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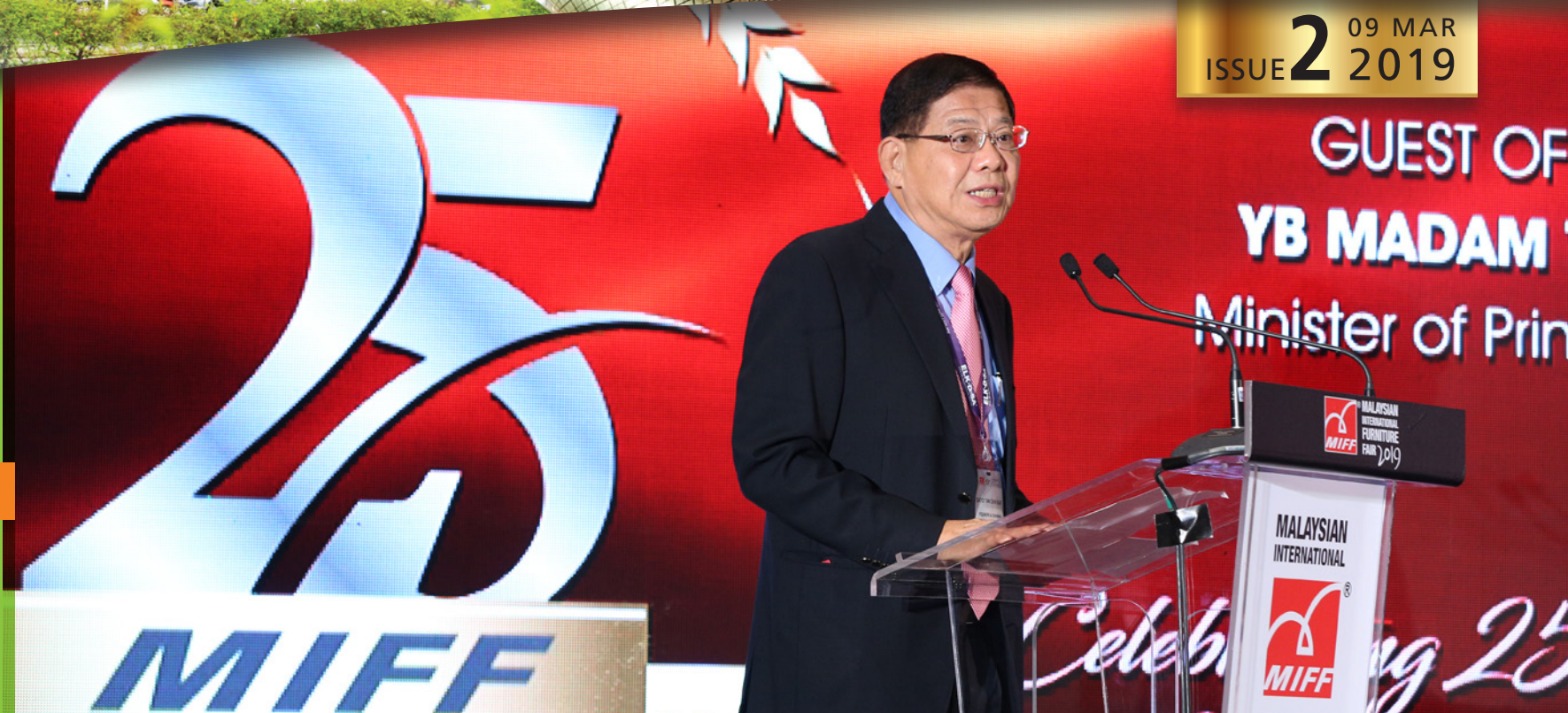


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The official show news of the Malaysian International Furniture Fair
08 – 11 March, 0930 – 1800 hrs | MITEC & PWTC, KL, Malaysia

ISSUE **2** 09 MAR 2019

**GUEST OF
YB MADAM
Minister of Prim**



BOLDER & BETTER MIFF Sears in 2019

by Tan Sher-Lynn

The Malaysian International Furniture Fair (MIFF) is back with a bang! The first day of the exhibition kicked off with the Opening Ceremony, featuring three prominent speakers – as well as an impressive string performance by three beautiful Malay-Chinese artists.

Following the performance, the hundreds of visitors in attendance were treated to a video showcasing highlights from MIFF's past 25 years ... from its humble beginnings in 1995, to its rousing success today – as the biggest furniture trade show in Southeast Asia and a Global Top 10 industry event.

Fittingly, the first speaker was Founder and Chairman of MIFF Dato' Dr Tan Chin Huat – whose vision to create a furniture hub in Malaysia has blossomed into the world-renowned event it is today. In his opening speech, he addressed MIFF's continued growth: "This morning, MIFF

opens for business with 600 exhibitors from 14 countries and regions – and I'm also happy to report that the number of pre-registered buyers from overseas has increased by 10 percent."

This increase in buyers is not only a boon for MIFF itself, but for the hundreds of exhibitors hoping to make new connections with overseas buyers.

