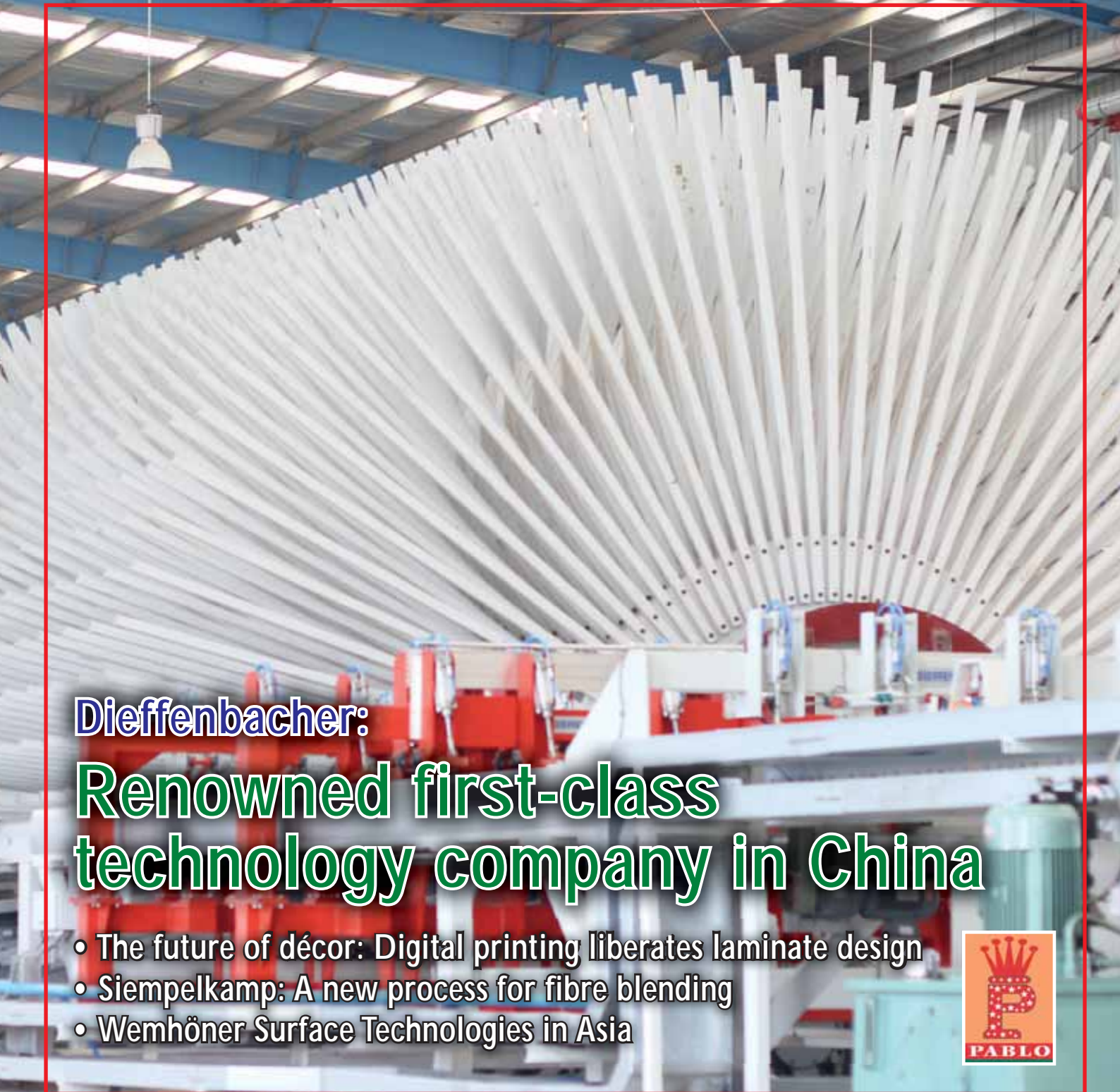


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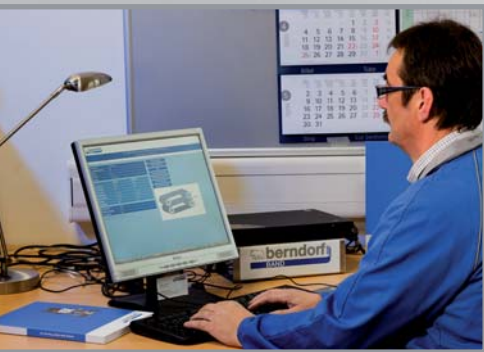
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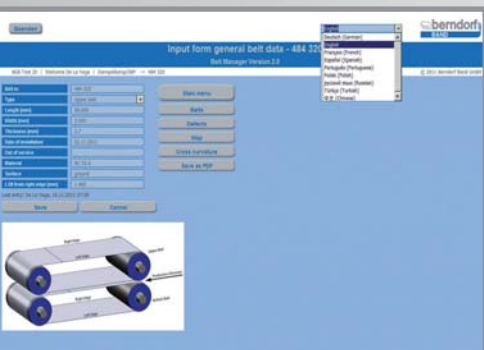
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Denice Cabel
Editor

Countdown to EUTR

When it comes to the EU Timber Regulation (EUTR), good things do not come to those who wait. This piece of legislation which prohibits illegally harvested timber from being placed on the EU market comes into force on March 3, 2013. From then on, all business operators who put wood or wood product on any of the 27 EU member states

for the first time must be able to prove that it comes from a legal source. Each operator will have to go through a process called 'due diligence', which involves gathering detailed information about the supplier, the product species, country of harvest, etc. The operator must also assess the risk level of the supply chain.

That's a lot of work, *we know*. And many of you may still be confused, annoyed, and wish that EUTR could go away. Sorry folks, there is no stopping EUTR. So instead of ignoring the issue on hand, everyone must prepare and comply, or run the risk of paying a hefty fine. As much as it is inconvenient for many manufacturers and traders, in the grand scheme of things, it is a small price to pay for curbing illegal logging and other forest crimes.

The EUTR, which is expected to bring fundamental change in the design, manufacture and shipping of furniture in the EU region and beyond, clearly has everyone's attention now. The new regulation was heavily discussed in many timber and furniture conferences I attended in the past three months. It was the buzzword at the National Hardwood Lumber Association (NHLA) Convention in Chicago (see page 50), the Global Woodmart in Kuala Lumpur, organised by the Malaysian Timber Council (MTC) (see page 53), and in Singapore during the FurniPRO Asia show (see page 58).

Many industry organisations as well as trade magazines and websites have been helpful in disseminating the right information to all parties concerned. It is important to educate the industry, make exporting companies aware of this regulation and what "due diligence" really means. In this issue of *PFA*, we have outlined the rules concerning the due diligence system and the steps to prepare for this implementation (see pages 14 and 19).

In today's rapidly developing global marketplace, it seems that the challenge for us all is how to quickly and successfully respond to changes in environmental and trading policies wherever they arise. By knowing how the EUTR impacts your business and learning what is required for compliance, you can stay one step ahead of the game and one step ahead of the competition.

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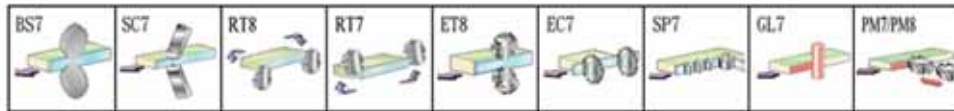
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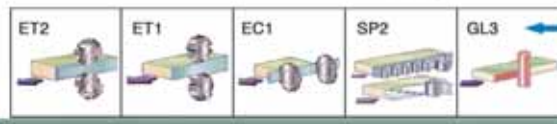
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Kenn Busch
Contributing Editor

*Kenn Busch is also publisher of www.materialintelligence.com and contributing editor to *Wood Digest* and *Interiors & Sources* magazines.*

Timing is everything

The SICAM exhibition, in Pordenone, Italy, is right in the sweet spot for materials and design.

Formerly a ZOW event, SICAM was taken over four years ago by Carlo Giobbi, who now runs it with his daughter Carolina and son Michele. Held north of Venice in the heart of Italy's furniture industry, the show is growing to be a global destination, with exhibitors from Germany, Turkey, Spain, Austria and Switzerland; Russia, Slovenia, France, Spain, Great Britain, Poland, and Austria; and visitors from around the world.

SICAM's trademark is what you might say is a "user-friendly" appeal to visitors. Stands are generally kept small and open for easy access and smooth traffic patterns, places to sit and rest are easy to find, and food and refreshment are free throughout the fair. This allows visitors to work the show from beginning to end with minimum of fatigue, and without needing to leave the grounds in search of good food at a reasonable price. Obviously, this philosophy maximises the productive time visitors and exhibitors have with each other.

And in an industry where most fairs are in the first half of the year, SICAM's October schedule happens to be optimal timing for material design.

It's no secret that most of the inspiration for global material and furniture design is derived from the Milan furniture fair, held in April every year. Colours, materials, material treatments, visual and textural structures, and combinations of all of the above are the designer's palette.

Décor printers build their new collections each year based on what their design teams observe in Milan. (See the story on Schattdecor on page 44 in this issue.) This intelligence is gathered and then shared, compared, and interpreted for the different markets that use decorative surfaces that carry their designs. This process takes time, including literally hundreds of hours of tweaking structure, scale and colour nuances. Concepts are then shown to key customers and others in the design community for review, changes are made, and another round begins. This may happen several times before a design collection is considered ready for market.

It should be noted that these collections aren't just reproductions of what was seen in Milan; they are more precisely concepts for new design directions, especially because they draw from the entire breadth of design, not just from one market; i.e, residential, commercial, hospitality, or European, Asian, South American, etc.

So, oddly enough (or is it?), SICAM has become a stage for world premiers...in a way, not unlike the Cannes Film Festival in the movie world. The new developments are finished, and designers and manufacturers are at the same moment looking for new launches at the major furniture fairs held early the following year, notably the Köln Furniture Fair in Germany.

Exhibitors and visitors alike give SICAM high marks for being well a well run, well-timed, productive event. Its role in driving design forward in the furniture world is sure to keep growing.



Michele, Carolina and Carlo Giobbi.



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The BIG SHIFT...



Mr. Peter Fitch,
Chairman of the MMMA

Recently industry pundits have been asking me how I can remain so positive in the articles I write about the panel industry. For the long term I still remain very optimistic as there are many positives including MDF's 'Green Credentials', a move to an urbanised higher income society in the developing world and the growth of the global population to close to 9 billion within the next 20 or so years. This article will focus on this BIG SHIFT and the shorter term consequences of this process.

So for those who require the short term outlook with a realism of the current predicament we are finding ourselves in, I will also write a very candid account of the current state of affairs. To be fair in my previous article, I had mentioned that we were currently in one of our 'darkest' periods of the current business cycle. The hope still is that the 'new dawn' is not too far away...

THE BIG SHIFT...is from the WEST (including Japan) to the EAST (including Australia). Some of the most important factors driving this tectonic movement are:

- GDP growth for the East in excess of 7%, for the West growth of less than 2.5%.
- Demographics. Ageing populations in the West and a young dynamic population in the East.
- Sovereign indebtedness of Western Governments and surpluses in the East.
- Rising education standards and innovation in the East but a stagnation in the West.

This Big Shift is not without its risks nor is it without its problems especially during this transition. What we are seeing now is the consequences of this transition.

On the demand side both European and US woodworking machinery associations have reported that growth for new orders have all but dried up. Both the Eurozone and the USA remain economically challenged to put it mildly. China's furniture manufacturers are reporting a 30 - 40% decline in export orders. The reduced demand for timber is reflected in the falling Softwood Price Index and Hardwood Price Index by 4.1% and 4.4% respectively from Q1 to Q2 of this year. (Figures for Q3 were not available at the time of publishing but are thought to reflect a further decline). For Malaysian and SE Asian panel exporters, we have seen the loss of two very large traditional markets in Syria and Iran due to the civil war and economic sanctions.

On a personal observation I have seen a drop in the volume of visitors to industry exhibitions, with exhibitors reporting fewer inquiries. So demand has significantly dropped, I am sure readers can draw upon their own experiences and come to similar conclusions.

What we are observing here is the relatively fast decline in the purchasing power of the West and an over dependency of the East for an Export lead economy. We will continue to see this with the continued debasement of the EUR, USD, GBP and soon to come JPY. To balance the equation what do we find when we look at the Supply side?

In Europe and the USA, plant closures, bankruptcies, liquidations and takeovers dominate the industry news headlines. Another report states that currently more than 80% of the world's panel producers are losing money, but why? The reason is that there has been a huge increase in installed capacity in China, Southeast Asia and South America. Incredibly this capacity will continue to increase for at least the next three years as partially completed and newly confirmed plants come on stream. The timing could not be worse and will result in a radical consolidation of the industry within those regions. In the short term, the industry is facing a real crisis and this is not an understatement.

The BIG SHIFT from the West to the East is underway, but thus far it has not been balanced. The decline of markets in the West has been too rapid and the transformation of the East from an exporter to consumer has been too slow. I fear it is not just the panel industry that is experiencing this imbalance but the broader economy also. Let us hope that an equilibrium is achieved sooner than later and protectionist measures taken by nations including anti-dumping and other tariff and non-tariff trade barriers will only delay this rebalance further.

In conclusion, we will not see the return of the heady consumer demands of the past from the Western markets, those days are over. Unless the East accelerates its domestic spending, which is also unlikely to happen so soon, we will start seeing headlines in Chinese, Asian and Latin American news journals of plant closures, bankruptcies, liquidations and take overs. A sobering thought but one we need to prepare for in Malaysia and the rest of Asia. ■



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Global wood resources

by MICHAEL HERMENS

I have been selling imported timber into Asia for over 16 years and during this time seen a wide range of species from all over the world. A great part of those species have been well known in the West but were pretty new in Asia. Few people in Asia would have known the difference between American soft maple and hard maple or even American white and red oak 15 years ago simply because there was no need yet to import these species due to the availability of local hardwoods in SE Asia.

Once a while you come across a new species unknown, not just in Asia but even in the rest of the world. A very good example is our "local" rubberwood sawn timber (rubberwood is a native species from Brazil) which up to 25 years ago was not a commercial species; the plantations were solely used for latex harvesting.

I am proud to say that I have been around at the "birth of rubberwood" when 25 years ago Hong Kong Teakwood (a Singapore based company) started the first tests to saw and kiln-dry rubberwood at their factory in Johor in close cooperation with an university in Kaohsiung, Taiwan.

Of course Eucalyptus has been widely used in Australia for many years, but the South Africans were first to plant it on a large scale and started to use the timber for purposes other than mining studs. One of the reasons was that South Africa was unable to import timber during the Apartheid and had to rely on local resources. This hardwood timber was FSC certified and I was one of the first ones to successfully import this timber to engineered door manufacturers in Malaysia. Over the years commercial Eucalyptus plantations have shifted from South Africa to South America, and large volumes of FSC certified sawn timber are exported across the globe.

Some of the well-known species in tropical forests across the world are available in lesser volume or on the verge of extinction and harvesting bans are in place. A good example is the SE Asian ramin which can only be exported with a proper Cites licence. Tropical forest owners are keen to find markets for the lesser known species and to become less dependent on the main species (for example, ipe, jatoba, meranti, sapelli, etc.).

Last October a group of five leading Dutch importers (including Lionex based in Malaysia) signed an agreement promoting the use of lesser known FSC certified tropical species originating from Africa, Indonesia and South America. This is an excellent initiative as it will lead to more balanced harvesting optimum use of tropical forests.

One of the new South American species I have recently come across is "Amapa" also known as "Sande" in Brazil. The botanical name is Brosimum parinarioides and, with a density of 650-675kg/m³ at MC 12%, is an excellent medium

hardwood. This timber has a white creamish to light pinkish colour with an even fine structure and is very suitable for general carpentry, mouldings and other products to replace SE Asian species such as kasah, ramin and even nyatoh. This timber is moderately priced and as added bonus 100% FSC certified, like many other species from Brazil. I am pretty sure that species like Amapa will be well received in SE Asia especially since the demand for certified legal timber is growing fast due to the soon to be implemented EUTR. ■



High yield trees



Amapa

IFFS announces appointment of new chairman

The International Furniture Fair Singapore Pte Ltd (IFFS Pte Ltd) announces the appointment of Ernie Koh as the Chairman of the board. Ernie, who is the Executive Director of Koda Ltd, took over the helm from Mr Andrew Ng, Deputy CEO of Lorenzo International Ltd, from August 2012.

With close to two decades of significant experience in international marketing and corporate branding, Ernie will spearhead the IFFS' marketing strategies, formulate business expansion plans, broach new design concepts and take charge of driving the business growth internationally, as well as to strengthen the IFFS' foothold in the region.

"I am honoured to be part of a dynamic team and I hope to play a significant role in promoting IFFS to be one of the best exhibition experiences for all delegates through tenancy remixing, introducing new spectrum of experiences and enhanced or innovative marketing and promotions. There will



be new challenges faced, but I am sure we will adopt clearly defined strategies and a creative approach to ensure healthy and continuous growth for IFFS," said Ernie, Chairman of IFFS Pte Ltd.

An avid enthusiast for green and sustainable initiatives, Ernie is also the Vice-President of the Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC). Ernie's illustrious tenure and active role in the SFIC has garnered him the industry knowledge to lead and be at the forefront of IFFS' future. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Marketing from the University of Oregon (USA) and a Master in Business Administration for International Marketing from San Francisco State University (USA). ■



Mr. Ernie Koh

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HOLZMA appoints new managing director

HOLZMA Plattenaufteiltechnik GmbH has appointed Holger Bomm, 48, as the new managing director. He took over from Eckard Hörner-Marass who held the position for 10 years. As his successor, Bomm is responsible for the areas of engineering and design, sales and services. Before joining HOLZMA, he spent many years with HOMAG Group subsidiary BARGSTEDT, where for the last nine years he held the position of, at times solely responsible, managing director.

With the new appointment, HOLZMA has gained a managing director who is very familiar with the customers' requirements. This is reflected in Bomm's goals for the company: "Our main aim is to achieve sustainable growth through satisfied customers in the trade and in industry," he said. "We have innovative technologies, great employees and a high level of systems expertise. We shall intensify the use of these skills so as to provide outstanding solutions and services tailored to the needs of the market."

Bomm sees great potential for further growth in the area of systems engineering. "Purpose-designed custom solutions, the impressive integration within the HOMAG Group, and an extremely high level of flexibility are the keys to further grow systems engineering."

He also plans to continue the development of the popular and proven HOLZMA series products. "I am convinced that we can achieve a great deal in the interests of our customers if we combine typical virtues of project business such as high flexibility with the efficiency of series business," explained Bomm.

The third priority for Bomm is the entry-level sector, where he is looking primarily at the BRIC states.



Holger Bomm

"I see significant potential in this entry-level segment, particularly in the emerging markets of Asia. We are therefore expanding our range in this segment and will make full use of the advantages of products Made in Germany - especially in Asia."

Bomm started his career in the HOMAG Group as a design engineer in BARGSTEDT in 1989. He rose through the ranks to become Head of Custom Design, after which he took over control of the Service Centre and Production areas. Following a spell of two years working for a different company, Bomm returned to BARGSTEDT in 2003 to take up the position of managing director. He filled this position very successfully for nine years. Among other things, his achievements include intensifying the cooperation between BARGSTEDT and HOLZMA and furthering the development of saw-store systems.

Bomm's move to the management board of HOLZMA will strengthen the cooperation between the two companies.

"Our goal is to offer our customers one-stop comprehensive solutions that are fully compatible and that meet their requirements to a T," said Bomm. "The conditions are right - in both a technological and a human sense. I was made very welcome right from the start. HOLZMA is like a big family where all members support each other and master challenges together. We want to consciously cultivate and foster this family atmosphere, also and especially in the cooperation with our global trade partners. Our customers should always experience this HOLZMA family feeling, no matter where in the world they work with us." ■

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EU Timber Regulation clarified

For traders and manufactures of timber materials, wood products and many paper products, the practical implementation of the EU Timber Regulation (EUTR), becoming applicable next March, are now becoming clearer. In July, the Official Journal of the European Union published detailed rules concerning the due diligence system and the frequency and nature of the checks on monitoring organisations, laying down the obligations of operators who place timber and timber products on the market. Organisations and companies in Asia and the EU are taking steps to prepare for this implementation.

