoComm for digital signage and AV systems, or shows like Dallas Market Center for decorative lighting. If you are in Europe, the equivalents are Light + Building for architectural lighting, PLASA or Prolight + Sound for theatrical, Integrated Systems Europe for digital signage/AV, and Salone Del Mobile for decorative.



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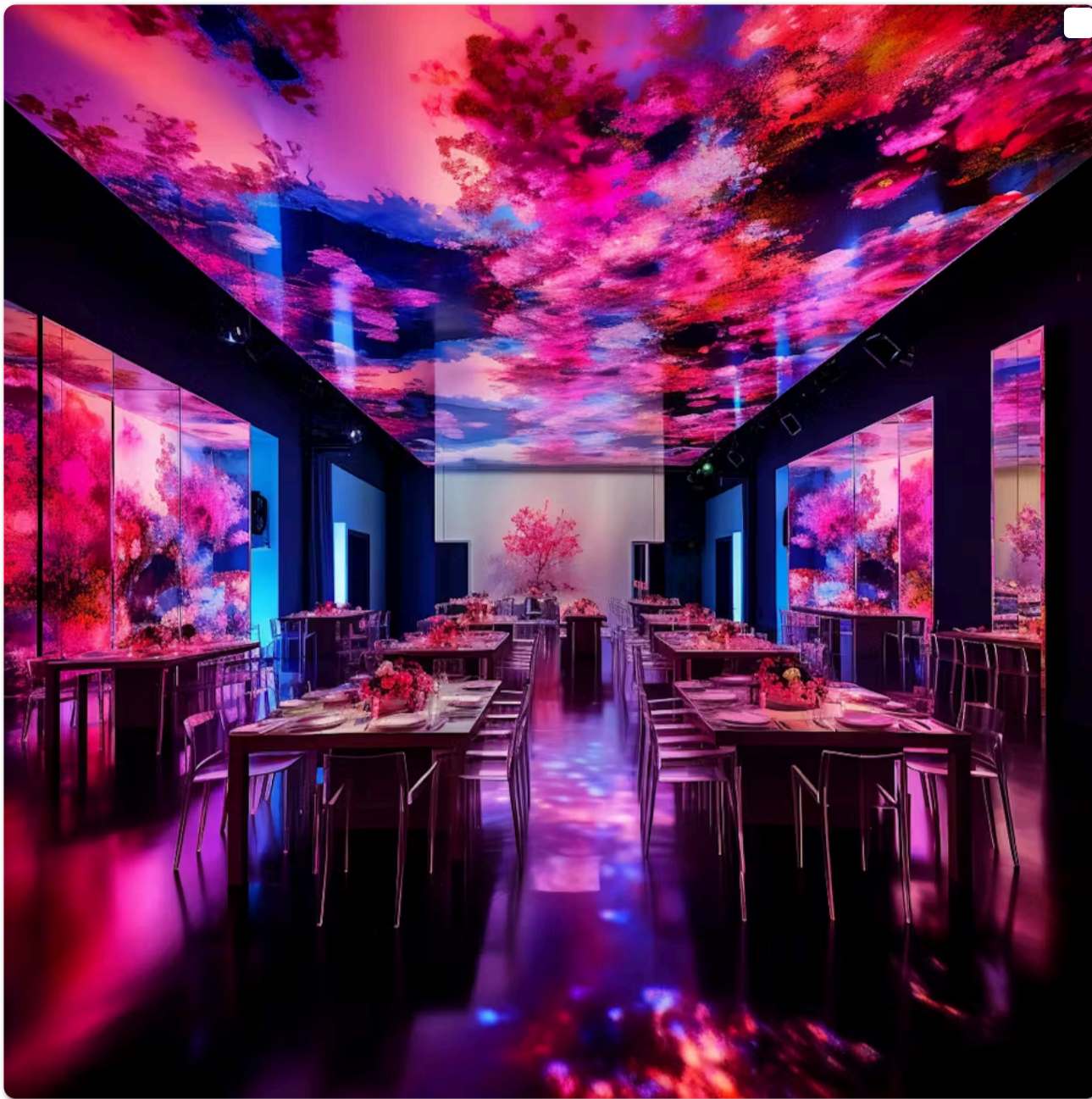
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Koerner Design's philosophy of "every light is a pixel and every pixel is a light" is represented by the intersection of lighting and digital signage into immersive experiences. [Original rendering enhanced with the aid of Midjourney generative AI software.]

