A History
MechoSystems, as it is known today, has had a deep impact on the evolution of architecture and design for more than a half century. Through the foresight of founder Joel Berman, who remains as the chairman, an entire industry was created.

The product line today not only includes the original manual MechoShade®, the motorized ElectroShade®, the WhisperTrac® motorized drapery systems, and discrete controls but also cutting-edge daylighting and lighting-control systems, such as MechoLux®, SolarTrac®, and SunDialer®.

Unlike others, MechoSystems welcomes hard-to-solve design and technical challenges, such as the shading of non-rectangular, sloping, high, wide, monumental, difficult-to-access, and other non-standard windows.

The company’s intelligent WindowManagement® and its commitment to planet-respecting concerns are supported by a scientific approach. For example, the manual Mecho®/5 and the entire UrbanShade® system—both with eco-friendly EcoVeil® shadecloth—have been recognized as a Cradle to Cradle Certified® Silver products by MBDC. And ThermoVeil® sunscreen was developed, through scientific studies by Prof. John Yelliot and other academics of the Arizona State University and Joel Berman in the 1970s.

In fact, EcoVeil, the original ThermoVeil, and the McDonough Iceland Collection® are some of the more than 300 textiles offered in a range of densities, weaves, and colors to satisfy the demands made by various glass types, geographical orientations, locations, and aesthetics.

It’s no wonder that MechoSystems’ products have been recognized by more than three dozen awards since 1972 and specified by the world’s leading architects and designers.
## 50 years

**1961–1969** Active as the Homecraft Drapery and Upholstery Company, formed from a small, family-owned drapery and upholstery business, founded at 1113 Church Avenue in the Brooklyn borough of New York City in 1939.

**1970s** Was first recognized for its products by a small group of innovative, forward-thinking architects and commercial-building owners, who saw the need for an energy-conserving, window-management system during the energy crisis of the 1970s.

**1972** Designed and developed a simple analog, automated, and motorized shading system, which was the first solar-tracking roller-shade project in the U.S., initially installed in the IBM Americas/Far East Corporation (A/FE) in Pleasantville, New York, by Edward Larrabee Barnes Associates architects.

### 1960s

**1962** Re-formed by Joel Berman as JB Associates (now Joel Berman Associates, Inc.) at 102 Prince Street in the Soho district of New York City.

**1968** Developed the first manual roller-screen shading systems, first installed in Trust Company of Georgia (now SunTrust Banks) by Carson Lundin & Shaw architects.

### 1970s

**1974** Developed the first roller-screen system for windows as a building standard, and first for the Irving Trust Company Building (Bank of New York since 1988), a 1929–1932 New York City structure by Voorhees, Gmelin & Walker at 1 Wall Street. Richard Carlson of Swanke Hayden Connell was in charge of the interiors.

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[The Irving Trust Company Building](image)

[Trust Company of Georgia (SunTrust Bank)](image)

1977 Resulting from the R&D of Prof. John Yelliot of Arizona State University, MechoSystems’ founder Joel Berman, and others, commenced a line of shadecloths and an educational program for the intelligent, scientific selection of window-covering textiles.

1977 Mel Byars, the firm’s long-time graphic designer, created the firm’s logo, based on the Zia Pueblo’s sun symbol and derived from a suggestion by Prof. Yelliot to Joel Berman.

1976 Based on the Irving Trust installation, the manual MechoShade system was trademarked and patented as a chain-operated, disk-brake, roller-shade design and became a viable component in commercial office buildings.

1977 Created the first programmable, intelligent control system to track the sun. Initially installed to automatically control the shades on the exterior of the Gregory Bateson Building in Sacramento by Sim Van der Ryn, the State of California Architect at the time. Was the first major window-covering project to include tubular motors in the U.S.
1980 Became known as MechoShade Systems, Inc.—formerly JB Associates—with Joel Berman as chairman and chief executive officer.

1987–89 Installed motorized ElectroShades® in landmark projects such as New York City’s Equitable Center (now the AXA Center) by Edward Larrabee Barnes, and Los Angeles’s First Interstate Bank Tower (now U.S. Bank Tower) by I.M. Pei. The latter, at the time, was the tallest building on the West Coast.

1986–1988 Refined an element in the company’s ThermoVeil shadecloth to reduce off-gassing. The result encouraged the Canadian government to specify the ElectroShade system (a soaring sail-like window covering) for Ottawa’s National Gallery by Moshe Sofdie with Parkin Associates.

1993–94 Developed an overrunning clutch-brake for the manual MechoShade roller-shade system, eventually granted a patent.


1999 Appointed Jan Berman as president and chief operating officer.
2004 Introduced EcoVeil, the world’s first Cradle to Cradle™ shadecloth. Received “Top-Ten Green Building Products” citation in the same year.