Speaking about the future of MIFF, 'Dato Tan said that MIFF will build on its strong legacy as a partner to the local industry to expand exports and drive growth and prosperity for all.

"We will increase our engagement with exhibitors and partners to ensure MIFF sustains its position as a unique trade show," he said. "We must work closer than ever because our future success depends on how well we can create new opportunities, new customers and new ways to bring innovative products to the market."

Day two of MIFF 2019 brings even more can't-be-missed events!

What : MIFF 2019 Buyers' Night
Who : YB Madam Teresa Kok, Minister of Primary Industries
Date : 09 March 2019 (Saturday)
When : 6:00 p.m.
Where : @MySpace Ballroom, Level 3 (MITEC)

Seminars, seminars, seminars!

With three seminars and one forum held on Saturday, there are plentiful opportunities to stay abreast of the latest industry news. See the MIFF 2019 Buyers Guide (page 18) for event details.

HOTSHOT



cont. on next page >>

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MIFF: An Ideal Gateway to ASEAN

Next up was M Gandhi, the group managing director for ASEAN Business, UBM Asia. He noted that this year, a record-breaking 20,000 buyers from over 140 countries and regions are expected at MIFF.

Naturally, an event of this scale will also impact the local economy: "We are proud that MIFF 2019 is estimated to contribute RM256.2 million in immediate impact to Malaysia's economy via hotel, food and beverage, transportation and entertainment from our exhibitors and buyers," he said.



Not only that, but Gandhi says that ASEAN's furniture imports are higher than China's. Thus, he encourages furniture makers to tap into the opportunities from the emerging ASEAN market – and push for increased inter-ASEAN furniture trade: "MIFF is the ideal gateway to reach out to the vast business opportunities in ASEAN and beyond."



Support for the Timber Industry

To officially launch MIFF 2019, the ceremony's prestigious keynote address was then given by YB Teresa Kok, Minister of Primary Industries, who was accompanied by her deputy, Datuk Seri Shamsul Iskandar. In her address, she congratulated MIFF for its achievements in conjunction with its silver jubilee celebration this year.



According to her, 'Made in Malaysia' furniture products are exported to more than 160 countries – making Malaysia one of the top (and largest) furniture exporters in the world, along with the US, Singapore, Japan, Australia and the UK.

In addition, YB Teresa Kok noted that the furniture industry in Malaysia is well-developed and contributes significantly to the nation's export earnings: "In 2018, out of the RM9.83 billion generated through exports of furniture products, wooden furniture contributed to RM7.79 billion. It is certainly our hope that the industry will continue to increase exports of higher value-added furniture and realise our country's export target this year."

"As such, the government will continue to facilitate the industry's growth and development to ensure that it will continue to prosper and perform even better as a commodity," she added.

One of the measures to support the furniture industry was to ensure its sustainable raw material supply: "The government temporarily restricted the



export of rubberwood sawn timber for higher value additions on 1 July 2017. This move has been positive in ensuring the availability of raw materials, as well as stabilising rubberwood prices for the domestic market," said YB Teresa Kok, adding that the ministry will continue to monitor the situation closely to ensure it works for both the downstream and upstream players, including resolving the issue of raw material shortage.

"Malaysia, as the leading producer and exporter of tropical timber products, will always ensure that it is able to supply wood products sourced from sustainably managed forests," she assured the gathered crowd.

She said that for this purpose, the Malaysian Timber Certification Council was set up as an independent organisation to develop and operate the Malaysian Timber Certification Scheme (MTCS). Currently, there are 359 companies certified under MTCS and the volume of MTCS-certified timber exported in 2018 was 378,387 cubic metres.

"In terms of market opportunity, there is much to be gained from MIFF as the most cost-effective way to attract new customers and broaden business networking," she added.

After her speech, YB Teresa Kok struck the gong (a Malaysian traditional musical instrument) three times – marking the official opening of MIFF 2019.

A Great First Impression

MIFF attendance continues to increase in both exhibitors and visitors – which translates to many new faces at the Opening Ceremony. And this year, designers from countries including Portugal, Romania and Sri Lanka stepped foot into the exhibition hall for the very first time.



One new visitor was Marian Dobrila, project manager of Integrated Export Services for Romanian small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Accompanying him were 10 Romanian furniture producers – also first-time MIFF attendees. "Our main objective is to look for opportunities to export to Asia-Pacific and develop business partnerships in the region," he said, noting that while it was just the first day, he could already feel the excitement and positive vibes.

"It's a fast-moving exhibition where people invest a lot in business relationships, and we can meet people from all over the world. By coming here, we are positive that our delegations will be trained to become more competitive in the foreign markets," he said, adding that he is impressed with how well-organised and well-equipped the fair is.

Sally Mills, president of Interior Designers of Canada (IDC), is also attending MIFF for the first time, along with five designers and one staff member.

