

'IT IS' Great British furniture campaign



We are pleased to announce the launch of an initiative designed to increase awareness of the key factors that make British made furniture great.

The **'IT IS BRITISH'** campaign was officially launched at The Furniture Show last month, with many BFM members displaying marketing material depicting the logo below.

A few incidents that I experienced at The Furniture Show in January:

I had the pleasure of meeting with a retailer from Japan. The gentleman concerned wanted to source a new upholstery supplier. We met to discuss his specific requirements in which he outlined that he wanted sofas that were 'typically British'. Whilst drinking our 'typically British tea', I asked 'What he considered 'typically British' to be. Could he describe it to me?' The succinct reply was;

“ *Large in size, comfortable in feel and traditional in style.* ”

We headed to see 3 or 4 exhibitors and the gentleman placed an order with a company and returned to Japan a happy man.

Next on my list was a retailer from Dubai. Again we talked about requirements. This time it was cabinet furniture on the shopping list - 'typically British cabinet furniture', to be precise. I asked the lady the same question as I had the Japanese gentleman earlier. The response this time was;

“ *Elegant, smooth, quite contemporary but not too contemporary in style but with distinctive quality craftsmanship.* ”

Again we visited a couple of stands before finding the product that met the requirements.

My third meeting of the day was with an interior designer from Russia whom I had met at a show in Moscow the previous year. She had been commissioned to re-design and furnish an exclusive city apartment. When discussing the specification she required the, by now, familiar answer came back - 'British'. 'British' I suggested could have many connotations and asked what it meant to her. The emphatic reply was as follows;

“ *The most fabulously designed, wonderfully manufactured, perfectly finished furniture. I want to create an impression of significance, luxury and style.* ”

All these comments were relayed to Mr. Andrew Harris, Managing Director of Andrew Harris Furniture, member of AIS and BSSA, who suggested;

“ *We buy British made furniture for the quality, the right look and the ideal design for the average UK home.* ”

'Typically British'. People can argue over the definition if they so wish. Although it meant three very different things to three very different people the key to me was that it meant something to all of them.

That will be one of the key outcomes of the **'IT IS'** Great British Furniture campaign.

As well as highlighting to the consumer the quality of and advantages of buying Great British furniture. Raising awareness of what Great British furniture actually is, will give the Great British furniture industry an identity in the eyes of the furniture buyer. We have such an amazingly diverse industry. It is traditional, contemporary and everything in between. It is furniture to suit any financial budget. It is furniture for the more morally or ethically aware. It is furniture for any age or generation.



Great British furniture can be what you want it to be.

The campaign is the brain child of Stuart Chadwick, Managing Director of Vale-Bridgecraft and BFM Director, who outlined the rationale behind the concept; "British manufacturing has been at the forefront in supplying British retailers for generations. A whole retail industry has prospered through it and the relatively new arrival of imported products does not preclude further growth. British manufacturers have some of the best products and designers in the world and can offer realistic delivery times, reliable after sales service, high standards of environmental management and employment for British workers."

Following initial discussions between the BFM Board of Directors, the campaign itself has gathered significant momentum because of demand from the consumer. At BFM, we have experienced a huge groundswell of enquiries over the last 12 months from members of the public wanting information about British manufactured product. We want to drive this demand into retail stores and use the logo as a point of recognition of what is a true British product".

Indeed, the development of the logo and marketing material is only the beginning and the long-term strategy looks to take things to the next level, as Mr. Chadwick explains; "This can be the beginning of a full blown national advertising campaign aimed at the public and supported in store with a comprehensive range of point of sale material".

For further information on the **'IT IS BRITISH'** campaign, please contact Roger Mason at rogermason@bfm.org.uk

Roger Mason



Suggested articles for publication should be e-mailed to info@bfm.org.uk

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European news

Exporters to France be warned!

Fire resistance of upholstery

The French proposed legislation on fire resistance of upholstery produced or imported and sold in the French territory has been sent to the European Commission for notification. The Commission will either confirm the compatibility of the measure with community law or enter into discussions with France with a view to removing the obstacle to free movement of goods with the Single Market.

Formaldehyde

The French legislation is pushing in the direction of the replacement of formaldehyde at source where other options exist. The UK legislation already requires this, though our exposure limits are currently not as strict. The main exposure for the industry will be through board material, but the manufacturers of the board will not be able to change until suitable lower risk alternatives are available for the resins.

