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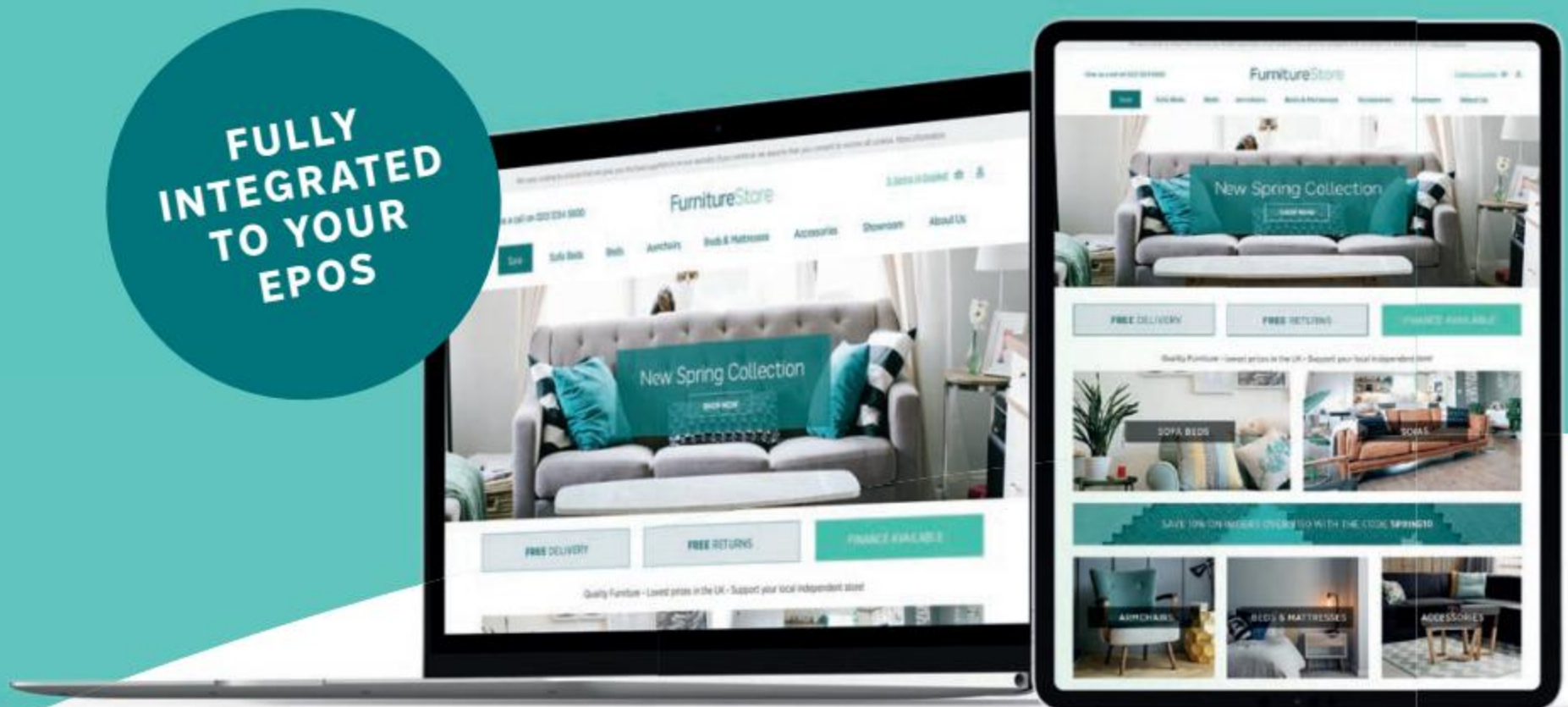


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Here's to a better 2021

We may have said good riddance to the old year, but many uncertainties and challenges remain to be faced

By the time you read this we should (but as so many deadlines have been and gone, who knows) have learned if the UK and EU managed to strike a last-minute trade deal or we are now on WTO terms where tariffs will add to the cost of products.

At the time of writing, hopes are pinned on a 'narrow path'. Regardless of the outcome, businesses should have had far more preparation time to adapt to the new situation. As things stand no-one knows what anything will cost from 1 January as the situation on tariffs is unknown.

Lyndon Davies, Hornby ceo, summed up what I think will be the feelings of many. 'We as a country, we're shuffling the deckchairs as the *Titanic* is sinking. People who are having these talks just don't understand how the real world operates. They think at the last minute they can come up with a solution. People are going to be losing jobs. You've got a pandemic, you've got Brexit, you've got a container shortage. It's chaos.'

As Davies mentioned, the pandemic has played havoc with shipping, with containers in the wrong place, shipping lines hiking prices as expected, retailers unable to get their hands on products and manufacturers trying to get hold of raw materials. I fear this will drag on for a while.

Obviously 2020 was a dreadful year for exhibitions, with basically everything from March onwards cancelled, other than some events in China. Even with a rollout of vaccines it looks like events planned for the first third of the year will still be very much in doubt.

Even if vaccination programmes go perfectly, it is going to take months and months for it to reach those not in the vulnerable categories, and then another month for the vaccine to work. How many people, having been through a year or more of risk, will want to visit an exhibition centre, where even with the best will in the world social distancing will be a problem? And as show organisers repeatedly said during last year, these are not decisions that can be left to the last minute.



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Whitemeadow reveals its plans for 2021.
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UK Flooring Direct looks to swell workforce

Online flooring retailer UK Flooring Direct has set out ambitious plans to boost its workforce.

The company wants to increase staffing numbers from 170 to reach 300 by the end of 2021.

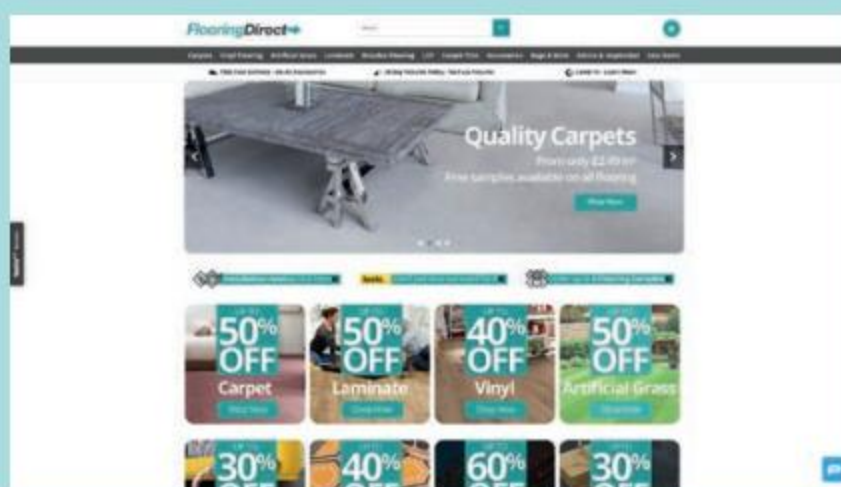
The move came after it achieved a record sales week during Black Weekend. It says it took 1,400 orders on Black Friday alone – up 87% on 2019 – at an average of 27sqm, and 81% higher for the full week.

'Black Friday was our biggest ever day of sales as we took 1,400 orders, starting shortly after 7am, with the final order in the minutes before midnight. In terms of geography, we saw orders from as far north as Inverness and as far south as Truro. It takes a real team effort to pull off these kinds of figures and to fulfil those levels of orders, as well as quite considerable planning. We're very pleased to have achieved another record-breaking day and it sets us up for further growth through to the end of the year and into 2021,' says Josh Ashby, UK Flooring Direct chief commercial officer.

'This has been a really difficult time for the whole country and now, more than ever, people have been investing in their homes, due to the fact that we are all spending more time there. We were growing very quickly but there is no

doubt that lockdown has accelerated the pace of growth in online retail and we have invested heavily in people and technology to be at the forefront of the flooring market. The success wouldn't be possible without such a fantastic team in place across each and every department,' says Jason Ashby, UK Flooring Direct chief executive and founder.

In October the company opened a second warehouse and office, and in November it secured £8m of funding from investment group BGF.



The company's website: Black Friday orders were up 85% on 2019

MIFF pushed back to September 2021

Next year's Malaysian International Furniture Fair (MIFF) has been postponed until September 2021 in the face of the pandemic.

The show, which was to have taken place from 8-11 March will now take place from 1-4 September.

The March event will be replaced by the second online MIFF Furniverse. Launched in August 2020, MIFF Furniverse attracted 70 exhibitors and 922 total visits of buyers from 84 countries and regions. It also brought new buyers (30% of the total) who have not visited MIFF before to start sourcing from MIFF exhibitors. Over 2,400 business leads have been generated and exhibitors expected a US\$1.16m in sales.

'We feel that the new dates will offer our exhibitors and buyers the best experience, while offering the industry the opportunity to convene and trade virtually in the meantime,' says Tan Chin Huat, MIFF chairman.

Emma plans for retail expansion

Bed company Emma has hired former Sealy sales and marketing director Neil Robinson as sales director UK & Ireland as it looks to expand its retail presence.

'By leveraging the remarkable brand awareness in retail stores, Emma will be able to reach those 50% of consumers who still prefer choosing their bed in-store



rather than shopping online. Also, an in-store presence helps to develop Emma's brand profile for consumers who are not regular ecommerce users. Retail and ecommerce will complement each other perfectly,' says Robinson.

'The UK and Irish retail structure is complex and diverse. It ranges from big bricks-and-mortar nationals to small,

local, independent businesses. My objective is to add a degree of clarity and experience to the Emma retail initiative that will complement the world-class work already undertaken and take us to clear brand leadership in the UK and Ireland in 2021,' he adds.

'From the outset we have relied on co-operating with the established retail sector in addition to digital sales channels. This omnichannel approach has become one of the keys to Emma's success. In his role Neil has thus set himself no lesser goal than to replicate in the retail sector the huge success that Emma has had in the UK's and Ireland's direct-to-consumer business,' says Dennis Schmoltzi, Emma ceo.

The company saw sales more than double over November's Black Weekend, selling a mattress every two seconds at peak periods.

The company sold €23m of mattresses over the 27-30 November weekend, a jump of 156%. In the UK, where prices were cut by 35%, it sold 25,000 mattresses.

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JYSK plans more stores

Furniture and furnishing retailer JYSK is to push on with its expansion in the UK and Republic of Ireland. The chain says it will open five more UK stores by the end of August and eight in Ireland.

The announcement came after a 74% increase in sales to €41m as the two operations were combined.

EBIT profits rose by 69% to €2.9m, as the Ireland operation made a profit in its first year.

The chain says online sales jumped by 24% in the year to the end of August as the pandemic closed stores. It was able to retain all staff, and increasing sales and improving trends as the year progressed led to an increase in the number of employees since stores re-opened during the summer.

'Whilst it has been a tough year for retail in many ways, we are very pleased with the results. In Ireland, we were able to contribute positive EBIT after just one full financial year. Whilst the EBIT result is not yet at our target levels, to be able to achieve this positive result alongside the significant level of investment and expansion we have done is quite remarkable,' says Roni Tuominen, JYSK UK and Ireland country manager.

'We've seen great improvements and positive trends in



JYSK plans to open 13 additional stores across the UK and Republic of Ireland

the UK towards the latter part of this year following the merger of the UK and Irish organisations. This turnaround project that started in June has already resulted in significant growth on our sales and customer numbers. UK customer numbers alone grew by 55% compared to last year.

'We are very confident in both the UK and Ireland markets and we will continue with our expansion plans over the next 12 months. The appetite is there for home furnishing products amongst our customers, perhaps now more than ever as the nation continues to spend more at time at home and invest in creating comfortable, hygge-inspired interiors that are synonymous with our Danish heritage.'

Virus and flood fail to dampen Housing Units profits

Housing Units managed to increase profits after almost maintaining sales in its past financial year, despite being hit by the pandemic and flooding disruption.

In the year to 29 March, sales dipped from £24.87m to £24.61m but pre-tax profits rose from £1.498m to £1.579m.

'Trading was disrupted in the final weeks of March 2020 due to the restrictions put in place by the UK Government from coronavirus and also due to localised flooding and resultant damage in part of the retail site. Turnover for

the period was on course to exceed that achieved in 2019 had it not been for these events,' says the company.

Lockdown 'had a significant impact on trading volumes throughout this period, with the business solely trading online from the end of March until the beginning of June 2020. During this lockdown period online trading performed well, and as soon as retail premises re-opened total trading volumes, in-store and online, significantly exceeded normal levels for that time of year as customers

spent more on their homes rather than going on holidays.'

The Failsworth, Manchester furnishing department store's

annual dividend rose from £600,000 to £850,000. During the year staff numbers rose from 254 to 262.

Pete Walker: 1942-2020

Pete Walker, Breasley co-founder died on 26 November 2020. He was 78 and had suffered from heart disease, diabetes, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's.

Walker and his business partner, Alan Crowshaw, launched Breasley Pillows in 1974, trading from market stalls, and formed it as a

limited company in 1977. The business grew to a turnover of £38m in 2018, employing over 200 people in three factories.

He was loved by family and colleagues and will be missed dearly. He is survived by his wife Victoria, son Richard and daughters Tara and Keeley.

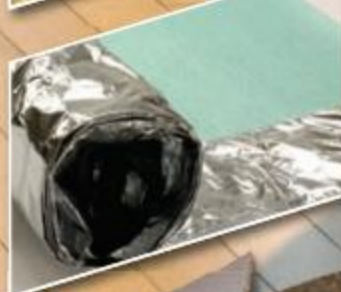
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David Morrison, Planet Furniture, Glenrothes, October 2020.

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marketing produced a steady flow of customers
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and we beat target!"**

Cy Fogel, You're Furnished, Essex. August 2020

**"We took 6 months turnover in the 3 weeks
[with no problems at all] and have recovered our
lockdown losses. This Greenwood Sale
has surpassed all my expectations!"**

James Fraser, M.D., Blackbridge Furnishings, Inverness,
Elgin and Fort William. July 2020

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Victoria hails 'extraordinarily strong' quarter

Victoria Group has hailed the 'extraordinarily strong' quarter post-lockdown, which saw a surge in sales and increased profits.

'The UK & Europe Soft Flooring division delivered an extraordinarily strong performance. Despite lockdown for the first 10 weeks of FY21, EBITDA for the six months overall was similar to the prior year at £19.2m, with post-lockdown revenue 21.2% higher than for the equivalent period last year, and post-lockdown EBITDA margin some 500bps higher on a like-for-like basis. This is pure organic growth,' says the group.

It said it had seen record orders for cut-length carpet, and logistic and productivity investments had paid off, such as refurbishing Interfloor's rubber underlay production lines which increased machine availability by 9%. Other measures included producing different carpet types at differing factories regardless of brand – production at Abingdon is 30% higher than last year with 12% fewer employees – and the three distribution centres are cutting and delivering 45% more orders with 25% fewer employees.

Operating margins for the half-year to 3 October increased from 13.8% in FY20 to 15.2%, and to 18.5% excluding the lockdown period. 'Consequently, the carpet and underlay division outperformed all of our key competitors – domestic and overseas – in the market,' it says.

Sales for the half-year were £126m, down 10.4%, with June to September accounting for £94.3m. A warehouse for carpet rolls at the Abingdon site should be completed by the end of March. The reorganisation has also given the group scope for 20% extra production without further investment.

'Given our strong, on-going operational performance due to strong demand for our products and the margin-enhancing actions made in FY20, together with having both the capital and the opportunity to make very meaningful acquisitions, the board expects the next 12 months to be transformational for Victoria,' says Geoff Wilding, Victoria Group executive chairman.