"Coming here, we are excited to discover more about Malaysian products, get more opportunities to showcase Canadian interior design works, and form new relationships with Malaysian companies," she said. "MITEC is a beautiful building, the fair is very well-organised and the people we've met are welcoming, friendly and helpful. It's really a great first impression."



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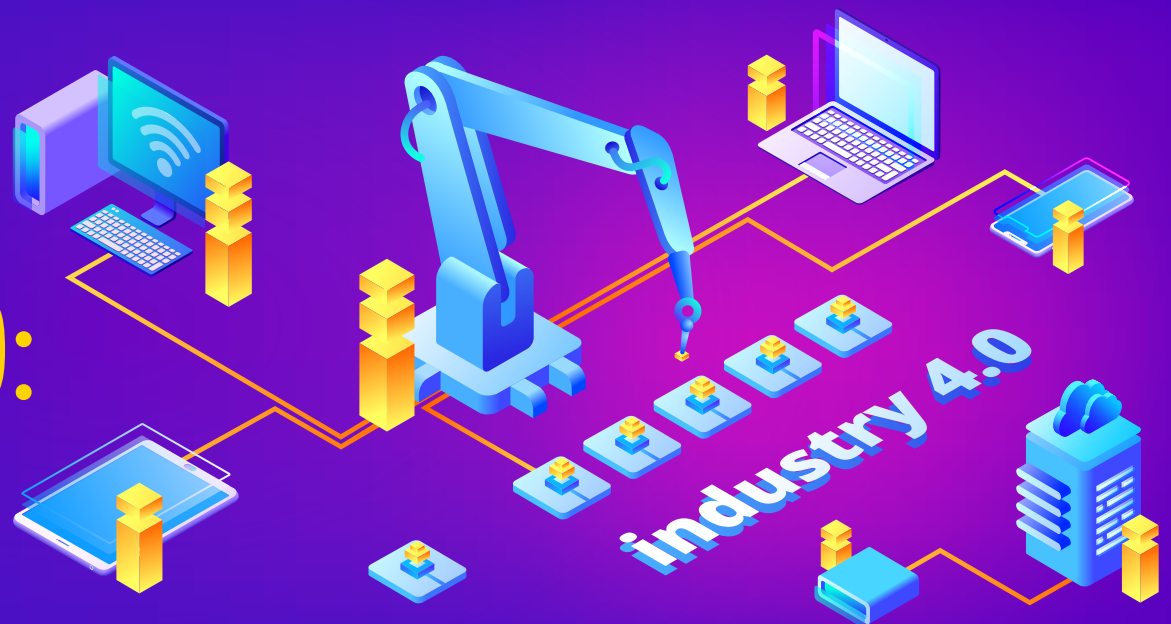
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INDUSTRY REVOLUTION 4.0: The Way Forward

By Khaw Chia Hui



The Malaysian furniture industry is a major contributor to the nation's gross domestic product (GDP). In 2018 alone, Malaysia's total export of wood and wood products came to RM22.29 billion, and furniture exports made up almost 40 percent of that value.

The industry itself provides employment to 93,000 people at varying skill levels. Almost 50 percent of total workers in the Malaysian furniture industry are classified as unskilled or general – and labour costs remain low. This, coupled with the high adoption costs of automation technology, hasn't encouraged manufacturers to adopt the latest solutions technology has to offer.

In light of this, Prof Dr Jegatheswaran Ratnasingam of Universiti Putra Malaysia's (UPM) Faculty of Forestry presented his observations on industrial automation at MIFF 2019 as part of the exhibition's Industry Seminar Series.

He says that the market for automated technology and mechanisation in Malaysia's furniture industry is relatively small: "It is estimated to be less than RM100 million per annum, against a capital outlay of almost RM4.7 billion."

Prof Dr Jegatheswaran is also a veteran furniture researcher recognised in Malaysia and internationally and notes that studies conducted between 2017 and 2018 at UPM Faculty of Forestry have shown that the push for automation can only be significant if the minimum labour cost increases to RM1,890 per month, making it hard for manufacturers to ignore new technologies.

In fact, a study last year showed that the cost to employee a worker per day is about RM64, versus RM189 per day for the cost of a CNC (computer numerical control) workstation.

"At this point, it is still much more affordable to just hire more workers. Lack of investment and data are major hindrances to adopting new technology," explained Prof Dr Jegatheswaran.

According to him, the tasks most suited for automation are best described as monotonous, precise, repeatable and consistent.

"In order to automate, there needs to be standard operating procedures (SOPs) and data on the various operations. As it stands, many of the furniture manufacturers lack data and information on these processes, posing additional challenges in adopting engineering principles to the automated operations," he shared.

More Hurdles to Automation

Prof Dr Jegatheswaran noted there is a lack of awareness on the concept of Industry Revolution 4.0 (IR4.0) and its benefits, as well as digital and ecosystem infrastructure gaps. He added that there is also a lack of incentives for furniture manufacturers to adopt IR4.0 technology.