Recent anecdotal evidence suggests that most European timber traders are well prepared for the implementation, however some overseas timber suppliers may not be as well prepared yet. The various timber importing federations across Europe have been briefing their members for many months and, with the exception of some small details, the principles of Due Diligence (DD) of supplies and risk assessment of sources are well understood. This is based on Interviews with industry leaders in Europe, and associations such as the Timber Trade Federation (TTF) in UK and the Timber Importers Association (AEIM) in Spain which cooperate closely with exporting organisations such as the Malaysian Timber Council and American Hardwood Export Council. European importers of finished products such as flooring and furniture are also well aware of the new legislation.

Industry organisations in several Asian countries are briefed and making efforts to inform their exporting members – especially in Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam where Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) negotiations are in various states of progress. However not all exporting countries may be as ready as European importers. One major furniture producer in Vietnam said "As a Company, we have a strategy in place and hope to be compliant (to the best of our knowledge) shortly - although we believe that we are already compliant to a large degree, the burden of proof and the paper-work trail will be burdensome and will take time, particularly in the absence of a VPA."

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on the EUTR relate mainly to the Due Diligence process so the European Forest Institute (EFI) has issued illustrative examples (see www.euflegt.efi.int) that provide answers which may help. Here are some examples:

Will I be able to export to the EU after March 2013?

The EU Timber Regulation is not banning or impeding trade in timber products. However, as EU operators are prohibited from placing illegally harvested timber on the EU market and must exercise due diligence to ensure that their timber is not illegal, they will require information and documentation from their suppliers ensuring the wood's legality. If an operator exercising due diligence concludes that one of its timber sources constitutes a 'non-negligible' risk, that operator has to apply risk mitigation measures. Measures to mitigate the risk can range from changing the supply source to requiring additional information, documentation or certification against a third party verification or certification standard that complies with the applicable legislation in force in the country of harvest, according to the requirements of the EU Timber Regulation.

I manufacture rubber wood products from wood that comes from a plantation and is a by-product. Do I still need the documentation?

Yes. If you are a timber product manufacturer in Europe and you are placing these timber products on the EU market for the first time – whether they come from a plantation or from a natural forest – you are obliged to follow a due diligence system that prevents illegally harvested timber from entering the EU.

In many cases European importers have already been trading under responsible purchasing policies for some time and they will continue to rely on those procedures, in good faith that due diligence has been at the heart of their timber business to ensure that they do not participate in the trade in illegal timber and wood products.

What is the best certification standard to ensure we can keep exporting our products to the EU?

The acceptability of a certification standard as proof of legality to comply with the requirements of the EU Timber Regulation is a decision that your client in Europe – the operator that places the timber on the EU market for the first time – has to make after a careful assessment of the credibility of a particular third party verified scheme as required by the EU Timber Regulation and the Commission Implementing Regulation; the responsibility lies with the operators.

Will certificates from the FSC, PEFC and other third-party verified schemes be sufficient proof of legality?

Certification by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) as well as other third party verified schemes can be used as a tool in the risk assessment and risk mitigation process if operators assess them as sufficiently credible; certificates however, are not an evidence of legality and do not absolve operators from the obligation to collect all the information and assess all risk mitigation factors as required by the EU Timber Regulation and the Commission Implementing Regulation. Only FLEGT-licensed timber coming from a country that has a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) with the EU and whose timber legality assurance system has been declared functional and Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) permits for the export of timber listed in Annexes A, B or C to the CITES Regulation will be accepted as proof of legality. Both FSC and PEFC offer advice on the role of certification in the EUTR, a subject they are still working on aimed at to assist compliance. ■

Note: This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the European Union.

Northwest Hardwoods' western operations earn PEFC Chain-of-Custody Certification

Northwest Hardwoods' western hardwood operations have achieved Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) Chain-of-Custody Certification, one of the highest standards of ethics and sustainability in forest products.

Northwest Hardwoods Vice President of Sales and Marketing David Weyerhaeuser noted that PEFC's focus on inclusiveness in recognising qualified certification standards around the world gives PEFC unequaled respect in the area of sustainable forestry.

"We embrace the idea that sustainability makes good sense from a business and corporate responsibility perspective – it's a path we've been on for years – but certification to the highest globally recognised standard helps us meet customer demand for certified products in furniture, cabinet, millwork and flooring markets around the world," Weyerhaeuser said.

Geneva-based PEFC is the world's largest forest

certification system, establishing standards that transform the way forests are managed, with the goal of ensuring a broad range of environmental, social and economic benefits. For Northwest Hardwoods, the process of gaining PEFC certification involved a six-month process of detailed documentation and independent third-party review to verify compliance with PEFC ecological, social and ethical standards addressing practices from forest management through saw milling. Northwest Hardwoods can provide certified Alder, Pacific Coast Maple, Birch, Ash and Hemlock from its five western US facilities.

This is the latest validation of Northwest Hardwoods' commitment to sustainable practices. PEFC chain-of-custody certification assures the buyer that the lumber comes from logs sourced from forestlands certified to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI®), The American Tree Farm (ATF), the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) and PEFC. ■



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Jowat AG sets up new subsidiary in Australia

Jowat AG, a global supplier of industrial adhesives has set up a subsidiary in Australia, Jowat Universal Adhesives Pty. Ltd. With currently six production sites and 18 sales organisations, plus a worldwide network of distribution partners, Jowat AG manufactures and supplies adhesives for the focus industries woodworking and furniture, paper and packaging, as well as the automotive, textile and electrical industries.

With the foundation of Jowat Universal Adhesives Australia Pty. Ltd., and by taking over the business of the Australian adhesives manufacturer Universal Adhesives Pty. Ltd., Jowat AG is expanding its presence in Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Isles. This underlines the Jowat strategy: to be close to its customers.

Due to the successful distribution partnership with Universal Adhesives Pty. Ltd., especially the Jowat products for load-bearing timber construction have already become firmly established in the Pacific region. Apart from the sales competence, the newly founded company also owns manufacturing facilities for hot melt and dispersion adhesives. This adhesive production meets market requirements and will ensure further growth for the focus industries of the Jowat Group.

Competent partners for the customers of Jowat Universal Adhesives Australia Pty. Ltd. in the Pacific region are the team members around the Managing Directors Shane Devereaux and Dr. Ralf Schelbach who can draw on long-term experience and know-how in adhesives.

"This addition to our activities will substantially strengthen the market position of the Jowat Group in Australia and New Zealand, and promote sustained attractive growth opportunities. For the first time, the Jowat Group will be represented with its own personnel on the Fifth Continent, which allows us to support our customers in this region by a much closer and solution-oriented partnership," this is how Klaus Kullmann, Director on the Board of the Jowat AG, comments the decision to establish the Australian subsidiary.

Jowat AG, with headquarters in Detmold, is one of the leading suppliers of industrial adhesives. These are mainly used in woodworking and furniture manufacture, in the paper and packaging industry, for graphic arts, in the textile, automotive as well as in the electrical industry. The company was founded in 1919 and has manufacturing sites in Germany in Detmold and Zeitz, plus four other producing subsidiaries, Jowat Corporation in the USA, Jowat Swiss AG, Jowat Manufacturing in

Malaysia, and the Jowat Universal Adhesives Australia Pty. Ltd. in Australia. The supplier of all adhesive groups is manufacturing over 70,000 tons of adhesives per year, with around 840 employees. A global sales structure with 18 Jowat sales organisations plus partner companies is guaranteeing local service with close customer contact. ■

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Outstanding service award

At the recent National Hardwood Lumber Association's Annual Convention in Chicago, Executive Director Mark Barford presented an "Outstanding Service Award" to Michael Buckley 'in grateful appreciation for 25 years of dedication and service to the North American hardwood industry'.

Michael was Director of the American Hardwood Export Council for Europe, Middle East and India from 1988 to 2000 and has continued to consult with AHEC and the NHLA since being based in Singapore. He has a Masters in American and European hardwoods and is active with the Singapore Furniture Industries Council and other regional organisations in ASEAN. ■

Mr. Michael Buckley

Baillie Lumber expands ripping services



Baillie Lumber Co., a premier provider of hardwood lumber solutions, has expanded their ripping capabilities allowing for higher volumes of full-to-width custom ripped strips from across their entire specie lines, grades, thicknesses and lengths available.

Manufacturers across the entire industry from cabinetry to flooring can realise the benefits of ripped-to-width strips to increase yield and production while decreasing waste. With the expansion of the ripping capabilities into two of our manufacturing facilities, Baillie has greatly increased the availability of production volumes and species variety to its customers worldwide, allowing for more flexibility and on-time delivery.

For more information, visit www.baillie.com. ■

WEINIG unveils double-end machine, new Conturex Compact profiling centre

Weinig's in-house exhibition Intech 2012 attracted around 1,000 professional visitors from across the globe, underlining the event's outstanding significance for the solid wood sector. The big headline was the announcement of a double-end machine for LIGNA 2013 while further highlights included the premiere of the new Conturex Compact profiling centre for smaller operations. One of the over-riding

themes was individual solutions for the most diverse applications. This year's InTech allowed visitors to experience more ready-to-deliver customer installations in action than ever before. This enabled WEINIG to clearly demonstrate its unique potential as a problem solver and to reiterate its comprehensive expertise throughout the entire value creation chain in solid wood processing. ■

PEFC announces its work on a Due Diligence System



The PEFC Chain of Custody (CoC) Working Group confirmed in its last meeting that PEFC CoC certification will satisfy information needs of legislative and regulatory processes such as the EU Timber Regulation (EUTR), the US Lacey Act and the Australian Illegal Logging Prohibition Bill now in process.

The PEFC Board of Directors requested the working group in December 2011 to revise the PEFC CoC standard to ensure that all certified companies meet the EUTR requirements. Discussions among stakeholder representatives in the working group focused on options for the implementation of information requirements on a mandatory basis without posing an undue burden on certificate holders not affected by such legislation.

Mandatory element in CoC certification

Appropriate requirements will be built into PEFC's Due Diligence System (DDS), which is an integral part of the CoC standards and therefore a mandatory element in CoC certification. At the same point in time, the PEFC DDS is available as a stand-alone mechanism, offering companies that are not prepared or eligible to obtain full PEFC CoC certification with a tool to demonstrate compliance with EUTR.

The revised PEFC Chain of custody standard with the modified DDS is scheduled to be approved by PEFC in February, prior to the implementation of the EUTR in March 2013.

For further information on the PEFC programme, visit: www.pefc.org. ■

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Schelling presents the flagship of the aluminium saws

With the newly developed precision saw fm 10, Schelling is setting new technological standards in the sawing of aluminium. The saw extends the processing spectrum compared with existing technology, especially in relation to demanding aluminium alloys.

The newly developed saw relies on practical experience. This means a further optimised solid design, which practically eliminates twisting, vibration and thermal effects, thus opening the way to high precision and long service life – and as the result of both: Precision for life.

The design supports even more powerful, high-speed motorisation, which reduces production times. In addition, numerous detailed improvements cut back non-productive times, increase productivity and improve ease of operation. The precision saw fm 10 is thus destined to become the international benchmark for non-ferrous metal saws in the demanding industrial production segment.

The water-cooled saw motor offers a number of advantages, directly or indirectly associated with this feature. First and foremost: The motor can be operated constantly under load, even at low speeds. The powerful 55kW saw unit of the fm 10 enables the machining capacity to be increased and an extended panorama of materials can be processed.

This includes copper, brass, pure aluminium and aluminium alloys and, with optional equipment, also high-strength aluminium, copper and other alloys. The motor supports controlled travel speeds of between 0.1 and 80m/s depending on the respective requirements.

A useful innovation in everyday application is the speed monitoring. It compares the actual speed with the setpoint and stops the machine when this deviation becomes critical in order to protect the saw blade, drive and workpiece. Incidentally, the maximum saw blade diameter of the fm 10 is 680mm, the maximum projection is 218mm, the maximum package height is 200mm. Various design versions enable maximum cut lengths up to 6,300mm.

The pressure beam zone has been redesigned to minimise material wastage and optimise the suction action. Furthermore, the contact pressure is automatically optimised according to the size, height and weight of the boards to be sawed.

The work surface of the table has been more ergonomically designed, so the cutting goods can be more easily accessed. Table lips and chip conduits perfectly round off the operability of the machine table. The work surface of the table is available as a steel table or a high-strength steel table version, respectively with or without air floatation. ■

Wood plastic meets demand for alternative materials



The use of wood usually takes on the issues of environment protection with governments around the world now restricting cutting of trees. Wood as material also poses questions on waterproofing. To satisfy market demand, characteristics of macromolecules combined with advanced pressure-micro foaming technology have been utilised to produce a unique material called CELLwood.

One of the many advantages of CELLwood, made by Taiwan company Microcell, is that it is 100% waterproof and eco-friendly as it is fully recyclable and its production does not use wood or powder. The material is suitable for external and internal use in buildings. CELLwood also has a certain "wood" feeling, a wood quality with

similar density, but with lighter mass ($d=0.6-0.7g/cm^3$). It can be easily processed in the same way as real wood in that it may be planed, sawed, cut, sheared, milled, nailed or sanded, etc. CELLwood has high rigidity and durability – similar to that of teak – and can be reshaped, or bent with heat.

CELLwood can basically be used to replace real wood and its possible applications include: high-quality furniture, railings/balustrades/fences, pencils, toys/blocks, fittings in bathrooms or humid areas (e.g. saunas), for prototyping/mould making, wooden crafts, gardening equipment or shoe parts, among others. Additionally, it can be used in both extremely cold or hot/humid climates – within a suggested temperature range of between $-30^{\circ}C$ to $+90^{\circ}C$.

As CELLwood's material is a polymer product, the correct working temperature range is as above. It can be cleaned using acid- or alkali-resistant amphiphilic cleaners, but not organic solvents such as benzene, methyl benzene or xylene. Lastly, CELLwood, like real wood, is not fireproof. CELLwood®.

For more information, visit www.microcell.com.tw. ■

Argos grading system

Now more than ever, it is the surface quality that determines whether a product is first quality or not. The key is to detect even the smallest surface defects — an area where customers benefit from first class inspection systems. This is one of the reasons why Steinemann Technology has entered into a strategic partnership with Argos Solutions. As a result of this strategic partnership, Steinemann acts as the exclusive worldwide distributor for the Argos surface grading systems for particle boards, MDF and OSB applications.

“Every nut, bolt and screw”

The Argos Grading System has been designed to detect surface defects under the most challenging conditions. The system can hold an unlimited number of grading recipes, ensuring objective grading with focus on maximising the percentage of A-quality without sacrificing customer satisfaction. The strength of the Argos grading system is its ability to detect, categorise and classify surface defects. Multiple camera lines and light sources are used to capture separate images in order to monitor physical and

topographical quality in raw boards, sanded and finished surfaces.

Reproducible qualities

This quality aspect is also crucial when it comes to reproducible sanding results. The Argos grading system offers precise detection of all surface defects that will help the operator to run the sanding machine more efficiently. The enormous increase in production capacities and demand for higher surface quality has additionally brought a high interest in automation of the finishing lines and both Steinemann and Argos see a high future potential in bringing the two companies technologies closer together. ■



Argos grading system



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- ★ Increase of 7 to 10 % board yield compared to traditional multiple rip saw
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- ◆ American SKEW feeding system equipped, cutting 5 - 6 boards per minute

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by HOMAG GROUP

Looking back over 20 years of the HOMAG Treff

Connecting innovation with fascination,
inspiration with perfect solutions, and people
with a passion for wood

At the 20th Treff for the woodworking industry, this year visitors had the opportunity to experience an unprecedented array of smart solutions for the production of furniture, windows, floors, staircases and doors. In an area of over 10,000 square metres, HOMAG showcased just how the company has linked innovation with fascination over its 50 year history.

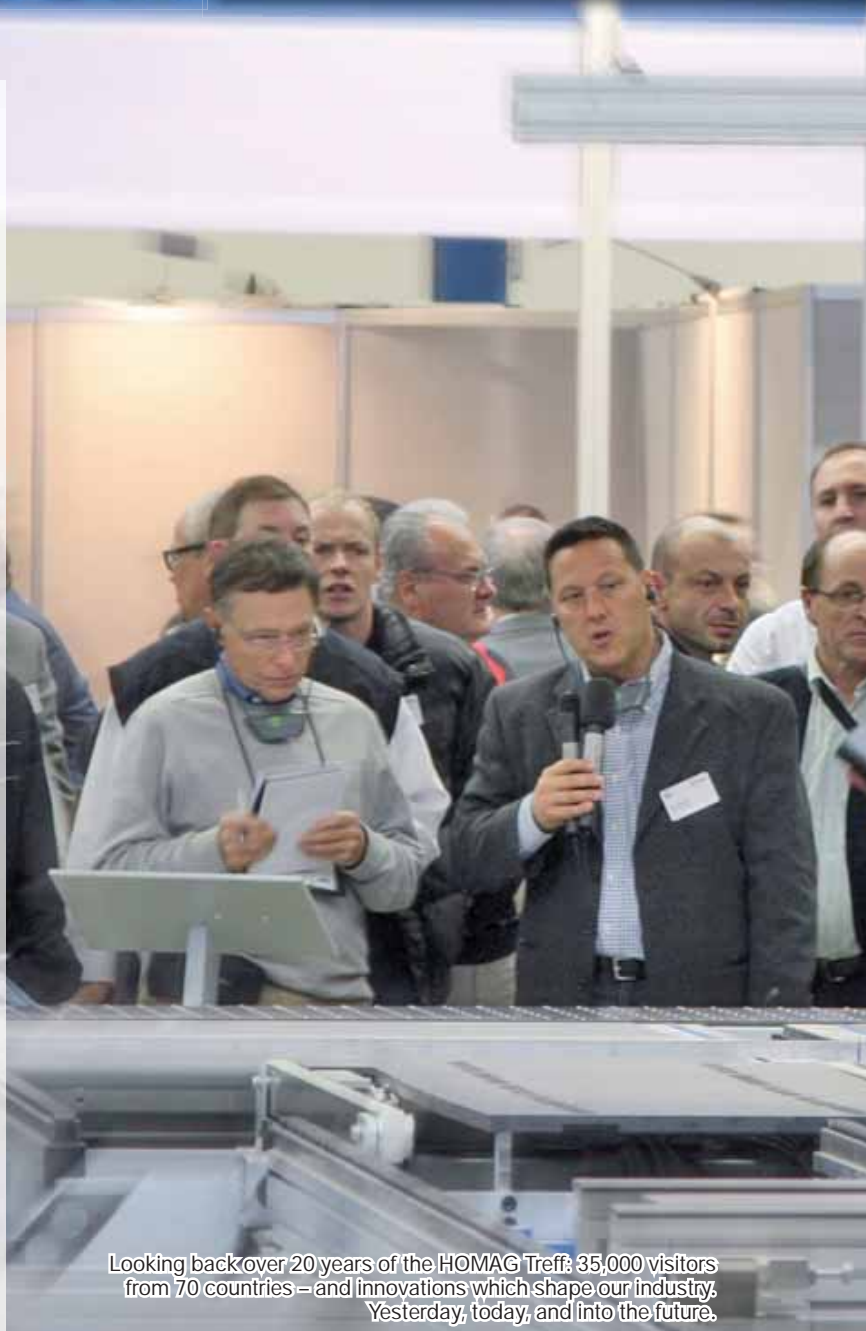
Smart batch size 1 solutions from the entry-level machine to the high-end plant attracted just as much interest as flexible concepts for efficient series production. A large number of customer orders under construction or in action were on hand to demonstrate the broad-based expertise of HOMAG's plant specialists – and the trust placed in them by customers.

Batch size 1 production: The whole range

■ One of the plants on show was for a customer in the furniture manufacturing business with the emphasis on high-speed production: Without compromising its extreme standard of quality, it clocks up feed rates of 30 metres, fast changeover in a 400 gap and 20 cycles a minute. The solution on show provided a shining example not only of extremely high performance but also outstanding flexibility. Remarkably, this plant features some of the most recent technological innovations, with profile trimming unit FK31 powerTrim, laserTec and acrylic edge polish producing zero-joint high-gloss surfaces.