No more Ikea catalogues

Ikea has ended production of its printed catalogue after 70 years. At its peak it distributed 200m copies a year. The summer 2020 edition is the final one.

'For both customers and co-workers, the Ikea catalogue is a publication that brings a lot of emotions, memories and joy. For 70 years it has been one of our most iconic products, which has inspired billions of people across the world,' says Konrad Grüss, md of Inter Ikea Systems, the worldwide Ikea franchisor.

The end of the catalogue, both online and in print, comes as the group increasingly moves online, with its websites receiving four billion visits.

Founder Ingvar Kamprad created the first Ikea catalogue in 1951, distributing 285,000 copies in southern Sweden. Production peaked in 2016 with 200m copies, in 69 different versions, 32 languages and to more than 50 markets.



Rolfe signs on £4.5m hub

Flooring wholesaler Rolfe Carpets has acquired a new distribution hub for almost £4.5m.

It has purchased a unit on Shorten Brook Way in Accrington, Lancashire from IT infrastructure company Exertis (UK). It will take over the 125,000sqft building in six months, providing it with space for long-term expansion, with the potential for the development of neighbouring land in the future.

'We have been looking at this property for quite some time and it is perfect for our needs in terms of location, size and quality. The building itself is relatively new and in a very good condition. Despite the obvious challenges posed by the Covid-19 situation, our solicitors Schofield Sweeney were able to complete the transaction at short notice. The support from Schofield Sweeney and our lenders, Yorkshire Bank, was invaluable and I am delighted with the result,' says Barry Lockwood, Rolfe Carpets md.

30 for Frank's

Two months after opening its 29th branch, northeast of England flooring chain Frank's the Flooring Store has reached the milestone of 30 stores.

Some £70,000 has been invested in refurbishing a 3,500sqft store on South Road, Alnwick.

The store is operated by business partners Gareth Booth and Andrew Birbeck, who also run the Frank's stores in South Shields and Ashington.

'We're delighted to have been able to bring a new Frank's the Flooring Store to the wonderful town of Alnwick. We are in a fantastic location just off the main road into the town from the A1, and opposite Aldi, and we are already experiencing excellent footfall,' says Booth.

'Opening the 30th Frank's the Flooring Store represents a fantastic milestone and we're pleased that we had the opportunity to do this in Alnwick. It's our most northerly store in the region and now means that we have Frank's stores stretching from Alnwick to Teesside, with more in the pipeline,' says Mike Spruce, Frank's area manager.

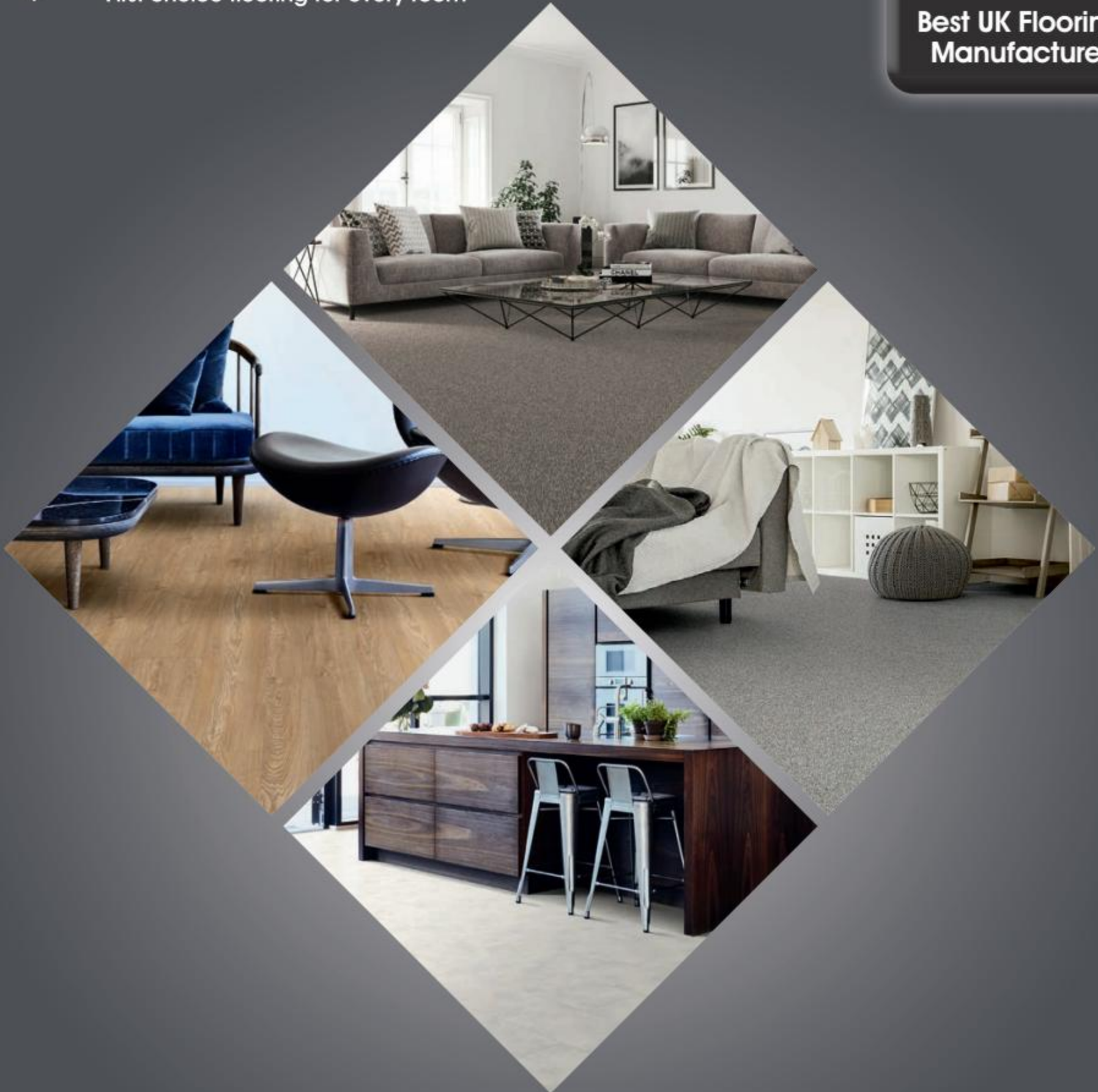


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There were also many positives. **Carefree Twist** was the No.1 selling point of 2020, leading to the launch of **Carefree Ultra** – both featuring our revolutionary, award winning Combi-bac® backing.

Essential Vinyl has been an excellent seller, ticking all the boxes for families; price, durability, convenience and easy maintenance, available in a selection of stylish mixed plank & tile decors.

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NEW PRODUCTS



1 Tako, Japanese for octopus, is **Maruni's** latest collection of solid wood chairs and tables. The curvature of the back and arms echoes the sea creature's distinctive profile. **Visit: www.maruni.com**

2 The SoftStep collection of cushion vinyl from **Abingdon Flooring** is the perfect accompaniment to the British manufacturer's carpet ranges. Featuring on a stylish lectern display, SoftStep complements Abingdon carpet in bathrooms, kitchens and utility spaces, bringing underfoot comfort, ease of

maintenance and natural style, and offering the optimum cross-selling opportunity. **Visit: www.abingdonflooring.co.uk**

3 Derived from its successful Baseline, **Eilersen's** Gotham has rounded shapes, teddy bear stuffing, flap edges and an angled back 6cm higher than Baseline. **Visit: www.eilersen.eu**

4 **Louis de Poortere** has announced its top-selling rugs of 2020 for the UK, with the Mad Men collection taking four of the top

five slots. Griff in Columbus Gold takes the top spot, inspired by the creative energy of 1960s New York and woven in a combination of cotton chenille and high gloss polyester. **Visit: www.louisdepoortere.com**

5 The S 32 VH barstool and S 32 VHT low barstool represent **Thonet's** response to the trend for standing tables and counters – in restaurants, in agile workspaces and in the home. S 32 VH (pictured) has a seat height of 75cm and S 32 VHT is 65cm. **Visit: www.thonet.de** → → →



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NEW PRODUCTS

6



6 Diesel Living with **Moroso** has added to its Overdyed Collection with armchairs, padded seats and stools. The new Overdyed Padded line maintains the collection's existing structures of painted steel tubing while updating them with padded seat cushions and backrests.

Visit: www.moroso.it

7 Exclusively available on Comfytex Deluxe by **Leoline**, PROTEKT is an antibacterial and anti-mould treatment that doesn't wash or wear off. Ensuring that cushion vinyl inhibits the growth of common bacteria such as e-coli, MRSA and staphylococcus aureus, PROTEKT delivers a more hygienic floor for today's homes.

Visit: www.leoline.co.uk

8 As a centre of technical expertise, **The Academy for Excellence in Flooring** provides the knowledge and skills to overcome challenges that can adversely affect the quality of LVT installations. With LVT susceptible to movement in relation to the ambient environment, use of the correct methods and right finishing products is a significant factor in an installation's long-term viability.

Visit: www.quick-step-academy.co.uk

9 Originally launched last summer, **Adrenalina** has launched a new version of its Leo upholstery, Leo Green, using the new Oceanic material by Camira Fabrics, a 100% recycled polyester fabric made from the plastic waste that pollutes beaches and oceans, the result of the SEAQUAL project.

Visit: www.adrenalina.it

10 **Floorwise** has a new rewards promotion, earning points across underlay including Floorwise branded underlay, plus grippers, profiles, adhesives and screeds. With rewards from smart speakers to TVs and wine to coffee machines, flooring's biggest promotion is packed with all the gadgets you want but can't always justify. The promotion runs until 30 June 2021.

Visit: www.floorwise-rewards.co.uk

7



8



9



10



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Richard Renouf

The lockdown effect

Complaints about mattresses with mysterious faults are on the up

Lockdown seems to have affected people's beds. When they find it difficult to sleep, it's always the bed's fault, and just lately I've been fielding a lot of calls and emails about 'faulty' mattresses. Usually there's no information about what the customer thinks the fault actually is.

Louise's email simply said: *We are in need of an independent bed technician to come and take a look at our mattress, which we believe is faulty. [The retailer has] already sent its bed technician out to us and he said it was wear and tear. We've had it less than a year and it's barely been slept on, so we'd like someone to take a look at it independently.*

My response was (I think) tactful but cautious. After all, the cost of inspecting a mattress is usually a significant proportion of the original price. If the mattress is of any age, a replacement would be cheaper. I said:

Most bed complaints I deal with are simply 'settlement' (or hollows appearing where you lie on them). This is not a fault because natural upholstery materials (eg cotton and wool) will matt down and until the whole surface of the mattress has had even use, there will appear to be a difference between the used and less-used areas. Perhaps you could send me more details and pictures so I can advise you.

Louise sent me some pictures and a video. Her 'proof' that the bed was faulty was that if you put a ball on it, the ball rolled away, usually settling into one of the dips caused by the tufts. No thought had been given to the natural shaping of the mattress, nor whether or not the bed was level. This is not a method of testing a mattress that I would endorse. But the pictures did give me a lot of useful information, and I offered my comments.

Your mattress has a pillow top. There's a very thick top layer of upholstery stuffing



Louise complained her year-old mattress was faulty

which is made to look as if it's a separate duvet-like attachment. In this will be layers of fillings like cotton, polyester and wool which always settle during use.

There is no industry standard for this as each type of filling will settle (flatten) at a different rate, but the rule of thumb that I consider to be reasonable is that this should not be more than 40% of the overall thickness of the fillings. That's a lot, and from the look of your mattress you have at least 100mm of upholstery layers so dips of 40mm would still be okay. As the mattress is tufted (buttoned) this would be measured by using a straight edge sitting on the mattress or a cord stretched over it to give a reference line and then measuring the high spots between each of the tufts.

When you lie on the mattress you compress the springs and fillings. The only

difference between your mattress now compared to when it was new is that the fillings don't recover their height, but you are getting the same support from the same quantity of fillings when you lie on them.

I hope that helps you to understand why I wouldn't recommend you to pursue a complaint.'

Perhaps the stress of lockdown or the limited amount of activity allowable was affecting Louise's sleep, but I couldn't suggest this in my email.

On a stressful day, I've noticed that my driving isn't as good as normal. Perhaps there's something wrong with my car... Visit: www.richard-renouf.com

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That was the year that was

Our correspondents breathe a sigh of relief as they put 2020 to bed and look ahead to fresh challenges. Cue the cheeky monkeys...

THE MANUFACTURER

Core Products

There is no doubt that 2020 will go down as one of the most memorable years, for all the wrong reasons.

Looking back to the January Furniture Show of 2020, the talk was still about new products and ideas, and the lockdown in China was something of a side topic. At the show we introduced our environmental initiative with the intent to plant a tree on behalf of all visitors to our stand.

By March the situation was escalating here in the UK but Stuart Wallace, Core Products director and myself, set off to Brazil regardless to personally oversee the planting of 600 trees. On the Saturday morning we finished and in the afternoon lockdown

was announced and the mad scramble to get home began. At least we could be sure we had done what we set out to do, and although the pandemic has had a dreadful effect on our everyday lives, we all hear the upside is the environment has benefited from the reduction in carbon emissions as we travel around less.

With so many years in the furniture trade you would think nothing would surprise us and over those years we have heard just about every excuse in the book for delays, but to be informed of a shortage of raw materials in 15 years' time is an absolute first. With little human activity in the Brazilian pine forests over the past six months the

local wildlife has flourished, especially the local monkey population. The species indigenous to the area is the black-capped capuchin, and being left to roam freely and undisturbed has led to a population explosion. These cheeky monkeys enjoy nothing more than stripping the bark off young pine trees and eating the fresh growth. So serious has it become that, out of 70,000 trees under six years old, almost a quarter have been affected, which means in 15 years' time when these trees would have been approaching maturity, there will be a shortage. It really does give a new meaning to buy now – whilst stocks last.

Mike Rowley, Core Products ceo



Mike Rowley and Stuart Wallace planting trees in March

THE RETAILERS

Fludes Carpets

By the time you read this we will be in a new year, and let's hope it's better than the old one. However, the start of 2021 is likely to produce some difficulty on the delivery front. With logistics company Rhys Davies no longer in business and the delays in receiving goods from Europe, things will be difficult. We are likely to have exited the EU without an agreement on trading terms; this will inevitably lead to an increase in raw materials and then to price increases for us and our customers.

The closedown in November was less of a problem than we anticipated. Our website and social media activity produced a good number of enquiries and so even though we were unable to open our doors to the public, we still managed to do business at arm's length, over the phone and by getting suppliers to send samples directly to our customers. We also had a number of previous estimates accepted and although business was down, the result was better than we could have hoped for.

Fortunately, we should still have some capacity for fitting prior to Christmas even though the supply chain and stock levels at the suppliers are challenging. Last week we

had a customer in the shop to re-select a carpet because her original selection was out of stock. We tried four different colours from the range and none were in stock. The customer said, 'Just tell me what colours are available and I will choose one of them.' We were able to find one that suited and the customer was satisfied with the outcome and thanked us for our help. Customers like her make the job worthwhile!

Since the return on 2 December, we have had a fair number of enquiries for flooring that is needed after Christmas. Customers generally seem to have accepted that the timescales are now longer and that early activity to find their flooring would be a good idea. I think that the events of the past eight months have created a more relaxed attitude from customers on many fronts. People are also looking at more expensive carpets and flooring and price has slightly less importance than service and quality. Let's hope this continues after Christmas.

