

industry news

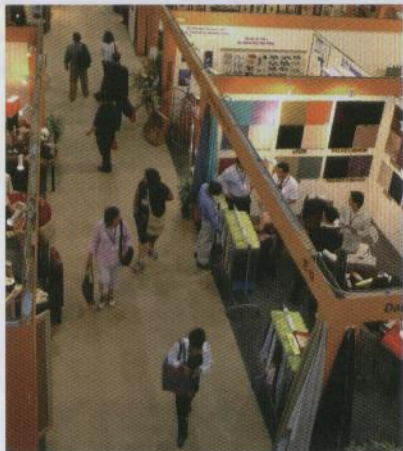
ASIA PACIFIC

IFFS/AFS 2006: Record Breaking Event

Singapore: The International Furniture Fair Singapore 2006/23rd ASEAN Furniture Show (IFFS/AFS 2006) generated a record yield of estimated US\$240 million of spot orders over the five-day event in early March at the Singapore Expo. The event is also expected to garner an additional US\$ 2.1 billion of follow-on sales for the year ahead.

The IFFS/AFS 2006 occupied six halls of the Singapore Expo, an increase of eight per cent in size from 2005 to a net exhibition space of 35,500 sq m. The number of new exhibitors also grew by more than 100 per cent, from 85 companies in 2005 to 176.

According to a press release by the organisers of the event, the show also registered the highest exhibitor and visitor count in its 23-year history with 505 exhibitors from 29 countries and 17,838 trade participants from 112



countries. There were 40 percent more foreign buying delegations than the previous year's event: from 48 buying groups to 77.

With more than 32,000 pieces of furniture and furnishing products featured, it had the largest collection of quality products in the Asean region.



Guest of Honour, Dr Vivian Balakrishnan speaking at IFFS2006.

Mr James Koh, President of the Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC) and Chairman of IFFS Pte Ltd, said: "Moving forward, the SFIC and IFFS Pte Ltd will be rolling out new initiatives geared towards improving the size, scope, and quality of the show. IFFS/AFS 2007 will see the implementation of 'Platform', a Design Entrepreneur Development Programme and the launch of the inaugural World of Woodworking Machinery 2007, or WOWMAC 2007. We are looking forward to staging an even bigger, better and more comprehensive show for our international audience next year."

IFFS/AFS 2007, together with WOWMAC 2007, will become the largest annual trade show in Singapore, with a net space of 42,000 sq m spread over seven halls of the Singapore Expo.

SFIC Launches Design Talent Incubation Programme

Singapore: The Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC) has launched a design talent incubation programme to partner leading furniture companies to hire and groom outstanding young design talents over the next three years.

The programme will leverage the annual Furniture Design Award (FDA) to identify 15 outstanding designers and award them with a one-year employment contract with some of the

country's top furniture companies over the next three years. The SFIC will fund the salaries of the designers for a year while they are on the programme.

In addition to the incubation programme, the SFIC will step up efforts to brand and market FDA to a higher profile. The council will also develop new platforms to showcase the winning furniture designs locally and overseas. Over the next three years, the SFIC will invest up to S\$1 million in the FDA and raise design standards in the local furniture industry.

Chairman of the Design Development Committee for the SFIC, Simon Ong said: "The primary aim of our initiative is to establish design as the bedrock of the industry's profitability by



furniture design award
Singapore

encouraging more local companies to incorporate original designs in the business models. The SFIC targets to increase the number of design-centric companies by about 30 percent in three years." It is hoped that with this strategy, the Singapore furniture industry can leverage design as a sustainable and strategic advantage to anchor its growth.

Sitra Holdings Receives Regional HQ Award

Singapore: Sitra Holdings (Int'l) Pte Ltd, a leading brand-centric distributor of furniture and wood-based products is first amongst local enterprises in the furniture industry to receive Regional Headquarters (RHQ) award.

The Group intends to leverage on the RHQ status to strengthen its key corporate infrastructure while continuing to enhance its market presence in key