



BFM Update

The Association for British Furniture Manufacturers

www.bfm.org.uk/

www.greatbritishfurniture.co.uk/

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BFM Links

Press links for

- Suppliers to furniture trade
- Discounts on testing furniture
- Trade credit insurance
- Business

Business Contract Opportunity

Austria

Opportunity Title: *265 bedside tables*

An Austrian organisation is tendering for the supply of bedside tables

Contact Details

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Sale - Panel Sizing machine

The machinery and assets valuation company, *Marriott & Co*, has advised the BFM of the opportunity to purchase by tender on line a *2002 Giben Formula XY SPT Panel Sizing Machine (IDS)* - due to repossession.

If you are interested go to www.marriottco-auctions.co.uk/ to view or download the catalogue and also to lodge online bids. The machine is available to view by appointment only at a location in Buckinghamshire. Please call the offices on 01252 712083 to arrange an appointment. Offers are to be received by 3.00pm on Tuesday, 23 March 2010.

Quilters - the Great British Furniture Campaign boosts sales

The BFM and *Quilters* of Ruislip joined forces in November 2009 to launch the UK's first 'Great British Furniture Store'. The shop-front was adorned with banners and supported in-store with 'Ask If It Is' and 'Great British

insurance

- BFM logo



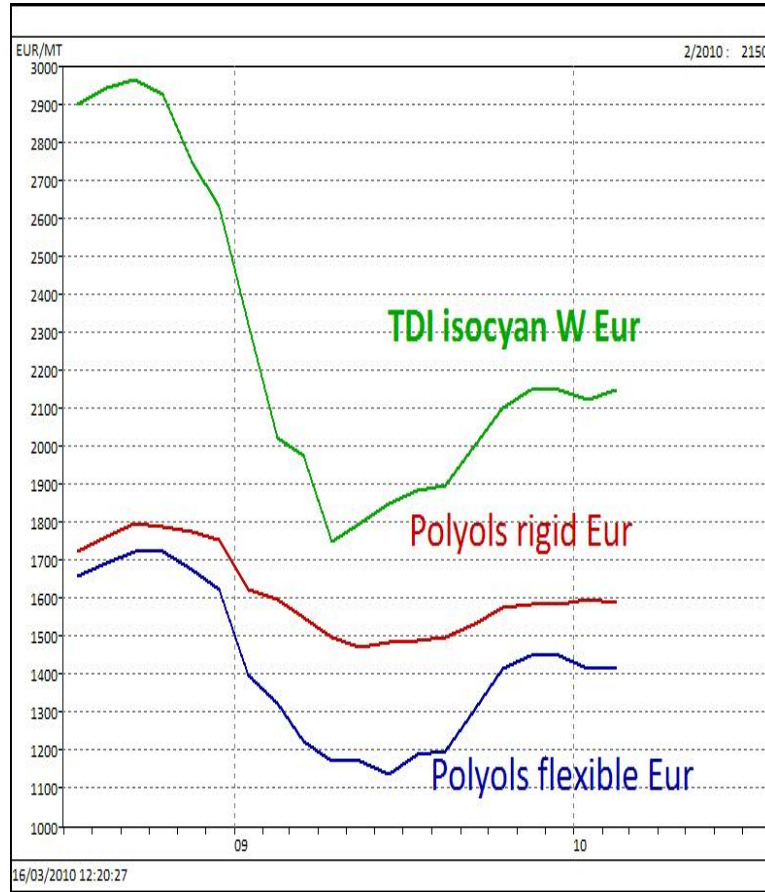
Furniture' logos highlighting furniture from the campaign members, as part of an initial 6 week campaign. The campaign proved so successful in sales that it was extended to the end of February 2010 and is now to be extended still further.

John Quilter has analysed sales from November 2009 to February 2010 and is pleased to share them with you. John would also like to pass on his experience with the following messages:

- ITIS suppliers' comparative indices are significantly higher than non-participating suppliers
- Some non-participating suppliers would have sold more under the ITIS marketing umbrella based upon the trends given below
- ITIS suppliers' comparative indices are significantly higher than Quilters department trends
- Footfall was significantly reduced during the four month period
- The winter weather has had more of an impact on trading this year
- Sales staff and customers enjoy talking about the "Made in Britain is best" message, it has a great feel good factor
- The statistics and comments underline the success of this new and refreshing campaign
- Quilters urge as many suppliers and retailers as possible to get on board and help sustain UK manufacturing and help uplift sales

*If you want a more detailed breakdown of sales
<http://bfm.org.uk/trade/news/news/QuiltersBFM.doc>
or if you wish to know more about joining the campaign
please contact adammason@bfm.org.uk*