When I have some spare time, I look at a few Facebook groups that are based around carpets and flooring. The general theme at the moment is the problem of receiving the correct goods on time and with no errors or



faulty items – this close to Christmas it is almost impossible to rectify problems before the break. However, I do have great sympathy for those manufacturers who have been affected by the demise of Rhys Davies, as well as the employees who have lost their jobs. We are living in an unnatural period, and that 'new normal' still seems to be a long way ahead. Let's hope that 2021 gives us plenty of things to shout about – for the right reasons.

Andy Laird, Fludes Carpets md

Floor Coverings

Well, since our last instalment things have gone even crazier. We've had the highest month ever in 24 years of trading in October. We have had the highest quarter ever in August–October and even now we are rushed off our feet. The showroom has remained open by appointment only and this has worked wonders, as we really get

to spend time with clients without rushing. Before the pandemic, we were sometimes guilty on a Saturday of not spending as long as we should have discussing client needs, so we plan to continue appointment-only for the foreseeable future.

Thank goodness we took on a much bigger warehouse, as we have worried about getting hold of product. Previously if someone wanted fitting in eight weeks from ordering we would delay the delivery to us. However, at the moment, as soon as the client orders we request delivery from our suppliers. We have big problems with stock still from most suppliers and

I don't see this getting better with Brexit just around the corner. Like we really need that as well right now.

Lockdown 2 was interesting. We did a lot of work behind the scenes and only three of our 11 staff were furloughed. We have a new store manager starting in January as we really don't see things slowing down. We have found lots of clients are happy to wait for fitting until the New Year, which wouldn't have been the case last Christmas. I do think clients have become more chilled out about when work happens, as most are saying just fit us in when you can.

We have had massive support from all our staff and many worked seven days a week in December to get jobs done. All being well, our profits will be only 10-15% down and we have been closed for three months of the year. I and my staff will take that – and roll on 2021, when we will see Floor Coverings grow and possibly expand. Watch this space.

Taro Strowgger, Floor Coverings owner



Even before Brexit, the supply chain is at breaking point



Fresh start

Dunelm has four key furniture trends for SS 2021



EQUATORIAL

'This joyful collection celebrates the long overdue appreciation of the natural world. Tropical forests and wild animals provide motifs for a colourful decorating theme which can be used in so many ways – from a lively kid's bedroom scheme to a sophisticated salon. We were so inspired by the wide range of directions this story took us in that we had to explore them all,' says Debbie Drake, Dunelm head of design.

A Vivian cocktail chair £149; Monkey side table £149; maize basket £10; ceramic tiger head pot £6

B Sheldon velvet three-seater sofa £549; Jungle Luxe eyelet curtains from £50; Claudia nest of coffee tables £199; Palm Trees cushion in teal £25; Clara velvet cushion £12; Clara circular cushion in emerald £18; Geo foil cushion in peacock £10; Mila rug from £65

C Farrah palm leaf ceiling fitting in gold £65; Matilda dove grey bed from £549; Isla chair in grey £139; Amazonia toile duvet cover set £28; Hannah mini oyster chest £89; Farrah palm leaf touch lamp £35; Medallion cotton rug from £12

D Isabel sofa £699; Claudia nest of coffee tables £199; Loren small sideboard £229; Amazonia charcoal and gold wallpaper £12 a roll; gold palm leaf rug from £65; gold hexagonal tray £10; Gigi ceiling fitting in white £60; Clara natural velvet cushion £20; Stonewash chenille cushion in stone £24

'The Equatorial theme can be taken in so many directions. The new Loren furniture range creates a more sophisticated take on the look when paired with our glamorous Amazonia wallpaper'



THE EDITED LIFE

'Many of us want to live simpler lives, to reduce our impact on the environment and improve our wellbeing. As we become more aware of our surroundings and understand how our choices contribute to the world around us, people are choosing to consume less and curate more. The Edited Life introduces a new era of thoughtfulness in the home, with an understated collection of pieces chosen for their simplicity, craftsmanship

and innate usefulness that will last beyond any trend. Having it all is no longer the goal: having enough, and it being just right is,' says Drake.

A Akina large sideboard £399; Jute Triangles rug from £75; leaf print on linen (set of two) £30; Origami easy-fit paper pendant £10

B Henry dressing table in oak £149; recycled

glass vase £8; ash wood coat stand with shelves £75; rush basket in butterscotch £22

C Undyed wool rug from £89; marl rug from £129; Ombre jute rug from £79; Triangles jute rug from £75

D Ash wood clothes rail £65; cork boxes from £10; Aren dining chair (set of two) £99

'Hand woven on a pit loom by expert crafters, the natural jute, cotton and wool fibres of these rugs give a beautiful finish and are fully biodegradable and recyclable'





FORMS

'Our latest Elements pattern Forms has been inspired by the arching shapes synonymous with the Bauhaus movement. The geometric shapes and rich navy and butterscotch colour palette make the perfect combination this season, and provide a great complement to our new Elements furniture range,' says Drake.

A Frey three-seater sofa £499; Elements Marne grey wallpaper £10 a roll; Dillon coffee table in black £249; Dillon side table in black £69; Elements shaped rug from £55; Elements Ramona glass ceiling fitting £49; Elements Marne cushion £18; Elements Rosco cushion £20; Sten pincushion £10

B Carson sideboard £229; Elements ceramic navy vase £12; ceramic planter £20; cushion as above

C Anya four-drawer chest £429

D Abrielle easy-fit pendant shade in black £25; Elements Oslo king duvet cover set £22; Elements Oslo cushion £20; Anders two-drawer bedside table £79; Elements Ramona glass touch lamp £39; Elements Sten runner £29; non-iron plain dye bedding in blush from £3

'Make a statement with our uniquely shaped ceramics range. With their soft curves and muted palette, you could create a beautiful display that brings colour and fun to your home. Cluster them on the Elements Carson sideboard for perfect Insta appeal.'



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LENA

'Lena is fast becoming the new Elements signature pattern. This season we have extended Lena in the bathroom so that customers who already enjoy the playful, modern floral in their bedroom can extend the fun to the en-suite. The colours also layer perfectly with the Elements Dots towels,' says Drake.

A Lena ochre cushion £14; Halston fabric three-seater sofa £529; Arkin chair £229; Chevron wood mural £50; Elements metal wall art £30; Elements Jaula ceiling fitting £75; Elements Losenge butterscotch rug from £55; Enzo Cage coffee table £99; Elements Axel cushion £16; Barkweave butterscotch cushion £5

B Elements Lena towel from £6; Elements Dots

towels in grey and ochre from £8 each

C Fulton two-tier shoe rack £35; Fulton clothes rail with shelves £59; Elements metal wall art £30; artificial trailing plant £14

D Oliver small sideboard in ochre £189; Geo clock £20; London single 20cm hurricane lamp in black £12

'Our Elements brand continues to grow. Our bold patterns and contemporary colours lead the way and provide opportunities for easy-going coordination throughout the home. This season we are excited to launch our first Elements furniture.'



IMA

IMA is the UK's biggest branded furniture clearance centre, specialising in helping manufacturers, importers and multi-store retailers clear current line, end of line, cancelled orders and customer returns. Established in 1981, we concentrate on providing an excellent service and maximum financial return for our clients which has led us to be a highly regarded company in our sector.

Company's with a stock clearance problem who need a solution should contact Paul or David to discuss our better than competitive rates or outright purchase offers.

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UPHOLSTERY



Open house

Whitemeadow is renovating its showroom to open throughout February

As for many companies, 2020 was a year of highs and lows for upholstery manufacturer Whitemeadow. In March, the business was uncertain what kind of an order book it would return to after lockdown. However, come June, it was clear the demand for homeware and furniture was on the rise due to people spending more time at home, which resulted in its highest ever outstanding order book.

Having learnt to deal with crisis management on a scale never seen before, Whitemeadow is more determined than ever to take its destiny in its own hands and do everything it can to ensure that 2021 is a good year for the business and the 600plus colleagues it currently employs.

In addition to taking on an extra 80,000sqft of manufacturing space, Whitemeadow is preparing to open its head office showroom throughout February and invite customers to view its new collections in a safe and organised environment.

This will be the first major Open House event the company has hosted and it has begun an ambitious renovation of its head office showroom in Sutton in Ashfield, Nottinghamshire, in preparation.

'Our showroom has become a hugely important space in which to present new products to our customers. We saw an opportunity to make it even more inspiring by having the space transformed into what we believe will be the best in-house showroom in our industry,'

says Daniel Oscroft, Whitemeadow sales director.

'Construction is underway, and once the project is complete this will be a really dynamic and vibrant showroom environment we are confident our customers will be impressed with.

'We can't wait to see customers again and are looking forward to what we are sure will be a challenging but also exciting 2021.'

'This will be the first opportunity since January last year for many of our customers to come and view new products, and having spoken to a number of them already, we can see

that there is a massive appetite to get out there again and start seeing new products,' says Ian Oscroft, Whitemeadow md.

'There is no doubt that 2021 will see fresh challenges, but whatever the year may bring, Whitemeadow has built solid foundations in our workforce, manufacturing sites and strong product development to face these head on with confidence.

'The team is looking forward to welcoming back customers in February, and to the rest of what is sure to be a challenging, yet exciting year to come.' Visit: www.whitemeadow.com



Beds and bedroom

Ayrton
Cattelan Italia





The Bed Show should return later this year

Onwards

Communication and environmental progress via the NBF

'Happy New Year. I hope you had an enjoyable break, albeit somewhat different to the norm, and you had time to reflect on what was one of the most difficult years in our recent past and to look forward to better things to come in 2021. With the roll-out of the vaccine programme, we can at last begin to picture a return to some kind of normality, both in our personal and business lives,' says Simon Williams, National Bed Federation marketing and membership manager.

'One of the few benefits of the last months is that they have provided opportunities to evaluate all areas of business, to review strategy and to set

clear goals for the post-Covid era.

'At the NBF, in early December, eight months later than originally planned, we held our first ever Green Forum – virtually of course. Our keynote speaker, environmental expert Professor Mike Berners-Lee, told delegates that huge opportunities exist for bed manufacturers to both pioneer and collaborate on products that will meet the growing demand from consumers for honest goods they can trust to help mitigate climate change.

'There is clearly an increased focus on sustainability within our membership as demonstrated by the high standard of entries in the Sustainability category in the recent Bed Industry Awards. This year could well become the turning point as consumers increasingly want real and reliable environmental information and eco-designed products that deliver both sound sleep and a lighter footprint on the earth's resources. Those companies that fail to grasp this do so at their peril.

'During the course of the year we plan to publish an NBF Green Pledge, an Ecodesign assessment toolkit for our members, and our work with Zero Waste Scotland on an EPR scheme for mattresses will come to a head and we'll start to see talk turned into action.

'We are also eagerly looking forward to staging the Bed Show once again at Telford International Centre on 21 and 22 September. Please save the dates in

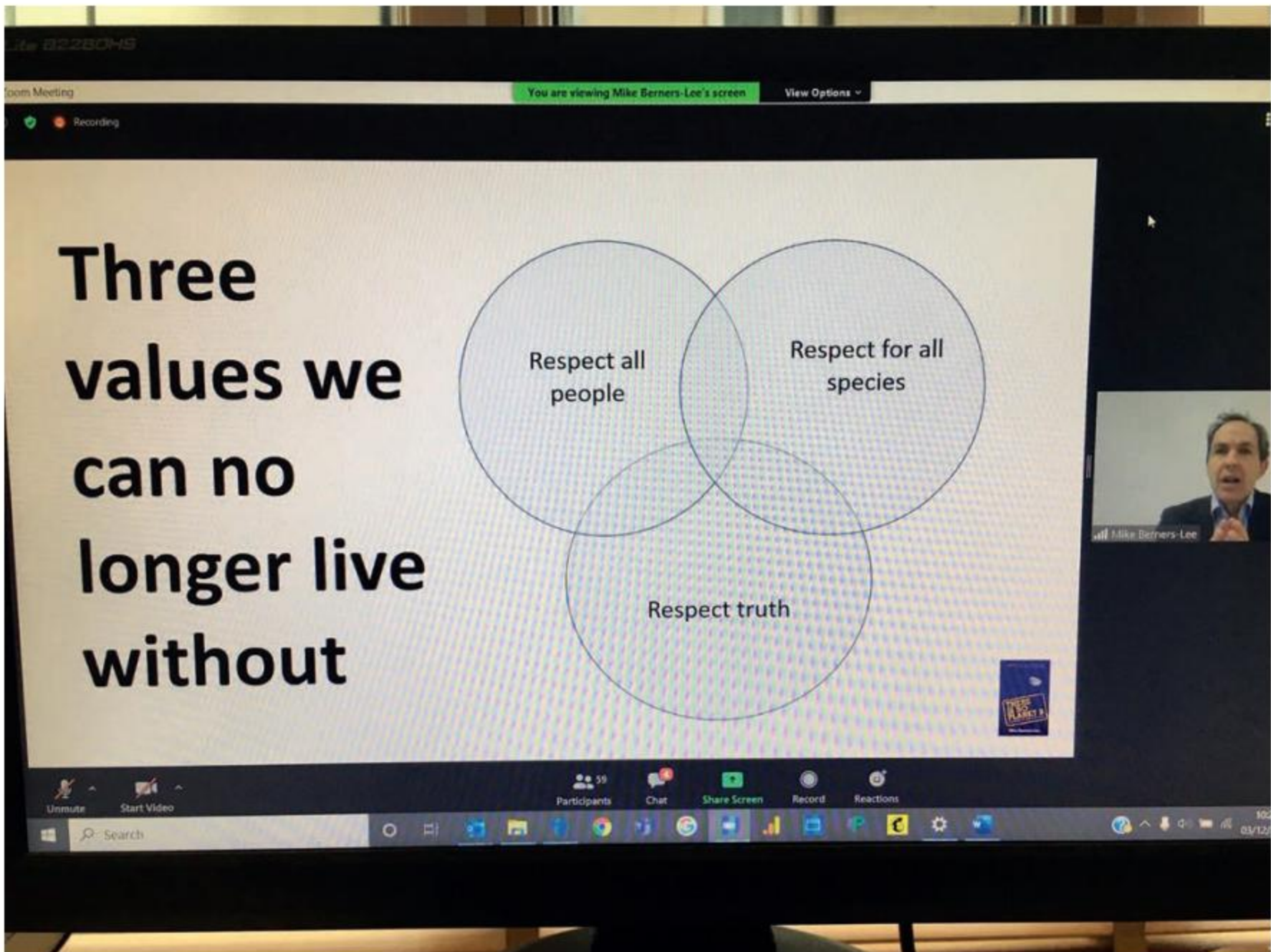
your diary. The lack of live events has been a huge void in our lives and getting back together again to share the very best our industry has to offer cannot come soon enough. Having missed out on 2020's show, we are taking the opportunity to have a fresh look at how we can "build back better" (to steal a government slogan), introduce some exciting new elements and make it a show not to be missed. We have set up a steering group of NBF members to help us deliver on this and they will also take on board the views of retailers and other visitors to the show to ensure it meets – and hopefully surpasses – the needs of all involved.

'For those who watched Jessica Alexander, NBF executive director and me presenting our livestream awards ceremony in late November, you'll be relieved to know that we've already confirmed the services of an experienced, professional host for the 2021 Gala Dinner and Awards. I can't divulge any names yet but further details will be announced in the next few months. Suffice to say that the showbiz talent agents haven't been calling the NBF office to offer us lucrative contracts. Phillip Schofield and Holly Willoughby can relax for the time being.

