

Furniture fairs expect orders to reach US\$2.1 billion

THE combined International Furniture Fair Singapore (IFFS) 2007 and the 24th ASEAN Furniture Show (AFS), which was held in Singapore from March 1-5, signed up an estimated US\$240 million of on-the-spot orders, with an additional US\$2.1 billion of follow-on sales expected, according to the organiser IFFS Pte Ltd. A total of 17,322 trade visitors, including 66 buying delegations from 17 countries, attended the show.

IFFS/AFS 2007 was the largest in its 24-year history, providing a useful platform for both the exhibitors and trade visitors. A record 510 exhibitors from 28 countries participated in the fair, with many taking up increased exhibition space. This resulted in the show being 10.7% bigger than last year's with 39,300sqm in net space spread across six halls at the Singapore Expo.

The combined fair showcased an excellent mix of Asian furniture designs juxtaposed against some high-quality international exhibits. With more than 35,000 pieces of designer furniture and furnishing products on display, IFFS/AFS 2007 offered both variety and quality buying opportunities. These included the largest collection of Chinese, Philippine, Indonesian, Taiwanese and Vietnamese furniture products, exhibited outside of the respective countries.

IFFS/AFS 2007 provided a match-making service between designers and manufacturers. A total of 92 first-to-market furniture prototypes by young designers from the region took part in



Officiating at the opening of IFFS/AFS 2007 are, from left: Andrew Ng, SFIC president; guest-of-honour Lim Hng Kiang, Singapore's Minister for Trade & Industry; and James Koh, chairman, IFFS Pte Ltd.

various design initiatives, including the annual Furniture Design Award, FLIP Challenge and the inaugural PLATFORM.

Craig Swift, client services manager of Sacred Earth, one of the 41 exhibitors from Vietnam at IFFS/AFS 2007, said: "We have exhibited at IFFS/AFS for three consecutive years and have always had successful shows. The 2007 show was by far the most productive for us with quality buyers from a large spread of regions and markets. We have already signed up for IFFS/AFS 2008, where we are confident of building on the success from the previous shows."

Steven Chew, COO of Sitra Holdings (International) Limited, Singapore, added: "We are pleased to see that IFFS/AFS has grown from strength to strength since its inception.

We see tremendous value in participating in IFFS/AFS because of the exhibition's ability to attract top international buyers and other industry professionals from all over the world. We were able to grow our sales directly and indirectly through the show and this show has become a must-attend in our annual marketing calendar."

Impressed with

the quality and variety of the show, Al-Karim Chatur, a VIP buyer from Eztia Furnishings, Canada, said: "Our participation at IFFS/AFS 2007 was a huge success. We have always found the Singapore show to be our treasure trove. And as the saying goes, 'the early bird catches the worm', IFFS/AFS has proven to be our gold mine and by placing it as the first show to visit in the ASEAN furniture trade show circuit, we have always been able to achieve what we want."

Echoing similar sentiments, another VIP buyer, Nicholas Pastos from Narde Ltd, Cyprus, said: "Once again, IFFS/AFS was very well organised and my colleagues and I were able to find a myriad of good designs and high-quality furniture at the exhibition."

IFFS/AFS will return from March 1-5 next year and will occupy seven halls at the Singapore Expo, expanding the show space by more than 12,000sqm.

Said Quek Chin Tuan, CEO of IFFS Pte Ltd: "We have taken into account the feedback ... from trade visitors and exhibitors and will be moving the dates of the fair closer to the China shows. IFFS/AFS 2009 will be held from March 8-12. Our objective is to ensure that IFFS/AFS continues to respond to the needs and demands of industry players by minimising travel inconveniences which will allow for more effective scheduling of itineraries." **ra**

For more updates on IFFS/AFS 2008, please visit www.iffs.com.sg



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