Price movements - foam chemicals



Period covered – July 2008 to February 2010
 €and £
 per metric tonne

	Euros		Sterling		
Polyol Flex	Month/Year	€	Month/Year	£	See Note
Peak Value	Sept 2008	1725	Dec 2008	1481	
Low Value	June 2009	1140	June 2009	976	-34%
Year Av'ge	2008	1674	2008	1333	
Year Av'ge	2009	1288	2009	1149	-14%
Latest	Feb 2010	1415	Latest	1238	+8%
Polyol rigid	Month/Year	€	Month	£	
Peak Value	Sept 2008	1800	Dec 2008	1599	
Low Value	May 2009	1475	June 2009	1271	-21%
Year Av'ge	2008	1755	2008	1399	
Year Av'ge	2009	1542	2009	1375	-2%
Latest	Feb 2010	1590	Feb 2010	1391	+1%
TDI	Month/Year	€	Month	£	
Peak Value	Sept 2008	2965	Dec 2008	2397	
Low Value	April 2009	1750	April 2009	1569	-35%
Year Av'ge	2008	2846	2008	2266	
Year Av'ge	2009	1993	2009	1777	-22%
Latest	Feb 2010	2150	Feb 2010	1881	+6%

% in right hand column relate to rises or falls compared to the figure immediately preceding it – Sterling only - for example the latest TDI figure (February 2010) is 6% higher than the 2009 average price; the 2009 average is 22% less than the 2008 average price, and the difference from peak to trough is 35%



Business Links

Press links for

- Procurement - Supply2.gov
- Changes to the law affecting business

'Toxic sofa' claims fail

More than 300 people sued for compensation in group litigation for burns suffered from the DMF chemical used in the Land of Leather sofas made in China by Linkwise. The High Court has now ruled that they will not receive compensation. The insurers, Zurich, refused to pay out and argued at the court that the company had breached the terms of the insurance policy. The Court accepted this argument. The solicitors, Russell Jones and Walker which represented the litigants, said:

"Consumers must beware that buying products made in China is potentially dangerous and if something goes wrong they have less chance of redress.....unless this decision is overturned on appeal by the Court of Appeal a great injustice will have been done."

Land of Leather was placed in administration in January 2009 but a number of test cases covering sofas it sold which contained DMF - and which were not manufactured by Linkwise - go before the court in May.

'More money to stop unsafe imports.....

meanwhile the government has announced £300,000 of extra funding to help stop dangerous and unsafe products finding their way into British shops. We are told that the new funds will allow specialist Trading Standards officers to step up their operations at the UK's two largest ports, Southampton and Felixstowe. Trading Standards South East will receive £45,500 for their work at the Port of Southampton and Heathrow and Gatwick airports.

Worker on sick leave may carry over holiday into next leave year

Various European court cases last year seriously questioned whether the UK's Working Time Regulations were correct in specifically denying holidays not taken because of sickness in one leave year to be carried over to the next one (*see [BFM members' area](#) - Employment documentation – Notes on the working time regulations for full details*). By denying carry-over, the UK regulations were said to be incompatible with the European Directive.

An employment tribunal has now found that that the Working Time Regulations should allow annual leave not taken as a result of sickness to be carried over to the

- Financial support for business

following leave year. To get to this decision the tribunal inserted additional words into the Regulations to make them compatible with the European Directive and its underlying health and safety 'thrust'.

In Shah v First West Yorkshire Ltd, Mr Shah booked 12 days holiday but before taking it he suffered a broken ankle causing him to be sick for the whole of the holiday period and unable to return to work until the next holiday leave year. Mr Shah was paid sick pay and for the 12 days he had pre-booked, holiday pay. Before he returned to work he put in a claim to the Company to re-take the holiday when he was fit but was told that he had lost it.

The tribunal took as its point of reference the European Court of Justice's decision in the case of *Pereda*. It ruled that in order to comply with the European Working Time Directive, the Regulations must permit an employee who falls sick during a period of annual leave to take that leave at a different time, if necessary, in the following leave year. Mr Shah therefore had a right to re-allocate the holiday to the following leave year (although he has accepted that he will not get paid twice for the same holiday).

The tribunal added the following words to the relevant provision of the UK regulations: *that leave may only be taken in the year in respect of which it is due 'save where a worker has been prevented by illness from taking a period of holiday leave, and returns from sick leave, covering that period of holiday leave, with insufficient time to take that holiday leave within the relevant leave year; in which case, they must be given the opportunity of taking that holiday leave in the following leave year'.*

The case has important implications for private sector employers because their benchmark is national law (unlike the public sector where European Directives & interpretations have precedence). This tribunal however has effectively 're-written' the national law to be the same as the Directive so it would seem that both public and private sector employers' are now expected to allow holidays occurring during sickness to be re-allocated to a different time, even if this means that they are taken in a different holiday year. *(Note: Any contractual holidays paid over and above the minimum laid down by the regulations are not covered by this ruling)*

Although employment tribunal decisions are not binding on other tribunals, it is thought (but not guaranteed) that the same approach will be followed by the higher authority of

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the Employment Appeal Tribunals.

Proskills apprentice & learner awards

Proskills has launched the 2010 awards for apprentices and learners. The closing date is 31st May 2010 and the awards will be taking place in October/November 2010. Entry forms may be obtained from [Proskills](#). Awards include:

- Apprentice of the Year
- Advanced/Modern Apprentice of the Year
- Achiever of the Year
- Outstanding Learner of the Year
- Outstanding Employer of the Year
- Outstanding Training Provider of the Year

If you have any questions please contact:

Jackie Bazeley - 078111 96326 or 01235 437912
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E-learning courses for SMEs

Courses designed to educate and improve business skills are available from [learndirect-business](#), some of which are free such as *How to Win Public Sector Contracts*.



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