'Engagement with UK and Irish bed retailers is crucial to the NBF supporting our members and their compliance with our Code of Practice. Like many



Keynote speaker Mike Berners-Lee



The Green Forum took place online

organisations, we have invested in developing a robust social media programme via Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn to create two-way dialogues with retailers. This is enhanced via our regular BedBiz email newsletter, but it was the launch of our Retail Champions scheme during 2020 that enabled us to develop more of a co-operative and, we hope, productive relationship.

‘There are two levels: Retail Champion level for those whose UK offering is at least 50% from NBF members; and Premier Retail Champions for those stocking 100% NBF Approved member products. Retailers receive a free POS pack and digital collateral to promote their allegiance and their details are added to the Find a Retailer search facility on our newly launched consumer website bedadvice.co.uk, which was formed when we separated the consumer content of the NBF website from the sections for members and the bed trade.

‘The website also has a product finder facility that allows the consumer to

search for a particular type of product, and then provides a listing of which NBF members manufacture it. The consumer can follow the link to the member’s website or contact the member directly to progress their interest and find their

nearest retailer.

‘2021 will also be the year when the NBF embraces the use of podcasts, vlogs and short videos to engage with our audiences.’

Visit: www.bedfed.org.uk



Filming the Bed Industry Awards presentation

BEDS AND BEDROOM



Above left: durability testing **Above:** the centre is in Middleton **Below:** modular microclimate testing

Test bed

An innovation centre is helping to improve mattress performance

The Vita Group has invested in a state-of-the-art facility, the Comfort Bedding Innovation Centre, in Middleton, Greater Manchester. Combined with its material science expertise and deep understanding of the science of comfort, the facility enables customers to develop new constructions and designs for mattresses. The centre offers customers a complete journey from foam development right through to finished foam mattress cores, with its expertise in evaluation and testing of mattresses helping customers to refine the performance of each design.

Foam selection is a key choice for mattress performance and, with more than 70 years of experience in the foam industry, The Vita Group can advise customers on these choices. The centre offers modular microclimate testing, which allows full mattress testing, or layers can be split to observe performance through different chemistries. Multi-layer constructions can be monitored and enhanced to enable incremental modifications that add an extra element of comfort.

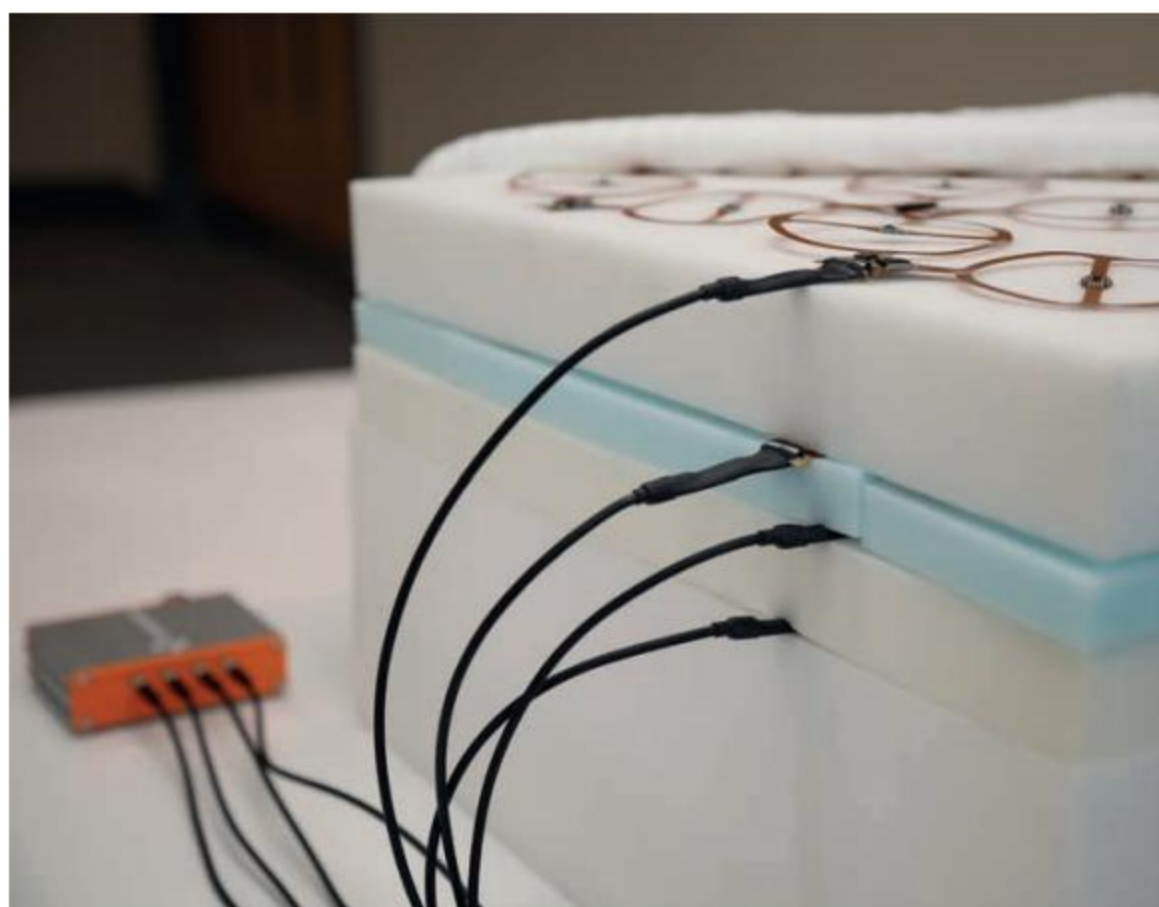
'Innovation is key to any business moving forward and that's no different at Vita. The Comfort Bedding Innovation Centre is driven by customer experience – we want to engage with our customers and bring them to the forefront as development partners. To stay at the cutting edge of technology, we need to know what our customers' requirements are, both in terms of foam composition

and finished product,' says Julie Walker, The Vita Group Comfort Division technical manager.

As mattress manufacturers' global footprint increases, and distribution to different countries and continents becomes more common, an understanding of how foam travels is also required. The centre is equipped to replicate high temperatures and high humidity conditions using a climate chamber. These conditions can be encountered in a range of environments including different geographies or in deep-sea travel. Using a large climatic conditioning chamber, multiple

roll-packed mattresses can be exposed to a range of conditions that promote accelerated ageing. With this performance data, technicians can provide solutions that help to combat the impact of these conditions.

While mattress comfort is subjective, movement and deformation are both detectable with special sensor mats, giving instant visualisation of pressure distribution across a sleeper's body, spinal alignment and body posture. This information is analysed by expert technicians and the data used to support customers in optimising their designs. Visit www.thevitagroup.com





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Enkev's specialty fibres are GOTS certified

Naturally

Organic natural materials are at the heart of Enkev's operations

'We are proud to introduce a new offering utilising our specialty fibres, producing a product suitable for multiple uses within both mattress and upholstery applications. Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) certified fibres are skilfully blended, and then thermally bonded using PLA, resulting in a product that is 100% plastic free. Ethical sourcing, traceability, carbon footprint awareness, end-of-life stories and fully biodegradable materials are all key features required by consumers,' says Dan Porter, Enkev UK md.

'These thermally bonded materials are becoming increasingly popular for use in mattress construction due to their shape retention, the ability to mix additional fibres to create truly unique blends, and eliminating micro-plastics from the materials' end-of-life cycle. Echoing the National Bed Federation's own ethos

to provide transparent, sustainable products that are good not only for the industry but also for the consumer and the planet, our new GOTS product range ticks all those boxes.

'Enkev Group is proud to be a leading provider of GOTS certified fibres, and currently holds certification for over 15 different fibres or blends. Our GOTS fibre content is 100% natural, 100% recyclable, and offers a truly certified organic product for today's demanding customers. These certified organic fibres are also completely FR chemical free, offering another benefit to consumers.

'Using and sourcing only the very best organic natural materials, we make our products using coir fibre, cotton, wool, silk and flax, blending them to produce materials unsurpassed in their resilience, durability and ventilation. These materials enable us to supply a completely environmentally friendly alternative to many synthetic materials.

'We don't just believe in the sustainable development of our company, we also have a responsibility towards the people we work with, and the people who we do business with,' adds Porter.

'The Enkev Group has immense pride and passion for our position as a supplier of high-quality, high-integrity filling solutions, and our partnerships with the Global Organic Textile Standards and UK Soil Association help us take our ethical and traceable supply chain to unique levels. Integrity, innovation, sustainability, transparency, people and planet friendly are not just tag lines, they are things we all truly believe in, and we look forward to working with customers old and new, delivering these values through our products to your consumers.

'Let Enkev be a part of your new development process, so we can help move you and your product offering towards a more sustainable future, taking nature's finest fibres using zero plastics, and minimising the use of FR chemicals.' Visit: www.enkev.com





Don't Judge a

MATTRESS

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Quality natural, organic, and vegan alternatives to synthetic materials for any industry.



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Setting the benchmark

The mattresses are made from recycled plastic bottles

No-one could have known what was in store for 2020 – and certainly not the impact Covid-19 would have on the industry. But that didn't stop the team at Jay-Be launching two products to the market: COREKIDS children's mattresses, infused with bamboo charcoal to reflect natural Infrared energy back into the body, and its first adult mattress range, Benchmark.

'As part of our Feel Good, Sleep Well philosophy, we continually take steps to innovate and raise the standard for both ourselves and the industry. In developing Benchmark, we considered all aspects of our five-step product lifecycle analysis, ensuring materials are from recycled sources and constructed in a manner that makes them 100% recyclable at the end of life,' says Roger Durrans, Jay-Be ceo.

'We are proactively taking steps to contribute to a more sustainable future, lowering our carbon footprint and

environmental impact at every turn whilst ensuring we're not compromising on the quality of healthy and comfortable sleep.

'Offering four distinct levels of comfort, Benchmark mattresses are 100% foam free and feature Advance e-Fibre which is an eco award-winning fibre made from 100% recyclable plastic bottles. The mattresses also arrive vacuum packed and rolled in order to reduce carbon emissions during transportation.'

The name Benchmark goes beyond the environment, however. It was consciously chosen to represent four new benchmarks, set, it is hoped, to inspire the industry and address modern consumers' needs. These are: *Value* – to be completely transparent about the specifications so customers can be confident they are getting exceptional value for money; *Comfort* – to design and manufacture

comfortable mattresses using sleep-smart materials that offer distinct levels of comfort to match the consumer's personal preference;

Sustainability – to use eco-friendly sustainable materials and processes to lower the carbon footprint of each new mattress developed; and

Innovation – to exceed customer needs by investing in the latest material and production technologies, to stay at the forefront of great value comfort and sustainability.

'The team at Jay-Be is proud of the success story of our most recent product launch and the positive feedback we are receiving from consumers. We are also delighted that we were recently able to celebrate the adult mattress range being shortlisted as a finalist in the National Bed Federation's Bed of the Year category.'

Visit: www.jaybe.com



BENCHMARK™

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Sleep Smart



Eco Friendly Mattresses.

A new adult mattress range offering exceptional comfort while helping to protect the future of our planet... Benchmark is the start of a new generation of eco-friendly mattresses.

Developed using the latest sustainable materials there are four distinct mattresses to choose from available in four sizes.

Discover more - visit jaybe.com



Feel good,
sleep well.™

BEDS AND BEDROOM



Tackle back pain

Problems are increasing thanks to increased working from home

The end of the coronavirus pandemic may be within sight, but after a year that's seen millions working from home, Mammoth is helping to tackle another issue: chronic back pain.

'We're all looking towards a more positive and healthier year ahead after the challenges of 2020. But with studies showing that back pain cases have increased by more than a third during lockdown – due largely to inadequate home-working set-ups – it has never been more important for consumers to show their backs a bit more care and attention,' says Stuart Page, Mammoth sales manager.

'As NHS award winner and official partner with the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, no sleep and comfort brand is better placed than Mammoth to provide the postural support and pressure relief that people need to wake free from debilitating back pain.'

Mammoth is the pioneer that brought Medical Grade foam technology from UK healthcare and made it available to the general public. The Rise, Shine and Move mattress collection comes with naturally cooling Medical Grade foam and Posture Cell technologies, both scientifically tested and shown to improve sleep, says Page.

Mammoth also has partnerships with Tottenham Hotspur football club, the

Rugby Players Association and the British Athletes Commission.

'As customers look to make more health-conscious decisions in 2021, we are working hard to educate people on the benefits of a restorative night's sleep and the value of investing in the very best sleep and comfort technologies,' says Page.

'As well as protecting back health, better sleep can improve productivity, boost the immune system, help maintain a healthy weight and care for mental

health. If your customers ask for a mattress that genuinely does them good, Mammoth is the healthy choice.

'We have some really exciting plans for 2021 to support our retail partners. Our increased focus on multi-channel advertising, a wide range of promotions and POS support shows our ongoing commitment to the stores. We are also looking forward to working with some new stores who have recently come on board,' he adds.

Visit: www.mammothcomfort.com

The collection features the latest Medical Grade foam and Posture Cell technologies



Mammoth – the healthy choice

Your customers are more health conscious than ever before and we know they are looking for products that genuinely do them good in 2021.

Mammoth are the only health and wellbeing brand in the comfort industry that are partnered with health professionals such as the CSP and have technologies proven to do you good.

www.mammothcomfort.com



7% MORE EFFICIENT SLEEP*



21% MORE ENJOYABLE SLEEP*



FALL ASLEEP 29% QUICKER*



69% FASTER COOLING**



46% GREATER PRESSURE RELIEF***

Rise®



The Mammoth Rise® mattresses contains our leading Medical Grade™ foam and PostureCells® technologies in generous amounts for those looking for something more, delivering improved health and wellbeing and remaining affordable.

Shine®



The Mammoth Shine® mattresses packs in as much of our leading Medical Grade™ foam and PostureCells® sleep technologies as possible. We've thrown in a few additional extras for those who believe you can't get too much of a good thing.

Move®



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* Tested under the guidance of Prof. Jason Ellis at Northumbria University's Centre for Sleep Research (2012) www.mammothmattress.com/sleep-research

** Independently tested by SATRA, Global leaders in scientific research and testing of consumer products under laboratory conditions. Tested against 50KG memory foam.

*** Independently tested by industry experts against leading healthcare beds.



Campaign for Wool Supreme 2400

Making a mark

Sleepeeze has secured its CO₂ certification

Sleepeeze has secured Planet Mark certification for the second year running. As a partner of The Eden Project, Planet Mark is a trusted international symbol for businesses to demonstrate continual improvement in environmental and social sustainability by using one metric: carbon dioxide. Planet Mark members can also choose to measure social value, which provides a more holistic view of an organisation's positive contributions to society and the environment.

Having been awarded carbon neutral status in 2017 and achieving PAS 2060

carbon neutral status in 2020, Sleepeeze has offset more than 1,388 tonnes of CO₂ from 2017 to 2019, with no waste going to landfill since 2012. This is the equivalent of offsetting 30 homes or taking over 300 cars off the road.

Eco-friendly initiatives are at the forefront of its corporate goals, from ethically sourced materials and forward-thinking manufacturing processes to environmental projects at both local and international level. From planting 478 trees in local schools in Kent to supporting fossil fuel reduction schemes in Indonesia and India and deforestation projects in the Amazon, Sleepeeze aims to make a positive global impact.

'Our business is dependent on natural resources to make beds that deliver an excellent night's sleep. We have a simple and clear belief that one of our fundamental duties is to ensure our activities do not have a detrimental impact on the planet,' says Howard Wilson, Sleepeeze joint md.