**Technology, (third-party) product, and/or designer you admire:** The digital signage industry is experiencing a wild period of innovation and growth with technologies such as direct-view LED screens and live rendering. I believe that every light is a pixel and every pixel is a light: The fusion of what we consider "architectural lighting" and what we consider "digital signage" is already well underway and architects and lighting designers need to rapidly retool their thinking and skillsets.

**Favorite lighting/engineering rule of thumb, standard, or equation:** If you're starting a new entrepreneurial venture, whatever you think it will cost, double it. Then double it again, and you might be in the right ballpark.

**Summarize your firm's environmental, sustainability, and governance (ESG) initiatives:** For over a decade now, I've been a vocal industry advocate for adopting a radical, simplified concept of sustainability in LED fixture design. The U.S. Department of Energy Solid-State Lighting team has been highly receptive: I've been invited to present at several DOE R&D Workshops to advocate for funding for sustainable product research. In 2019, I independently won the grand prize in the DOE R&D competition for a sustainable office luminaire design with my "[bamboo pendant](#)" concept — which was very popular amongst industry colleagues and helped lead to the launch of Lightly.

[Visit Koerner Design online](#)

[CARRIE MEADOWS](#) is editor-in-chief of LEDs Magazine, with 20-plus years' experience in business-to-business publishing across technology markets including solid-state technology manufacturing, fiberoptic communications, machine vision, lasers and photonics, and LEDs and lighting.

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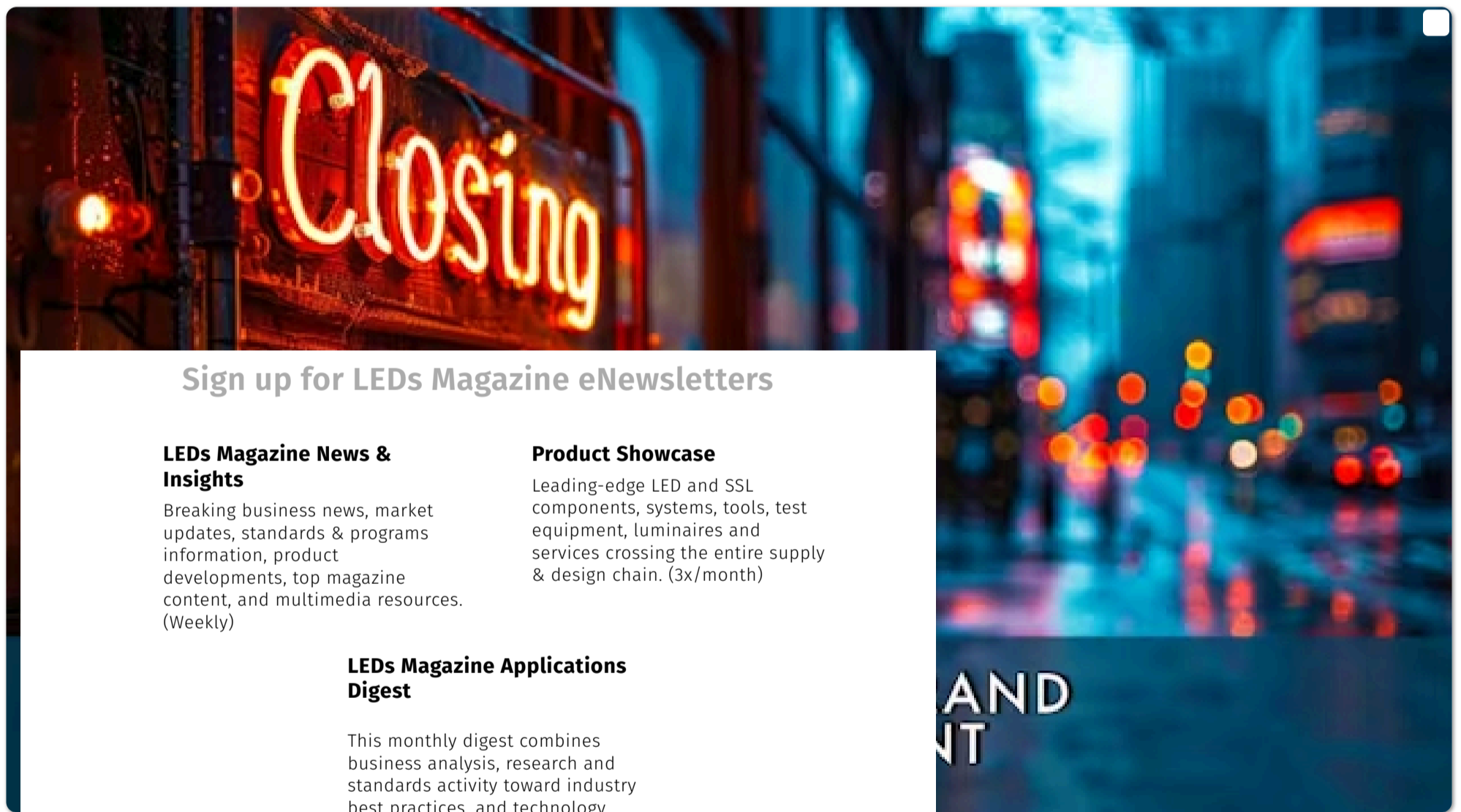