"The Malaysian furniture industry has a human capital problem where there is a mismatch in skills and the lack of the right talent," he said. "This has resulted in a lack of knowledge in how to integrate existing infrastructure with IR4.0 solutions, leading to a reliability issue. Reliable production and consistent standards are vital for furniture manufacturers to remain competitive in the world market."

He added it would be naive to assume the furniture industry is immune to technological changes.

Adoption is Still Possible

However, all is not lost as panel-based furniture manufacturers stand a better chance in adopting IR4.0 technologies.

"Panel-based furniture is mainly standardised in shape and form without intricate detailing or variation, making it a prime candidate to have fully automated factories," said Prof Dr Jegatheswaran. "Currently, only parts of its manufacturing process

are automated and mechanised. To adopt a fully automated system, manufacturers will have to fork out significant investments – still, it will benefit manufacturers in the long run."

But as it stands, solid wood furniture manufacturers are a ways behind in being able to move towards full automation and mechanisation. Accuracy, data and analytics for solid wood furniture are still a work in progress.

A Starting Point

Prof Dr Jegatheswaran, in his presentation, said that the furniture industry needs to compile data from their factory shop floors. Without that data, the implementation of IR4.0 will not be feasible.

And in order to ensure reliability and consistency, there needs to be a minimisation in variability in the manufacturing process.

"At the same time, manufacturers have to integrate engineering principles into their factory processes. This will facilitate the adoption of low-cost automation, as a starting point," he said. "Once manufacturers have overcome the initial hurdles, then they can move towards optimising product design and product manufacturing processes."

In Conclusion . . .

The pace of technology advancement is punishing – so it's only a matter of time before companies will have to adopt IR4.0 technologies. Those who don't will see themselves being left behind or stagnate, eventually becoming uncompetitive in the world market.

Manufacturers must take heed of the technological changes that are sweeping through the industry, and be prepared for the changes to come, concluded Prof Dr Jegatheswaran.



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Bedrooms with a 3D Touch

The 3D effect is no longer confined to just movies, as BZ Furniture has incorporated it into their Auburn bedroom collection. The set has already garnered plenty of attention from buyers, especially those from the US and Canada, on the first day of MIFF 2019.



Made from solid rubberwood and ash veneer, this set has concave accents giving it a multi-dimensional effect. The collection comes with a bed frame with functional storage, headboard, five-drawer chest, dresser and a nightstand. The concave accents have a wire brush effect and are paired manually – so no two pieces of furniture are exactly the same. In addition, the company has other interesting bedroom collections on display at their booth.

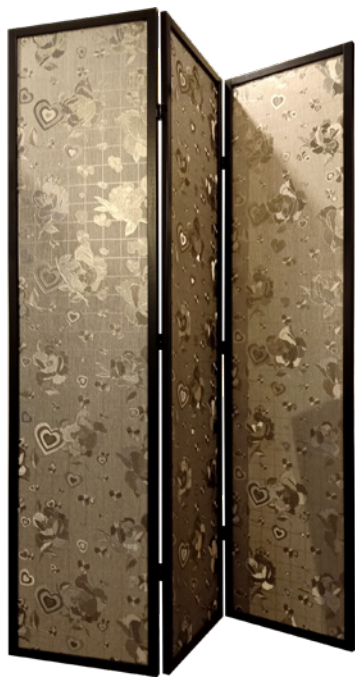
BZ Furniture
PWTC, Hall 3, Booth 329

Stylish Partitions

Armed with more than 60 years of experience, Taiwan-based Nan Ya Furniture has been making pinewood partitions for clients all over the world. And this year at MIFF, the company is excited to introduce its partitions with PVC heat-press designs. The floral motifs come in silver or gold.

The partitions are sturdy, so they can be safely placed anywhere in a house or office. The company also has more than 100 designs to choose from, including its bestseller: the pinewood frame with non-woven paper. At their booth, there are also a range of vanity tables, standing mirrors, shoe benches on display.

Nan Ya Furniture Industrial
PWTC, Hall 4B, Booth 4B11



Create your own 'Mastersleep'

Horizon Industries designs and manufactures a range of mattresses using various materials including coconut fibers, memory foam, pocket spring, coil spring, natural latex and re-bond mattresses. The company also has a catalog of mattresses with healthcare functions, with easy maintenance and 5- and 7-zone support. For a personal touch, Horizon also has a single-head quilting machine that can produce any preferred designs on the mattress top, as well as a house logo knitting machine to add logos or brand names. The company currently has two house brands Italia Sunno (for mid-high markets) and Auzzie Slzpp (for mid-markets).

Horizon Industries
PWTC, Hall 3, Booth 326
www.aussiesleeps.com



Sunshine on Babies

Pamper little ones with the Sunshine Cot, a modern baby cot from Vistawood Industries. This uniquely designed baby cot – which won the Platinum Furniture Excellence Award at MIFF 2018 – features an unusual colour mix of yellow and grey. Suitable for newborns to young toddlers, the cot features P2 grade medium density fibreboard (MDF) and eco-friendly paint. The hardware was also tested and found to be leadless, which ensures that it's harmless to babies.