'The Planet Mark has helped us achieve these milestones by providing

an independent, credible reporting system, encouraging us to focus on new objectives and communicate to our stakeholders while enabling the business to grow without compromising our ultimate responsibility: to safeguard the planet for future generations. Sleepeeze is proud to be the first bed manufacturer to achieve the Planet Mark and maintain this for the second year running.'

The company is committed to ensuring its products are produced sustainably. All the timber is sourced under European timber regulations, ensuring the carbon footprint of each product is exceptionally low. British wool is a component in many of its mattresses and it supports the Campaign for Wool initiative, promoting sustainable practices in sheep farming. Within the factory, all fluorescent lighting has been replaced with LED alternatives.

From reducing its carbon footprint to supporting initiatives designed to limit its reliance on fossil fuels, Sleepeeze is demonstrating its commitment to making a sustainable difference.

Visit: www.sleepeeze.com





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Origins

Good to share

Hypnos has developed an eco-friendly packaging material for all to use

After 18 months of research, Hypnos has developed an industry first by creating a new recyclable, eco-friendly packaging solution for its beds and mattresses across its retail and contract factories.

At the heart of the packaging is sugar cane, a renewable and carbon dioxide-depleting resource. Sugar cane ethanol is combined with recycled plastic, which has a carbon footprint that can be up to four times lower than that of normal plastic, helping those who use it to reduce their carbon footprint.

The use of ethanol, a bi-product of sugar cane production, and recycled plastics that form a green polyethylene (a more environmentally friendly form of plastic) means the material is carbon neutral, 100% recyclable and eliminates the need for fossil-based products.

Hypnos led the challenge, working in partnership with a specialist polyethylene manufacturer. It has decided not to patent or trademark the packaging: it wants to share the innovation globally and is calling on industries and retailers around the world to ditch single-use polythene and make the transition to this 100% recyclable product.

'We're extremely proud of our sustainability credentials and are committed to creating ethical solutions which benefit the environment, and

we believe in fostering environmental responsibility wherever we can. We're keen to share this technology with other industries and retailers, especially as most bed manufacturers use plastic to protect their beds and products. If all the mattress manufacturers in the UK switched to eco polythene instead, it would save a staggering 8,000 tonnes of CO₂ per year. Just imagine what could be achieved if we all made this change,' says Richard Naylor, Hypnos sustainability director.

This latest development is another key milestone in Hypnos's sustainability agenda. From the use of natural resources to carbon offsetting programmes, it was

the first bed maker in the world to become carbon neutral, and has been carbon neutral for a decade.

In addition, it was also awarded the Queen's Award for Enterprise for Sustainable Development 2020 and created the pioneering Origins Collection. Every single element within this collection is traceable and environmentally responsible thanks to the collaboration with Red Tractor to source ethical British wool. All of its beds and mattresses have been made from natural, sustainable materials and are completely recyclable, ensuring they should never go to landfill.

Visit: www.hypnosbeds.com



Sugar cane ethanol is at the heart of the new material

The Hypnos Origins™ Story

We value the people, animals and places
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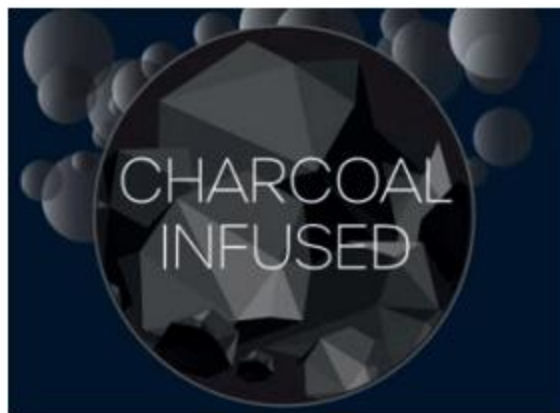
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BEDS AND BEDROOM



The Therapeutics range features charcoal, copper and graphene

Time to act

Going Platinum now could bring year-long benefits

'2021 looks to be full of greater optimism with a confirmed vaccine for the Covid-19 virus. Now more than ever is the perfect opportunity to grow retail sales within your bed department. As a business Protect-A-Bed is constantly looking to help drive sales for all of our retail partners. We offer a perfect opportunity to increase the average order value and grow sales. Plus, we offer a reward system to our partners through the Protect-A-Bed Platinum Club. Since launching the Platinum Club, the results have been excellent. Both existing and new partners have joined and are benefiting from the focused approach to growing sales,' says Paul Lake, Protect-A-Bed national sales manager.

'The Platinum Club has been designed to build, recognise and reward success with unique promotional and discount opportunities, sponsored incentives and tailored POS solutions as well as membership rewards.'

'Protect-A-Bed has developed a world-class programme, built on a singular focus and honed over years of experience. This includes a unique sales training and motivational programme, our best-in-class mattress protection collection and bundled guarantees, new state-of-the-art display bays, award-winning customer services and claims resolution, and a next-day delivery service where required,' says Simon Zomet, Protect-A-Bed ceo.

'The Platinum Club is a way of bringing together the very best elements of what we have to offer and what we know works well to build sales. Put the market-leading brand to work for you and Protect-A-Bed will increase your profitability.'

Supporting the Platinum Club is the company's latest collection Therapeutics,

which features copper, graphene and charcoal embedded within the protectors to increase and enhance the sleeper's wellbeing.

'We are constantly evolving and innovating. Protect-A-Bed has a long history in creating revolutionary products and this new range is particularly exciting,' says Lake.

'The importance of healthy sleep has been gathering greater awareness nationally. It has been well documented that Protect-A-Bed can help retailers significantly grow retail sales whilst offering better sleep solutions, and the Therapeutics range is a perfect evolution. It features Protect-A-Bed's innovative technology but now combines materials that have been known to help many with joint relief and relaxation, mineral absorption, a healthier immune system and heart health, as well as including anti-ageing properties. This is a must-have for all our existing retail partners



Protect-A-Bed POS

and for any bed retailers who want to offer their customers the best possible sleep experience.

'2021 is the perfect time to join the Platinum Club and invest in our cutting-edge Therapeutics range. Act in January and your store can gain a longer benefit throughout the year.'

Visit: www.protectabed.co.uk



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Country Oak 54945



Mountain Oak 20642

More choice

Moduleo has expanded LayRed with a new size, designs and shades

Moduleo has recently expanded its award-winning LayRed engineered vinyl flooring range with four new designs, 24 additional shades and a new, larger plank size.

Building upon its extensive collection, which includes the Select, Transform, Impress, Moods and Herringbone ranges, LayRed's update provides retailers with new colours across the brand's most popular wood designs: Sierra Oak, Laurel Oak, Country Oak and Mountain Oak.

Embossed in register during production to provide an ultra-realistic texture, the planks are now available in a larger format, 25% bigger at 149.4cm x 20.9cm.

Moduleo utilises state-of-the-art technology to create grains, knots and grooves that fully mimic the surface texture of wood and stone, resulting in authentic structure and depth.

Since the launch of LayRed in August 2019, the collection has proven to be the product of choice for renovation

projects, with retailers able to provide customers with a product that looks stunning without sacrificing on reliability. Last year the range received the Red Dot Award for innovation thanks to its product design, marking how its composition and performance pushed boundaries within the flooring industry. LayRed's integrated underlay and strong core enable the bridging of unevenness over existing floors, and a wealth of different styles mean that it can be the customer's inspiration behind a room when refreshing a home.

'We're happy to be able to offer retailers more choice when it comes to stocking and selling our flooring,' says Matthew Brook, IVC Group UK and Eire national sales manager.

'We believe our engineered vinyl collection can face up to almost any challenge, boasting all the benefits of its natural counterparts but with added plus points such as being warm underfoot as well as scratch and stain resistant.

'The easy maintenance of engineered vinyl, alongside its strong sound and heat insulation properties, can change how customers think about and design a room. Once people discover LayRed they realise they're exploring a modern alternative to natural materials which is built to last and easy to apply.'

Visit: www.moduleo.co.uk



Sierra Oak 58933



reddot winner 2020



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moduleo.co.uk/layred



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Design Floors



Modular

Creating atmosphere

Giorgetti's latest designs have influences from abstractionism to Bauhaus

As well as furniture and decorative accessories, Giorgetti's Atmosphere collection includes contemporary hand-knotted rugs. Its latest trio are Modular, Shighera and Miro.

Modular is made of wool, linen and bamboo silk and is characterised by a Bauhaus-inspired motif. The surfaces are treated with random loop and horizontal loop techniques that make the design three-dimensional. This peculiarity also adds interest to the

monochromatic versions, available in all colour ranges, together with five versions with contrasting colours.

Shighera reveals a graphic pattern inspired by the organic abstractionism of the 1960s and Constantin Brâncuși's sculptural shapes. In wool, bamboo silk and linen, the carpet is enriched with a mélange veil in Himalayan wool and bamboo silk bouclé from which the motif can be seen. The surprising shiny/ opaque effect is due to the combination

of materials and makes the refined play of lines perceptible in the monochromatic version too, available together with the contrasting one.

Miro combines linen and bamboo silk. Its characteristic surface comes to life from a series of scribbles. The shades of the background graphics are fixed, while the sign in the centre can be customised.

All three designs are available in custom sizes.

Visit: www.giorgettimedia.com



Miro



Shighera

FITTER OF THE YEAR



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THE COMPETITION FORMAT IS AS FOLLOWS:

- 1). *You do **NOT** need to be an NICF member to enter this competition. Applicants must be aged **18 years** or over on **Wednesday 31st March 2021**. NICF Council members are excluded from entering.
- 2). **Deadline for entry is Wednesday 31st March 2021 — at 23:59 hrs.**
- 3). Entrants are first required to complete a questionnaire giving the most **full** and **accurate** answers possible. Entries will be evaluated by a panel of judges based on the answers provided and 14 fitters will be selected to progress to the Semi-Final practical trials.
- 4). The Semi-Finals will be held on **Thursday 17th and Friday 18th June 2021** at the FITA Training Centre, Loughborough.
- 5). The 6 Finalists **MUST** be available to attend a briefing day on **Wednesday 28th July 2021** at the FITA Training Centre, Loughborough.
- 6). The Final is at The Flooring Show, Harrogate, **Sun 19th to Mon 20th September 2021**.

ENTER ONLINE NOW!

www.nicfltd.org.uk/FOTY-Competition

The Final will be held at The Flooring Show, Harrogate in September 2021

Fitter of The Year LVT 2021 Competition is kindly sponsored by





Pie Chart

Shared passion

Donna Wilson has created designs for Woolable by Lorena Canals



Abstract



Donna Wilson (left) and Lorena Canals

A shared passion for wool and artisan design has brought Donna Wilson and Lorena Canals together to add to the Woolable by Lorena Canals collection.

Wilson's collaboration began to take shape in the moment that Canals launched her concept of washable wool rugs – Woolable by Lorena Canals. A long-time admirer of Wilson's work, Canals thought it would be great to design something together, and join their shared passion for wool.

In this collaboration, Wilson contributes her bold and colourful signature designs while Canals offers her know-how and over two decades of experience in artisan rug-making,

working closely with skilful artisans at her factory in India.

The rugs have been developed from Wilson's graphic art, reinterpreted in a more subdued palette as per Canals' washable wool colour chart, making use of *mélange* yarns to imitate the original watercolours. The rugs are tufted to different pile heights over a cotton canvas base, making them lightweight, flexible and machine-washable.

Inspired by an original Wilson aquarelle print featuring a composition of abstract colour blocks, the rectangular Abstract turns the original bolder colour palette into slightly toned-down shades. The rug version replicates the watercolour stains

throughout its surface, using *mélange* yarns to recreate the subtleties of the hand-painted strokes. It features a slightly irregular surface by combining different pile lengths. Although mostly tufted in a short pile, the natural-coloured longer pile in the areas surrounding the colour blocks provides a contrast effect.

The Abstract rug is available in what is considered the best-selling size among the Woolable range: 170cm x 240cm. It comes packed in a cotton tote bag printed with a Donna Wilson design in dark grey, over a natural base, and includes an anti-slip underlay.

The round, colourful Pie Chart rug was inspired by a knitted cover for a wooden stool in the colours of the rainbow, designed by Wilson. This cheerful piece combines plain-coloured sections in short pile wool with others in *mélange* yarn, together with a contrasting grey segment tufted in a longer wool pile. The edge is finished all around with a long pile fringe.

Pie Chart comes in a 120cm diameter size for an easy fit in nursery rooms, hallways, at the bedside – or gracing anyone's favourite corner. It, too, comes packed in a cotton tote bag printed with a Donna Wilson design, and includes an anti-slip underlay.

Natural raw materials, non-toxic dyes, fair trade and sustainable manufacturing are the eco-friendly values by which Lorena Canals stands, as well as giving back for its Sakûla educational project in India.

Visit: www.lorenacanal.com

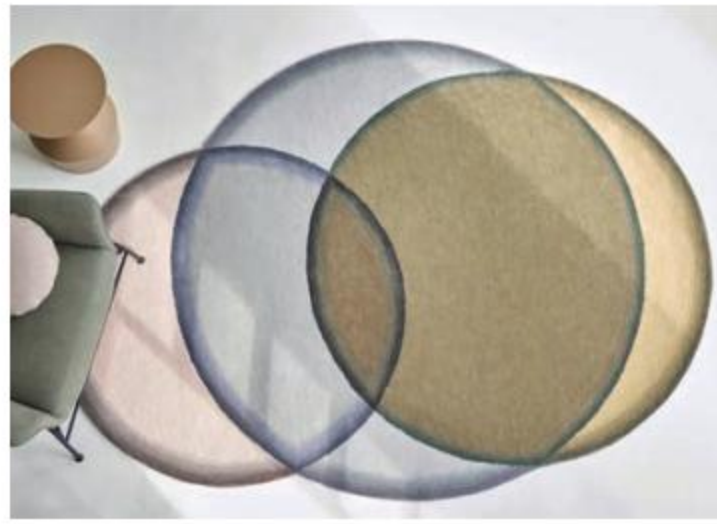
Both rugs can be machine-washed



RUGS



Charlotte Lancelot shares her love of needlepoint with Chaddar (above), featuring traditional embroidery, while Maria Mengual's Modica kilim (below) is an abstract based on the apparently random reproduction of basic forms, inspired by paving.



Crystal by Charlotte Lancelot brings stained-glass windows to mind, with its overlapping coloured circles. The hand-knotted rug is available in three designs: neutral (pictured), red and blue, and in one size: 190cm x 260cm.



The hand-tufted and chain-stitched Dreams collection by Brianda Fitz-James Stuart includes Medieval Faces, in which the designer draws on Medieval art

The hand-knotted wool Cobble features a dense grid that creates the appearance of volume. Designed in-house, the medium and dark grey tones help regulate the light in a room, making Cobble ideal for studies or offices where a sensation of depth is desired.



Diversity

GAN's latest designs draw inspiration from many places. Visit: www.gan-rugs.com



Patricia Urquiola's Mirage collection has been expanded, with Round Mirage seeing the unusual contour becoming more defined and emphatic than in the original rug, outlining the intersection of a circle with a square. Urquiola thus proposes once again a suggestive visual effect reminiscent of the avant-garde Op-Art movement of the 1960s, with multiple colour gradients that seem to reflect the light.



