



interzum in Germany attracts many suppliers of components to the furniture industry.

innovations and design, presented for the fifth time by Koelnmesse in collaboration with red dot, gave prizes to 43 products which were presented in their own special exhibition for the duration of the trade fair. *The next interzum event will be held 13–16 May, 2013.*

### Record sales at MIFF

The Malaysian International Furniture Fair (MIFF) 2011 ended after hosting more than 6,500 overseas buyers from 140 countries with US\$778 million sales generated during the five days, surpassing last year's figure of US\$755 million.

The global economic recovery has spurred a robust growth in the property market evident in the increased demand for office and home furniture at the fair.

Held for the 17th consecutive year, MIFF 2011 showcased a wide range of furniture from 500 exhibitors including local and foreign furniture makers from countries such as China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Taiwan, Thailand, Singapore, South Korea, USA, Japan and Egypt. The fair received encouraging feedback from both exhibitors and international buyers, with many exhibitors making bookings for larger exhibition space next year.

More than half of the international buyers were from ASEAN (21.4%), Europe (14.5%), Far East (13.4%) and the Middle East (11.9%). The event saw a significant

increase in buyers from the Middle East, India and Africa. International buyers were encouraged by the high quality and competitive pricing of furniture showcased at the fair.

Overall, exhibitors were pleased with the show which attracted many quality buyers. Many noted that there was a slight decrease in the number of buyers compared to last year but were pleasantly surprised by the fast pace of negotiation in terms of purchase orders and business from non-traditional markets.

"It has been a real eye-opener. I am pleased with the traffic and the business written. People actually come in and give you [purchase orders] and down payments. They want to do the business on the spot," remarked Bob Hudgins, business development manager for Hume Furniture Industries.

Safari Office System director David Kiew said that the company received more buyers at his booth. "Enquiries for our office furniture at MIFF have been increasing year by year. This time, we saw a 10–15% jump in sales compared to last year," he said.

One of the MIFF 2011 highlights was the Ideation Award organised for the second year which targets young designers from local institutions to come up with innovative and creative furniture design. This year's competition was themed "New Urbanism, Innovation and Sustainability" and included prototyping of the shortlisted designs.

The international judges highlighted the higher standard of entries as well as the technical advice from participating manufacturers who produced prototypes for the 11 contest finalists. The judges also felt that many of the final designs possessed commercial potential.

*MIFF 2012 will be held from 6–10 March next year.*

### Positivity at Proposte

Journalists at the inauguration ceremony for Proposte seemed to agree on one point: "If the Americans turn up, we'll know the recession is finally behind us". And turn up they did; 268 American visitors attended this year, a 21% increase compared to last year.

Overall attendance at Proposte 2011 dropped by 2.69% compared to figures from 2010. Interestingly enough, there was an increase in foreign attendance: this

The supporting programme for this year's fair included a forum for interior architects, tradesmen, architects, designers and property developers. "The forum has been a great success for us. We were delighted to welcome so many architects, our target market, and other visitors as well, and call their attention to our innovations," adds Julia Sohler, marketing communications officer at Blum GmbH. The interzum award for material









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