Europe vs China

An anti dumping case against China is still being pursued by several European countries, however the application from when submitted to the European Commission was returned due to some administrative omissions.

BFM's expertise in demand

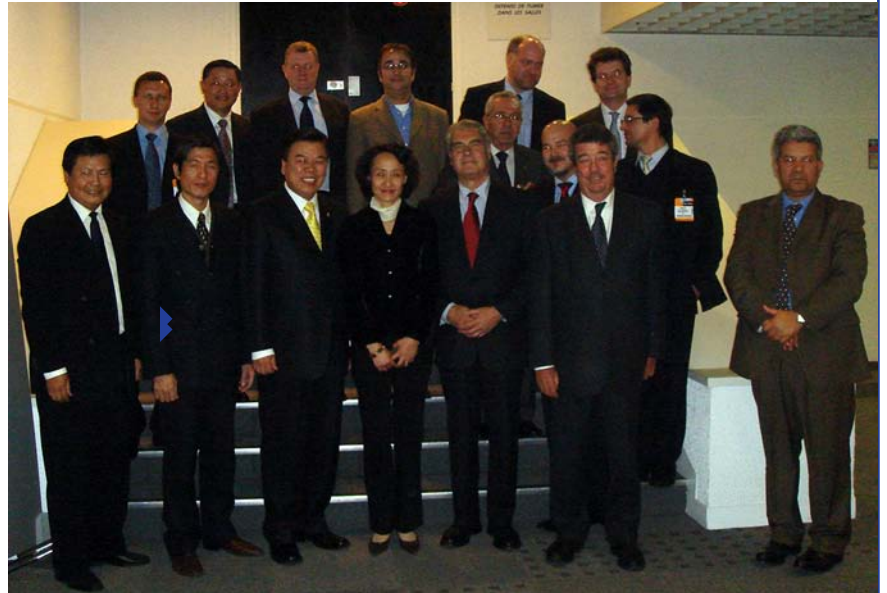
BFM has been invited by the EU to conduct assessments of Environmental and Health & Safety standards in Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Turkey.

World Furniture Organisation - one step closer

At a meeting in Paris during the Salon du Meuble on January 22nd 2007, 39 representatives from furniture manufacturers' organisations from all over the world decided to proceed with the creation of an organisation called the **World Furniture Confederation**. This will be formalised during the next world furniture congress to take place at the Shanghai furniture fair in September 2007. Mr. Rodrigo Rodriguez, Honorary President of the UEA, was chosen as the first president of the WFC.

The World Furniture Confederation will have members who are either supra national furniture manufacturers' organisations or organisations representing the furniture industry. The statutes will also make it possible for an entity that does not represent furniture manufacturers but is active in the furniture sector to become a supportive member.

39 countries were represented either directly or through the supra national organisations UEA and CAPFA. Excuses were received from the US and Israel.

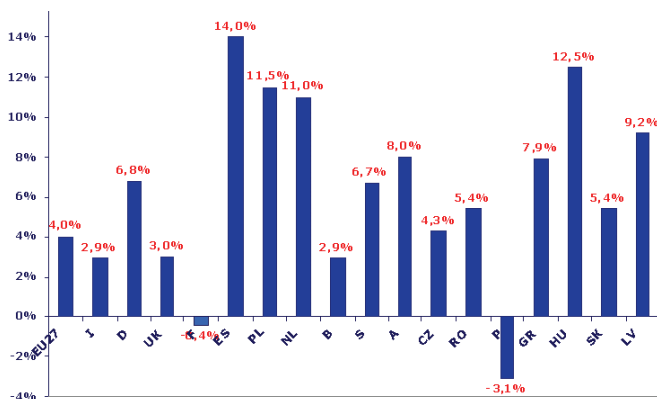


In picture from left to right

Bottom row: **Mr. Wang Mingliang**, Vice President CNFA, China - **Mr. Jack Chen**, Honorary President CAPFA, Taiwan - **Mr. Chang-Hwan Choi**, Chairman CAPFA, President KFFIC, Korea - **Ms. Zhang Bingbing**, Vice President CNFA, China - **Mr. Rodrigo Rodriguez**, Honorary President UEA, Italy - **Mr. Calixto Valenti**, President UEA, Spain - **Mr. Labidi Barhoumi**, Directeur Général CETIBA, Tunisia