Geometry, shape repetition and neutral colours are combined in Thay by Maria Mengual, a design that evokes motifs typical of Thai textiles and reinterprets the lines of traditional Persian kilims



A second design from the Dreams collection by Brianda Fitz-James Stuart, White Daisy references Matisse and William Morris in a pattern that is hand-tufted and chain-stitched



Zoe is Daria Zimovatnaya's first design for the company, where geometric shapes, colour and texture combine. It comes in two versions: the hand-knotted Kubb and the kilim Sool

RUGS

New heights

Geometric volumes combine in Matteo Pala's latest collection

Italian design duo MM Company has created *Prospettive fantastiche* (Fantastic perspectives), a capsule collection of four rugs for Matteo Pala that draws inspiration from two-dimensional pencil sketches made while noting design ideas during a phone call.

Arcadia, Volumia, Elisia and Triplia are compositions of 'fantastic' geometric volumes, built starting from perspective projections that can be perfectly

observed from every angle. Each piece was designed at MM Company in Milan, then hand-knotted by expert Indian craftsmen who follow ancient techniques and use the finest quality materials such as silk and New Zealand wool. The rugs were then presented in Matteo Pala's showroom in Vicenza, Veneto.

The *Prospettive fantastiche* collection is available in a sophisticated and minimalist colour palette and enriched

by a materiality given by the different heights of the pile: to accentuate the vanishing lines and the sense of depth, the closer we get to the centre, the shorter the pile is.

The result is a series of synthetic and rationalist compositions, made up of independent elements but linked by a single graphic sign.

Visit: www.matteopala.it
www.mmcompany.eu



PHOTO: ALEKSANDR DAL CERO



The rugs have different pile heights

BerryAlloc reinvents wood flooring.

BerryAlloc introduces 2 brand new parquet collections: **Les Exclusifs** and **Les Essentiels**. Because of its innovative **Ultimtec® technology** the collections succeed in bringing together the delicate natural beauty of oiled wood and the ease of maintenance of a varnished wood making it easy to clean, robust and long-lasting.



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ACCESSORIES



Left: tableware is a new category Above: assorted vases

A new year

The SS 2021 collection has more than 1,300 products

The start of 2021 will be different for the furniture and home decor industry, as the January Furniture Show has been postponed until April and Spring Fair cancelled. It is at these exhibitions that Gallery Direct normally unveils its Spring/Summer collection. However, the lack of shows isn't stopping the company as it opens the new year with the launch of its SS 2021 collection.

'We were determined to introduce a wide range of new products for our customers at the beginning of the year, and so we are delighted to announce the launch our SS 2021 collection, which features more than 1,300 lines across all our product categories and new trends. These will be featured in our latest lookbook, which can be viewed online,' says James Hudson, Gallery Direct business development director furniture.

'We are introducing a huge extension to our home accessories catalogue, with more than 210 faux plants, 140 vases and 60 candleholders. There is also a new addition: a tableware range including glassware and kitchen essentials.

'The new wall decor collection has something to suit all interior trends. There are over 160 new lines, across wall art, mirrors and wall storage. The extensive selection of mirrors includes extensions

of some of the popular current ranges as well as a varied choice of new designs.

'The SS 2021 soft furnishing collection is designed perfectly to accompany the other new ranges and embodies each trend. It features subtle yet opulent velvets, luxurious faux furs and cosy bohemian knits.

'On the furniture side, there are over 180 fresh items, as well as new products and four new fabric ranges offering 22 different fabrics on Made to Order. There is also a selection of outdoor furniture, with a variety of styles to suit different tastes.

'An incredible amount of hard work has gone into this launch. It is never easy developing a large new collection, and we've had even more challenges than usual, due to the unprecedented year we've had. However, we are really proud of the finished range, which delivers an exciting array of fresh new products for our customers.

'There are supply chain and shipping issues across the industry. However, utilising the skills of our teams here in the UK and overseas, and working closely with our supply base, we are doing our best to overcome these, to minimise the impact for our customers as much as possible, for both our current ranges and

the new products in 2021. We realise that there are still challenges ahead, but we are optimistic that we can deliver a wonderful range of products to our customers over the coming months.'

The new collection can be viewed at Gallery Direct's Sittingbourne, Kent showroom from 25 January and at the Leeds showroom from 1 February, by appointment only.

Visit: www.gallerydirect.co.uk



Rye cabinet



Gallery™

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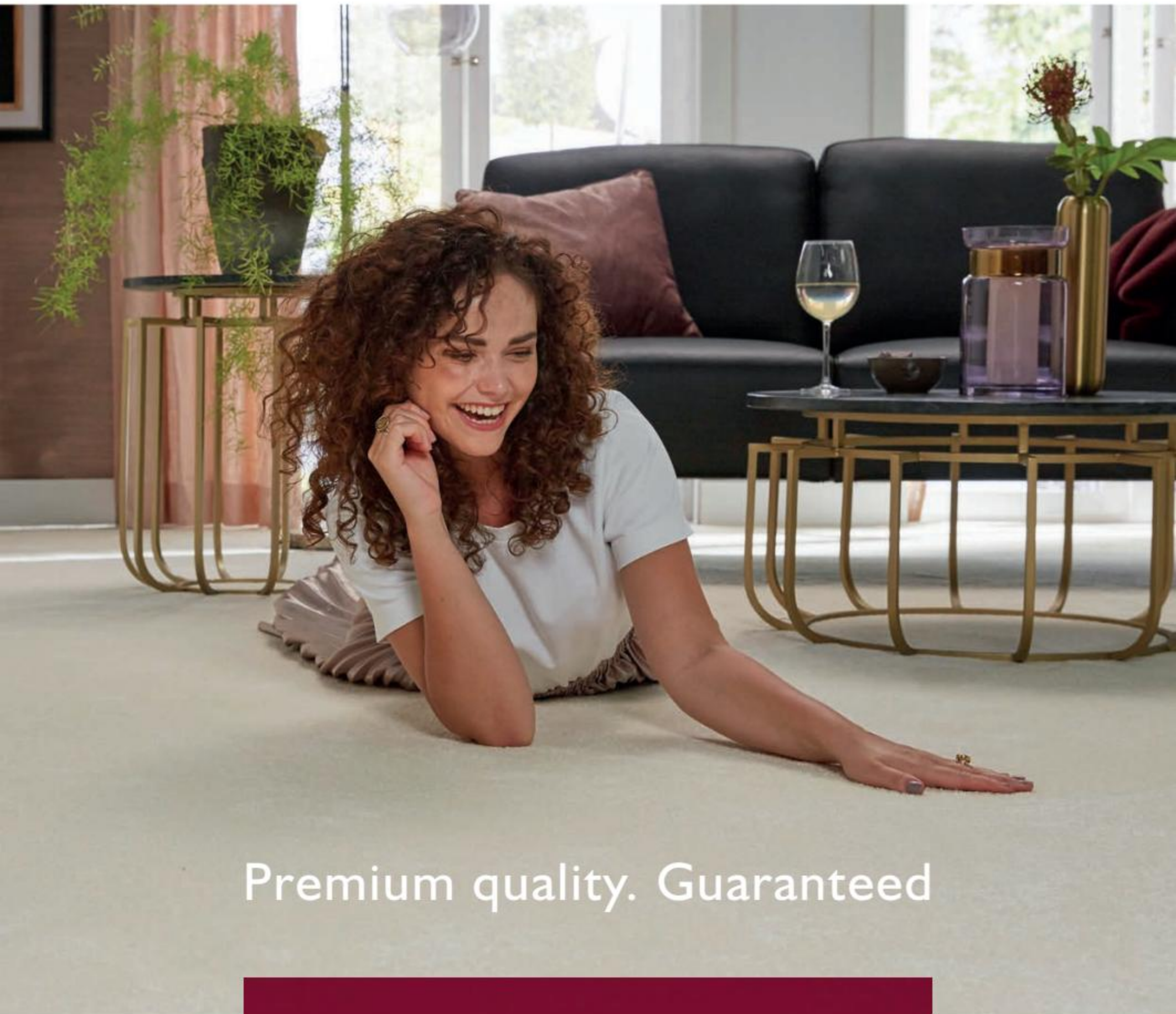
View our full collection online at
www.gallerydirect.co.uk

Re-use

Vondom's Revolution collection is made from fishing nets, waste plastic from the Balearic Islands and plastic bottles from the sea. Visit: www.vondom.com



Clockwise from top: La Predrera, Delta, Ibiza, Africa, Brooklyn



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UPHOLSTERY



Spektra

A journey

himolla is to take to the road

'It was a year of unprecedented challenge but it was humbling and inspiring to watch the world come together to face it head on. There is plenty to look back on with optimism, and himolla reacted to an uncertain market by providing a reliable "safe pair of hands" and support for our retail partners, whilst continuing to offer customers innovation and our traditional blend of superlative quality and value,' says Rob Davies, himolla UK sales agent.

'International flights were restricted so fewer people were at the himolla house show in October to see it, but the launch of Spektra proved an immediate

hit. This new model range offers a sleek, understated, designer look combined with a host of essential features such as optional battery pack and heart balance. The range is available in 10cm steps and includes two seat heights, wall huggers, beds and new designs.

'To build on our existing successes we've introduced a range of sales-winning refinements to some of our most popular models. There are new features on the Rhine, Mosel and Chester, including stepless adjustable neckrests, longer footrests and optional battery packs. The Chester even benefits from an electric neckrest, while many recliners

now offer heated seats and backrests and a massage facility.

'One more way customers can relax is the use of AquaClean on their furniture: its molecular coating prevents spills and stains from penetrating the fabric, meaning one-wipe easy cleaning and new looks that last and last.

'Beginning in March, himolla agents will be visiting our retail partners with a roadshow, showcasing all the new models, the top features and the latest marketing plans. It's our way of giving you the support you need and saying thank you for your ongoing hard work.'
Visit: www.himolla-uk.co.uk





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With more than 20 years in the industry, LPD Furniture's dedicated staff have a wealth of experience and knowledge. Its established buying team continually strives to source premium products, while ensuring that each piece delivers excellent value for money.

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all tastes, contemporary and traditional, so there really is something for everyone.

LPD has a stress-free direct despatch service to further enhance its offering. Having its own team of trusted delivery drivers not only limits the risk of damage in transit, but also enables it to offer a door-to-door service of three working days to most of mainland UK. Its dedicated home delivery team looks after your orders from the word go, to

ensure a smooth, successful delivery.

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Visit: www.lpdfurniture.co.uk



Above: Malmö Right: Monaco drinks cabinet





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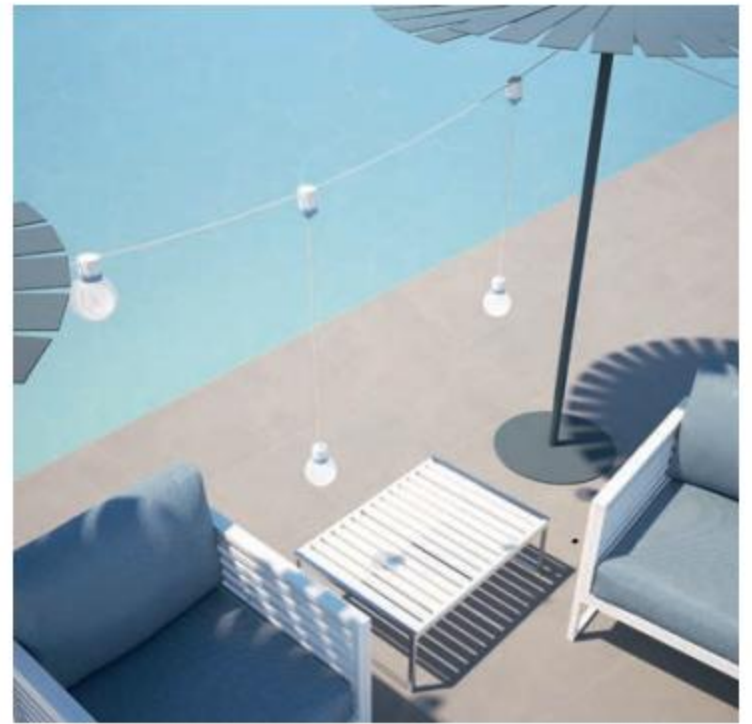
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LIGHTING



Sun by Eduardo Blanco Espeleta



Valeria by Daniel San Juan

Top of the class

A trio of new designs are honoured

A trio of outdoor lights made from recyclable plastic have been recognised by Gandiablasco's 14th International Outdoor Furniture Design Competition.

The competition aimed to award the best outdoor lights by highlighting their uniqueness, innovation and functionality, as well as their ability to integrate into an outdoor environment. The proposals had to be original, unpublished and made of 100% recyclable plastic.

The winning designs were: Boies, by María Franco Llinares and Denis Calle,

which won first place; Sun, by Eduardo Blanco Espeleta, in second place; and Valeria, by Daniel San Juan, which received a special mention.

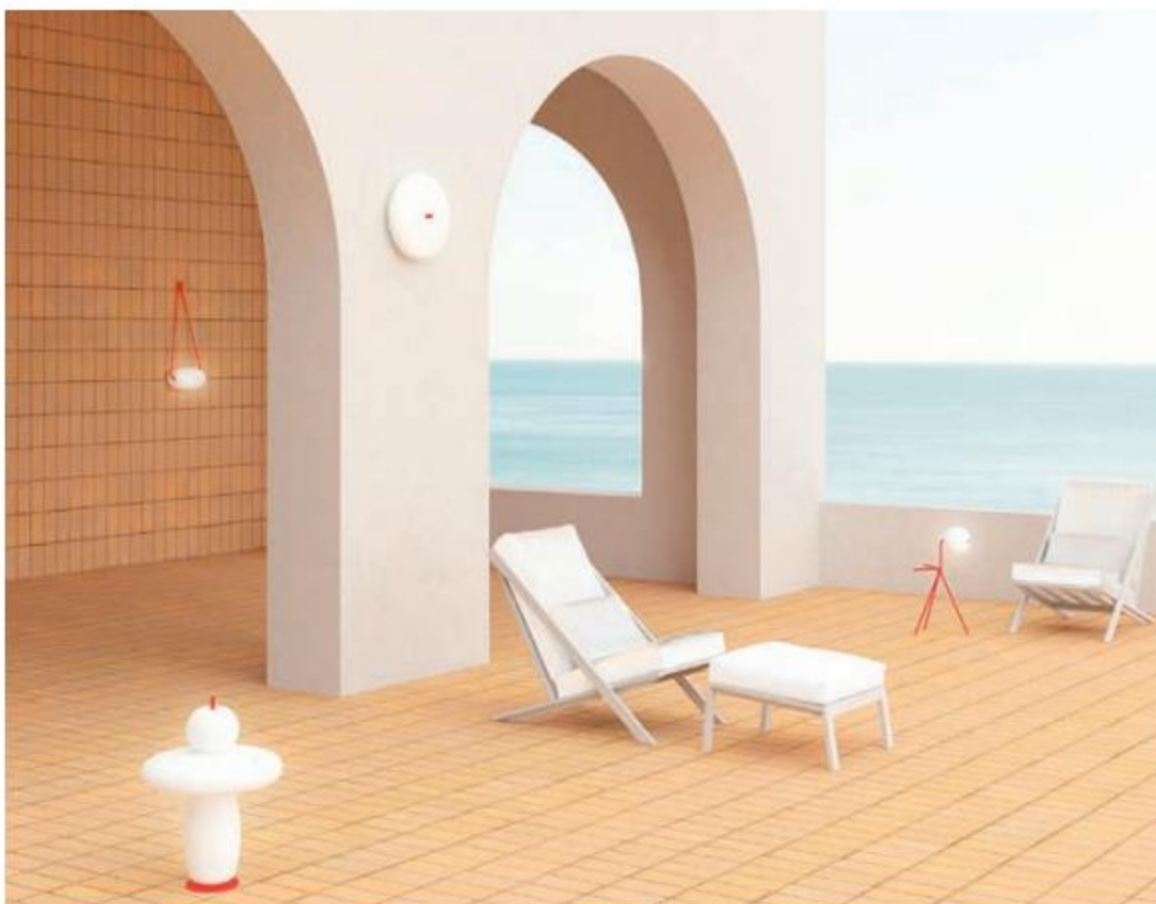
Boies is a series of three outdoor lamps with LED lighting that can be operated either individually or in combination. Designed to combine in a multi-faceted way in any environment, they stand out for their smooth lines reminiscent of marine buoys and oval edges that evoke the rounding produced by erosion and other forces of nature.