About the Author

**Carrie Meadows | Editor-in-Chief, LEDs Magazine**

Carrie Meadows has more than 20 years of experience in the publishing and media industry. She worked with the PennWell Technology Group for more than 17 years, having been part of the editorial staff at *Solid State Technology*, *Microlithography World*, *Lightwave*, *Portable Design*, *CleanRooms*, *Laser Focus World*, and *Vision Systems Design* before the group was acquired by current parent company Endeavor Business Media.

Meadows has received finalist recognition for *LEDs Magazine* in the FOLIO Eddie Awards, and has volunteered as a judge on several B2B editorial awards committees. She received a BA in English literature from Saint Anselm College, and earned thesis honors in the college's Geisel Library. Without the patience to sit down and



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### LIGHT BITES | Lighting, controls, and design firms announce new personnel

New hires demonstrate the breadth of exciting opportunities in the North American lighting and controls market.

[Carrie Meadows](#)

Sept. 17, 2024



Manufacturing Services & Testing

### DESIGN TOOLS | Simulation software optimizes indoor lighting efficiency

POOK VILLEGAS introduces the basics of lighting simulation software for designers who are just starting out.

[Pook Villegas](#)

Sept. 16, 2024



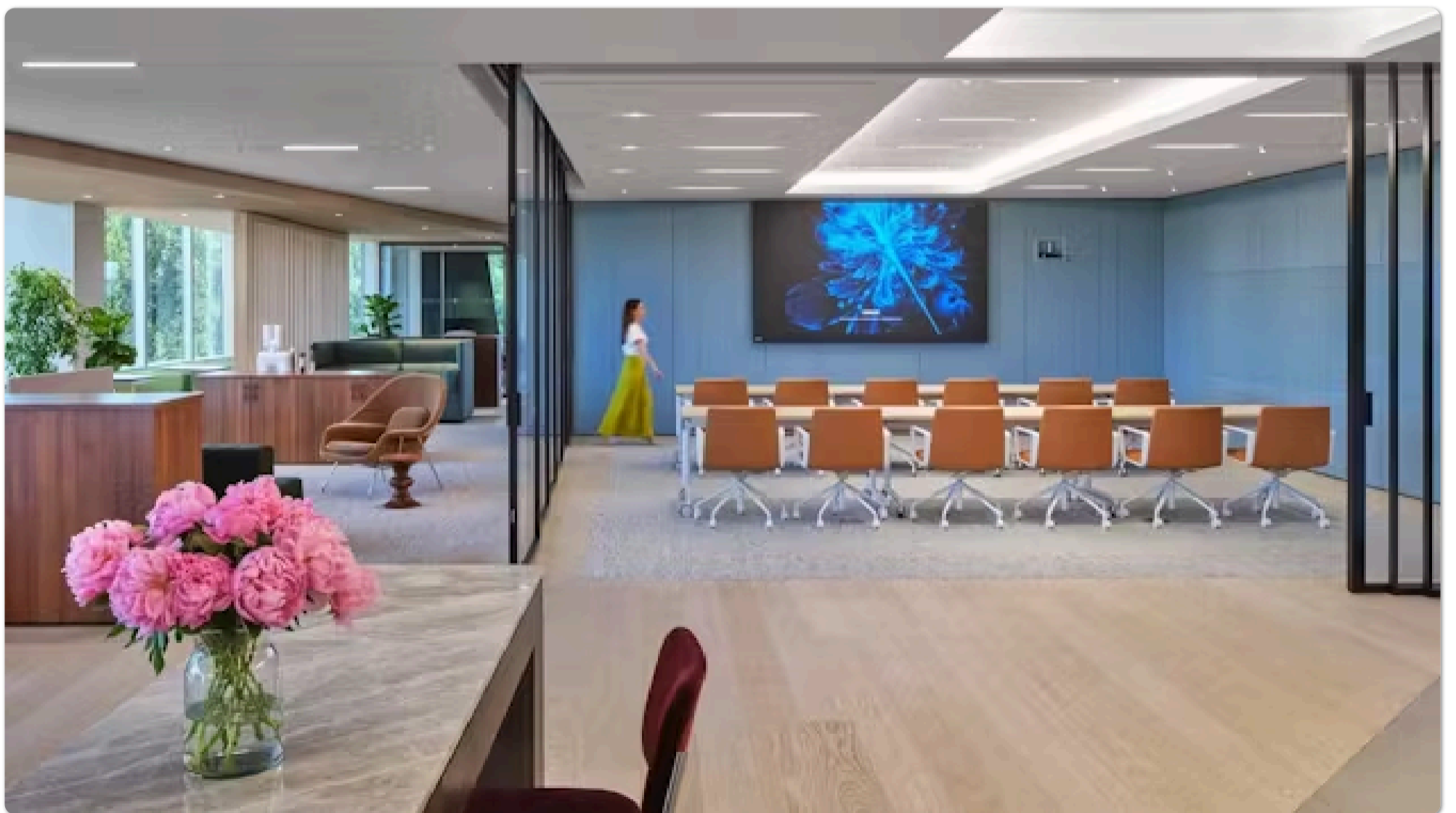
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## RETAIL APPLICATIONS | LED retrofits deliver ROI for large retailers