Made from natural, solid rubberwood, the sturdy and durable construction ensures the safety of sleeping babies. Perhaps the most unique features of the Sunshine Cot, is the middle panel which can be removed and converted into two stylish chairs that can accommodate adults.

Vistawood Industries
MITEC, HALL 8, Booth M801
www.funbies.com.my



Elevating Standards in Environmental Design

For decades, products and collections from Chuan Yie Furniture Industries' have been synonymous with inspired design and quality craftsmanship. With this foundation, plus a dose of passion, creativity and professionalism, the company continues to elevate both standards and aspirations in the industry. This is especially evident in their brand RODAS, which illustrates how using spatial elements can transform ideas into designs that are as elegant as they are practical. And as wood is the foundation for RODAS designs, the company holds its responsibility to the environment in the highest regard.

Chuan Yie Furniture Industries
MITEC, Hall 4, Booth M406
www.rodas.com.my



A Goldmine of Home Furniture

Buyers looking for great quality Malaysian home furnishings

can drop by Cosmines to sample a wide variety of products such as dining sets, cabinets, sofas and more. For example, the Cos-Bringham Living Suite is a collection that includes a TV cabinet, occasional pieces, coffee table and storage. It comes in natural colours to suit flooring and walls of any material or colour. These pieces are mainly made from MDF veneers and a variety of solid wood. Based in Muar, Johor, and as an experienced and trusted manufacturer, Cosmines places an emphasis on quality, price and delivery lead time.

Cosmines
PWTC, Hall 2, Booth 216
www.cosmines.com



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Sweet Home Concept
MITEC, Hall 4, Booth M411
www.sweethome.my

Scarlett Seduction

A stylish-looking bed makes any bedroom more inviting! And this design from Sweet Home Concept – called Scarlett Bed – cultivates luxury, with a velvet upholstered headboard, exuding the ultimate in sophistication and decadence. Using simple minimalist design, the bed draws attention with deep, tufted buttons on the headboard, which add texture and tone. Its velvet fabric matches beautifully with the bed's metal legs to give this bedroom piece an irresistible allure.

Sweet Home Concept is a leading upholstery bedroom and living room furniture manufacturer and will be showcasing a ranges of upholstered bed designs at MIFF 2019.

Sleep Like A Queen

Don't underestimate the power of a plush bed. This beautiful design by Comfy Factor comes with an extra-long upholstered headboard frame that extends out to two elegant night tables. The headboard and base are made from velvet for a distinctive soft and luxurious feel, making your bedroom fit for a queen. With this bed in your room, your dreams will definitely be sweeter. Based in Muar, "Malaysia's Furniture City", Comfy Factor is one of the fastest growing upholstered furniture manufacturing companies in the country, which producing elegant and contemporary furniture with competitive prices.

Comfy Factor
MITEC, Hall 3, Booth M302
www.comfyfactor.com



Stack it Up

Do you have limited space? If so, make it a non-issue with this stackable bed from Johann & Joann Concept. Made from quality, but lightweight material, the bed frames can be easily taken down and placed on the floor when you want to sleep and stacked again the next morning to free up the space for other activities. During the day, it can also function as a sofa. This innovative product is ideal for small or studio apartments, guesthouses, as well as large families who want their homes to look less cluttered.

Johann & Joann Concept
MITEC, Hall 6, Booth M608
www.jnjconcept.com



Peace and Quiet in a Pod

Confidential conversations are meant to be private, even in public places. So, step out of the outside world and into Wintech Metal Processing's meeting pod: D POD. Designed to fit two to four people, the D POD is an acoustic booth ideal for uninterrupted work, holding discussions, making important calls, and running teleconferences. The lighted signage functions as a sensor-based timer for a booth in-use feature that ensures minimal interruptions when you need to work with maximum focus and minimal distractions.

Wintech Metal Processing
PWTC, Hall 2B, Booth 2B18
www.wintech.com.my



Body Massage While You Sleep

Get a massage while you sleep with Pinghu Allen Furniture's adjustable electric beds specifically designed for the home. Also equipped with a wireless remote control, USB ports and Bluetooth, the bed comes in either single- or queen-sized with adjustable head and footboards. Get a well-deserved night's rest in complete relaxation from the comfort of your home. Specialising in bed frames, beds and mattresses, Pinghu's 16 years of experience speaks for itself, running two factories in China and Vietnam, the company strives to ensure high quality, advanced technology and long-term relationships with their customers.

Pinghu Allen Furniture
PWTC, Hall 1, Booth 143C
www.allen-furniture.com



Play to Win

Long hours, body aches and hardly any time for socialising? You must be a gamer! Gamers go through the same stress as any desk-bound person. Level up with a racing gaming table and chair from Anji Funuo Furniture with their newest design for a more comfortable gaming experience. The specially designed table lights up with a USB connector and the chair is made from a single piece of moulded foam for better contouring and comfort. So, get strapped in for a long night of gaming with the racing chair's high back that provides great support to games all night long.