This collection of lights, made of 100% recyclable polyethylene, has been rewarded for the authenticity and originality of its design. The judges say they had 'not seen anything like it' in the lighting sector, neither at a formal nor conceptual level.

The Sun portable outdoor lamp is inspired by natural light and represents the sun and its surrounding system with its fluorescent core. Designed to be a sculpture in daylight and a lighting experience at night, its geometrical shapes become a decorative accessory consisting of two semi-spheres of recyclable roto-moulded polyethylene and a sheet of thermo-lacquered aluminium. The judges particularly valued the elegance and simplicity of the creation, as well as its versatility and functionality as a floor lamp.

Valeria is inspired by the classic string lights of summer evenings that facilitate improvised lighting in an enriching way, focusing only on the enjoyment of shared moments outdoors. The design aims to provide a lighting solution to an unfolding environment such as terraces. Valeria is adaptable, versatile and its extension allows it to become the perfect accessory for all kinds of spaces and moments. The judges appreciated the freshness and the suggestive aesthetics of the lamp, born from a genuine and original concept.

Visit: www.gandiablasco.com



Boies by María Franco Llinares and Denis Calle

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EXHIBITIONS

CIFF, 18-21 and 28-31 March, Guangzhou, China



300,000 visitors are expected

New theme

4,000 exhibitors are expected at CIFF as it returns to Guangzhou

Design Trend, Global Trade, Entire Supply Chain is the new theme through which CIFF Guangzhou is repositioning itself to aid the sector's development in the context of the global pandemic.

The 47th China International Furniture Fair aims to promote the value of design and create a new business model in touch with current events. The model is based on synergy between the extraordinary internal market and the further growth of exports, as well as integration of offline and online promotion in order to offer an optimised, more comprehensive exhibition portfolio that represents the entire furniture industry.

CIFF Guangzhou 2021 will be held in two phases organised by product sector: the first, from 18-21 March, dedicated to home furniture, home decor, home textiles, and outdoor and leisure furniture; the second, from 28-31 March, for office furniture, commercial furniture, hotel furniture, furniture machinery and raw materials for the furniture industry.

Covering a total area of 750,000sqm, the China Import and Export Fair Complex in Guangzhou is expected to host 4,000 companies and 300,000 trade visitors.

The success of the last two 2020 editions of CIFF, held in July in Guangzhou and in September in Shanghai, at such a complicated moment in history has rewarded the organiser's investment, hard work and commitment to always offering the furniture industry's main players new, concrete opportunities.

During the first phase, in the home furniture sector, the latest innovations will be showcased including international

design trends, modern and contemporary furniture, upholstery, and a variety of living and night area solutions.

Home decor and home textiles will focus on new interior design trends in furnishings, lighting, paintings, decorative elements and artificial flowers, while outdoor and leisure will feature outdoor furniture such as garden tables, chairs, and equipment and seasonal decorations.

The Office Show, the largest trade fair in the world dedicated to the office, will headline during the second phase, with systems and chairs for the workplace, trends and solutions for the smart office as well as for public and commercial spaces and schools, and furniture for medical care and the needs of the elderly. At the same time, CIFM/interzum

Guangzhou 2021 will host the leading brands in China and internationally that offer the latest technologies, machinery, materials, surfaces, and essential components for the furniture industry.

There will be at least 20 themed events. Design exhibitions, seminars and conferences will include the second edition of Design Spring Contemporary Chinese Furniture Design Fair; 2030+ International Future Office Exhibition; Global Furniture Industry Trend Conference; The Design Dream Show; Ten Parallel Space Exhibition – Easy Party; Top Design 100; CMF Trend Lab and My Dad is a Designer, providing interesting insights, moments of encounter and useful ideas for inspiration and reflection.

Visit: www.ciff.furniture





THE 47th CHINA INTERNATIONAL FURNITURE FAIR (GUANGZHOU)

***Design Trend, Global Trade,
Full Supply Chain, All in CIFF***



GUANGZHOU PAZHOU

Home Furniture

18 -21 March 2021

Office Show

28-31 March 2021

CIFM/interzum guangzhou

28-31 March 2021

📍 China Import & Export Fair Complex
PWTC Expo

SHANGHAI HONGQIAO

03-06 September 2021

📍 National Exhibition and
Convention Center (Shanghai)



EXHIBITIONS

Long Point, 21-24 February, Long Eaton



Tetrad's Aberlour sofa is shown in Harris tweed Macallan check with Brompton Tan piping and buttons and hardwood dark mahogany feet



Collins & Hayes will launch its Edit fabric collection and a smart yet casual model to enhance the range. Pictured is Bailey.

Early start

Long Point has come early this year

This year's spring Long Point exhibition has been brought forward from its usual month of May to late February, and with the January Furniture Show potentially moving to April and The Furniture Show dates still to be confirmed, is likely to be the first major furniture show of the year in the UK.

Alexander & James; Artistic Upholstery; Ashley Manor; Ashwood Designs; Baker Furniture; Bluebone Furniture (making its show debut); Buoyant Upholstery; Carlton Furniture; Collins & Hayes; David Gundry; Duresta; G Plan Upholstery; Gascoigne Designs; Hunter Knight; Iain James Furniture; John Sankey; Orbital

Vision; Parker Knoll; Sherborne Upholstery; Siren Furniture; Spink & Edgar Upholstery; Steed Upholstery; Tamerisk Designs; Tetrad; The Art Group; Westbridge Furniture Designs and Wiemann will be exhibiting at showrooms across the town. Visit: www.longeatonguild.co.uk



Duresta's Hoyland is a contemporary design with sweeping lines and Art Deco styling, while grandiose proportions pair with classic British styling on the Coco sofa with a high back and detailed scrolled arms



Shapely wing details paired with optional integral USB charging and power recline allow G Plan's Kingsbury to deliver on form and function. Plump cushioning works alongside optional power headrest and lumbar support.



Artistic Upholstery's Manhattan buttoned sofa



Award-winning Monaco 2000 from Wiemann is a versatile, contemporary VIP range with a multitude of options and clever storage

LONG POINT

21ST - 24TH FEBRUARY 2021

The Long Eaton Guild invites you to visit undoubtedly the most important furniture exhibition of 2021, featuring the leading UK and International brands of Upholstery
Cabinets, Bedroom and Lifestyle accessories

SEE THE LATEST COLLECTIONS FROM THESE 28 LEADING BRANDS
AT THE UK'S MOST ENJOYABLE AND UNIQUE FURNITURE EXHIBITION

Ashwood Designs
Artistic Upholstery
Bluebone Furniture
Collins & Hayes
Gascoigne Designs
Iain James Furniture
Parker Knoll
Spink & Edgar
Tetrad

Alexander & James
The Art Group
Buoyant Upholstery
David Gundry Upholstery
G Plan
Orbital Vision
Sherborne Upholstery
Steed Upholstery
Westridge Furniture
Violino

Ashley Manor
Baker Furniture
Carlton Furniture
Duresta Upholstery
Hunter Knight
John Sankey
Siren Furniture
Tamarisk Designs
Wiemann Bedroom

LOCATION OF EXHIBITORS AND HOTELS ARE LISTED ON OUR WEBSITE

www.longeatonguild.co.uk

OR CALL OUR HELPLINE 0115 973 4481



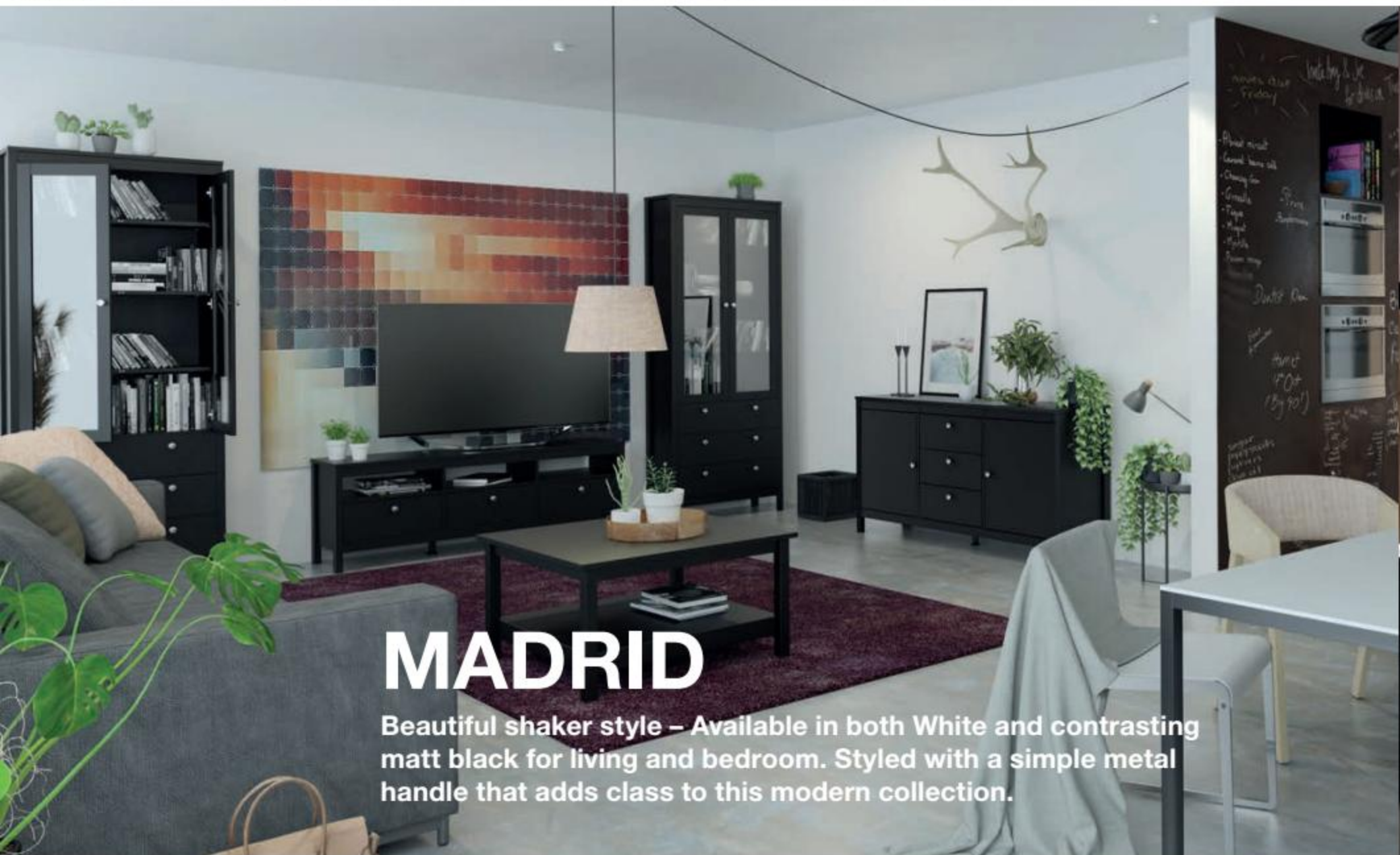
LONG EATON GUILD

OF FURNITURE MANUFACTURERS



BARCELONA

Beautiful shaker style – Available in white and contrasting matt black for living and bedroom. The brown-leather tab handle gives a stylish nordic look.



MADRID

Beautiful shaker style – Available in both White and contrasting matt black for living and bedroom. Styled with a simple metal handle that adds class to this modern collection.

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WE DO THE HARD WORK FOR YOU

TRADE BODIES AND ASSOCIATIONS

Bedadvice.co.uk launched in November

Multi-skilled

Membership offers a multitude of benefits

'When you join the National Bed Federation you become part of one of the most respected trade associations in the furnishing sector – and the only one specifically for the UK bed industry. We represent the industry to government, regulators and standard makers – both in the UK and Europe. As a leading, impartial authority on beds and mattresses, we are a regular source of information for press, professional, legal and consumer enquiries. We also own the bedadvice.co.uk website, offering consumers unbiased, independent advice on all things bed related,' says Simon Williams, NBF marketing and membership manager.

'We offer a range of other services to members. Chief among these is the opportunity to exhibit at the highly successful Bed Show, which is held annually in Telford towards the end of September. Our annual networking Forum in the spring is also very popular.

'Other membership benefits include: enhanced credibility for your business

with retailers, contract specifiers and consumers; our audited Code of Practice for manufacturer members, which provides additional assurance and kudos; technical support to help understand and comply with relevant standards and regulations, including guidance notes, regular training and updates; expert advice on mattress recycling, sustainability, eco design principles and the circular economy; automatic coverage by our Primary Authority agreement with West Yorkshire Trading Standards for all trading standard issues or queries; market intelligence reports, economic updates, consumer surveys and trademark register; education, skills and learning – all you need to know to access the industry's apprenticeships schemes and available funding; and keeping up to date with industry and association news.

'We are keen to support start-up companies, potentially the industry's leading lights of the future, and have therefore now introduced a new

category of membership for start-up bed manufacturers,' says Williams.

'Associate membership is open to manufacturers of beds, mattresses and related products with a UK or Republic of Ireland manufacturing facility.

'New for 2021 is associate supplier membership for companies supplying components, packaging and services to UK and Irish bed manufacturers. Applicants may be new, start-up businesses or existing businesses new to the UK and Irish bed market and can be based anywhere.'

Visit: www.bedfed.org.uk



POS highlights beds made by NBF members; the Retail Champion scheme was introduced in July 2020

nbf

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FEDERATION**

Let's make it right



**We all sleep
better with a
clear conscience.**

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By championing excellence in bed-making and selling, and supporting sustainability.

And by educating consumers on how a good bed can improve their sleep.

Because when we do, everyone sleeps better at night.

*If you're a manufacturer, components supplier
or retailer, find out how the NBF can help you at*

BEDFED.ORG.UK



Nick Garratt, BFM md

Stronger together

Campaigning, support, information and advice were all provided

2020 proved to be a year of extremes for many BFM members, with a pattern of devastating lockdowns and a huge boost in sales over the late summer months where the industry faced unprecedented demand.

'In the gaps between lockdowns, we started to gain ground promoting the furniture industry to a wider audience, with the Buy British furniture event in autumn. The campaign worked well, reaching a broader audience and helping to get the message across about the importance of British furniture. Based on this initial success, we are looking at revisiting it in 2021 – but for now, our focus is on some urgent demands,' says Nick Garratt, BFM md.

'One of the biggest concerns for our industry this year has been product shortages and price hikes. These issues have hit many of our members hard, just as they started to move back into manufacturing after the first lockdown and were benefitting from the opportunities being presented as householders looked to invest in their homes. We've been liaising with government on the issue and were pleased to see the matter of foam and particle board shortages raised in Parliament. This is something we are going to keep very much at the forefront

of our activities and lobbying efforts, particularly as the UK prepares to exit the EU in January.

