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Week of March 19 - 25, 2010

## Office furniture fixture Herman Miller leaving downtown for wider open spaces

by Allison Wollam  
Houston Business Journal

A high-end office furniture dealer is ditching downtown for new digs in the Galleria area.

Herman Miller Inc., and its affiliate, Geiger International Inc., will move showroom operations from cramped quarters in Pennzoil Place to a more spacious location in the new BLVD Place development.

Geiger was a Pennzoil Place tenant for more than 20 years, while Herman Miller occupied the building for just over a year.

"We outgrew our space at Pennzoil Place and they didn't have any more space that was suitable for our showroom," says Jim Hardaway, managing director for Herman Miller in Houston.

Parking also became a big headache for the firm's clients and Hardaway expects the new location to be more accessible.

The new 5,206-square-foot Herman Miller showroom is slated to open late this summer in the recently completed first phase of BLVD Place at 1800 Post Oak Blvd.

Hardaway says a location in the heart of Houston's retail and office market makes it better to promote the brand while also serving as a resource for architectural, interior design and commercial clients.

Zeeland, Mich.-based Herman Miller has been in the Houston market for over 40 years and Hardaway says the office furniture provider always looks for iconic buildings or neighborhoods when opening a new showroom.

BLVD Place developer Ed Wulfe, president of Wulfe & Co., calls the move significant because Herman Miller is trying to get the benefits of opening a showroom in a prime retail trade area while also continuing to serve the office market.

Wulfe says Herman Miller is an example of the high quality retail tenants BLVD Place has been able to attract, adding that the center should be 98 percent leased in the next couple of months.

"I guess it helps when you're the only game in town, but it's exceeded my expectations," says Wulfe.