> **Featuring acrylic edge polish:** A dual scraper blade produces a smooth radius, bringing about a degree of gloss. The downstream polishing used increases the degree of gloss by applying wax and polishing away any unevenness in the radius surface. Depending on the requirements, polishing units can be used simultaneously from above and below. Due to an oscillation movement performed by the polishing wheels at an angle of below 45°, a superbly even polished result is achieved over the entire edge radius on completion of processing.

■ An office furniture manufacturer from Southern Europe places its trust implicitly in the laserTec process for its batch size 1 production – both for throughfeed and



Looking back over 20 years of the HOMAG Treff: 35,000 visitors
from 70 countries – and innovations which shape our industry.
Yesterday, today, and into the future.



5-axis stationary technology.

■ Using a single-sided sizing machine, an edge bander with handling system and a gantry processing centre with edge banding unit and 5-axis spindle, a German equipment producer will be providing its customers with bespoke trade fair stand and shopfitting solutions in the future. This will allow even large-scale orders to be processed at high speed without restricting processing scope – whether for decor or veneer edges, part heights up to 500mm, or for processing aluminum or plastic.

Series production: 70-80 % higher output

■ With a 6-sided line, a furniture manufacturer from Poland aims to achieve maximum output in sizing and edge banding. Compared to a classical production line, the 6-sided line delivers around 70-80% higher output.

■ The reacTec laminating plant delivers 25% higher output for the furniture manufacturer Swedwood China for a conventional laminating plant. The completeLine production concept is able to laminate surfaces and wrap continuous workpieces simultaneously. This producer favors the off-line method which entails gluing and winding the decor foil on a separate pre-coating machine. Under the influence of pressure and temperature, the glue layer is then reactivated in the completeLine production plant. The result: Optimum plant availability coupled with maximum flexibility and economy.

> Comparison of urea lamination and reacTec offLine processes:

Urea lamination:	reacTec offLine
Machine length 15.7m	Machine length 7.9m
Process module 12	Process module 5
Electrical energy requirement approximately 477kW 92kW	Electrical energy requirement approximately plus approximately 120kW for pre-coating machine

Panel sizing and profiling

The wide variety of products that can be manufactured in throughfeed was demonstrated at the HOMAG Treff by...

- ...a production plant for three-layer parquet with click profile for high-speed flooring production.
- ...complete factory equipment for the processing of door leaves – from panel sizing to the processing of locks and hinges.
- ...a plant for panel sizing and profiling of wood fibre insulating panels up to 300mm in thickness as part of an overall project by a wood material manufacturer.

Customers back complete concepts – also with CNC processing

The fact that a large number of customers decide in favour of integral solutions from the HOMAG Group was clearly evident, also in the field of stationary technology. Many customers have opted to supplement their existing production lines with processing centres from HOMAG.



Twenty large-scale plants were on show live in action!

One renowned manufacturer of kitchen worktops, for instance, intends to start using a HOMAG BOF 512, while a highly efficient BOF 322 production cell with TBA automation solution will soon be operational for a customer in the challenging shopfitting and interior fittings sector. This will not only help to cut staffing costs but also extend the utilisation period by producing during break times and extended shifts. The result: a significant increase in productivity.

Three different counter corner joints

In the window production sector too, a number of customers are enthusiastic users of HOMAG processing centers. From the BMG 511 to the powerProfler BMB 900, in some cases also with feed, these systems address wide-ranging needs for all of these users – and to the very highest standard of quality.

There were three different counter corner joints being demonstrated by HOMAG on three machines at the Treff: One variant with counter profiling and doweling, and another counter joint which uses no dowels at all. This is fixed using only screws. Another joint patented by the tool manufacturer Leitz is being used exclusively and for the very first time on a customer plant. The KonTec joint is based on a milled dovetail, and it requires no additional work steps or components.

In total, there were 11 CNC processing centres for visitors to observe in live operation, with a range of other interesting project solutions in the construction stage.

Ambition 2200 NEW: Great on flexibility, small on price

The Ambition 2200 NEW represents a whole new generation of edge banding machines.

The new features in detail:

- Improved handling due to high-speed toolless edge feed changeover
- Extended equipment possibilities with the avail-

ability of a free space

- Easy retrofitting with laserTec
- Servo edge feed as standard
- Dual-pressure system as standard: Compressed air volume savings of up to 30% depending on equipment, own internal network helps improve repeat accuracy of actuators

The benefits at a glance:

- Simple, fast operation and programming using a 19" touch-screen.

- Low set-up times through automation packages for different edge designs.

- Infeed on a wide, extendable workpiece support, variable use of different edge thicknesses (0.4–20mm), panel thicknesses (8-60mm) and workpieces sizes (up to 60mm).

- Preparation for “zero joint” edge banding with laserTec.

- Fast change of glue type through simple handling of the hot-melt glue application unit.

- Perfect workpieces: 20mm solid molding, 0.3mm veneer, 2mm PVC

> Seen overall, the Ambition 2200 NEW may claim substantially extended features and improved handling compared to predecessor models.

Venture 316: Real 5-axis technology for woodworking shops

The Venture 316 addresses practically every conceivable customer need in terms of furniture and door production and also interior fittings. With just a few standard tools, practically any assignment can be tackled without the need for additional units or non-standard tools.

The benefits at a glance:

- High level of stability, precision and processing quality by means of a large, stable moving gantry with bilateral guide and heavy-duty welded steel construction

- Large working depth to 1,550mm

- Compact DRIVE5C five-axis spindle with spindle speed of up to 24,000rpm for high torque levels even at minimal speeds

20 years of woodWOP – A special success story

There is no other CNC programming system which can claim such a successful development history as woodWOP. Since its launch in the nineties, woodWOP has become the most frequently installed programming system with over 30,000 users worldwide and is

now also the established standard for CNC training in vocational training schools and technical universities.

In 2012, in other words 20 years after woodWOP was initially presented at the first HOMAG Treff, the version woodWOP 6.1 with integrated CAD functionality has now been launched. It now offers users scope for operators to generate, import or modify CAD drawings in the office or directly at the machine, supported by a wide range of drawing and modification functions. This is not restricted to only the basic coordinate system; it can be implemented on any optional level.

Other benefits at a glance:

- Open file format for simple, stable and compatible linkup. All known trade-specific programs can output the woodWOP format, allowing them to be integrated without problems into the existing software landscape.
- As woodWOP 6 is reverse compatible down to woodWOP 4.0, older programs can be simply imported.
- woodWOP 6 is also upward compatible. This means that programs which were generated in the office using the new version can also be opened at a machine where an older version of woodWOP is installed.

The major benefits of the new woodWOP Version 6 include not only the speed of programming a complete, fault-free production range at the office workstation, but also its outstanding security and visualization. With these innovative software solutions, the HOMAG Group is offering the market a security package which is unique anywhere in the marketplace, and will allow even complete newcomers to learn the ins and outs of programming and working with HOMAG Group CNC machines within an amazingly short familiarisation period.

New service deal for German clients: iPackage compact

For its joinery customers using Venture and Ambition machines, HOMAG is now offering a specially tailored service deal: iPackage compact. The package includes one on-site inspection a year, inclusive of travel costs and expenses, as well as TeleService – and all for a flat-rate payment for the year. The complete package is provided at a fixed price designed to suit wood-working shop budgets.

The on-site inspection helps to preventively eliminate failures and so reduces the number of avoidable faults. Faults/issues which still occur are then dealt with professionally at HOMAG using the TeleService via an online connection to the machine.

The benefits iPackage compact are self-evident:

- The machine is always in top condition
- Higher production availability
- Stable product quality
- Favorable life cycle costs and consequently lower manufacturing costs for the end product

On-the-spot inspection at the “pit stop”

Customers at the HOMAG Treff had the opportunity to bring their exchange processing units to the “pit stop” at this year’s HOMAG Treff for some expert attention. At the start of their visit, customers deposited their units at a dedicated servicing workshop bus where they were given a thorough once-over by the servicing experts. After a rewarding day at the exhibition, customers were able to pick up their units again and take them home. If a problem was discovered, customers were given a flat-rate quote for express repairs, and the unit was returned to its owner just a few days later. In short: rapid, unbureaucratic, customer-focused service. ■

Any customer buying a machine from the Ambition series or a Venture 316 will receive a Wi-Fi version iPad (32GB) free of charge, subject to placement of order during the period from September 1, 2012 to January 31, 2013.

20 years of woodWOP – with over 30,000 users, this is the most successful programming system worldwide



Great on flexibility, small on price: The Ambition 2200 NEW

Photos courtesy of: HOMAG Holzbearbeitungssysteme GmbH

The Siempelkamp Ecoresinator

A new process for fibre blending

by Ralf Griesche

The objective of each manufacturing company is to operate efficiently. Therefore, costs incurred for investments, material and energy use have to be kept as low as possible. With its "Cut your cost!" campaign, Siempelkamp literally puts money in customers' bank accounts. With its "Ecoresinator", the machine and plant builder provides an innovative MDF method for fibre blending, which saves up to 20% in resin and considerably relieves the budget of the plant operator. A year and a half after the new technology was introduced to the market, it is time to take a first look at the market position and application results of this new technology.



The Ecoresinator, integrated into the Starwood HDF production line, is directly connected to the blowline.



Siempelkamp
Maschinen- und Anlagenbau

Siempelkamp Maschinen- und Anlagenbau GmbH & Co. KG presented its new blending system for MDF for the first time at LIGNA 2011: The Ecoresinator. The system promises "resin savings up to 15%, better surface quality, and increased capacity."

A few Siempelkamp customers could already convince themselves of this promise. Well over a year and half after market introduction, a first conclusion about the success of the system can be drawn. More than 10 sold systems, with three systems having started operation, speak for the high demand of resin-saving machine concepts. This comes as no surprise – low resin costs present a competitive advantage for plant operators.

Material savings: the key to production success

During the production of medium density fibreboard (MDF), many different factors play a role when it comes to improving and maintaining the efficiency of a plant. This is especially important during times of intensive competition, high consumer demands, and increasing material costs. Therefore, the objective is to achieve

resource-saving production and high board quality in terms of mechanical and optical properties. This presents a special challenge for wood-based panel manufacturers and plant builders because the MDF production process, compared to particleboard production, is relatively expensive. Due to the system, larger amounts of raw material and energy are used; resin, wood, and energy represent the primary cost units requiring approximately 30% each of the total production costs.

Innovative technologies and machines can contribute to resource savings during different stages of the production. Next to the fibre production process and the forming and press line, the blending process is a keystone for which the use of innovative technology pays off. With the Ecoresinator, Siempelkamp provides a new blending system for MDF production which lowers material consumption as well as optimises the quality of the blending process. The spray technology and the correct setting of the energy needed for the blending process in the blowline are of great importance. With the Ecoresinator, powered by Schlick, Siempelkamp supplies state-of-the-art blending technology which, compared to traditional systems, guarantees high-quality MDF on the one hand and tremendous resin savings on the other.

"The amount of resin that can be saved depends on the type of wood used, the board thickness, and density," explains Hüseyin Yildiz of Starwood. This Siempelkamp customer was the first plant operator who ordered an Ecoresinator as a retrofit for its thin MDF production line from the Krefeld machine builder. "Because we are operating a thin board line, the savings are especially impressive and reach 24% at best. On average we are able to save 15% across all board thicknesses and densities!," says Yildiz. The potential savings offered by the Ecoresinator have also convinced many other Siempelkamp customers.

Innovative technology that convinces

To date, three of 10 sold Ecoresinator blending systems have started operation for satisfied customers. These are three successfully completed orders for which Siempelkamp experts have continually improved the system. Many long-term Siempelkamp customers use the opportunity to upgrade their traditional old blowline with the Ecoresinator. Other plant operators expressed their trust in Siempelkamp expertise by ordering the Ecoresinator as a component of a complete new plant. Where are the trust and successful market position of the Ecoresinator coming from? A glance at the blending technology of the system explains it.

Siempelkamp developed this new optimised blending process based on the two-component nozzle technology by Schlick. The controlled injection of steam results in the optimised swirling of the fibres in the blowline. A fine resin mist coats practically every



Detailed view of Schlick nozzle technology.

fibre and avoids resin spots on the board. Using the same amounts of resin and wood, the new blending technology results in a product with improved technical properties. This effect can alternatively be used to reduce the resin and fibre consumption. Depending on the plant configuration and product application, potential resin savings of 10% to 20% are possible with the Ecoresinator. This makes this system recommendable for all MDF plants, especially for the production of thin MDF and HDF.

The Ecoresinator – a profitable investment

The Ecoresinator also offers advantages regarding its investment, assembly, operation and maintenance. The system requires comparatively lower investment costs and is installed and operable in a matter of a few days. Compared to other mechanical blending systems, the operating costs are extremely low because no additional electrical energy is consumed.

"There are practically no additional operating costs. We need approximately 75kg of additional steam per metric ton of fibres – and that is it. We need no vast amounts of circulating air, no additional power, and no additional cleaning shifts. The Ecoresinator was simply attached to our existing blowline system – that is all," says Hüseyin Yildiz, Starwood managing director.

Plant shutdowns and associated costs as well as maintenance costs do not apply with the Ecoresinator. The nozzles, installed on the outside of the blowline, relieve the costs usually spent on maintenance: The abrasion inside the traditional blowline caused by the fibres no longer takes place and thus, the lifetime of the nozzles is increased. To sum it up, the Ecoresinator stands for low investment costs, short as-



In the Starwood control room: Siempelkamp employees explain the new blending process.



Monitoring screens at Starwood reconstruct the reduction of the resin consumption here by approximately 25%.

sembly times and negligible operating costs on one side and enormous resin savings and optimal surface quality on the other. This concept has recently convinced another large European HDF manufacturer and long-term Siempelkamp customer.

Ecoresinator retrofit: a progress report

For its HDF plant made by Siempelkamp, this plant operator ordered the new Ecoresinator back in the beginning of 2012. A year and a half prior to this investment, the company had carried out a different optimisation to its eight-year old blowline. This optimisation, however, did not bring the desired results so that the customer turned to Siempelkamp for help.

With the experience gained by assemblies and startups from prior orders at Starwood in Turkey and Jianfeng in China, Siempelkamp experts started the installation of the system at this European HDF manufacturer in July 2012. In only a short time the system was installed – long shutdown times and unnecessary costs were avoided for the customer. These time savings are a result of the modular design of the Ecoresinator.

Ecoresinator 2.0 – modular design meets any customer requirement

The Ecoresinator is supplied as a ready-to-install complete blending system including switchgear cabinet and automation software. The experiences collected from prior installations of the Ecoresinator led to the decision to sell the system as a modular design concept. Module 1 includes the steam supply; Module 2 includes the blowline incorporating the nozzle technology by Schlick; resin and water distribution are part of Module 3. The modular design makes it possible to tailor the Siempelkamp blending technology to each specific customer plant and the conditions on-site. Furthermore, the pre-assembled and tested modular system is easy to transport. The preliminary work of the customer is also minimised due to the modular concept: only water, resin, and power connections are needed; the connection elements are supplied by Siempelkamp.

Siempelkamp has also optimised its ProdiQ®

system. Production data is easily monitored; optimisation measures of the production process can be administered in a targeted manner if needed. The self-sufficiently operating ProdiQ® system monitors the functionality of the blending system as well as the distribution of the steam, water and resin. For the customer this results in additional personnel savings: No operator is needed to start or stop the system or for possible throughput malfunctions – the monitoring takes place automatically. Thus, the system guarantees high plant safety, availability, low maintenance, and an optimal, always monitored, resin distribution.

The Ecoresinator – a convincing system

Despite initial skepticism due to prior negative experiences with other suppliers, the plant operator which was recently equipped is convinced of the innovative system. The Ecoresinator by Siempelkamp meets the high quality standards of the customer on all levels: The manufactured boards are spot-free and possess high rigidity. At the same time, the HDF manufacturer records resin savings in a double-digit percentage range and even predicts further optimization potential.

Due to its excellent ability to reproduce results and its ease of maintenance, the Ecoresinator simplifies the daily work of the production teams. Furthermore, the system opens up the opportunity to increase the production capacity for the customer. The optimised resin distribution shortens the required exposure time of the mat inside the press and minimises scrap.

In summary, with the Ecoresinator, Siempelkamp offers a matured blending system which leads to a quick return on investment due to high material savings and relatively low investment costs. Short installation and ramp-up times minimise downtime for the retrofit process. The self-controlling system provides high repeatability. Minimum wear results in low need for maintenance efforts and low spare parts investments. The Ecoresinator presents an innovative blending technology for retrofit or as a component of a new MDF production plant. ■



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we energize your business

As a leading supplier of wood-based panel equipment, Dieffenbacher has made remarkable technology achievements around the world. Dieffenbacher has supplied and installed over 100 wood-based panel production lines in China, continuously improving the development of the local wood-based panel processing industry. In October 2012, I visited Zhoukou Dahe Forest Industry Co., Ltd to conduct site investigations on the company's wood-based panel production lines supplied by Dieffenbacher.

Strategic positioning

When I visited Zhoukou Dahe Forestry Co., Ltd, I was very impressed with the tidy, extensive and effective work divisions. The office and production areas are separated by a trunk road, and on both sides there are newly planted trees.

**Renowned
first-class
technology
company**

Mr. Zhang Song, General Manager of Zhoukou Dahe, has many years of industry management experience and so he is well-versed with the company's operations as well as market developments and regulations. Zhoukou Dahe, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Henan Investment Group, is the largest MDF manufacturer in Henan province. It is an important investment which signifies the strategic cooperation between Zhoukou Municipal People's Government and Henan Investment Group. Dahe's 225,000m³ MDF and HDF plant is a collaborative project which resulted from the forest pulp paper strategic cooperation agreement between Henan Investment Group and Zhoukou Municipal Government in 2007. Dahe was officially established at the end of 2008, and construction started in September 2010.

Mr. Zhang said that the Dahe project will efficiently utilise resources and will boost Henan's economy. When the Dahe plant goes into full capacity, it will not only produce considerable

in CHINA

A site visit report on Dieffenbacher's panels production line in Zhoukou Dahe Forestry Co., Ltd

By Chris Si, reporting from Zhoukou, Henan Province



Zhoukou Dahe Forestry Co., Ltd



GM of Zhoukou Dahe Forestry Co., Ltd,
Mr. Zhang Song

economic benefits, but will also bring good social and ecological benefits. Using raw materials such as wooden chips, brushwood and submarginal logs, combined with internationally advanced continuous press system and the most advanced energy saving and environmental protection technologies, this project is set to produce MDF and HDF widely used in furniture, decor and packaging. The annual consumption of wood chips, brushwood and submarginal logs is 360,000 tonnes, while the annual consumption of crop stalks and urban wastes is 60,000 tonnes. The annual total transportation volume is expected to reach 1 million tonnes. It can bring revenues of RMB 300 million annually for the local farmers.

"The MDF and HDF production project not only optimises the forestry industry of Henan Province, but also promotes the special processing industry of forest products," said Mr. Zhang.

Global quality

The total cost of investment for the Project 1 of Dahe Forestry Industry is RMB 580 million. The highly

advanced continuous press system continuous press system from German company Dieffenbacher is the key equipment in the production line. Its width measures 9 feet, which is rare in China. The equipment can be used to produce the whole series of HDF products of heterogenous specification.

Mr. Zhang is very proud of this large-scale production line. "The Investment Group was clear from the very beginning that Dahe Forestry Co. is going to be a long-term development. Taking into account the product quality standard and future upgrade/development plans, our equipment of choice can deliver high-end products that we can import."

In the beginning when the company was selecting equipment suppliers, the investment group has investigated Dieffenbacher's performance in the domestic market. "Dieffenbacher performs very well in the local market and they have over 100 continuous press production lines in China. After the field investigation and visits, we found their equipment have excellent performance, powerful controllability and great upgrading potential. Meanwhile, we also adopted the suggestions and comments of the other companies that have Dieffenbacher production lines. Dieffenbacher equipment is superior to

Zhoukou Dahe Forestry Industry Co., Ltd was awarded the MDF and HDF project in a commissioning ceremony held in Zhoukou City, Henan Province in May 2012. The annual sales revenue of this project is expected to reach RMB 440 million.

other equipment in terms of the cost performance, product quality and after-sales services. Through open bidding, Dieffenbacher successfully won the bids in October 2010."