Anji Funuo Furniture
PWTC, Hall 1, Booth 140A
www.nova-furniture.ch

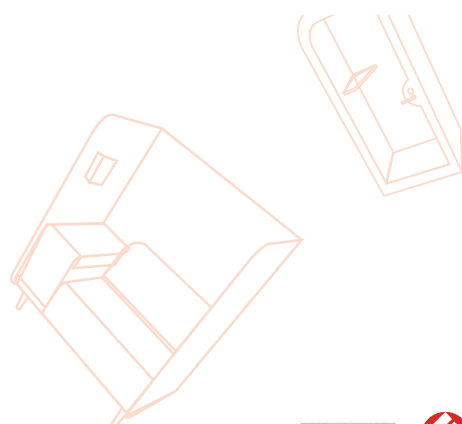


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Mr Zilahi Imre
Editor-in-Chief,
MagMob furniture magazine, Romania
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On MIFF's Recipe for Success

In my 10 years with MIFF, I've watched it grow into a truly global event. I believe this success is a credit to the MIFF leadership team, which has invested both attention and money to attract visitors that are relevant to exhibitors.

You don't have to look far to see this relevancy. MIFF brings in buyers from all over the world – they are meeting here and looking for new products. And for exhibitors, the attitude that MIFF brings is satisfying to them . . . because after all, this is their business. Exhibitors want to see people walking around, placing orders and buying containers of products! THIS is the recipe, which MIFF understands perfectly. And the main difference, if we're comparing it to other shows, is that every detail is taken care of at MIFF.

Throughout my years of involvement with MIFF, I've developed partnerships that continue to grow and flourish. And this year, I'm glad to announce that industry professionals from Romania (another furniture manufacturing country) are attending MIFF 2019 to explore the possibilities of doing business together – and learning how our countries and

markets can complement each other.

In Romania, we also have solid wood, we have soft wood, and we have certain designs that could be exported to Malaysia . . . and we can also buy from Malaysia, too. Basically, I see this as a balanced potential partnership, on the same level with equal standing.

At this show, we have nearly 60 visitors from both Cluster Mobilier Transylvania (CMT) and the Romanian Wood Crafts initiative (RWC). These groups are here to explore the possibilities of working with local companies. Therefore, I encourage the Malaysian exhibitors to interact with them – there might be possibilities for joint ventures, or simple contracts to supply goods to other markets.

This potential for partnerships is the reason I encourage my Romanian colleagues to travel more. Attending these diverse, international shows allows a greater opportunity for getting in contact with relevant industry players. I like to say that if you don't know about opportunities – they simply don't exist... you have to create them.

In the past, we had some problems (like Malaysia) – we also struggled in investing in design and using raw materials in a creative way. So for us, the RWC and CMT play vital roles in the Romanian furniture market's international expansion. The RWC is a Swiss-Romanian joint initiative co-financed by the Swiss government to help small- and medium-sized companies find out if they would be successful in certain foreign markets with their products. On the other hand, CMT provides an efficient model for the furniture industry in Romania – which could be replicated in Malaysia. By creating avenues for companies to collaborate based on specific interests, CMT brings organisation and know-how and allows members to explore new markets and join common product development projects.

Both groups bring strength to every member – and therefore, we strongly encourage our Malaysian counterparts to attend our MIFF 2019 Industry Seminar on March 10 to learn more about these initiatives – which could create new and exciting opportunities for us all.

Think out-of-the-box to break into the German market



The Malaysian International Furniture Fair (MIFF) attracts more and more visitors each year. Most recently, attendees came from around 140 countries, expressing the worldwide appeal of this event. This speaks in favour of furniture made in Malaysia – which is in demand worldwide.

Of course, buyers from my home country of Germany also visit MIFF. However, the number of visitors does not match the size and importance of the German furniture market – with a turnover of €34 billion (consumer prices), it's the largest in Europe.

This means there is still room for improvement, in both the number of German visitors to MIFF, but also in German imports from Malaysia. In the living, dining and bedroom product segments, Malaysia isn't even ranked in the 25 most important supplier countries (as of 2018) in Germany. And in the case

of upholstered furniture, Malaysia is listed at 21 – behind Indonesia and ahead of Ukraine.

It is paradoxical: On one hand, Malaysia is one of the largest furniture exporters in the world, but on the other hand, there is the high-turnover German furniture market – and somehow neither of them seem to come together.

Among German buyers, the furniture industry in Malaysia enjoys a good reputation for reliability, attractive prices and quality. Only in terms of design and in materials used, there are critical voices. This criticism refers to, in particular, the dominance of furniture made from rubberwood.

"Rubberwood could not sell in Germany," they announce in unison – as German end users (allegedly) don't like furniture made from this material. However, the vast majority of German consumers have never seen rubberwood

furniture because it can't be found in any local furniture store.

Therefore, if Malaysian furniture manufacturers want to penetrate the large German furniture market, they have to create alternatives. In this point, a bit has changed in the last few years . . . there are already alternatives to rubberwood, like acacia or American hardwoods.

