Distributor Sentiment Shifts Optimistically as Industry Momentum Builds For 2026

The Solomon Coyle 2025-Q4 to 2026-Q1 Dealer Market Outlook Report is now available, offering the latest snapshot of business conditions and distributor sentiment across North America's commercial furniture industry.

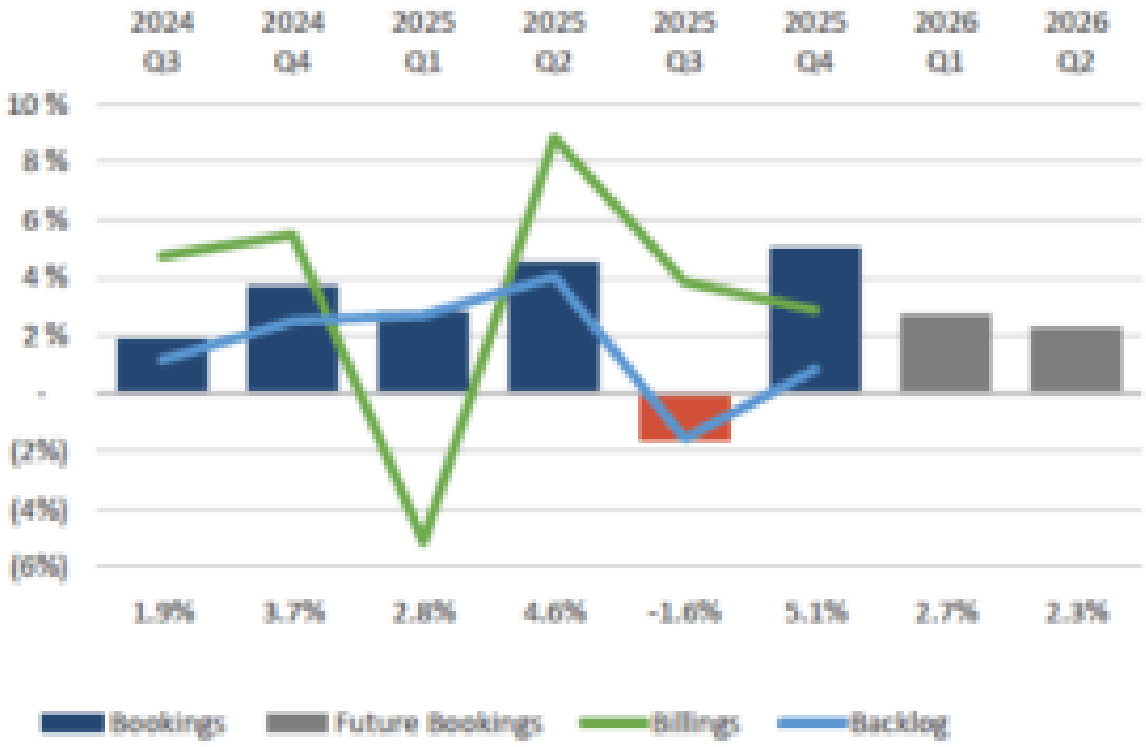
Key Insights from the Report:

After a period of uncertainty, distributor sentiment clearly shifted to a more optimistic stance in Q4, with bookings outpacing expectations and pipelines remaining broadly healthy across regions and sectors. While there are a few areas worth monitoring, particularly in billings and backlog, the overall outlook points to a steadier and more
constructive start to 2026. Diving in:

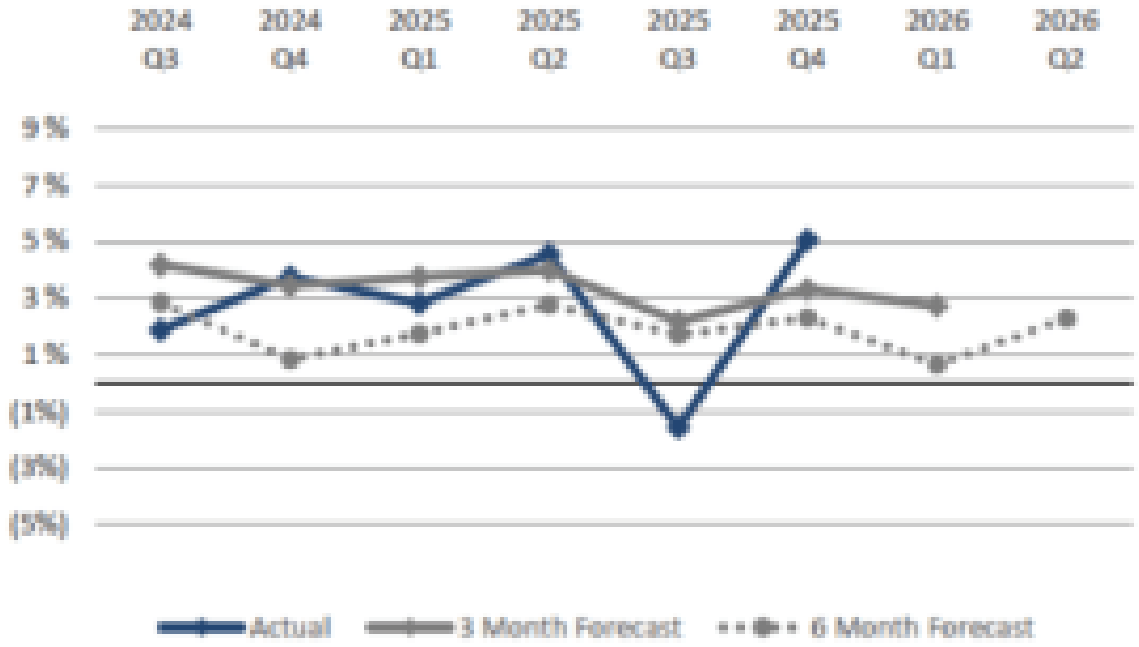
- When asked three months ago, dealers had predicted 3.3% growth for Q4 bookings. The 5.1% growth subsequently reported is a pleasant surprise. Looking ahead to Q1 Bookings, their expectations went up from 0.6% growth to 2.7%.
- Dealers saw a small decline in Billings, coupled with a moderate increase in Backlogs; two things to keep an eye on in next quarter's results.
- Pipeline activity increased in every economic sector except Financial, which dropped, but is still generally positive.
- Geographically, the U.S. West is heating back up after recording the largest regional drop in pipeline activity last quarter. Conversely, Canadian pipeline activity dropped significantly after leading the pack last quarter.

"After a period of uncertainty, distributor sentiment clearly shifted in a more optimistic direction in Q4, with bookings outperforming expectations and pipelines remaining broadly healthy across regions and sectors. While there are a few areas worth monitoring, particularly in billings and backlog, the overall outlook points to a steadier and more constructive start to 2026," said Shelley Rosetta, Principal at Solomon Coyle.

Distributors from across North America contributed to the quarterly Market Outlook survey, providing forward-looking data on bookings, billings, backlog, and pipeline activity.



Changes in Bookings, Billings, and Backlog



Actual vs. Forecasted Bookings: 3 and 6 Months in Advance

To view the current report, visit:
www.solomoncoyle.com/dealer-market-outlook-report/.
For inquiries regarding participation, email support@solomoncoyle.com.

About the Dealer Market Outlook Report

The Solomon Coyle Dealer Market Outlook Report is a quarterly research initiative that captures the distributor perspective on current performance and future expectations in the commercial furniture industry. By collecting data directly from distributors across North America, the report provides timely, forward-looking market intelligence on bookings, billings, backlog, and pipeline activity by region and sector, empowering dealers to make better-informed decisions about strategy, budgets, and staffing.

How to Participate in Future Surveys

Commercial furniture distributors in North America are invited to participate in quarterly Market Outlook surveys. Survey entries are confidential, and participants receive complimentary access to the comprehensive regional and sector report.
Survey periods generally run during the first three weeks of each new quarter.
To express interest in participating, visit https://solomoncoyle.com/participation-interest-dealer-market-outlook-survey/ or email support@solomoncoyle.com.

Full Report Access and Subscription Options

The comprehensive regional and sector report includes full national data, regional breakouts, sector and category analysis, and more granular pipeline and bookings expectations. Enhanced report access is available through:

- Complimentary access for survey participants
- Annual subscription ($8,000/year for four quarterly reports)
- Inclusion in the Quarterly Market Intelligence Program (QMIP)

For more information or to subscribe, visit https://solomoncoyle.com/research/dealer-market-outlook/.

About Solomon Coyle

Solomon Coyle is a leading consulting and research firm dedicated to supporting the vitality of the commercial furniture and modular wall distributor channel. The firm provides strategic and operational consulting, industry research, financial and compensation benchmarking, professional development programs, and peer group management to distributors and manufacturers across North America.