2007 Refitted and updated the Gregory Bateson Building, three decades after the original installation, with the greatly advanced permutation of the former system, the state-of-the-art SolarTrac program.

2008 Amalgamated Solell and Home Automation into MechoShade Home Systems as the new brand to focus on residential window coverings and the systems-intergration segments.

2008 Developed the SunDialer solar-shading system—the cousin of the highly advanced SolarTrac—to specifically serve smaller or retrofit projects. Received Light Fair’s Innovation Award in the subsequent year.

2010 Introduced MechoLux, an intelligent lighting-and-shade control system to complement the company’s Energy-Management Program.

2011 Became known as MechoSystems (formerly MechoShade Systems) due to its wide range of products, not only high-end roller shades but also energy-management controls and motorized drapery systems.

2011–2011 Completely renovated and retrofitted the MechoSystems headquarters—a hundred-year-old structure in Long Island City—into a sophisticated facility which achieved a LEED® Gold rating.

Currently Employs approximately 500 people in three countries with plants in two U.S. locations and one in the U.K., offices in three countries, and more than 75 representatives.
Partial List of Awards

1972 ROSCOE design award for the manual shade, Resources Council.

1988 IBD Award, Certificate of Recognition.

1997 Environ Design for leadership in ecological initiatives and environmental stewardship in the design and architecture fields, Interiors & Resources magazine.

2002 ACE Award (Architects Choice for Excellence), Architecture magazine.


2003 ACE Award (Architects Choice for Excellence), Architecture magazine.

2004 One of the “Top-Ten Green Building Products” for EcoVeil® Screens, GreenBuilding, Inc.

2004 New Product Showcase for EuroTwill® Shadecloth, LIGHTFAIR.


2006 EXCITE award for WhisperTrac motorized drapery system at CEDIA Expo, Custom Retailer magazine.


2006 Purchasing and Design Preferred Vendor Award, BITAC (Buyer Interactive Trade Alliance & Conference).

2006 Finalist in the ROSCOE Best of the Year Awards in the window-treatment category, Interior Design magazine.


2007 AdStudy® Award for “Design with Light” advertisement of the New York Ferry Terminal, Architectural Lighting magazine.


2007 Certificate for Excellence in Material Development in the polymers category to EcoVeil®, Materials ConneXion®.

2008 Progress Report Section for SunDialer, a unique and significant advancement to the art and science of lighting, Illuminating Engineering Society.


2008 EXCITE award for MechoRF® C4 2-Zone Interface at CEDIA Expo, Custom Retailer magazine.

2009 Two Silver Awards, Best of NeoCon® Silver for (1) EcoVeil Naturals Shadecloth in the health-care-textile and (2) window-treatment categories, Contract magazine.

2009 LFI Innovation Award for SunDialer, LIGHTFAIR New Product Showcase, in the Controls, Daylight Integration and Systems category.

2009 Bestoftradeshow.com Award, to MechoShade Systems as a Top-Industry company at LIGHTFAIR International Trade Show and Conference.

2009 EXCITE award for SunDialer for Excellence in Custom Installation Technologies and Products at CEDIA Expo, Custom Retailer magazine.

2009 Silver Award, Best of NeoCon® for EcoVeil Naturals Shadecloth in the health-care textiles category, Contract magazine.

2009 Finalist in Best of the Year Awards, Best of Year Merit for EcoVeil Naturals Shadecloth in window-treatments category, Interior Design magazine.

2010 Gold Award, Best of NeoCon® for UrbanShade in the window-treatment category, Contract magazine.

2010 Innovation Award, NeoCon® Innovation for the SunDialer economical window-management system, Contract magazine.


Continued
2010 Silver Award, Best of NeoCon®, for Design Collection in window-treatments category, Contract magazine.

2010 Innovation Award, Best of NeoCon®, for SunDialer in window-treatments category, Contract magazine.

2010 Two Best Utilization of Sustainable Materials awards to (1) SunDialer and EcoVeil Naturals Shadecloth, both under the “Green” Products Sustainability category, WCMA (Window Covering Manufacturers Association).

2010 CEPro BEST (Best Electronic Systems Technologies) Award for UrbanShade in Household Enhancement/Accessories and Automated Shade Control category at CEDIA Expo, CEPro magazine.

2010 EXCITE award for UrbanShade in the Excellence in Custom Installation Technologies and Products category at CEDIA Expo, Custom Retailer magazine.


2011 Honoree, Best of Year Award, Interior Design magazine.


2012 EXCITE award for WhisperShade® IQ2 in the Excellence in Custom Installation Technologies and Electronics category at CEDIA Expo, Custom Retailer magazine.