The Dieffenbacher equipment selected by Zhoukou Dahe include wooden dry cleaning system, forming line, continuous press system, raw board handling, sanding line and storage system. The main line is now operating stably and well.

Mr. Huang Yongli, technical director of Zhoukou Dahe Forestry Co., Ltd, further described the highlights of the production line: "With the Dieffenbacher PROjet gluing system, the glue is evenly distributed on the fiber surface so as to reduce the dead ends of the pope gluing and enhance gluing efficiency. By



Dieffenbacher 9-foot continuous press

adopting the low-temperature drying process for the secondary drying equipment, it can ensure the good state of the dried fibers and reduce energy consumption and fire risks. Moreover, Dieffenbacher's high-performance 9-foot continuous press can be easily adjusted according to temperature changes.

It can rapidly change the production variety, control the thickness easily and eliminate the origin drift, which results to plates with different density, thickness and width. Its advanced export regulation process and superior hydraulic drive system ensures the continuity and stability of the production lines.



Cooling & stacking

The highly advanced continuous press system from German company Dieffenbacher is the key equipment in the production line. Its width measures 9 feet, which is rare in China. The equipment can be used to produce the whole series of HDF products of heterogenous specification. Mr. Zhang said the production line has high degree of automation, superior performance, powerful controllability and great upgrading potential. The products have passed the quality inspection, conforming to the market standard of excellence.

Mr. Zhang also spoke highly of Dieffenbacher's services. "From installation to production, we have good communication with Dieffenbacher. Both their foreign technical experts and Chinese engineers in charge of services and maintenance made great efforts to solve various kinds of problems that we had to ensure stable operation."

Outlook

Although Zhoukou Dahe is just a new company, its strategic location will play a significant part of its success in the future. The company is confident that it will successfully develop the downstream industries and manufacture furniture, flooring, door panels, etc. Eventually it will produce products with high added values.

I also noticed that, in addition to the introduction of world-class Dieffenbacher press system and Andritz refiner, Zhoukou Dahe's testing centre is built with high standards. The laboratory is equipped with cross-section density tester, rapid moisture tester, constant temperature water tank, precision balance, wood universal testing machines, and other advanced equipment which can test various raw materials, auxiliary materials, finished products, etc. The testing centre can provide the reference data for the production in a timely manner and assure efficient and high-quality production.

With such an ambitious plan and long-term investment, I believe that we will hear more exciting and good news from Zhoukou Dahe Forestry Co., Ltd in the future. ■



Heat centre & drying system



Gluing system



Auto-storage system



Forming line



Wood protection products

U.C Coatings Corporation is the premier US manufacturer and supplier of wood protection products for the logging, lumber, furniture and woodworking industries. Its products can conserve natural resources and improve production yields. Using these products has become synonymous with best practices for hardwood log and lumber production across North America and in many other parts of the world.

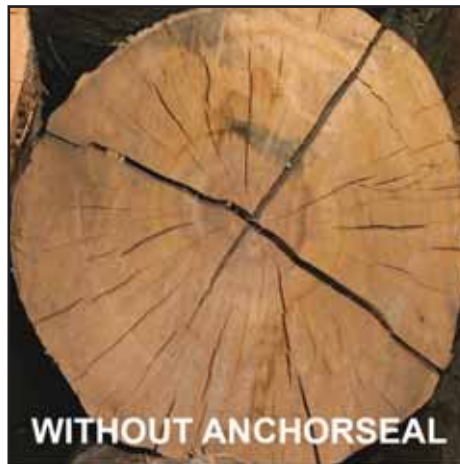
ANCHORSEAL has been the end grain sealer of choice for over 30 years. It creates a wax barrier that protects against end checking and costly degrade in freshly sawn logs and lumber, and is known in the forest products industry as the best quality and most stable wax emulsion end sealer available. When applied immediately after sawing, ANCHORSEAL prevents up to 90% or more of end checking (drying splits) reducing losses, conserving resources and improving yield. It can also help reduce blue stain in logs.

Research results at US universities have demonstrated the value of end sealing with ANCHORSEAL. At Virginia Tech it was found that 5/4 (3.2cm) thick green lumber that was end coated within three days of sawing produced a 4% greater yield by reducing end checking. At the University of Wisconsin, research found that end coating freshly sawn logs reduced end checking by 6" (15cm) and reduced log stain by 9" (23cm) after weeks of storage. Results show that logs and lumber protected with ANCHORSEAL are significantly more valuable than uncoated logs and lumber.

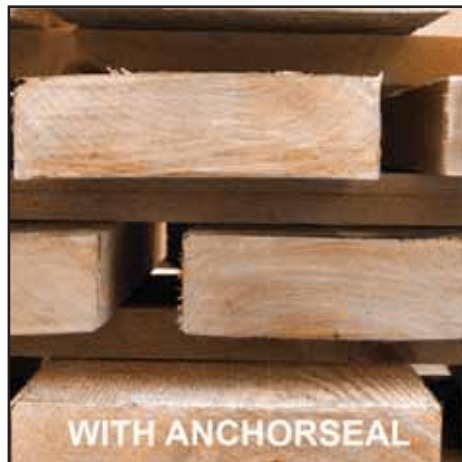
LogSavers & FlitchSavers are patented log stitches which



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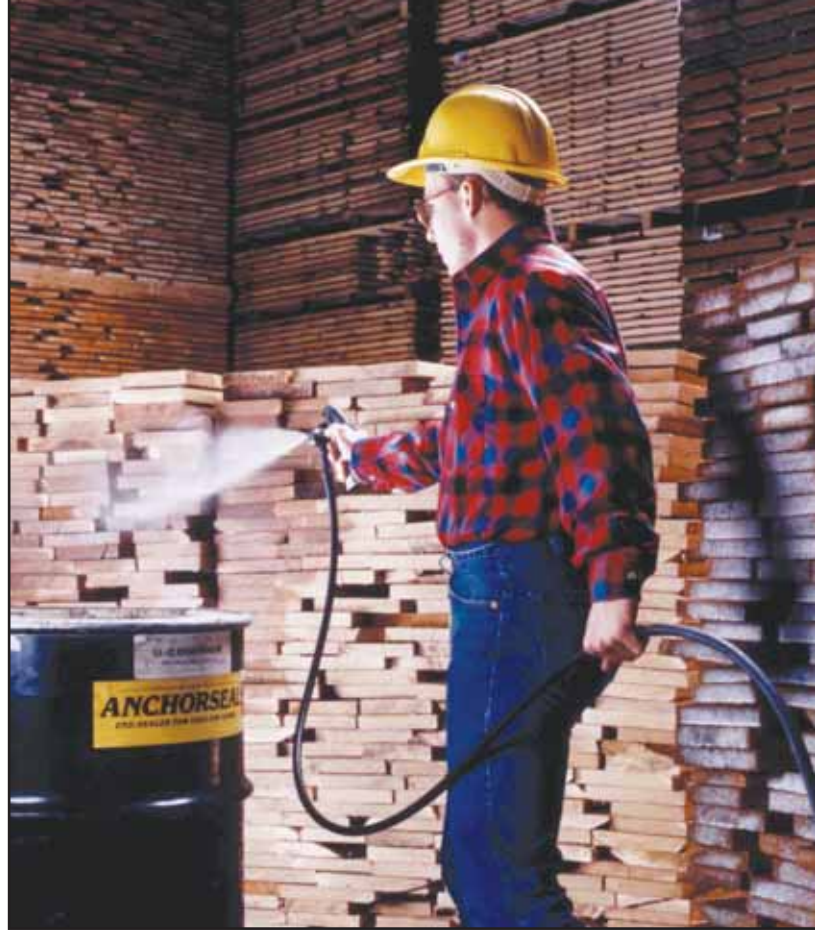
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replace old-fashioned S-irons. Especially useful for valuable veneer logs, these stitches prevent existing end splits from growing larger and causing loss of value to the logs. LogSavers & FlitchSavers are made of special plastic so they will not damage saws or veneer knives and will not create black iron stains in the ends of the logs. Because these stitches attach to the face of a special hammer, they are safer to use because your hands are not in the striking area.

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Solutions to ageing hot-melt adhesive

Q: Hello! We are a wood door factory. Recently we find the melting speed of hot-melt adhesive is slower than before. When banding thick door panels, there is frequently the problem of lack of adhesive at the rear. In addition, there is also certain percentage of fragile banding. These problems are not evidently improved when we replace the edge-banding adhesive with the transparent adhesive without filler. Please tell us what has caused such problems and how we can completely solve them?

- Mr. Meng in Shanghai

A: Hello, Mr. Meng. Thanks for your letter. Your question is actually very typical. We often come across similar problems with other customers. New equipment just debugged usually doesn't have any problem. But after being used for half a year or longer, problems begin to appear from time to time. The root cause lies in the ageing of the hot-melt adhesive. Of course, irrational design and use of the heating system will dramatically quicken ageing of the hot-melt adhesive. In this article, we will analyse the causes in details in terms of equipment and glue, and provide you with relative solutions.

1. Heating system of the edge-banding machine

The heating system of the edge-banding machine is mainly divided into heating by the glue-melting cylinder and heating by the glue spreader. Both heating sub-systems should be better controlled independently to meet with requirements of hot-melt adhesives for different application temperatures and ensure the open time so as to get the best adhesion effect. However, glue spreaders of many edge-banding machines available in the market adopt

a half-surrounding design and the external radiant heating method (the centre of the spreader is not heated). At the same time, temperature of the glue spreader and the glue-melting cylinder should be integrally set. Such edge-banding machines often have unreasonable heater power configurations, or the problem of asynchronous heater ageing causing the temperature actually measured of the spreader far below the set temperature and that of the cylinder. As a result, the open time of the spreader is shortened to lead to a series of problems, such as thick glue layer, pinhole and degumming. To extend the open time and ensure the gluing quality, the following methods are usually adopted by the plants:

A) Replace with the "medium-temperature adhesive"

The open time of so-called medium-temperature adhesive is usually longer than that of higher temperature adhesive. Therefore, this method can to some degree solve the problem of fragile banding. But when the temperature measured of the spreader is much different from the set temperature, or when the air temperature is too low, the problem of degumming will still take place. At the same time, the heat-endurance performance of the medium-temperature adhesive is weaker than the high-temperature adhesive, causing the finished products to have hidden safety hazards in future use.

B) Increase the set temperature

For edge-banding machines with the above problems, when the spreader increases to required temperature, temperature of the cylinder will be largely greater than the use temperature. In this high temperature, the filler of the hot-melt adhesive can easily precipitate to accelerate aging. The precipitation layer and the carbonisation layer will decrease the heating efficiency, lead the glue-melting speed to slow down so that glue supply is not in time. If the cylinder is cleaned in time, to accelerate glue-



Figure 1: Long-time high temperature results in serious carbonisation.



Figure 2: Filler at bottom of the glue-melting cylinder.



Figure 3: Carbonised particles block up the glue quantity adjusting system.



Figure 4: Lack of adhesive.

melting by continually increase the set temperature will result in a vicious cycle, and the heater will easily become aged.

C) Increase the quantity of glue spread

Increasing the quantity of glue spread can significantly extend the open time, but excessive quantity will not only increase the glue cost but also easily cause glue overflow to pollute the panel surface and even affect the subsequent edge-trimming and polishing procedures.

D) Speed up material feeding

Generally, linear edge-banding machines feed material at a speed of above 10m/min. Appropriate acceleration can combine the edge-banding belt with the panel in a shorter time. Taking production capacity and labor intensity into consideration, the edge-banding speed of many customers cannot be much increased.

2. Impacts of thermal stability of hot-melt adhesives on equipment

Thermal stability of hot-melt adhesives refers to physical and chemical changes to hot-melt adhesives at certain time intervals during the heating period under particular heating conditions. Usually, hot-melt adhesives after becoming aged have problems of carbonisation, crust, gradation and increased viscosity. The ageing of hot-melt adhesives will usually lead to four serious consequences:

- The carbonisation layer on inner walls of the cylinder and filler gathered at bottom of the cylinder will cause the heating efficiency to decrease and the glue melting speed to slow down;

If the set temperature is raised, the heating pipe or plate will result in a shortened life span, causing the production cost to increase;

If the set temperature is not raised, when banding thick panels at high speed, it can easily lead to insufficient glue supply and lack of adhesives at rear of the panel, resulting in waste products;

- Higher set temperature can lead to intense smog around the cylinder, and cause damage to the health of workers;

- Carbonised particles falling down shall block up the glue quantity adjusting system, resulting in partial lack of adhesive or partially uncoated;
- Carbonised particles entering the glue fluid shall result in partial bulge;
- Aged and discoloured glue fluid will cause reduced adhesion.

3. Maintenance measures for edge-banding equipment

Though ageing of the hot-melt adhesive is inevitable in application, we can still take a number of measures to improve during production to ensure normal production.

3.1 Select products of great brands and high quality

According to our experiments in the laboratory and on the application site, ordinary EVA hot-melt adhesives with better quality will have evident discoloring within three to four hours after put in the cylinder while that with poorer quality will have evident discoloring within one to two hours. Henkel's latest Technomelt series products are PP level, and have no obvious change even put in the cylinder a full day. This is because of their different molecular structure.

The double bond of EVA molecular formula can easily break at high temperature, so carbonisation can easily take place. But PP molecular formula only contains single bonds, therefore its performances are more stable and cannot easily get carbonised and break up, providing largest protection for the equipment.

3.2 Shutdown to reduce the temperature

Any hot-melt adhesive has a recommended scope of temperature. During continuous production, the upper limit of temperature recommended



Figure 5: Carbonised particles taken from the glue spreader.

by the supplier can be adopted; at downtime and break time, we recommend to reduce the temperature of the glue-melting system by 2- to 50 degrees.

3.3 Add adhesives in time

For edge-banding machines whose glue-melting cylinders are placed below the glue spreader, we recommend that the fluid level of the cylinder always maintains above 2/3, to avoid carbonisation and huge amount of smog caused by a small quantity of overheated glue.

3.4 Regular cleaning

Usually, we recommend that the glue-melting system be cleaned once a month. This can ensure the heating efficiency and that the glue channel is unblocked. For hot-melt adhesives with more fillers,



Figure 8: Comparison between EVA and PP hot-melt adhesives within eight hours after heated at 200°C

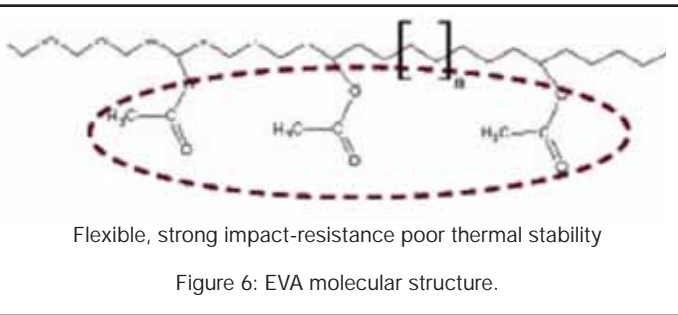
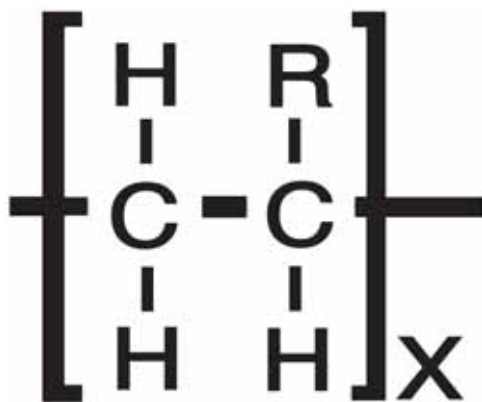


Figure 9: Glue quantity in the cylinder is too small, resulting in overheating.



R can be CH₃, H, CH₂CH₃ or others

Figure 7: PP molecular structure

if not cleaned in time, fillers gathered at the bottom will not only reduce the heating efficiency but also make it harder to clean after a long period, even cause damage to the glue-melting system.

Observe the following steps when cleaning: 1

- ① Remove most of hot-melt adhesives in cylinder;
- ② Remove most of fillers and carbonisation layer at the bottom;
- ③ Put in cleaning agent and heat up to 120°C;
- ④ Remove the mixture and repeat Steps 3 and 4 ;
- ⑤ Rinse the glue-melting system with hot-melt adhesive

3.5 Point-check the equipment regularly
Set temperature and actually measured temperature of a lot of equipment are quite different. Therefore, we recommend that each workshop be equipped with an infrared temperature measuring gun, and a dedicated employee be assigned to check temperature of the cylinder and the spreader frequently and record their differences from the set values in order to find out and remove abnormality in time.

It can be concluded from the above analysis that when a problem occurs, it is often comprehensively caused by a number of factors. To ensure that product quality can maintain stable over a long period, we should find out the root causes to solve the problems at their sources. We hope the above analysis can help you in a way. ■

For any problem concerning the application of adhesives, please immediately contact Dr. Wang Fangzian, Henkel's technical expert. Email: fangxian.wang@cn.henkel.com. Tel: (+86) 137 88907156

Sustainability of wood – an assessment

by Rupert Oliver of Forest Industries Intelligence

The concept of 'sustainability' has become one of the great buzzwords of the new millennium. The word has become so universal that in 2009 a report on contemporary newspeak by the Centre for Policy Studies claimed it had become "heavily used and abused" and branded it "potentially dangerous and vacuous". According to the report, sustainability is now linked to anything from development to transport, housing or communities and is "a word whose very looseness and lack of clarity makes it a perfect prefix for any activity where approval is being sought".

There is truth in these assertions. But sustainability remains a hugely useful concept. It is a complex idea about meeting needs – for food, materials, and social welfare – without damaging the capacity of the planet to satisfy these needs over the long-term. The problem is not so much in the word itself, but in the fact that sustainability is so often poorly understood and rarely applied strictly. Policy-makers and practitioners have also often lacked the tools necessary to put genuine sustainability into practice. But there is a growing band of people determined to change that. Many of these people are involved with wood. In the timber industry, sustainability has an added meaning because foresters need to sustain forests in order to keep themselves in business, and it is true to say that the forestry sector invented the very idea of sustainability. The concept of sustainability originates in forest management methods pioneered in Germany over 200 years ago. In 1804, the German forestry lecturer Hartig described sustainability in the following way: "Every wise forest director has to have evaluated the forest stands to utilise them to the greatest possible extent, but still in a way that future generations will have at least as much benefit as the living generation". Since then, foresters have gained a deep understanding of natural eco-systems from experience of active management – both good and bad – over many generations.

One key lesson from this experience is that managing human interventions with nature involves trade-offs. If you set aside all your forest for wildlife, you reduce availability of land for food or building materials. If too much timber is taken from a forest, you damage soils, waterways and biodiversity. Another lesson is that everything depends on context. Nature is enormously variable and managers have to work with this variability and not against it. Some forests and soils are resilient and lend themselves to intensive management. Others are fragile and may be better left untouched. Many of the greatest environmental disasters (the US dust bowl, cattle farms in the Amazon) have come about from attempts to apply practices successful in one region to a different environment elsewhere.

The final lesson is that managing this complexity requires information – a combination of accurate data (on forest dynamics, soil types, human needs, etc.) and appropriate tools to ensure this is readily accessible to managers and practitioners. For wood professionals, sustainability is a concept that is ripe with meaning, supported by increasingly clear definitions and standards, information and decision-making tools. It's a concept that needs to be nurtured, developed and explained. It's also a concept that can be usefully applied to other sectors and industries. In recent years, great strides have been made by organisations such as the American Hardwood Export Council in Life Cycle Assessment (LCA), the scientific analysis of the full environmental impact of products and materials from cradle to grave. ■

US hardwood forest

Wemhöner Surface Technologies in Asia

An interview with
Mr. Heiner Wemhöner,
Managing Partner,
Wemhöner



In the 33 years you've been with Wemhöner, what major achievements are you most proud of?