In between row: **Mr. Mohsen Sellami**, President CSNIBA, Tunisia - **Mr. Bart De Turck**, Secretary General UEA

Top row: **Mr. Dmitry Yamshchikov**, General Director, Elburg, Amedoro, Russia - **Mr. James J. Yang**, Secretary General CAPFA, Korea - **Mr. Roger Mason**, Managing Director BFM, UK - **Mr. Abulcadir Coklar**, Mobder, Turkey - **Mr. Pavlos Kimtsaris**, Project Manager, UEA, Greece - **Mr. de Gouvion St. Cyr**, International Relations, UNIFA, France.



EU Furniture Production

Variation in furniture production in 2006 compared to previous year. 11 months for all countries except 6 months for NL.

The UK's furniture production registered 3% increase, greater than Italy.



UNION EUROPEENNE DE L'AMEUBLEMENT
EUROPEAN FURNITURE MANUFACTURERS FEDERATION
VERBAND DER EUROPÄISCHEN MÖBELINDUSTRIE

BFM will be supporting two shows this year:

Salone Internazionale del Mobile, Milan 18-23 April 2007

This year has seen the UK contingent increase space by over 50% in the main show. With the show attracting record visitor figures last year, some 223,138, UK companies are seeing the importance of the exhibition rising.

There will also be circa 25 young UK designers exhibiting at the Salone Satellite – a high design hall within the show.

Adam Mason, BFM Commercial Director, commented; “The show’s move to the new venue last year seems to have just increased the desirability factor of the exhibition, both from exhibitors’ and visitors’ point of view. UK companies see buyers from Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Asia and beyond as well as Western European visitors. The exhibition is a crucial part of a number of companies’ export strategy.”

• **Mebel, Moscow** • 12-16 November 2007

- BFM is pleased to announce that the association has secured ‘Key Event’ status for the Moscow show this year.
- Every year UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) considers applications made by Accredited Trade Organisations across all sectors to secure extra promotional and marketing funds for, what they consider to be, key Events.
- With exports to Russia increasing by 110%, across all sectors in 2006, BFM highlighted the Mebel show as one worthy of key event status and UKTI agreed.
- Meetings in the coming weeks between BFM, The British Embassy in Moscow, UKTI and other stakeholders will decide a strategy that will make best use of the increased funding and promote individual exhibitors and the wider British furniture industry as effectively as possible.
- Further details will be made available in the near future.



For further information on either the Milan or Moscow exhibitions, please contact Adam Mason at adam.mason@bfm.org.uk

environment

don't miss out

Reusable transit packaging

BFM is working with WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Programme) to organise a workshop on reusable transit packaging in furniture. The session follows on from WRAP sponsored research involving the trialling of reusable packaging on upholstered product sold by Argos, and kitchen work tops sold by B&Q.

The free packaging workshop is scheduled for the **24th April** at the Metropole Hotel near Birmingham. Key aims will be to present the findings of reusable packaging research and facilitate supply chain discussions to enable the uptake of reusable systems.

For further details contact Clare Wood at WRAP on 01295 819669 or Alistair Bromhead at BFM on 07932 674707

BFM's resource efficiency success is set to spread

Woodworking companies are being recruited for two new resource efficiency clubs. These follow on from the success of the South East club operated by BFM during 2006 which was the UK's first resource efficiency club specifically aimed at furniture and woodworking businesses. Potential savings of around £1 million were identified among the group of ten companies based in the South East with £330,000 of actual savings achieved to date.

Ten more companies are being recruited to the South East club and a further ten companies are required for a new club being established around Nottingham. Key target areas with saving potential include wood waste management, energy efficiency, the improvement of operational practices and water management.

The initiative has been sponsored by Envirowise, a Government funded initiative designed to secure cost savings through resource efficiency and cleaner technology. Savings have been identified through a series of open seminars and on-site consultancy – all of which is provided free of charge.

