



Flexible furniture solution for TechPark MIT

MIT's TechPark is a new, purpose-built facility designed to inspire the next generation of tradies and engineers.

This ambitious project was undertaken with the goal of allowing students and staff to collaborate within a mix of open and closed

classrooms in an environment that prepares them for their future.

We talked to Kim Smith, Asset & Contracts Manager, about how OfficeMax helped with flexible, durable and innovative furniture solutions for this awesome new facility.

"The ultimate goal is to have all the trades under one roof, working together and sharing facilities."

Kim Smith, Asset & Contracts Manager

Results at a glance



Fuss-free fit-out with our Furniture Specialists



Flexible furniture solutions



Reliable service



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The Challenge

TechPark was designed to be a flexible, modern learning environment where students from different disciplines could work both collaboratively and separately.

Therefore, the furniture had to be:

1. Flexible:

Student tables and seating had to be easily moveable to fit with fluctuating student numbers.



2. Durable:

MIT needed sturdy furniture to withstand heavy usage.

3. Unique:

It was important that the furniture fit with the modern design of the building.



“We wanted furniture that was unique to the building, but also flexible and easy to manage. We need to be able to move it around the facility to accommodate fluctuating student numbers.”

Kim Smith,
Asset & Contracts Manager



The Solution

Our furniture team worked closely with MIT's architect to supply:

Flexi learning environments:

- Flip tables on castors
- Student chairs with trays for bags
- Bar leaners on castors

Staff work areas:

- Hot desks with power and USB charging built into desktops
- For those spending the full day there were desks added with a canopy and overhead light.

Hard-wearing furniture and break areas:

- Leaners with 38mm ply tops and 50mm square aluminium frames
- Heavy-duty vinyl on seats
- Heavy-duty “one piece” stacking chairs
- Heavy-duty steel “one piece” high stools

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Surprise Challenge

As is often the case with big projects like this, there is always a challenge or two that you didn't account for. However, this time the challenge was felt across all of Auckland: the August 2020 Level 3 Alert lockdown in response to cases of COVID-19 in the community.

With classes due to start in September 2020, the work on TechPark had to carry on. The installation team managed to continue safely and professionally, adhering to the Government's COVID protocols. Remaining furniture deliveries became contactless – this included distributing just over 500 chairs around the building, while still maintaining a safe distance from other workers.

The Results

For MIT an unexpected side effect of the COVID-19 pandemic was the resulting drive from the New Zealand Government encouraging Kiwis to study trades.

With financial and economic incentives, this has seen a sudden influx of students just as TechPark opened. With the flexible nature of the furniture at TechPark, accommodating these students has been a breeze and the facility is fast becoming a thriving hub for students and staff alike.

“I've found OfficeMax are very easy to work with, especially Richard! He's very accommodating and knows what we need. Sometimes I barely need to say anything but, 'I want this.' And next thing you know, I've got a quote for the right thing. It's great!”

Kim Smith, Asset & Contracts Manager

Create a space your people will thrive in. Get in touch today.

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