I'd say the achievement that I'm most proud of is when we became the leader in short-cycle press lines. In the beginning, Wemhöner is only no. 2 in the market. It took many years – middle of the 90's – to get the leadership.

Where are Wemhöner's major markets?

Our biggest market in Asia is China. Malaysia and Thailand are also good markets for us. Unfortunately we do not have much business in Indonesia right now, but I think there is a potential there.

Besides that, South America and Turkey are still good markets for us. We don't have business in some parts of Europe, particularly because of the economic crisis. North America is a very slow market. Russia is also quite slow, but there is potential there. Of course we do a little bit in India; it's a difficult market.

What are the challenges in doing business in China?

I think China is the no. 1 market to make furniture. This is the main reason why we set up business in China – we want to be close to the market. We started manufacturing in China in 2007. In 2011 we doubled our capacity.

We are exporting from China. My goal is to have 50% of the production exported from China and the other half for the Chinese market. At the moment we export 25-30% of our production, so we need to work on this and increase our exports.

What's your revenue like in China?

This year we generated roughly 100 million RMB (12-13 million euro) in China. Our revenue in Germany is much bigger.

What's your business outlook for 2013?

2013 will be a difficult year. I think the financial crisis worldwide, especially in Europe, will not get solved so quickly, and so everyone is more or less affected by that. Syria is also experiencing political problems, and Turkey is a bit involved

in that as well. These are things which make investors look out more carefully and hold back on investments.

How much do you invest in R&D?

We invest around 5% in R&D annually. This is very important.

Is environmental sustainability important to Wemhöner? What kind of innovations are you working on to help customers in their 'green' positioning?

Of course it's very important to us. I believe Germans are the frontrunners on green technologies, and so as a German company we have done many changes in the past few years to become a green company that we are today. In Germany, we use solar energy in our facility. We also installed energy-efficient lamps in all our plants.

In our machines, we try to achieve the best energy efficiency because this is very important for our customers. For example, we have developed dryers and other machines that are efficient and consume less electricity. We are innovating in our machines as well as in our factories.

What are your advantages over competitors?

Aside from being close to our customers, our plants and machines are according to German standards. Delivering high-quality machines is our main difference. We don't copy or try to follow somebody, we create the trends!

Does this mean that your products are all high end?

We are talking to medium- to high-end level companies. As I've said earlier, my aim is to have 50% of our production exported out of China. We can only reach this goal if our technologies are sought after by top companies. That means our customers are the best in their particular field and they can afford to buy sophisticated machines.

How do you sell products to cost-conscious customers? Is this a challenge?

This is always a challenge with every customer. I've met so far no customer who is not looking for the best value for their money. As a market leader, we have to show that we can offer cost advantages. Some of our customers they only make very few machines, and they are not so cost orientated than we are. If you only make a few machines, it's not possible to be number one.

How many plants or lines do you produce in a year?

In Germany we produce 35-50 plants or lines per year. In China we make around 20-25.

Which of your products/machines are in demand today?

We have a good mixture of products. Surfacing of wood-based panel materials is still in demand. There are some old plants which have to be renovated or replaced. Our main business is still short-cycle press lines in China as well as in Germany. We are the leader. We are also in new systems like digital printing, so we do lacquering lines and printing lines. I think digital printing is one of the future important technologies for us and for our customers.

What is more important: service or product innovation?

It's a package. The customer expects the best service, the best price and the best quality. We need to fulfill all those requirements. It's always important that the customer buys the second line, the third line, the fourth line and so on when he is expanding his production. If a customer is not buying from you the second or third time, you know exactly that you did something wrong. I'm proud to say that our customers purchased 14, 20 or more lines from us.

How many staff does Wemhöner employ?

We have about 100 people in China and 250 in Germany.

Any plans of expansion?

Not at the moment, but the next expansion will surely be done in China. ■



Kenn Busch with Bernd Reuss, Schattdecor's Head of Corporate Communications, at the company's headquarters in Thansau, Germany

The future of decor

DIGITAL PRINTING liberates laminate design

by Kenn Busch



One of the least understood things about decorative laminates is, the visuals you see – whether they're abstracts, woodgrains, stones, or fantasy designs – are realised on specially engineered decor papers. These papers are then treated with performance resin systems specifically designed for the intended application, whether it's HPL, thermally fused melamine, or light-weight foil applications.

The top global companies that create these designs survey all the major international design exhibitions (not just furniture), and closely track trends in the markets they serve throughout Europe, the Americas and Asia.

Throughout the history of decorative laminates, decor papers have been printed on rotogravure presses using several stages of specially engraved cylinders, each carrying part of the design structure and colour. This is the same technology used for fine-art prints and photography, known for its very high quality.

Rotogravure presses run at production speeds,

tended by skilled artisans who make sure each print stage is perfectly in register, and every roll of printed paper matches exactly the colour and balance of the original design approved by the customer.

Some of these decors have been the same for literally decades. Others use the same pattern or structure, but the colours are customised for different customers and markets.

Production rotogravure presses are the size of four train cars, cost several million Euros, and are designed to run paper up to wide at 2,75 and up to 300 metres per minute. Because production cylinders are very expensive to buy and engrave, new decor concepts have traditionally been developed on "lab" or "baby" presses, which are scaled-down machines that use the same inks and paper. The test prints can then be pressed into a prototype laminate.

Several years ago, decor printers began experimenting with digital printing as a way to shorten the design

development process, but difference in paper and ink limited colour accuracy and the ability to create pressed samples.

Digital printing meet laminate production

Most major laminate suppliers have always offered custom printed laminates. Logos, graphics and even murals were created by silk screening the decor papers before they were treated and pressed into laminates. This process is, of course, labor-intensive and slow, and photo-quality images were not possible.

As digital printing for decor paper proofs was coming online, suppliers began to explore using that technology to create full-size custom laminates. Among the many challenges:



Schattdecor's highly customised digital printer.



First-generation Digital Visions images on display. While Schattdecor has an extensive and growing library of "stock" images, any image file may be used to create unique or custom decors and laminates.

Printing speeds are very slow; most printers are nowhere near the width of a laminate sheet; inkjet heads were not compatible with the water-based, organic inks used by the top decor printers; and, inkjet printing on decor papers yielded inferior quality.

After years of idle talk in the industry, Schattdecor AG became the first to seriously pursue digital printing for world laminate markets. Headquartered in Thansau, Germany, Schattdecor is the largest decor printer in the world, with facilities in North and South America, China, Turkey, Poland, Russia, Italy and Switzerland.

Last year the company launched its Digital Visions effort – a collection of crisp, vibrant digital prints that range from photo-realistic cupcakes to splattered paint to river rocks, and an open offer to create and print custom designs. Developed by expert teams of designers and technologists on the company's sprawling campus in the German Alps, Digital Visions is the decor paper industry's first commercial foray into digital printing, targeting custom prints and designs that either can't be printed on rotogravure, or designs that would never achieve the volume required for that scale of production.

"We started looking at the technical requirements for digitally printing decor papers about four years ago," said Michael Then, head of foil and digital printing. "Even for what is, by our standards, very small-scale production the biggest challenge is finding printers that can achieve acceptable speeds and print quality."

"Image quality is of course our highest concern," said Klaus Breuer, head of digital systems for Schattdecor. "We must be able to achieve very high resolution prints, and cannot accept any of the 'banding' effects you see when an inkjet nozzle fails or clogs. In printers of the size we require, it has proven very difficult to have this quality as well as high output."



Schattdecor debuted a revolutionary system at Interzum 2011, allowing customers to preview the company's designs in a virtual 3D setting.

Quality first, volume later

Schattdecor's current inkjet printer uses modified versions of the company's own organic, water-based ink formulations. The proprietary inks have been engineered to be compatible with decor paper structures, as well as with the resin saturating processes of the company's direct customers – laminate producers. They are also colour-fast and stable over time – which, thanks to the durability of laminates, might mean decades.

"The paper is also a challenge, because its structure has to be open enough to be impregnated with the resin systems," said Then. "On the other hand, a more closed structure is best for print quality. These two properties can sometimes work against each other. Papers that are easier to impregnate are harder to print on."

And with water-based inks the paper tends to expand, which adds another layer of complication to the process. Then and Breuer are working with machinery suppliers to explore heating of the papers, and other remedies to minimise paper expansion.

"We use only water-based inks, nothing else," said Breuer. "Schattdecor decided from its very beginnings in 1985, never to use any solvent or UV inks. That's very important for us, because these inks may leave unwanted, potentially toxic substances in the paper."

The major hurdle in achieve higher printing speeds is that all the printers larger enough for laminate designs – 1.32 metres wide – are multipass inkjet systems, in which one print head travels back and forth across the paper. "A single-pass system, with fixed heads across the width of the paper, could be 100 times faster, maybe even 1,000 times faster," said Then. "I believe there will be such machines in the years to come, but for now we are focused on achieving the quality our customers expect."

The market is beginning to notice, and Schattdecor is filling orders for special projects, like custom table tops.

"This is where we predicted Digital Visions decors would initially be utilised," said Breuer. "Once we have optimised the image files for digital printing, we can start

production. This isn't possible with rotogravure printing because each stage of rotogravure printing requires specifically mixed ink colours. With inkjet, we're using the same four base colours; the mixing is done by the computer right on the paper."

Digital decor: A designer's perspective

"When we launched Digital Visions at Euroshop last year, people were telling us that we don't need a collection of designs that architects will want to develop their own designs. But since then, 95% of what we've sold had come from our collection."

Marco Verhasselt, sales manager for Schattdecor AG, works closely with design manager Claudia Küchen in bringing the company's digital printing collection and service to design specifiers via the laminate industry.

"At the moment we're selling it mostly to our direct customers, mostly HPL producers, who have very flexible production," said Verhasselt. "The sales strategy was to go to our customers and show them the high quality of our printing; they already know about our service. It's very successful at the moment."

"With our Euroshop exhibit, we introduced Digital Visions, and Schattdecor, to commercial designers, architects, and of course, shop designers," said Küchen. "Traditionally, these contacts and presentations are made by our customers, the laminate producers, but we needed to know first-hand how would they react."

"We've been hearing that niches of designers are looking for custom designs, but our industry had little to offer them. Our direct customers were starting to pay attention to digital printing for this reason, so we decided to develop and refine this technology."

"Architects and designers at Euroshop were really excited about this because in the past when they saw brilliant designs like our cupcakes, they were only available on printed foils or PVC, which isn't very ecological, durable or consistent. So they were really excited to have it in a laminate, which is more water and scratch resistant and doesn't smell like PVC foil. And when they found out they could get them from their current suppliers, reaction was 100% positive."

Küchen spoke to architects responsible for hotels, shops, senior homes, schools, exhibitions and hospitals, all of whom have creative ideas for utilising custom designs.

"When you enter a hotel, you want to see something special in the lobby. Some hotels want every room to have its own design theme. For seniors, it's sometimes hard for them to remember where to go or which floor they're on. Unique design elements with pictures are easier for them to remember than numbers."

Because architecturally specified projects evolve slowly than furniture introductions, few Digital Visions projects are installed as of yet. But the programme has earned respect and recognition in both of its first two years; the Top Design award at the 2011 Arena Design event (juried and awarded by Karim Rashid), and the 2012 Acanthus Aureus award from the Furnica exhibition, both in Poznan, Poland.

"What we've found has validated our expectations," said Verhasselt. "There is indeed a market for digital prints that offer high-quality execution, high-definition graphics, on high-quality materials." ■

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www.myanmar-expo.com/MIMIF/

French veneers: A must for luxury furniture, interior design and layouts

French veneers, an upmarket product.

French veneer manufacturers benefit from high-quality domestic timber resources. Exceptional species and French know-how come together to create upmarket veneers suitable for a wide range of applications in luxury furniture, interior design and layouts.

For sliced veneers, it all starts in the forest. In this area, French veneer manufacturers have everything they need. They have the advantage of abundant and diverse forests. Hardwoods make up two-thirds of these forests. With forestry operations dating back over several centuries, French forests have a worldwide reputation for producing high-quality timber.

In this rich forest kingdom, it is the oak that reigns supreme. French forests produce over 3 million m³ of oak each year, with consistent harvests being guaranteed by PEFC certification. Half of this volume will find noble uses in cabinet making using boules, or manufacturing barrels to age the finest wines in the world.

But the end-products that show off upmarket French oak to the greatest extent are veneers. Manufacturers appreciate the fine grain of the wood, with its silver grain and pale colour, and steaming and drying techniques are used to alter the appearance to suit the customer. At actions held by the French forestry commission (Office National des Forêts), the finest examples of oak from central France, Burgundy and Normandy often win the gold medal! Other species such as beech, ash, sycamore maple, fruit trees and some softwoods complement the range, appealing to a vast range of requirements.

A high-quality resource, acknowledged expertise

Located at the heart of the famous Garonne and Adour valley forest, Saint Loubert is one of the leading French specialists in oak veneer production. "We work with many other species, but our production is based around oak. We are uncompromising when it comes to the quality of the timber we buy, continually inspecting and improving the quality of our supplies." Mélissa Siab is a sales agent in charge of exports, and she tells us that the factory is capable of producing 8 million m² of veneers annually. In addition to oak, other species such as beech, ash, maple, walnut, wild cherry and many others are also offered.

"As well as our standard 0.55mm thickness, we can also manufacture veneers from 0.4mm to 2.5mm, with the option of other dimensions if required by the customer." Mélissa Siab emphasises the company's reputation. It is based on the technical expertise of their manufacturing. She tells us that their considerable experience in kiln drying produces an even colouring and finish for their products. Our precise and rigorous selection procedures mean that our customers are assured an excellent consistency and reliability in their supplies.

Other French producers also make use of the full diversity and richness of French forests. Such is the case with Select Bois et Placages. Also known under the name of Select Wood Veneers, this medium-sized company offers veneers made from French oak, natural or dried beech, white ash and sycamore maple. They even offer an option of birch burl veneers, a type of rotary cut veneer.

Depending on customer requirements, Select Bois et Placages can deliver lengths from 1m to 4.5m, in a standard thickness of 0.6mm. For special orders, other veneer thicknesses can be produced (from 1.5mm to 0.25m). The company is also able to produce jointed veneers and measured cuts for panels, doors, furniture, kitchens, offices, staircases, flooring, etc.

Moving south, around 200km east of the famous Bordeaux vineyards, France Noyer specialises in high-quality decorative veneers. With expert craftsmanship developed over three generations, this family business was founded in 1930. The directors declare that they are the No.1 producer worldwide of crotch veneers, creating highly specialised veneer varieties: spotted, veined and swirl, etc.

This manufacturer also stands out for its production of European walnut. The factory processes 10,000 walnut trees each year, harvested with the roots intact. These walnut burrs produce unique designs that are particularly in demand for luxury car dashboards. "Over 85% of our production is exported, and some of our customers have been with us for over 25 years". France Noyer's directors inform us that their veneers have been used in the interiors of the Grand Hyatt Shenzhen hotel (China), to restore the Dublin Parliament building in Ireland, for interior design in luxury villas in the USA, and to decorate palaces for the Arab Emirates, among others.



Digitally-controlled panel cutting machine.

Elaborate veneers and materials

French producers are currently expanding their product ranges far beyond simple veneer sheets (see panel). Saint Loubert, for example, has produced a smoked veneer. "Sheets of veneer are treated with ammonia using an autoclave." According to factory technicians, this process can produce various contemporary shades of brown, much in demand for panelling, furniture or high-end interior design projects.

"Saint Loubert is also about to launch a new product." MéliSSa Siab explains that this is a new range of rough cut veneers. These veneers will fit in perfectly with the highly fashionable trend for authentic and natural woods. Cut to order, Saint Loubert offers oak and other species such as walnut and sycamore maple.

Elsewhere, Rhône Placages & Composants are still very much focused on veneers. "We have stock of over 2 million m² of veneers, from about 120 or 130 different species", Sylvain Chaussignaud, export manager for this company based in the Lyon region tells us. But this dynamic company has also developed complementary activities. "Having moved into jointed veneers, we continued even further into complex areas such as veneered panels, curved or flat, with varnished, lacquered finishes, etc."

In addition to the jointing workshop, a press and a production line producing panels for cabinet making are also operational. The factory has focused on industrial production, with new machining possibilities: drilling, grooving and edging applications. Rhône Placages & Composants is also equipped with a varnishing and lacquering workshop that can deliver finished products, ready for customer assembly.



Veneered panel press.

Laser and digitally-operated marquetry

In addition, this veneer manufacturer has recently invested in digitally-controlled laser equipment in order to optimise cutting of marquetry elements. Lastly, Sylvain Chaussignaud also tells us that the company now produces veneers for covering plinths, windows and a variety of door frames.

Rhône Placages & Composants is now able to offer a complete range of sliced wood products aimed at a variety of industrial applications (furniture, kitchens, bathrooms, office furniture, etc.), and interior design (hotels, public and private buildings, luxury shops, yachts, etc.). Regular high-quality supplies, carefully controlled pricing and ranges, short lead times, and adaptability to market developments are among the assets of Rhône Placages & Composants.

In France, veneer manufacturing quality and the dedication and expertise of the craftsmen would be nothing without sales support. The average size of companies in the field is well suited to a personalised service for customers. They know that they can depend on responsiveness, adaptability and flexibility to deliver the correct products on schedule, on time and on budget. "We offer our customers French woods, craftsmanship and our industrial know-how", concludes MéliSSa Siab.

A new range

In furniture and interior design, manufacturers have now become assemblers, with veneer producers now taking care of shearing, jointing, plating and other processes. Veneer manufacturers now have to meet this new demand, defined by pre-packed veneers cut to usable dimensions, ready for assembly and finishing. Some French producers have already been active in this area for several years. They are thus able to carry out complex operations with various equipment for processing sliced veneer sheets (calibrating, jointing, glueing, pressing, drilling, grooving, edging...). Veneered panels (veneers glued to particle boards, MDF, plywood, etc.) and flexible paper-backed veneers - flat, curved or domed (for plinths, skirting boards and door frames) - or wood-backed (for more advanced use) are now available from several French companies. Such is the case at Rhône Placages et Composants, who are also marketing processed veneers made from unrolled sheets, glued and pressed before vertical cutting. Lastly, the traditional field of marquetry is no stranger to progress. Digital equipment is now used to create a variety of artworks, designs and motifs using laser cutting processes to produce each element of the puzzle with the greatest precision. Thanks to such new technological possibilities, the traditional veneer industry in France is able to offer a highly varied range of products, suited to the needs of customers worldwide. ■ *Copyright: FrenchTimber*



Slicing, an art with a long-standing French heritage

The many applications of sliced wood

Furniture	raw, jointed and assembled veneers; veneered panels; contoured, grooved panels; doors, drawers
Kitchen, bathroom, storage	lacquered doors, countertops, mouldings, plinths
Office furniture	processed veneers, veneered panels
Sailing	partition panelling, cabin doors
Industrial joinery	thick veneers, coated door frames
New products	sawn-effect veneers, smoked veneers

Luxury layouts, a French speciality

Hotel industry	Hilton, Grand Hotel Hyatt, Park Hyatt, Sofitel
Tertiary, private sector	Danone
Public buildings	libradies, museums, Dublin Parliament (Ireland)
Luxury shops and yachts	Louis Vuitton, Rolex, Zara, Queen Mary II

Source: Françoise Noyer, Rhône Placages, Saint Loubert, Select Bois et Placages



Full speed ahead for wood research and exports

AHEC staff from different offices around the world: (standing L-R) Roberto Torres, Luis Zertuche, Michael Snow, John Chan, An Di Nguyen; (sitting L-R) Rod Wiles, Takahiro Tsuji and Sharon Shek.



A report on the USDA Forest Products Laboratory (FPL) Tour and Lake States Lumber Association Export Seminar held in Madison, Wisconsin on 17 September 2012.

Highlights of the Forest Products Laboratory

The FPL is a federally funded wood utilisation research laboratory based in Madison Wisconsin. At the turn of the 19th century, logging had proceeded across much of the eastern United States and demands for wood products were rising rapidly. Hence the FPL was established in 1910. Its research began with preserving railroad ties, and now FPL is venturing into nanotechnology and finding ways that our research can contribute to mitigating the impacts of climate change.

