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B O S T O N

# SPIRIT

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## Renovation Husbands

Breathing new life  
into old Boston



Design of  
the Times  
Reinventing the home office

LGBTQ  
Realtors  
New Bay State branch

Gospel  
Music  
In the key of queer

Wicked  
Great  
'Plain Bad Heroines'

# Jason LaGorga

DesignCrossover.com

## What are the effects of open-concept living on the COVID-influenced home office?

The trend of open-concept living spaces over the last decade is being rethought because entire members of households are home—often working, going to school and socializing on devices at the same time. Clients are looking for design solutions that give them the ability to have a private area where they can Zoom without disturbing other family members or be disturbed themselves.

## How has COVID affected the ability to meet capacity for your projects?

The biggest logistical challenge right now is capacity, for designers, millworkers and contractors. Clients are desperate for immediate “fixes” to their home office needs; most trade professionals are running waiting lists and contractors are booking well into Spring 2021.

## What compromises are clients willing to make for their home office spaces?

Clients are all seeking a nook or cranny dedicated to their office or their child’s schooling. People want a space that looks professional for online meetings with thought-out backgrounds and lighting. No one wants to look like they are running a meeting from their kitchen island or their bedroom. Likewise, people don’t want to stare at their workspace once the workday is over.

## What changes are people making in their home office that they might not have been able to in a traditional office setting?

People are taking this opportunity to create a work environment that reflects their personal style. There isn’t one specific design trend. Instead there is a trend toward seeing this as a chance to create a space that reflects each individual’s taste and style. That wasn’t always an available option when people were commuting to a corporate environment.

## What are some creative alternatives to carving out a home office space?

Seek out the nooks and crannies! A lot of greater Boston housing has existed for decades and is full of unexpected or underutilized spaces—the grand entry hall that welcomes very few guests now, the butler’s pantry full of serving ware not being used, and the detached garage that had been filled with lawn equipment—can all be transformed into your new home office.



This casual work-from-home space makes dual use of the kitchen’s pantry area. PHOTO Eric Roth



A new home office was created just outside the living room in an otherwise underutilized passageway. PHOTO Jared Kuzia



Jason LaGorga PHOTO Eric Roth

**Do you think the home office will be a “given” for future design plans?**

I think one of the long-lasting impacts of the pandemic is that very few corporate employees anticipate returning to the office full time in the near future, if ever. The pandemic has changed how certain sectors work and many of my clients have a dedicated home office space on the “must have” list now, whereas pre-pandemic it was usually more of a “would be nice to have.”

**How is business and are you still going on-site for projects?**

The residential design and construction industry are busier now than I can remember in recent memory. Site meetings are still critical to a successful construction project. In addition to the now common masks and distance on job sites, meeting agendas have been tightened and quick FaceTimes with GCs to answer questions have become more common.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY KATHERINE SLINGLUFF

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