The fact is, that with more than 600 exhibitors represented at MIFF this year, there are a lot of products that are suitable for the German market – and this news seems to have spread to German buyers. In any case, before I left for Asia, I got the impression that some buyers from my home country – who in the past renounced a trade fair visit to Kuala Lumpur – want to come to MIFF again this year.

I'm curious how often I can speak German at this year's MIFF. . .



Helmut "Max" Merkel
Editor-in-Chief, German furniture
trade magazine MÖBELMARKT
General Manager, CRP Consulting

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LOYAL EXHIBITORS



Ms Cheryl Tan, General Manager, Titov

"MIFF is a very good platform for Malaysian manufacturers to meet buyers from all over the world. In my opinion, it would be difficult for manufacturers to promote our furniture overseas on our own. By participating in MIFF, we're able to reach them. MIFF plays an important role in bringing up newcomers, as well as maintaining high standards in the industry."



Mr Soo Yen Siong, Senior Export Manager, Southern Furniture

"I've been with MIFF for a very long time. It's a very useful platform for furniture exhibitors. Exhibiting here is great as MIFF is an established brand that is just going to get better. I wish them all the success in the coming years."

Mr Peh Ju Chai, Executive Director, HeveaPac

"Happy 25th to the MIFF team! I've been supporting the show since its first year. If you're a new company, exhibiting at MIFF is the fastest way to enter the world market. It also helps you to stay relevant in this industry."



Mr Lester Chung, Head of Operations & Business Development, Lorenzo

"MIFF is recognised as the best in the business – even in the international market. More and more exhibitors have been participating, which is a good sign. Also, MIFF has been attracting a lot of quality buyers from all over the world. We have grown together with MIFF and that makes us very happy. I wish them all the best."



Ms Heng Soo Hoon, BLH Global Marketing

"MIFF has grown by leaps and bounds since it began. It's worth the time and effort to participate in this exhibition – we've been participating for the past 15 years. MIFF invites a lot of international buyers that we're always keen to reach out to and the buyers can just visit MIFF and find everything they need. We would like to congratulate MIFF for all its achievements over the past 25 years. We hope that they keep going and enjoy a bright future in the industry."



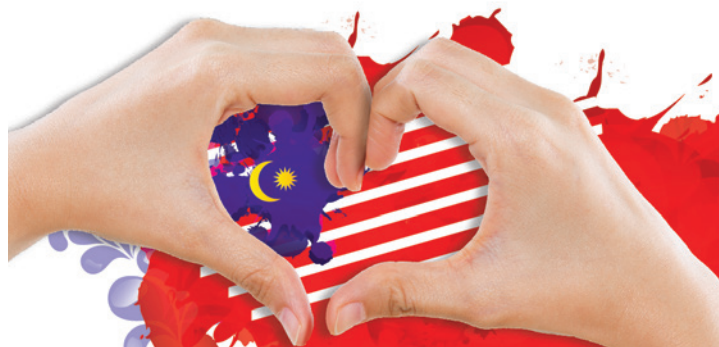
Ms Suzan Lei, Marketing Manager, Step Furniture

"MIFF is a very good organiser that is managing a very important furniture exhibition in Malaysia. It encourages overseas buyers to come here to conduct business, research and everything in between. I wish MIFF all the best and may it enjoy another 25 years of excellence."



Ms Emily Wong, Director, Zenith Projects Technology

"If there was no MIFF, there would be no platform for furniture manufacturers in Malaysia. If they are going strong, it means the industry is going strong too. The exhibition has become a big part of the industry. Kudos!"



KIND MALAYSIA

Connecting Corporates With Civil Society

Connecting Companies & Charities at the Kind Malaysia Pavilion

by Brooke Herron

For nonprofit organisations, corporate donations go a long way. Therefore, in an effort to connect companies and charities, MIFF 2019 features the Kind Malaysia Pavilion, where interested attendees can interact with a handful of selected nonprofit humanitarian groups.

Kind Malaysia was launched by UBM Malaysia, in partnership with MITEC, to promote kindness and the betterment of life in the local community, while assisting corporations in delivering various CSR (corporate social responsibility) initiatives.

The inaugural event was held last October – with the theme "Connecting Corporates with Civil Society – Partnership for Humanity" and was a rousing success for the nearly 1,800 attendees and the 57 humanitarian non-governmental organisations (NGOs) who participated – many whom attended to gather information and learn about ways to give back.

AT MIFF 2019, visitors can visit the MIFF 2019 Kind Malaysia Pavilion at MITEC, Level 3, Hall 9. During the exhibition, the NGOs can fundraise and sell handicrafts – and donations are accepted.

Five nonprofits have booths in the Kind Malaysia Pavilion at MIFF 2019:

Business & Professional Women Malaysia (BPW) is part of BPW International, an influential network of professional and businesswomen. The organization focuses on empowering women through economic empowerment, equality, entrepreneurship and ethics.