The USDA Forest Products Laboratory uses science and technology to find ways to use wood resources wisely and efficiently whilst keeping forests healthy. In its world renowned nanocellulose pilot plant, high-strength and extremely versatile, nanocellulose materials are being developed for a variety of applications including ballistic glass; small, powerful transistors; and heat-resistant additives for concrete, among many other uses. In the testing facility, wall assemblies are being tested for a range of harsh conditions, from heavy rain and extreme heat to high humidity and strong winds. The air-powered debris launcher in the engineering mechanics and remote sensing laboratory is used to develop protective safe-rooms in hurricane and tornado-prone areas. Cellulose nanofibrils material are also being developed for use in bio-degradable electronic parts, high-performance insulation aerogel material, and regenerated cellulose braided reinforced fabric.

The FPL research staff has the experience and expertise needed to make the lab world renowned among forest products research organisations. Their range of wood research spans from fiber and chemical science to composites. It's primarily or partly responsible for many of today's wood-based technologies, including wood preservatives, glulam beams, oriented strandboard, and fiber-based packaging. Whether it's putting a self-adhesive, environmentally friendly stamp on an envelope or walking on a hardwood floor, FPL has in some way contributed to making those products and innovations.

Asia as a growth market for hardwood

After the tour, we proceeded to the Lake States Lumber Association Export Seminar, where Mr. Michael Snow, Director of the American Hardwood Council (AHEC), and Ms. Jen Pino-Gallagher, Bureau Director of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, gave their analyses of the US hardwood export market. The seminar was intended to educate timber companies about international markets and the export assistance programmes. Attendees and speakers were welcomed by Mr. Scott Bowe, Professor & Wood Product Specialist, University of Wisconsin.



Mr. Michael Snow, AHEC Executive Director, presented the big picture of the world's hardwood market to a group of timber suppliers who flew in to Madison for the seminar. Mr. Snow said that instead of worrying that production is moving overseas, American hardwood suppliers are failing to see the opportunities that globalisation offers. He cited the report by Mr. George Barrett of Hardwood Review, stating that nearly half of the graded lumber from the US are going overseas. With veneer, 70% of the US production is going overseas. It's not just the shifting of manufacturing from North Carolina to China that is happening today, but there is also a shift of consumption to new markets.

"The rise of the middle class is increasing quickly," said Mr. Snow. "If you look at the households with income of above US\$20,000 a year, growth is seen in China and India. These are the new customers of finished products made of American hardwood. You must look at these new markets."

Mr. Michael Snow, Executive Director, AHEC

The last three years have seen a significant trade of hardwood. China is the biggest importer of wood. Although China's market is slowing down, the worst case scenario is China's GDP growth to be at 7.5%, which is still considered high.

Within Southeast Asia, the most important market by far is Vietnam. Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand markets are also doing well. Thailand has some political issues and flooding problem so it may take a while before their economy will bounce back. Thailand has a very big woodworking industry. They do a lot of picture frames, handicraft, toys, etc. The underlying potential is certainly still there; it's a market to keep your eyes on in the next couple of years.

There is a tremendous jump of American hardwood exports to Vietnam over the last two years. The reason behind this is that many companies are moving from China to Vietnam. "China is no longer a low-cost country," said Mr. Snow. "It has problems with labour shortages, particularly in Southern China where the wood industry is based. Many companies, especially the lower end of the furniture manufacturing, are now moving to Vietnam where labour costs are low but productivity is high. Roughly 12% of Vietnam's imported timber comes from the United States. The US market share in Vietnam is small, so there is room for growth."

Looking at other markets in Asia, Japan is no longer the biggest dominant force in Asia when it comes to volume orders. However, when it comes to unit values, the Japanese will pay for quality. A lot of the manufacturing companies in China are either owned by the Japanese or producing for the Japanese market. Hence, even if the direct exports in Japan are not as huge as it used to be, the weight of the decision making is there.

Malaysia is the second largest exporter of hardwood in the world, next to the United States. The furniture industry in Malaysia is well established, and they're trying to get their furniture to Europe and the US. According to Mr. Snow, rubber wood, which is Malaysia's staple type of wood, is no longer as desirable as it used to be because of environmental concerns. Malaysian manufacturers are now waking up to the different types of species, and this could be a good opportunity to promote American hardwood.

AHEC spends a lot of its time engaging with the furniture industry. It runs furniture design competitions in Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, etc. It is doing a lot of activities to open up networking opportunities for the US hardwood exporters. It helps companies export to get involved with what's going overseas. It is a global organisation with offices in different parts of the world, and a lot of consultants on the ground. They are the eyes and ears of AHEC and know what species are going where, what problems the markets are facing, etc. AHEC's mandate is to grow the pie for American hardwoods.

"There's a basket of activities that AHEC does. We don't do business-to-business matchmaking. What we do is teach the importers in new markets, manufacturers who need technical information, and architects and designers who don't understand the performance of wood. We have programmes all over the world to target all of these segments. We also do 15-20 grading seminars every year," said Mr. Snow.

AHEC runs a worldwide programme to promote American hardwoods in over 50 export markets, concentrating on providing architects, specifiers, designers and end-users with technical information on the range of species, products and sources of supply. ■



Nanocellulose pilot plant



A custom-designed moisture performance testing facility.



FPL provides scientific research on wood, wood products and their commercial uses.



NHLA Annual Convention & Exhibition Showcase 2012

The global gathering of the hardwood community



Mr. Mark Barford, Executive Director of NHLA



Keynote speaker Mr. Mike Ditka

If busy registration counters and overflowing meeting rooms are any indication, then it appears the US hardwood industry is ready to do more business in 2013 coming off the 115th National Hardwood Lumber Association's (NHLA) annual convention. Over 800 wood industry professionals attended the NHLA annual convention, conducted at the Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Towers last September 12-15, 2012. These attendees came together to network, celebrate, and gain valuable insight to improve the course of their company's future success.

At the opening session, outgoing NHLA President Dave Redmond welcomed delegates from all over the USA and Canada where there are 1,200 members of NHLA, as well as hardwood traders from 12 countries reflecting the growing emphasis that the association is now placing on overseas markets and membership.

New members from China

Mark Barford, executive director of the NHLA, reported that the association was making a more concerted effort to promote exports of American hardwood lumber to help member companies make up for recession-induced domestic lost business.

Barford said: "I've spoken to at least 15 different groups that are here in the convention. We've been trying to get this message out, and hopefully you'll agree with it. Quality plus integrity is equal to reliability. And with that reliability, we can increase our market for North American hardwoods. There are 12 different countries represented here. These guys are buying as much as 50 to 100 containers a month of North American hardwood. This is just a small percentage of what they are buying. If you let our inspectors assist you with your markets, we think that we can help you grow the markets. That's why we are in China, Vietnam, South America and Mexico."

He noted that NHLA has particularly done well in opening hardwood lumber market opportunities in China and said NHLA has added 37 Chinese companies as members.

"People ask, why?", said Barford. "Do we want our customers to be part of our organisation? Yes, we want our customers to understand our code of ethics."

"Twelve years ago I was interviewed for a magazine and was asked, 'What are you doing in China?' Well, not a lot. I hope the Chinese will learn to like our wood," Barford told the audience. "Then I was asked, 'what if the Chinese like your wood?' If they like it, then we are not producing enough to meet their needs."

"Today, we are sending about 30% of what they need. We have an opportunity to grow. The opportunity in the US market is going to come back, but until then, we have an opportunity in the international market to move forward."

Barford also reported that NHLA has a budget of over US\$3 million and a staff of over 20 people.

New appointments

Scott Heidler, president of Heidler Hardwood Lumber Co. of Chicago was, elected president of the NHLA Board of Managers Executive Committee. He succeeds Dave Redmond, president and CEO of Highland Hardwood Sales Inc. of Augusta, GA. Heidler is the fourth generation of Heidler Lumber, a company that has been a member of the NHLA for more than a century.

In his speech, Heidler said: "NHLA and its membership is in the middle of some very exciting opportunities and changes in our industry, including issues such as Hardwood Checkoff, the global acceptance of Phytosanitation compliance, the American hardwood promotion, and the formulation of the inspector training school foundation. As I accept this role, I look forward to the finalisation and implementation of many of these programmes."

Pem Jenkins, president of Turn Bull Lumber Co. of Elizabethtown, NC, is elected as Vice President. The six new board members include: Mark Cifranick of Baillie Lumber Co., Shane Cook of Midwest Walnut Co., Charley Fiala of GMC Hardwoods, Inc., Scott Holley of Industrial Timber & Lumber, Steve Jones of Ron Jones Hardwood Sales and T.J. Rosengarth of Northwest Hardwoods.

Outstanding Service Award

Industry consultant Michael Buckley from Singapore was presented with an 'Outstanding Service Award in grateful appreciation for 25 years of service to the North American hardwood industry'.

In his speech, he said: "I'm shocked, surprised and delighted, because it's been a pleasure. It's been 25 years of passion for this fantastic industry. I'm British but I'm based in Singapore now. I take an international perspective and I hope I can continue to contribute to this programme."

Motivational keynote speech

Three outstanding leaders gave their keynote speeches in this year's event: Mr. Mike Ditka, Mr. John Carpenter and Mr Kevin O'connor. The NHLA said the three speakers had been selected for being leaders in areas of change, flexibility, motivation and leadership.

Hall of Fame football legend Mr. Mike Ditka rounded out the first morning session in delivering a motivational keynote speech that drew on his 50-plus year career as an NFL player, coach and commentator.

The following day, President of Caterpillar Forest Products Inc., Mr. John Carpenter gave his keynote speech. John joined Caterpillar in 1984, starting his career in Peoria based Product Support marketing programme. John's 28-year career with Caterpillar has taken him all over the world and offered him a variety of experiences and perspectives to share. In 2005, he was the president of Caterpillar Forest Products Inc and currently resides in Caterpillar's Forest Products Center of Excellence in LaGrange, Georgia.

On the third day, Mr. Kevin O'Connor, host of the Emmy Award-winning series This Old House, challenged the audience with the question 'How green are you?' and went on to give a perspective that suggests the answer 'not very'. While green products are increasingly available, consumers are not using them at anything like their potential. One reason he suggested is that scare tactics have been shown not to work with consumers. Furthermore the issue is often one of over-promise and under-delivery on green products. Putting 'green' in perspective, price and cost are often the big issue.

'Until the green movement gets better and cheaper, adoption rates will remain low', he predicted.

Educational seminars

Attendees were also kept busy with seminars and discussion panels over the three days:

- Building Your Next Generation Leaders: Competitive Talent Recruitment & Retention Strategies was presented by Chelsea Garrett, founder of Garrett Search Partners.
- Energy Management and Assessment: Strategies to Reduce Energy Cost was presented by Dr. Brian Bond, Associate Professor and Extension Specialist of Sustainable Biomaterials at Virginia Tech.
- The Family Wealth Paradigm: Integrating Family Values with Wealth Planning for a Long Lasting Legacy was presented by Kevin Rogers, Managing Director of BNY Mellon Wealth Management.
- Design Trend Decision Makers: The Factors that Move the Market. In the panel discussion were Peter Bentel, Bentel & Bentel Architects/Planners AIA; Scott Fettig, Product Director; Wood Products Elkay Manufacturing Co.; Bruce E. Mulder, Professor of Furniture Design, Kendall College of Art & Design and Sandi Ownby, Hard Surface Stylist for Shaw Industries.
- The International Buyer's Panel: Panel members were Ernie Koh, Executive Director of KODA in Singapore; Victor Flores, Maderas La Mision in Mexico City and Guadalajara; Andreas von Moeller, Managing Director of Jacob Jurgensen in Hamburg, Germany; and James Xu, Chairman of the China National Hardwood Council.
- NHLA Hardwood Lumber Grading Rules. Panel members were Chief Inspector Dana Spessert; Joe Snyder, NHLA Rules Committee Chairman and all seven of the NHLA National Inspectors.

Trader's Alley

The event also featured more than 60 exhibits displayed in NHLA's Trader's Alley. Exhibits include suppliers of hardwood lumber, dry kilns, lumber grading, wood scanners, lumber optimisation systems and more.

The 2013 NHLA Annual Convention & Exhibit Showcase will be held in Fort Worth, Texas. ■



Keynote speaker Mr. Kevin O'Connor of 'This Old House' TV show



Mr. Dana Spessert, Chief Inspector



The NHLA Presidential gavel passes from Mr. Redmond to Mr. Heidler.



International Buyer's Panel

An interview with Ted

ROSSI,



President of Rossi Group

Ted Rossi is one of the most well known people in the American hardwood export industry, having taken his family business into the export trade nearly 40 years ago. He has been President of NHLA, Chairman of AHEC and was the founding President of the Hardwood Federation in the USA. He is now CEO of Rossi Group based in Connecticut with operations throughout the eastern states. The Rossi name and brand remains a reference in many export markets, so we took the opportunity to talk to him at the recent NHLA Convention in Chicago where he was Chair of its Nominating Committee.

Mr. Rossi, the hardwood market climate at this NHLA Convention in Chicago seems more upbeat. To what do you attribute this change?

Overall there is definitely more optimism for our industry. We have gone through a very rough period for the last four years, with much restructuring, industry consolidation and efficiency gains. There now is a general feeling business is beginning to improve. That is being driven by the domestic market, where the signs are very positive that housing has finally started a rebound. Mortgage rates are at historical lows and no indication of upward changes in the near future. Exports continue to be a key sector, influenced more from China and Far East markets, where growth has recently slowed from a rapid pace. However, I believe they will continue to grow next year and with a rebounding domestic demand and I am very confident we will see much improved business climate.

You have completed some years as President and Senior Officer on the NHLA Board during which the association has become more internationally focused. Does this have universal support by the membership?

The majority of the members realise that we are in an expanding "global marketplace". The last four years have certainly confirmed how important this global market has become for the US hardwood industry. American Hardwoods will continue to be the benchmark of global hardwood trade. Strong roots and tradition that include our grading rules, and the integrity, reliability, and commitment of our association and members mean long term growth for our industry. The NHLA is committed to that goal and have the support of the members to become the standard for global hardwood trade.

What is your impression of the NHLA Chicago Convention overall; and would the next one in Texas be attractive for Asian members to attend?

Chicago is a great city to host our convention, being convenient to get to and a gateway for our international members. I think the breakout sessions and discussions were very informative, well attended, and received some of the best reviews of any previous convention. The NHLA convention is truly becoming the "global gathering" for the for the hardwood "family". Our industry is vibrant, resilient and more than ever truly represents a worldwide hardwood community. Next year's convention will surely have increased attendance. With an improving and expanding domestic demand, and continued growth in our export market, it will be an event you don't want to miss. It will be interesting to see what issues we have for our panel discussions. They continue to improve at each convention.

NHLA is expanding its membership in China. What do you see as the benefits for Chinese members?

China is, and will continue to be, the largest market for American hardwoods. It currently represents over one-third of all our hardwood exports. I believe that position will maintain or increase over the next year. NHLA will provide, through its mission, grading rules and code of ethics, the trading structure for this continued growth in China. It is certainly most important that we have membership and support of the Chinese industry in this regard. NHLA will always strive to maintain the integrity and tradition that guarantee the confidence in our product, and set the standard for the rest of the global hardwood trade to follow. Membership growth will be a measure of our success.

Your company – Rossi Group – is heavily involved in US hardwood exports, which have increased this year. Do you see the total share of exports continuing to rise in 2013?

Rossi Group has nearly 40 years of history in the export business. We are passionate about our relationships and continue to maintain or grow our market share in the products we produce. Our philosophy to build, maintain and support our export markets has never changed. It will continue to be the mission and goal for our company in the future....a tradition! ■

2nd 'Global WoodMart'

Report by Michael Buckley

A larger and longer wood market than the inaugural event in 2010 returned to the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre (KLCC) for three days in October with 120 exhibitors. Opened by the Hon. Tan Sri Bernard Dompok, Malaysian Minister for Plantation Industries, to an audience from over 20 countries, the show was the main part of a week-long series of timber events:

"Market Requirements for Timber & Timber Products"

The week started with an international conference which attracted an audience of over 200 delegates to hear how the global changes in timber markets affect the Malaysian timber industry. This was in the context of governments aligning policies and laws to address the issue of illegal logging.

International speakers from Australia, Europe, USA and China each gave a synopsis of their domestic markets and commented on the forthcoming legislative changes. The conference was arranged by several European organisations, hosted by the Malaysian Timber Council (MTC). Delegates and speakers were welcomed by MTC's CEO Cheah Kam Huan and superbly moderated by Christian Schriver of CS Consulting and Management. Opening remarks on behalf of the European Union (EU) were made by Vincent van den Berg, Programme Coordinator for the European Forest Institute's EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Asia office in Kuala Lumpur. "Markets require suppliers to demonstrate sustainability of wood and wood products. The FLEGT recognises the roles of both buyers and sellers," he said. "FLEGT-licenced business is considered risk-free and will require no further documentation", he concluded. The opening session was then addressed by Prof. Dato Dr Latiff, Prof. Emeritus at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, who gave an overview of sustainability and declining natural resources.

Andre de Boer introduced the European Timber Trade Federation (ETTF) and provided an overview of the Due Diligence (DD) process that will be required under the new EU Timber Regulations (EUTR) that will come into force in March 2013. These are based on assessing and mitigating risk, traceability through records; and he gave the advice "if you have no information, don't buy it!" Steven Mitchell from the Timber Development Association (TDA) of Australia suggested that the DD process in Australia is likely to go the way of Lacey and will include Australian domestic trade. Brent McClendon of the IWPA talked about the complexity of changing markets and while applauding the current improvement of imports to the USA by 10%, he acknowledged that they are still down 40% from the peak. He gave a view of the US Lacey Act Amendment saying that IWPA is working to improve its working and is also cooperating closely with MTC. From the China Timber & Wood Products Distribution Association, Liu Nengwen said that China, which is the world's largest wood trading nation, "is making moves towards certification and legality."

In answer to a question during an intense panel discussion about how companies are adapting to market changes, Warren Spitz, President of IWPA, explained that Canada and USA are different - his company being incorporated in both. "Compliance under Lacey is in USA only, but buyers' confidence in supply is necessary in both countries", he said. Some people had asked him why not just use FSC but he replied it is not that simple. Asked about small suppliers, Brent McClendon stated that in IWPA "We have always wanted to support small businesses on both sides" and added "we prefer company-based risk assessment not country-based."

In the case of Malaysia, Mrs. Sheam Satkuru-Granzella from MTC said that "as key players we fully support legal and sustainable timber and we do not condone illegal logging, but the challenge is

to find an implementable and workable system because ultimately, it is suppliers who have to provide the confidence to buyers that our timber products are legally or sustainably produced. There followed a lively discussion which included questions as to why Malaysia had not yet signed a Voluntary Partnership Agreement with the EU. In response it was said that the negotiations surrounding the VPA are close to conclusion and it just requires additional time to iron out some of the internal processes. During the session it was made clear that the EUTR does not need a licence or certification, but requires that Due Diligence be done - shipment by shipment.

Launch of the International Timber Trade Forum

At a reception of invited guests following the conference, the International Wood Products Association (IWPA) from USA and the European Timber Trade Federation (ETTF) jointly launched the International Timber Trade Forum (ITTF) as an informal network designed to exchange information and encourage multilateral discussions to economic, technical and sustainability issues that impact the international timber trade.

The ITTF is intended to bring together the principal timber trade federations representing regions or countries to focus primarily on strategic, legislative and operational policy and practice. Proposed membership and an operation for the ITTF were circulated and the next step will be to publish terms of reference by December 2012.

The Global WoodMart: KLCC 4-6th October

Over 120 exhibitors from 22 countries presented a very comprehensive range of timber and timber products in a highly focused wood show, reminiscent of the French Carrefour du Bois, the leading biennial wood show in Europe. Following the inaugural show in 2010, this year the space at the Kuala Lumpur Conference Centre was expanded by 65% and included many new exhibitors.

Opening the show, The Hon. Tan Sri Bernard Dompok, Minister of Plantation Industries and Commodities, focused on the need to work together to promote timber. "Wood is inherently green", he said "and tropical, temperate and boreal timber producers must therefore unite for the benefit of the global wood-based industry, while promoting a 'greener' living environment."