When properly planned, large retail projects can benefit from the improved illumination, energy savings, low maintenance, reduced downtime, and lower costs of LED lighting retrofits...

[Sean R. Nacey](#)

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Lighting for Health & Wellbeing

## DARK SKIES | LUNA program seeks to advance acceptance of targeted outdoor lighting usage

DLC's LUNA guidance gets a nod from the GSA, as the consortium shares study findings that elaborate on energy/cost benefits of qualified outdoor lighting.

[Carrie Meadows](#)

Aug. 16, 2024



Lighting for Health & Wellbeing

## INDUSTRY INSIGHTS | Bringing circadian rhythm lighting and quantum dots together to advance wellbeing

Technology startup founder SARAH MORGAN opens a series about circadian lighting opportunities with a call for readers to vote on covered project findings.

[Sarah Morgan](#)

Aug. 7, 2024



LEDs & SSL Design

### LIGHT BITES | New LED launches from Lumileds, Luminus, and Violumas

LED developers continue to push performance in compact emitters, digging in to refine thermal management and optical designs for a range of use cases.

[Carrie Meadows](#)

Aug. 5, 2024



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### INDUSTRY INSIGHTS | Develop serviceable luminaires with support from Zhaga standards

ZHAGA CONSORTIUM members summarize how replaceable components prolong the useful life of luminaires and contribute to a circular economy.

[Jan de Graaf](#)

July 25, 2024



Lighting for Health & Wellbeing

## DarkSky teams with global cities association to fight light pollution

Any sustainability initiative must include protection of night skies, says the nonprofit, as it joins forces with LUCI.

[Mark Halper](#)

July 23, 2024

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### STANDARDS | Market transformation and standards groups ally to evolve guidance for energy-efficient lighting products

DLC program director LIESEL WHITNEY-SCHULTE condenses the core industry initiatives in which the DLC participates to inform standards development and product assessment criteria...

[Liesel Whitney-Schulte](#)

July 17, 2024



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### PROJECT | Workhorse pendants balance ambience and task illumination in hospitality venue

High-bay lighting from Luminis contributes to a unique restaurant aesthetic in Earl Giles Distillery production space.

[Luminis](#)

July 16, 2024



Architectural Lighting

### Latest outdoor luminaires from Glamox tick multiple eco boxes

Recycled aluminum, reusability, and night sky protection all factor into a rugged new wall-mounted line.

[Mark Halper](#)

July 3, 2024



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### Fagerhult teams with metals company for aluminum recycling

Not all recycling is created equal. A pilot project involving a sprawling Oslo office park yields promising results.

[Mark Halper](#)

June 28, 2024



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