If your company is located in the South East or the Nottingham region, is involved in furniture or timber processes and is interested in saving money through resource efficiency, please contact Alistair Bromhead 07932 674707 or a@abromhead.co.uk

Environmental design of furniture

Recent statements by major retailers such as M&S and Tesco show that manufacturers will come under increasing pressure to demonstrate the environmental soundness of their products. Environmental design principles are key determinants of an item's environmental performance, with the consideration of issues such as material selection, material reduction, jointing techniques, component labelling, reparability and end of life potential for recycling and remanufacture.

By addressing such issues in a timely manner, UK manufacturers have the potential to gain a competitive advantage. BFM is leading a DTI sponsored project on environmental design and would like to hear from any furniture manufacturer interested in participating.

Please contact Alistair Bromhead 07932 674707 or a@abromhead.co.uk

statistics

Import and export data covering all sectors for the whole of 2006.

Detailed below are the percentage changes for the individual sectors:

SECTOR	IMPORTS	EXPORTS
DOMESTIC	+ 4.73%	+ 4.87%
CONTRACT	+8.12%	+20.13%
OFFICE	+12.88%	+5.92%
BEDS	-10.11%	-12.41%
KITCHENS	+7.61%	-12.41%

Key positives for specific individual countries are detailed below:

Domestic

- ▶ Poland – exports increased by over 110%
- ▶ Imports from within the EU decreased by over 5.5%
- ▶ Exports to Italy increased by over 30%
- ▶ Exports to Russia increased by nearly 90%
- ▶ Exports to Kuwait and Bahrain increased by 78% and 51% respectively

Contract

- ▶ Exports to Germany increased by nearly 80%
- ▶ Exports to Latvia and Czech Republic increased by 98% and 110% respectively
- ▶ Exports to Canada increased by over 70%
- ▶ Imports from within the EU decreased by over 13%

Office

- ▶ Exports to Belgium increased by over 175%
- ▶ Exports to Russia increased by over 53%
- ▶ Abu Dhabi and Dubai increased by 246% and 40% respectively

Beds

- ▶ Exports to Poland and the Czech Republic increased by 348% and 188% respectively
- ▶ Imports from within the EU fell by 2%
- ▶ Exports to Canada increased by over 75%
- ▶ Imports from China fell by a little over 12%

Kitchens

- ▶ Exports to Italy increased by over 1600%
- ▶ Exports to Greece increased by over 140%
- ▶ Exports to Norway nearly doubled
- ▶ Exports to Turkey increased by over 600%

The above provides a snapshot of some great successes that have been experienced in 2006. Let's hope the trend continues in 2007.

For further information on import and export statistics including individual countries respective figures, please contact Adam Mason at adam.mason@bfm.org.uk

projects

Improving competitiveness of the furniture industry

BFM is currently involved in two European projects with partners from other EU Member States:

Change up aims to develop resources and tools that will allow companies in the European upholstery sector to competitively restructure and to be better able to anticipate and manage change. The vehicle will be a range of European Centres offering support in the form of labour market intelligence, knowledge management, technology transfer, innovation management, international marketing and innovative models of industrial relations.

FIRST aims to support furniture manufacturers in restructuring to enhance their global competitiveness, through the development a data base of company practice supported by benchmarking tools. New product development and supply chain management lay at the heart of the project.

BFM Management Development Group

membership

The BFM Management Development Group (BFMMDG) is currently recruiting new members to join the existing group.

If you are:

- Aged between 25 and 40
- Employed as a manager, executive or director
- Wishing to significantly broaden your knowledge of the sector

then the BFMMDG will be of interest to you.

The BFMMDG provides a networking, benchmarking and knowledge sharing environment for the people who are the future of our industry.

The current membership is made up of individuals working in the following areas: Production, Marketing, Exports, Design, Customer service, Sales, Logistics.

And we are looking to increase the membership in terms of both numbers and to incorporate the whole supply chain to include retailers, components manufacturers and every sub-sector in between.

Regular meetings, overseas research trips and factory visits are just some of the activities undertaken by the BFMMDG.

For further information, to recommend a colleague, or to request an application form, please contact Adam Mason at adam.mason@bfm.org.uk

employment

Additions this month to the BFM model employment documentation contained within the members' area of the web site, under the section Recruitment, Probation and Induction:

- Job offer letter
- Age-neutral application form - including questions on the: Proof of nationality/UK residency – Home office requirements
- Equal opportunities monitoring form
- Questions relating to the rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Probationers – assessment form and model letters
- Induction checklist and record

www.bfm.org.uk