Major country pavilions at the show were drawn from the USA, Sarawak and France, demonstrating the diversity of the show, which included wood materials, wood products, specialised services and media. Exhibitors came from as far afield as Ghana, Brazil, Netherlands and Chile, as well as throughout the Asian region from India to China with many from within Malaysia. The Malaysian Timber Certification Council (MTCC) and PEFC International from Geneva were both present and trade organisations such as the European Forest Institute, the European Timber Trade Federation and TRADA from UK. French Timber provided a choice of temperate species from Europe and at the American hardwood pavilion 15 exhibitors joined the American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) where John Chan, its regional director based in Hong Kong and his team were on hand to meet with trade and industry visitors. Visiting the pavilion was Chris Rittgers, Agricultural Attaché at the US Embassy for Malaysia and Singapore. American Softwoods were on show and locally based distributor APP Timber exhibited a group of international suppliers.

The opening day was concluded with a Gala Dinner with traditional Malaysian cuisine and hospitality as well as some entertainment in a modern mode. Next day a "Best Presentation Award" ceremony was held at which the Malaysian-based Lionex (M) Sdn Bhd won the major award of the show.

After the show, a spokesman from MTC commented "Despite difficult market conditions in Europe and the USA, a strong buyers' programme managed to attract more than 1,800 high quality visitors from 60 countries to this show. Despite the lower buyer turnout, many exhibitors reported good sales and solid trade enquiries. Visitors came from Australia, Austria, Africa, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bahrain, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Casablanca, China, Denmark, Egypt, France, Guyana, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, The Netherlands, Oman, Pakistan, The Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Polynesia, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Switzerland, Syria, Taiwan, Thailand, Tunisia, UAE, UK, USA, Uzbekistan, Vietnam and Yemen."

Seminars: 5th October

'It's all about wood and design' was an inspirational seminar hosted by MTC and aimed at architects and was well attended by delegates. They saw reference to many iconic American and Malaysian hardwood projects by Kevin Hill, a leading wood specialist contractor based in Singapore. He demonstrated innovations in wood which solve construction issues, developed by his company Venturer and other technical partners. Then Kenneth Yeh, architect with Marra & Yeh in Sydney, Australia also gave an inspiring view of the possibilities for wood which is his passion.

"Readiness of Indonesian forest product exporters in meeting EUTR March 2013" was the final event when a delegation from Indonesia held a well attended seminar entitled Speakers included Agus Sarsito and Jimmy Chandra, and a panel moderated by Andy Roby, VPA FLEGT Facilitator resident in Jakarta. A full explanation of the Indonesian Government sponsored timber and timber product export licensing scheme Sistem Verifikasi Legalitas Kayu (SVLK or TLAS) under the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) was given.

The next Global WoodMart is scheduled for 2014. ■

US exhibitors at Global WoodMart



(L-R) Jennifer Brand, Brent McClendon, Mark Barford, John Chan, Norman Murray and Warren Spitz at GWM.

The American hardwood pavilion coordinated by the American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) was by far the largest international exhibitor at the second 'Global WoodMart' in October. With other exhibitors from the US softwood industry participating as well as several visitors and associations, the US presence was strong.

Exhibiting at the AHEC pavilion were Nina Company, Bridgewell Resources, Sonoking Corporation, Robinson Lumber Company, Northland Corporation, Somerset Wood Products, Missouri Walnut, Snowbelt Hardwoods, Northwest Hardwoods, Baillie Lumber Company, Graf Brothers, Shannon Lumber International, International Wood Products Association (IWPA), Hardwood States Export Group (HSEG) and Anderson Tully Lumber Company Inc. Visiting the pavilion was Chris Rittgers, Agricultural Attaché at the US Embassy for Malaysia and Singapore. John Chan, AHEC's regional director based in Hong Kong, and his team were on hand to meet with trade and industry visitors.

American Softwoods were on show and locally based distributor APP Timber exhibited a group including American suppliers. Senior officers of US associations were also on hand to meet traders including Executive Director of AHEC Mike Snow, Executive Director of NHLA Mark Barford, President of IWPA Warren Spitz and Executive VP of IWPA Brent McClendon. The

Hardwood States Export Group (HSEG) was represented by Joel Stopha and David Wong of the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Regina Todd from the State of Mississippi. Jennifer Brand, Vice Chairman of AHEC, officiated at the opening ceremony and at the MTC Gala Dinner for exhibitors and buyers.

Other US industry participants were Tom Walthousen of Downes & Reader Hardwood and Norm Murray from U.C Coatings Corp. Christian Mengel of VM International participated at the show and participated at the 'International Conference on Market Requirements for Timber & Timber Products' that preceded the Global WoodMart.

Reviewing the show, Mike Snow on behalf of AHEC said "The strong focus on wood is what sets the GWM apart from most other shows in Southeast Asia where wood suppliers are often lost amidst the myriad of other products and services on display. The number of visitors may be smaller than many other shows, but those visitors are there for one reason and one reason only: to buy or sell wood!" ■



An interview with **Mr. Cheah Kam Huan,** CEO of the Malaysian Timber Council (MTC)

We heard that you are retiring this December. Can you share your future plans with us?

I will take a long break and then decide what else to do. I've been working since 1972 and only took 1-2 week breaks. I have been with MTC since day 1 in 1992, and have been the CEO of MTC for the past six years. I need a longer break.

What can you say are your major achievements as CEO of MTC?

During my time as CEO, we tried to get the companies to be more responsive to current issues. For instance, more and more companies are going into certification. About 10 years ago, many companies are saying "no, we don't need that". To them it doesn't serve any purpose but now, they know that they must have third-party certification to assure buyers. Another achievement would be the programme that to develop our gluelam industry. That programme has been going on for the last 4-5 years. We are also promoting automation machines to

companies. Like Singapore, we are also facing issues in labor shortages. We need to introduce automation wherever we can to reduce the manpower requirements in specific enterprises.

What about Global WoodMart? Was it your innovation?

I wouldn't like to take credit for it, but obviously it is something that we are very proud of. There is a niche here in this part of the world because there is no such exhibition that buyers and sellers from all over the world can meet. This is only the second show and we are already 65% bigger than the first one. Hopefully we can grow the next show more.

What's happening on the furniture promotion side? We know that MTC is now responsible for the promotion of furniture.

We are very excited to help the furniture industry because I think that is an area where we can find the most potential in terms of value adding for our timber products. There are many areas where we can help the industry. The perception of buyers overseas is that our furniture lies in the low- to mid-range quality, so we got to move the industry from the lower end to the higher end of it with processes such as branding, quality control and more active tradeshow participation.

Which is your major market?

The US is a huge market for us. It has always taken about one-third of our product exports. We are hopeful that our exports will grow since the US is slowly getting out of the subprime crisis. The important factor is business confidence, and we can see that consumer confidence is slowly coming back. There's a lot of suppressed demand so hopefully next year will show better results.

How about the Middle East and Europe?

Apart from those countries that gone through the Arab Spring, there are many countries that are still showing growth. In Dubai, confidence is slowly creeping back. Europe is important but we have to be very patient, it still has another two years of crisis. Having said that, there is still reasonably good demand for timber, especially in the UK, Germany and France.

How about the Southeast Asian market? Is this a market where Malaysia is already doing well?

We have been promoting our products in Singapore and also exporting our furniture to Indonesia and elsewhere. For Global WoodMart, we are looking at Indonesia timber companies to come in a bigger way. They have a lot of resources and factories, but their exposure to the West is not as developed. This platform is good for them. Vietnam is a big importer of raw materials for the furniture industry, so this is also good for them. The Chinese are also here in a bigger way. There are 11 companies from China here, and we like to grow their participation also.

Can you tell us about the sponsored buyers programme for Global WoodMart?

The sponsored buyers programme is meant for regions outside of our traditional buyers, such as the CIS countries, non-traditional Middle East countries and Eastern Europe. We sponsor the hotel accommodation of buyers and arrange the meetings with our manufacturers here. We invited over 100 buyers from various countries.

Is Malaysia investing on furniture and building design?

Yes, the industry has realised that if we are going to move to the next level, we have to come up with great designs and better range of products, and introduce more species. This is the kind of support that the MTC, the government and FRIM (Forest Research Institute Malaysia) provide.

Are you confident that Malaysian furniture can still be imported to Europe once the EUTR takes effect?

Yes. Furniture made in Malaysia are basically made of rubberwood, which is from the plantations and not from the forest. Issues of legality shouldn't be a big issue; we have all the necessary documents needed to prove the legality. ■

FMC China 2012 achieved great success!

The 18th Furniture Manufacturing & Supply China (FMC China 2012) was successfully held last September at Shanghai World Expo Exhibition & Convention Centre. The exhibition was held concurrently with "FMC Premium 2012".

The exhibits included woodworking machinery & tools, office furniture supplies & gas spring, furniture coating & chemicals, furniture hardware & fittings, furniture inspection, design & services, furniture panels & surface deco, cabinet & wardrobe fittings/furniture lightings, furniture fabric & leather and upholstery furniture components & supplies.



The total area of FMC China 2012 was 63,000 sq m, occupied by 761 exhibitors from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Australia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Singapore, Sweden and the USA. 30,759 trade buyers from 111 countries and regions visited FMC China this year.

There were three pavilions: Taiwan, State of North Carolina and Pennsylvania hardwood pavilions. Eight associations and groups – namely Malaysian Timber Council, Mexican Furniture Association, Indian Association of Furniture Manufacturers and Trader, ASEAN Furniture Industries Council, Vietnam Purchasing Group, Shanghai Timber Industry Association, China Wood-based Panel Distribution Alliance, and China National Forest Product Industry Association – brought their members to the show.

FMC China attracted 30,759 trade buyers, including 26,193 local visitors and 4,566 overseas buyers. In total, 43% came from Asian countries, 22.3% from Europe, 15.6% from North America, 3.7% from South America, 2.1% from Oceania, and 1.1% from Africa. The Top 20 best represented countries/

regions for international visitors were India, Russia, Malaysia, Mexico, Taiwan Region, Japan, USA, Singapore, Italy, Hong Kong Region, Vietnam, UK, Brazil, Indonesia, Thailand, Australia, France, Canada, Korea, Turkey, Germany and Belarus.

Moreover, 21,573 visitors from decision-maker levels attended 'FMC Premium 2012', a show for high-end suppliers of Furniture Components and Raw Materials.

Outlook of FMC China 2013

FMC China 2013 will be held from 11-14 September 2013 in Shanghai World Expo Exhibition and Convention Centre (SWEECC).

Semi-finished Furniture will be added as a new category in FMC China 2013. Meanwhile, furniture hardware & fittings, furniture fabrics & leather and furniture panels & surface deco will be enlarged in 2013, as well as woodworking machinery & tools.

The organisers will continue to focus on improving the quality and quantity of the visitors and provide best woodworking machinery and furniture raw materials for China furniture industry. ■





furniPRO Asia 2012 breaks new ground as marketplace for innovations in ASEAN

furniPRO Asia 2012 came to a close after three days of lively discussions and deal making that saw close to 100 global brands showcasing their latest innovations to some 100 key hosted buyers from the region and over 2,000 trade visitors, of which more than 50% came from overseas. Backed by strong support from the industry in the region, furniPRO Asia 2012 is endorsed by the Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC), and supported by the American Hardwood Export Council, Singapore Manufacturing Federation and the Taiwan Woodworking Machinery Association.

Knowledge exchange

One hundred key buyers from China, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Myanmar, India, Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam were hosted at furniPRO Asia, where they met with exhibitors for three days of intensive discussions on potential deals and collaborations.

Visitors to the trade fair were keen to find out more about the latest innovations and developments in the furniture production and woodworking industry. They were not disappointed as many exhibitors brought their latest technology to the fair.

"I believe that furniPRO Asia has arrived at an opportune time to fill a pressing need in the ASEAN market, one which has been vacant for some years now. With our powerful global networks and experience from organising the world's largest furniture and furniture production events including imm cologne, ORGATEC, interzum and interzum guangzhou, furniPRO Asia will be a trailblazer for the region, to discuss the latest issues and policies impacting the industry today, and acting as the gateway to the emerging markets in ASEAN." Mr Michael Dreyer, Vice President, Asia Pacific, Koelnmesse.

The "Green Forum" and "Investment in Myanmar" sessions on 18 October, co-organised by Koelnmesse and the Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC) also received good response. Each session saw more than 100 delegates packing the room, to participate in lively discussions on the effects and implications of the European Union Timber Regulations (EUTR) for ASEAN come March 2013 and the opportunities in Myanmar's growing market.

Highlights of the Green Forum

The session on the "Green Forum" received a lot of attention due to the timely topic of discussion. In March 2013, the requirements of the EU Timber Regulation will come into force. This new legislation prohibits placing timber on the EU market if it was illegally harvested. To achieve this, it sets out procedures which those trading timber within the EU must put in place to minimise the risk of illegal timber being sold.

Mr. Ernie Koh, SFIC Vice President, Chairman Green Initiatives Committee, stressed that being "Green" isn't just about choice of material. It must be ingrained into corporate



culture and the company must have a long-term vision.

The first forum speaker was Mr. Frank-Hugo Storelv from STAVN in Norway. He began his presentation with a hard-hitting film which illustrated how the planet is suffering from climate change. Mr. Storelv's told his personal experience of Norway becoming warmer — no longer the country of 10 months of winter. He said that people in Europe and the USA – your customers — think very passionately about green issues. There is therefore a huge business opportunity to make money by doing the right thing. "Is sustainability expensive?", he asked. No, it's the only way to go ahead. People are looking for brands with value and quality, and that will say something about them as good citizens. It's trendy in Europe and the USA to be a responsible person while public procurement laws are driving an insistence for green products. Singapore already has a positive image as a clean, green, sustainable country. Trust is key to doing business. Singapore should take up the challenge to make products that future children can be proud of; furniture that lasts, that is true sustainability.

Mr. Storelv recommended all companies to aim for ISO 14001 because it requires companies to set environmental targets and for them to demonstrate an improved performance each year. He understood that all the green systems, certification and labels made it confusing for manufacturers to know what to do but he urged the ISO 14001 as the start point.

The next speaker, Mr. Burkhard Sydow from IMA AG, demonstrated the green credentials of panel furniture production. He estimated that currently only 30% of worldwide furniture manufacturing uses modern particle board, mainly in kitchen, ready to assemble and office system furniture. While sustainable forest management practices had resulted in net annual growth being higher than felling in US, Europe and the CIS, he urged manufacturers to be aware that demand for wood was increasing tremendously and therefore they should use more particle or MDF board. He outlined the improvements made in technology to minimise the use of toxic formaldehyde and to reduce emissions through better sealing. IMA's latest technology for edgebanding uses lasers and plasma to seal better and use polymers not glue. Their mission is to enable clients to produce modern panel furniture with greener techniques and reap commercial benefits.

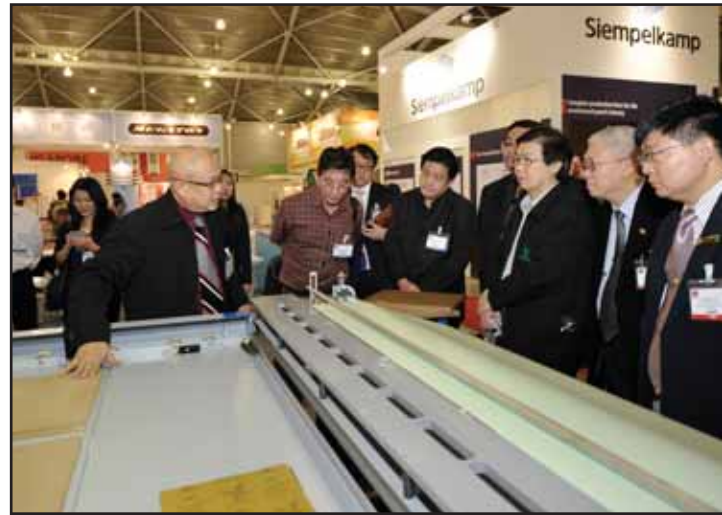
The final speaker was Mr. Tom Ter Horst from the European Forest Institute, who set out the EUTR and assessed its impact for Asian furniture manufacturers exporting to the EU. Quite simply the EUTR is a piece of European Union legislation that prohibits illegally harvested timber from being placed on the EU market whether in the form of logs, sawn timber, wood-based panels or any products made from wood. The only products not included are those made from recycled materials. All operators and traders must be sure they are not dealing with illegally harvested wood. The EUTR defines "illegality" according to the country where the timber is harvested.

One option is to go for FLEGT licensed timber from a country which has signed a VPA (Voluntary Partnership Agreement) such as Indonesia and several countries in Africa, but Mr. Ter Horst stressed that you don't need to have a VPA to be able to export timber to the EU.

The key to compliance is for each operator to have a robust due diligence system to prevent illegally harvested timber from entering their supply chain so that any timber they buy must have been produced in accordance with the legislation applicable in the country of harvest.

During the Q&A session, moderated by Michael Buckley of Turnstone Communications, furniture manufacturers and their associations voiced their concern about their ability to comply when VPAs had not yet been signed and so few FLEGT licences were available. They feared shipments being turned away at the EU ports after 3 March 2013. Mr. Ter Horst stressed that EUTR is not a border measure but that buyers will be asking to see evidence of robust due diligence to ensure the legality of timber used so that they in turn can be sure of complying with the new regulation.

The next edition of furniPRO Asia will be staged in Singapore in 2014. More information can be found at www.furniproasia.com.



Show organiser seeks tie-up with associations

An interview with
Michael Dreyer,
Managing Director and Group VP
Asia Pacific, Koelnmesse Pte Ltd



What's the concept behind FurniPRO Asia? How extensive was the preparation for this tradeshow?

From our talks with the woodworking machinery and furniture industry in Asia, we learned that the machinery side particularly was increasingly unhappy about the exhibitions in Southeast Asia. Since the regional woodworking machinery show was cancelled a decade ago, there were smaller national events in Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam which were serving local markets, and none of these exhibitions really took off to become the exhibition for the ASEAN region. Machinery manufacturers invest a lot of money to bring heavy machinery to the exhibitions, and they said that none of these small exhibitions in Southeast Asia is justifying such kind of an investment. Exhibitors had stopped bringing their machines to the shows; they only brought posters and brochures which didn't cost much. Everyone was unhappy about that, which resulted to fewer visitors attending the shows. When we learned about this, we talked to the machinery industry as well as the furniture industry of Southeast Asia and we said, "why don't we join forces and concentrate on one event where machines are being displayed and where high-calibre regional visitors are going to?" That's what we have been trying to do with FurniPRO. We talked intensively with the machinery manufacturers, came up with good schemes for them to bring in machines, and built up a relationship with the ASEAN Furniture Industry Council. They all brought delegation to Singapore, and that is the system which could lead to FurniPRO Asia to become the regional woodworking machinery and furniture accessories exhibition for Southeast Asia.

What made you decide to keep the furniture and machinery shows separate?

We discussed this with the machinery industry and when we presented our concept for FurniPRO, we actually suggested to co-locate with the IFFS [International Furniture Fair Singapore]. At that point, the industry was not supporting that idea. The situation now is being re-visited. I have a bit of a discussion now with Eumabois about this and we also put questions about this into our exhibitor's questionnaires. We will monitor that situation and wait for the replies. We are open to do that. We have good relations with the Singapore Furniture Industry Council (SFIC), so there definitely would be an opportunity to co-locate if the industry wants this.

What aspects of the show need improvement?

This show is a good start after 10 years with no woodworking show in Singapore. What we need to do to stay strong is to follow through with the idea to work with the machinery manufacturers and the accessory manufacturers, listen to them and try to tap also into their relationships, experiences and so on. At the same time, we will build a strong relationship with furniture manufacturers who are the customers of our exhibitors. This is something we started with working with APEC. We are going to be present at the next APEC meeting in December in Jakarta. We will openly discuss the next steps pertaining FurniPRO Asia and APEC's involvement in FurniPRO Asia. Just to make sure that regional attendance and regional bias are being secured.