The Budimas Charitable Foundation provides guidance and funding to support the welfare of orphans and underprivileged children in Malaysia. The foundation uses a three-pronged

approach to address the three basic necessities for children, which are food, education and a home.

MERCY Malaysia is dedicated to humanitarian aid during crisis and non-crisis situations. This Malaysian-based international nonprofit organisation has operated in more than 30 countries around the world providing medical care, post-crisis recovery and training on disaster prevention and preparedness.

The Malaysian Association for the Blind (MAB) is the premier voluntary organization in Malaysia serving visually impaired persons. The association not only promotes the prevention of avoidable blindness, it also empowers visually impaired people by providing opportunities for greater involvement in society.

The Xim Phou Moon Welfare Society serves underprivileged populations through various charity projects, with a focus on environmental protection, recycling programs, education and welfare services. Groups like orphans, the disabled, senior citizens and underprivileged students benefit from their programs.

Moving forward, a KIND Malaysia Pavilion will be included in every trade show organized by UBM Malaysia, with the aim to build effective engagement between potential sponsors and NGOs. This comes as UBM has shifted its community focus away from more passive philanthropic activities to more active engagement. Through Kind Malaysia, UBM hopes to energise and support NGOs by helping them find partners – either corporations or other nonprofits – and to create greater understanding and awareness within the local community.



www.kerfurniture.com www.kg-furniture.com www.kgfresources.com

info@kerfurniture.com shley@kerfurniture.com

MIFF 2019 Venue

MALAYSIAN INTERNATIONAL
M · I · T · E · C
TRADE & EXHIBITION CENTRE

8th - 11th March 2019
Hall 2 M220A, M220B & M220C





By Chow Ee-Tan

The MIFF Welcome Reception was all about relationships – in particular the friendships and partnerships – that have been nurtured over the exhibition's 25-year history.

To commemorate MIFF's milestone anniversary, this Welcome Reception was extra special for the organiser. About 100 invited guests, including long-time delegates, international media, judges, seminar speakers, friends and partners of MIFF were treated to a sumptuous buffet dinner at Tanjong Lounge Riverside Café at PWTC yesterday evening.

As always, MIFF presented souvenirs of appreciation to certain individuals and groups who contributed to the event. This year, in celebration of the theme Design Connects People, the tokens, with words 'cheers to our wonderful friendship', were given out by MIFF Founder and Chairman Dato' Dr Tan Chin Huat and MIFF General Manager Ms Karen Goi. These gifts were presented to MIFF's friends who have been supporting them for 25 years.

Dato' Tan was beaming the whole evening as he welcomed all the guests. He told *Furnish Now* that he was very happy and touched to see many old, as well as new, friends at the event.

In his speech, he specifically welcomed those who had been with MIFF for a long time and also those joining them for the first time, like the delegates from Romania. Indeed, the guest list of the reception comprised international delegates from every continent, and from countries including Japan, Canada, South Africa, China, Mexico, Italy, France, Australia and more.

"The success of the show and its contribution to the global furniture trade would not have been possible without the confidence and trust of our customers and partners."

He also paid tribute to the award-winning young designers from FDC in Action, who – with the launchpad of MIFF – now have their own careers and businesses.

He then proposed a toast to all the guests in celebration of their mutual journey and to recognise how far they've come together.

Also, at the dinner was Mr M Gandhi, group managing director for ASEAN Business, UBM Asia. For him, the Welcome Reception was a coming together for the friends of MIFF, and a reunion and celebration of friendship. He also thanked those who worked very hard to put together this year's exhibition.

The highlight of the evening was a surprise 'puzzle piece' activity to celebrate MIFF's Silver Jubilee. Prior to the event, numbered puzzle pieces were placed on the tables. Then, all guests participated by placing their pieces onto the original 25th anniversary logo – which was not only fun, but also illustrated how each guest makes up an important 'piece' of MIFF's success.



UBM Malaysia

Suite 5-01, Level 5, Sunway VISIO Tower,
Lingkaran SV, Sunway Velocity,
55100 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Tel : +603 9771 2688

Fax: +603 9771 2799

Email: info@miff.com.myWebsite: www.miff.com.my

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EDITORIAL TEAM

Creative Content Director: Matt Young

Chief Editor : Gloria D. Gamat

Associate Editor : Brooke Herron

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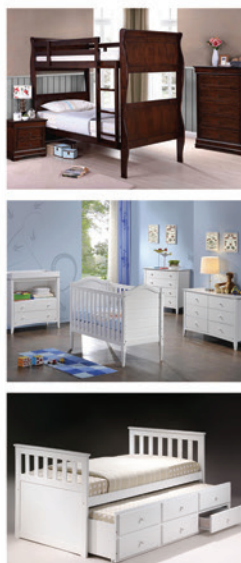
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Media MICE Pte. Ltd.

6001 Beach Road, #19-06
Golden Mile Tower, Singapore 199589
Tel: +65 8186 7677 Fax: +65 6298 6316
Email: enquiry@mediamice.com
www.mediamic.com

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PWTC
Hall 3,
Booth 325