We will also intensify or roll out more seminars. Both the 'Green Forum' and 'Investment in Myanmar' seminars were well received, so we will definitely extend that programme in the next FurniPRO. We are also thinking of adding a CEO Forum or something similar.

Can you share some of the feedback from the buyers programme?

We have quite some good feedback from some of the buyers. In fact, some of the people we were hosting or we were flying in purchased machines on the spot. We have two or three exhibitors who actually sold machines, which is very unusual for this type of capital goods. This means people who were coming were actually loaded with ideas and they were waiting to look around and place their orders. That's very good and that is something we definitely have to extend next time.

What can we expect in FurniPRO Asia 2014? What's your message to the exhibitors?

We are very grateful to receive the support of exhibitors even though this is a first-time event. I hope that we delivered according to their expectations. We will follow-through the idea to concentrate on one good central event in Southeast Asia for the woodworking machinery market and we will work very hard with the overseas associations in Europe, Japan and the US. Hopefully in the next two or three editions we can have a big, global machinery show up and running again in Singapore.

Views from the **sidelines**

I came here to know whether valued customers are interested in the show. When you compare to other shows like in Bangalore or Delhi, you get a minimum of 100 business cards. However, valued customers in those shows are only about 2-5%. Here in Singapore, I have learned that the customers are serious and interested in the technologies. Our members who are exhibiting here are very happy because there are a lot of qualified customers. It is better to have six really serious customers than 100 people who are not buying. I met visitors from the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and, of course, Singapore. From that point of view, I think the organisers did a good job. They also organised the Asian furniture manufacturing meeting here in Singapore during the show.

In comparison to China, European manufacturers have a long tradition here in the Southeast Asian market. We have been successful here since the 80's. We know the customers rely on good quality machines that European manufacturers can offer. We were the first who requested to have a show in Singapore because we remembered in the 90's that we had tremendous success. That show stopped due to several reasons including the Asian crisis in 1998. Also, the markets in other countries developed. Many of our members requested to let us do another exhibition here in Singapore, but unfortunately most of them just recovered from the financial crisis. It is not easy for them to create budget for new shows. They are a little skeptic at the beginning, but I think most of them would see that the show here had qualified visitors. I think for the next exhibition, in two years' time, we would see a lot more exhibitors.

The conferences were also good. The forum on green technology which discussed energy efficiency is very interesting. To make this show a success in the long term, we need to add a little bit more display space, more technologies and more companies to further attract the customers visiting this show. It is not easy to do so right away on the first show, but I think it would be a benefit to combine it with the furniture show or something similar.



Franz-Josef Büttfering
President, Eumabois



Christian Pozzan (L) and Canzio Costantini (R)

The quality of visitors is good, and hopefully next time it could be better. I mean, I was expecting better. If the organisers are to do another show, it should be on a convention where the supplier, customers and the machinery are in the same venue so we could meet up easily. The organiser might also look into the number of days and if it falls on weekend or weekdays to gather more customers.

Canzio Costantini
Managing Director
SCM Group Asia Pte Ltd



Generally the show is small, but the quality of visitors is very good. The people who are here are the decision makers. That does not mean we have signed many contracts but the people here are decision makers. We have made some new contacts which I am very happy about.

What needs to be accomplished for the next show is that it definitely needs to grow. It needs to have the support of various associations for the woodworking industry in Europe, that would be Eumabois, which is the European woodworking association, and in Germany would be the BDMA. If we can get the support of different associations, the show would be bigger. From our side, we want to build up and support such a regional show because going to small shows in different countries in this region has not really worked out. What we need is one central show in Southeast Asia for the machine manufacturers for the woodworking industry.

Henning Gloede
Managing Director
Siempelkamp Pte Ltd



Gabriele Nardin (L) and Loris Zanasi (R)

Our expectations of the show were met. We didn't expect more people because we know that this is a new exhibition. The people coming to this exhibition are really interested and do not waste our time. I also think that the marketing management people behind this exhibition did a good job in promoting the show. Obviously we like to have more contacts but in general, we are satisfied because we arrived here with low expectation.

This is the only show in the region that we are participating in. We stopped going to other exhibitions in Thailand and Indonesia two years ago. From our point of view, it makes more sense to have one strong exhibition in Singapore instead of several shows in Indonesia, Malaysia or Thailand where the people from the other countries don't come. If this show is able to attract more suppliers next time, then it becomes more interesting. For instance, it would be make more sense if my competitor is here. Customers want to see the innovations and new offerings, at the same time they also want to see the competition.

Gabriele Nardin
Sales & Marketing Manager
IMAL PAL Group



ASIA

Honestly, at the beginning, I was a little bit disappointed but during the three days I was here, I found out that the customers are really serious. It is not like in China - the show has a lot of people but not so many serious buyers. The quantity of visitors here may not be so huge, but the quality is very good. In fact, I met one serious customer from Denmark who wants to buy our equipment.

The organisers should work on bringing in more exhibitors and machines to the show. The more, the better! But the organisers did a very good job in promoting this show and they spent a lot of money compared to the smaller local shows.

Joe Chang
Managing Director
Kuang Yung Machinery Co., Ltd

I used to attend all the shows in this region and it is more for meeting existing customers and some friends who are also exhibiting. The people who visit this show know what they want. It is better not to have too many people in your booth because it gets very busy, but in the end you don't really give a good impact to the potential customers. There are too many shows in this region. It is a good idea to focus on one show in Singapore.

I prefer that this show doesn't coincide with the furniture show. I prefer an exhibition like this one where I talk with one person for a long time, rather than lots of people for just five minutes. The organisers did a good job but they have to wait for the economy to improve so many companies will exhibit and visit. It won't be easy. After the third edition, maybe there will be more visitors. It will depend on how the response is for them.

Karim Laidouni
Area Manager
Forezienne



The show rose above our expectations. For us, it is good because we came here to see new product lines. The response was pretty positive. The second thing is that the people who promised to show up, did.

I do hope that there will be more exhibitors next time because it's disappointing for customers to come here and leave after looking around for two or three hours. On the other hand, the benefit of a very small show is that nobody passes our booth without looking at it. Personally I am a big supporter of merging this show with a furniture show. This could bring in people. Singapore is the right place for a product show.

Christian Klingsberger
Head of Sales WOODTECH
Wintersteiger AG




This is a quality show with high-quality displays and customers. Some of the other machinery shows in the region have the size but very poor exhibit. We didn't have this kind of show for the last 10 years in the region, so I think this is a good start. We made the right decision to come to the show and we

hope that this show will grow.

From what I can see, the organisers have done a lot for this show. They are very experienced organisers and they know what to do to make this better. My hope is that if they can grow this show, double the size. This one is a good try. People really took the effort to come. I met people from neighbouring countries and even Australia.

W.K. Tan
CEO
Lignar Engineering Pte Ltd



DOMOTEX Hannover The world of flooring

The international floor coverings industry eagerly awaits its major event – DOMOTEX – which takes place in Hannover from 12-15 January 2013. Approx 1,400 companies from 60 countries will be showing their latest products and collections at the leading international trade fair for carpets and floor coverings. Some 40,000 trade visitors from more than 80 countries are expected in Hannover.

“DOMOTEX is the most important date in the calendar of the international carpet and floor coverings sector. No other event offers the industry such a popular and internationally acclaimed platform. The keynote theme ‘Flooring Deluxe’ reflects an important market trend in favour of premium floor coverings and clearly puts the focus of DOMOTEX 2013 on products that excel in terms of quality and design,” says Dr. Jochen Köckler, Member of the Board at Deutsche Messe AG.

In line with the DOMOTEX claim – “The World of Flooring” – every product group and trend will be showcased in detail at DOMOTEX in Hannover. Hand-made and machine-made carpets, textile and resilient floor coverings, parquet and laminates take pride of place, however equipment and products for floor laying, maintenance and applications technology will also feature in this impressive array.

Accordingly, the trade visitors come from the wholesale/retail trade, the field of architecture, interior design and the skilled trades. They obtain a complete market overview so that they can compare suppliers, products, terms and prices, as well as gain insights into the latest trends and developments. Some 54% of the visitors come from outside Germany and as many as 90% are involved in making their company’s purchase decisions. These figures put DOMOTEX at the top of the league of international trade fairs.

The keynote “Flooring Deluxe” puts the spotlight on premium products

Demand for high-quality flooring continues to grow, not only on the consumer market but also in the contracting sector. Whether for the home or commercial premises, modern design and top quality materials play an essential part in interior design concepts.

The keynote display “Flooring Deluxe” at the next DOMOTEX will focus on premium quality textile floor coverings, parquet and laminates. In order to showcase these products to best effect a special Flooring Deluxe display area has been dedicated to textile floor coverings in Hall 6. Another special area in Hall 9 has been allocated to high-quality parquet and laminate floors. Top-name exhibitors will stage presentations around the centrally located special areas.

The Concept Room idea is central to Flooring Deluxe and provides scope for exclusive product installations. These individual room settings – or modules – allow for the innovative demonstration of different types of flooring. Emphasis will be placed on inspiring and ground-breaking design ideas and presentations ranging from a lifestyle concept, a room design and a solution for commercial premises to a featured material and an unconventional installation. The intention is to illustrate the role played by flooring in the interior design concept. The Concept Rooms will be staged by some of the leading international companies exhibiting at DOMOTEX.

Innovative online services for DOMOTEX trade visitors

The Match and Meet service brings exhibitors and visitors to DOMOTEX together via the Internet. Trade visitors post their individual profile on www.domotex.de and indicate which products interest them most. Participants then automatically receive a hit list of the appropriate contacts and are able to contact the potential business partner directly.

DOMOTEX2go, a “mobile” trade fair guide, will once again be available at the next DOMOTEX. This smart phone guide features the most important online functions of the DOMOTEX website. DOMOTEX2go enables every trade visitor to select exhibitors, products and events and plan their own timetable at the trade fair accordingly. The guide also offers an interactive map of the Exhibition Grounds, including a navigation function. This application can be downloaded from www.domotex2go.de and is available as a free download from Apple’s app store. ■

Dubai WoodShow Preview



معرض الأخشاب
المعرض الدولي للأخشاب ومكان الأخشاب
WOODSHOW
Dubai International Wood & Wood Machinery Show
www.dubaiwoodshow.com

9-11 April 2013

innovative resources that can initiate new transactions. Dubai, the business hub of the Middle East, is the place where the global wood industry now meets annually.

With 16,000 sq m of space available to showcase more than 500 brands for exhibitors from over 30 countries, the show will feature wood products such as timber, hardwood, softwood, plywood, panels, MDF, wood flooring, treatment products, spraying equipment and raw wood materials in the Middle East region. Returning to the show will be local wood importer/distributors Gulf Timber Company, veneer specialist Danzer Group, international timber distributor PVS International, wood coatings supplier Sirca Spa, decor surfaces printer Schattdecor AG, Canadian association Quebec Wood Export Bureau, and machinery suppliers Cefla Middle East and Biesse Middle East.

The woodworking machinery sector will include a range of wood machinery, such as boring and combining machines, blades and knives, edgebanders, sanding, finger jointing equipment, plywood manufacturing machinery, wood accessories and components, and dust control equipment. Exhibitors are drawn from several countries famed for their technology - specifically Germany, Italy and China. Confirmed participants are Accutec Wood Tooling System Pvt Ltd, Qingdao Suba CNC Equipment Co Ltd, Wemhoener Surface Technologies GmbH & Co KG, Technoman Building Materials Trading (representing CMT Utensili SpA, BUP Utensili Srl, Collanti Concorde Srl, Astroflame, Brookhuis, Tigra Hartstoff, Nastrofex), Fein (offering metallic building materials), Hesse International GmbH and Fayek Abrasives FZC.

The programme for an accompanying seminar will be announced shortly by organisers Strategic Marketing & Exhibitions.

For more information, visit www.dubaishow.com ■



Delhiwood 2013: Gateway to great opportunities



Delhiwood 2013, 3rd Edition of the International Trade Fair for Woodworking Machinery, Tools, Fittings, Accessories, Raw Materials & Products will be held on 31 January – 3 February 2013 in India Expo Centre & Mart, Greater Noida, India. Delhiwood 2013 is organised by PDA Trade Fairs and co-organised by Eumabois.

Due to the demand from the Industry, the first ever Delhiwood was organised in Pragati Maidan, New Delhi in 2009. The second edition, held in 2011, underscored the need for a comprehensive exhibition to address the needs of the North Indian, North Eastern Indian and Central Indian markets.

The success of the first and second editions and the unanimous acceptance from the industry as the most definitive woodworking show for Northern India has encouraged the organisers to follow up with the third edition of Delhiwood. ■



What's new at Delhiwood 2013?

To make the event completely interactive and to provide tangible value to exhibitors and visitors, Delhiwood 2013 offers the following special events:

- Special zones for displaying activities of machines
- Prefixed B2B meetings
- Exclusive hall for non-machinery exhibits
- New exhibit profiles such as wooden doors, windows, flooring and parquetry
- Exhibition of 17,500 m² gross area.

In addition, Wood News, the Principal Official Publication of Delhiwood 2013, is planning to host a concurrent Seminar for timber importers, timber traders, manufacturers of furniture and other wood-based products, architects and interior designers. The organisers are expecting over 470 exhibitors and over 25,000 visitors for Delhiwood 2013.

EVENTS CALENDAR 2013

JANUARY	Start Date	End Date	Event	City
	12-Jan	15-Jan	Domotex	Hannover
	14-Jan	20-Jan	imm Cologne	Cologne
	17-Jan	20-Jan	ZOW Istanbul	Istanbul
	28-Jan	31-Jan	SURFACES	Las Vegas
	29-Jan	2-Feb	IMOB 2013	Istanbul
	31-Jan	3-Feb	DelhiWood 2013	Delhi
FEBRUARY				
	18-Feb	21-Feb	ZOW Bad Salzuflen	Bad Salzuflen
MARCH				
	5-Mar	8-Mar	Woodmac China	Shanghai
	5-Mar	9-Mar	MIFF	Kuala Lumpur
	6-Mar	10-Mar	EFE	Selangor
	7-Mar	10-Mar	Build+Décor	Beijing
	11-Mar	14-Mar	IFFS / AFS 2013	Singapore
	11-Mar	14-Mar	IFFINA	Jakarta
	11-Mar	14-Mar	VIFA 2013	Saigon
	13-Mar	17-Mar	TIFF 2013	Bangkok
	17-Mar	20-Mar	The Big Show	Muscat
	26-Mar	28-Mar	Domotex Asia/ChinaFloor	Shanghai
	27-Mar	30-Mar	Interzum Guangzhou	Guangzhou
APRIL				
	9-Apr	11-Apr	Dubai Woodshow	Dubai
MAY				
	6-May	9-May	Project Qatar	Doha
	6-May	10-May	LIGNA	Hannover
	7-May	9-May	gulf BID	Manama
	13-May	16-May	interzum Cologne	Cologne
	20-May	23-May	INDEX Dubai	Dubai
	23-May	25-May	IFMAC	Jakarta
JUNE				
	6-Jun	9-Jun	China Furniture & Woodworks	Dalian
	20-Jun	22-Jun	Furnitech Woodtech	Bangkok
AUGUST				
	21-Aug	24-Aug	Aseanwood Woodtech	Kuala Lumpur
SEPTEMBER				
	11-Sep	13-Sep	The Flooring Show Asia	Singapore
	11-Sep	14-Sep	FMC Shanghai	Shanghai
	25-Sep	28-Sep	VietnamWood	Ho Chi Minh
OCTOBER				
	2-Oct	4-Oct	NHLA Convention	Texas
	5-Oct	9-Oct	Intermob Turkey	Istanbul
NOVEMBER				
	8-Nov	11-Nov	DOMOTEX Middle East	Istanbul
	11-Nov	14-Nov	Indonesia Woodshow	Jakarta
	14-Nov	17-Nov	Index	Mumbai
	25-Nov	28-Nov	The Big 5 Show	Dubai

If you would like to add your event to our calendar, please contact Ms. Denice Cabel (denice@pabloasia.com).

Country	Organiser	Website
Germany	Deutsche Messe AG	www.domotex.de
Germany	Koelnmesse GmbH	www.imm-cologne.de
Turkey	Clarion SURVEY GmbH	www.zow.com.tr
USA	Hanley Wood LLC	www.surfaces.com
Turkey	ITE Turkey	www.itf-imob.com
India	PDA Trade Fairs	www.delhi-wood.com
Germany	Clarion SURVEY GmbH	www.zow.de
China	Deutsche Messe	www.woodmacchina.net
Malaysia	United Business Media (M) Sdn Bhd	www.miff.com.my
Malaysia	EFE Expo Sdn Bhd	www.efe.net.my
China	China B & D Exhibition Co. Ltd.	www.builddecor.com
Singapore	International Furniture Fair Singapore Pte Ltd	www.iffs.com.sg
Indonesia	PT. Kerabat Dyan Utama (Radyatama)	www.iffina-indonesia.com
Vietnam	Handicraft & Wood Industry Association of HCMC	www.vifaifair.com
Thailand	Royal Thai Government, Office of Export Promotion Activities	www.thailandfurniturefair.com
Oman	Omanexpo	www.thebigshow-oman.com
China	Deutsche Messe AG	www.domotexasiachinafloor.com
China	Koelnmesse Pte Ltd	www.interzum-guangzhou.com
UAE	Strategic Marketing & Exhibitions	www.dubaiwoodshow.com
Qatar	IFP Group	www.projectqatar.com
Germany	Deutsche Messe	www.ligna.de
Bahrain	Hilal Conferences and Exhibitions	www.gulfbidexhibition.com
Germany	Koelnmesse	www.interzum.com
UAE	dmg :: events	www.indexexhibition.com
Indonesia	Wakeni Kaigo	www.ifmac.net
China	Dalian Northern Int'l Exhibitions Limited Company	www.sinoexhibition.com
Thailand	Reed Tradex	www.furnitechwoodtech.com
Malaysia	Trade-Link Management Services Sdn Bhd	tradelink.com.my/woodtech
Singapore	ORIEL Events	www.theflooringshow.asia
China	Shanghai UBM Sinoexpo International Exhibition Co., Ltd	www.fmcchina.com.cn
Vietnam	Chan Chao International Co., Ltd	www.vietnamwoodexpo.com
USA	National Hardwood Lumber Association	www.nhla.com/convention
Turkey	TÜYAP Fair Convention and Congress Centre	www.intermobistanbul.com
Turkey	Deutsche Messe	www.domotex-middle-east.com
Indonesia	Strategic	www.indonesiawoodshow.com
India	Index Trade Fairs	www.indexfairs.com
UAE	dmg events	www.thebig5.ae

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EXHIBIT PROFILE

- Woodworking Machinery, Plants & Accessories for production of Sawn Timber, Veneer, Particle Board, MDF, OSB, LVL, Plywood & Panels
- Kiln Drying & related Timber Technologies
- Joinery Machinery, Machinery for the Furniture Industry, Wood-based Panels & Veneered Products, Manufacturers of Upholstered Products
- Machinery & Lines for Finishing
- Handling Equipment, Tooling, Woodworking Tools, Hand Tools, Portable Power Tools
- Fittings & Accessories (Hinges, Knobs, Handles, Other Hardware)
- Dust Extraction Equipment
- Products: Laminates, Veneers, Plywood, Particle Board, MDF, Engineered Wood, Moulded Plywood, Panel Products, Wood Composites, Sawn Timber
- Woodworking Materials & Consumables: Edge Banding Materials, Adhesives, Lacquers, Polishes, Finishes, Sanding Paper, Sanding Materials, Abrasives, Coatings, etc.
- Saw Milling Equipment, Accessories & Tools
- Wooden Doors, Windows, Flooring Parquetry
- Aluminium Kitchen Fixtures

VISITOR PROFILE

- Furniture Manufacturers
- Interior Decorators
- Architects & Builders
- Saw Millers
- Timber Importers
- Timber Merchants
- Wood Workers
- Hardware Distributors / Dealers / Manufacturers
- Plywood, Particle Board & MDF Manufacturers
- Craftsmen
- Manufacturers of Wood-based Articles
- Experts from Research Institutes
- Forestry Officials
- Government Officers, etc.

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