'As we move into 2021, it's important we are as prepared as possible for the changes on the horizon. With this in mind, we are building a dedicated Brexit hub online, where we'll have the latest information, guidance and advice available for our members to help them navigate the challenges ahead. This will be regularly updated and should provide a useful resource for our industry to stay informed on the specific requirements for furniture manufacturers.

'Digitisation has also raced to the fore in the pandemic, so it is timely that we will be launching the new BFM website early in the new year. This has been developed to give a greater profile to our members' own businesses, with an enhanced area where they can showcase their company, offering a significant step up from the current directory service. The website will also provide a wide range of new functions to enhance the business operations of our members.

'Whatever lies ahead, BFM will be helping the industry put safety first through the work of its Environmental, Health and Safety service. Developed to help manufacturers keep their workers safe and their businesses compliant to

avoid prosecution, this service is one of our most valued member benefits, and it has proved of significant value as the industry addresses the changing work environment in the pandemic.

'While recent figures show a drop in fatal injuries at work and Health and Safety prosecutions – thought in part to be the result of reduced economic activity – days lost to work-related illness and workplace injury shot up by more than 10million to 38.8million, with almost half of these (17.9million) related to stress. In all areas of the industry, we will need to adapt and evolve for the future. As an industry, we are stronger together – and the BFM will continue to offer value and support to its members.'
Visit: www.bfm.org.uk



The Buy British campaign highlighted the importance of British furniture



BFM
BRITISH FURNITURE
MANUFACTURERS
Stronger together

Solutions, advice & practical support

- Health, safety, environment
- Employment & personnel
- Export services
- Legal helpline
- Technical advice E.G. standards, EUTR
- Suppliers directory
- Benchmarking trade data
- E-mail news bulletins

Opportunities to save costs

- Discount on space & VIP benefits for exhibitors at the January Furniture Show
- Raw material price data
- Plus many more...

Sales & marketing

- Enhance your credibility using the BFM logo
- BFM Code of Practice
- Sales leads
- Raise your profile through the BFM directory

BFM Representing the industry

 @BritishFurnitureManufacturers  @BFM_LTD

Membership of BFM provides great value for us at Whitemeadow. The whole team use the information provided on the website and the regular bulletins; and we review and use the information to help us drive improvements in our business.

Ian Oscroft
Managing Director, Whitemeadow



Join us to support the Buy British campaign in 2021

Flying the flag for British Manufacturing

www.bfm.org.uk

LOGON to the new BFM BREXIT HUB

TRADE BODIES AND ASSOCIATIONS



A test report can be a valuable selling tool

A fit finish

Without test results, proving a product is fit for purpose is difficult

There are many types of furniture finishes, but whatever form they take, they must be functional, fit for purpose, durable and attractive. Furniture made from wood or wood veneers will probably have a lacquer finish to protect the surface and enhance the beauty of the wood. Other furniture products might have a man-made surface such as a plastic laminate, PVC foil, impregnated paper, powder coating or a pigmented paint finish.

Furniture finishes might be regarded as engineered to suit the process of application and the product. They will need to be selected for suitability for the material substrate and the type of end use of the furniture. For example, furniture in a hotel or office environment will encounter a more aggressive set of conditions compared to furniture in a domestic setting.

In order to assess a new finish for suitability, it is essential to carry out an evaluation using appropriate test methods and assessment criteria. SATRA uses British and European standards which contain relevant procedures and criteria for evaluating finishes. The requirements and specifications for furniture finishes can be used to determine if the finish is durable enough for the chosen application and can then be regarded as fit for purpose.

The performance of surface finishes may be evaluated using four criteria: mechanical, for example impact

resistance and scratching; heat resistance, including resistance to hot cups, dishes and saucepans; chemical resistance and liquid attack, from such substances as oils, acids, foodstuffs, bleaches, alcohols, tea and coffee; and climatic influences, involving, for instance, light, temperature and humidity.

It is useful to find that the standards used for evaluating furniture finishes are divided into categories, representing the different levels of durability needed to satisfy the particular application.

Many trade buyers want to see some proof that a manufacturer's furniture meets the standards required. Retailers

or importers may wish to evaluate the effectiveness of the finish of the furniture they are buying. A manufacturer or a retailer may submit a sample piece of the furniture to a laboratory, such as SATRA, to undergo a standard test and use this as proof that all furniture produced will meet the standards. A retailer may find themselves in a weak position if they attempt to back up a claim that the product is fit for purpose if they have no test results.

Testing is not expensive, and a third-party report can be a valuable selling tool for the manufacturer and the retailer. Visit: www.satra.com





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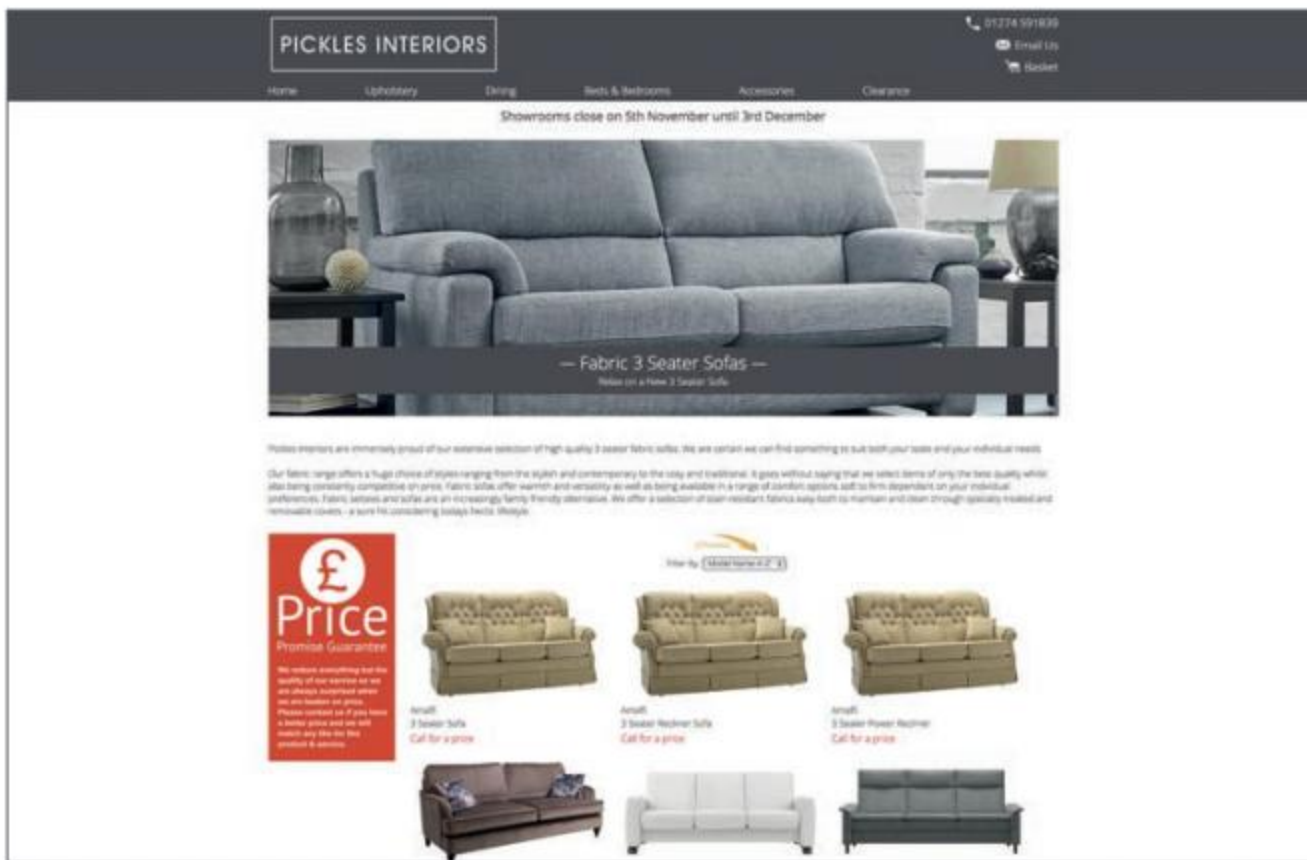
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Left and below: Abacus created the websites of independent retailers Pickles Interiors and Chrysties **Above:** Nigel Hennigan, Pickles Interiors md

Getting online to work

Abacus is focused on independent retailers

'Given the last year, having a strong, accessible and user-friendly website is now fundamentally important. As bricks and mortar buildings close, cyber-space remains ever open. Shopping habits have changed and retailers must change too. This is where Abacus can help,' says Neil Barker, Abacus director.

Abacus is managed by Barker, whose own background is as an independent furniture retailer. He began his voyage into website construction as a direct result of identifying weaknesses in what he was offered by other website designers. 'Websites that, whilst looking aesthetically pleasing on the outside, fell far short of the mark. Websites that could not be updated. Websites that did not showcase the entire range of products on offer. So, I sought to create something better, stronger,' he says.

Abacus has designed, built and manages the sites of 24 independent retailers, the majority of which come from the Minerva Furniture Group.

'The benefits of opting for a website by Abacus are multi-faceted. These are websites that can be managed by sales staff. The pages are populated from the Abacus database, which now houses in excess of 25,000 product items. This means the creation of the website is fast as products are already there.

'Pricing can also be handled through Abacus, with price updates managed centrally and then pulled across to individual retailers. Ticketing can be taken care of at the click of a mouse.'

'Neil and the team at Abacus have helped transform our business. With in-depth knowledge of the furniture industry, they have provided us with a website that we believe is one of the best in the trade, helping to drive customers through our door and increasing customer enquiries beyond our expectations. We would highly recommend them,' says Nigel Hennigan, Pickles Interiors md.

'We have a fantastic relationship with Neil at Abacus. They are very efficient and easy to deal with. The results from our website have improved tenfold since we began dealing with them,' says Ryan Scott, Chrysties director.

'Whether we like it or not, times are changing. We are fast establishing ourselves as a driving force in terms of website design and construction, with the success of independent retailers very much at the heart of what we do. If it's time for your business to move forward, we may well be the place to start,' says Barker.

Visit: www.abacus-furniture-solutions.co.uk



Abacus Furniture Solutions

Bringing You "Game Changing" Websites

Abacus Furniture Solutions remove the obstacles preventing you from making the most of online retail.

- 1 Our specialist team will input your ranges with images, sizes, prices, etc.
- 2 25,992 items & 6,394 swatches already in our hub-making us time efficient
- 3 Affordable monthly payments- contact us for full breakdowns
- 4 Built by furniture specialists who understand the industry
- 5 Additional features SUCH AS option to print tickets direct from your site

At Abacus, we start by ascertaining what it is YOU want and how we can best design and create a site that will meet YOUR specific needs. We make sure that the whole process revolves around a tailored approach with the aim of minimum stress for maximum gain. Once we have your products and images in place, we can then auto-price for you. Job done!

Neil Barker



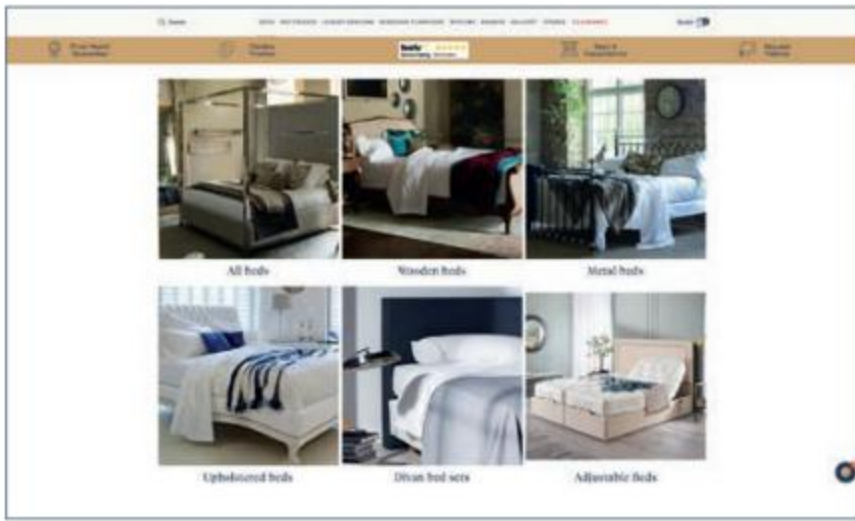
- 6 Our primary aim is SEO optimisation and achieving high rankings
- 7 Should you require it, Abacus can get you e-commerce ready

Call 07748 116126 or email us:
neil@abacus-furniture-solutions.co.uk

Abacus Furniture Solutions-Game Changing Websites



TRADE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES



And So To Bed, Fishpools, Snug Interiors, Home In Online and Julia Jones use OMNIS

Unification

Legacy software can create unwanted problems

'A lot of furniture retail software in use today is suboptimal because so much of it was conceived and written for retail as it was and falls short in coping with retail as it now is. The fundamental weakness of this legacy software is it is often heavily reliant on integrations with a retailer's website. This reliance hampers retailers, especially those serious about the future, serious about ecommerce and omnichannel success,' says Wayne Robbins, Iconography director.

'Integrations can be high maintenance and create many day-to-day issues, limitations and operational inefficiencies due to issues and errors in moving data between systems. Working with a number of progressive furniture retailers we have created a new, unified commerce software platform: OMNIS.'

The OMNIS platform provides ecommerce, EPOS, CRM and a suite of retail management functionality that work in unison, a single coherent entity that does not require integrations between online and offline retail systems to move data and achieve everyday

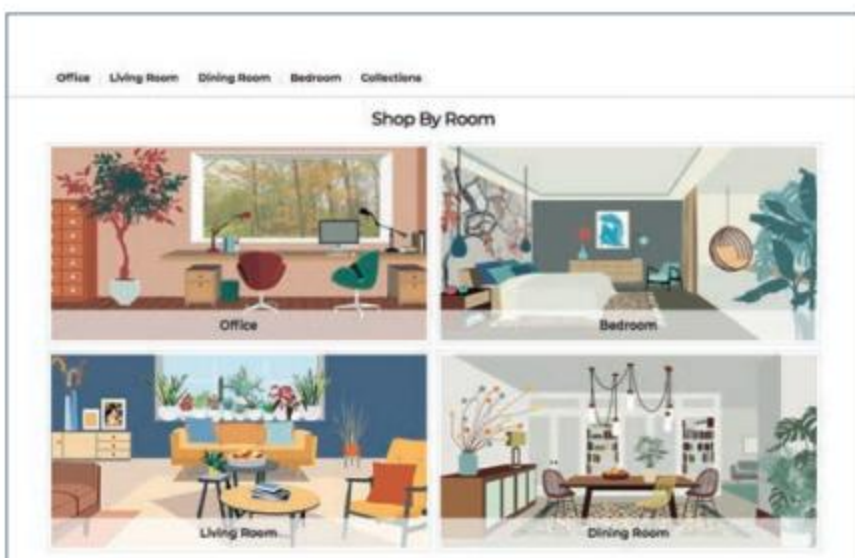
retail outcomes – such as reporting, product catalogue creation, purchase order creation and sales order processing, says Robbins.

Removing integrations creates many benefits for retailers. 'Unified commerce delivers agile and progressive retail for the 2020s and consigns to the dustbin of history all the day-to-day integration-related issues and limitations that we know many furniture retailers experience when using legacy retail software for online and instore retailing. For snippets of some real integration issues from our client support portal – highlighting the sort of problems that regularly hamper furniture and homeware retailers – go to this page on our website: iconography.co.uk/integrationissues.

'The benefits of unified commerce are numerous. Better insight and indeed oversight across the business: data is there in real time, no lags, no re-keying, no integration errors, no moving of files to collate data from different systems. Increased operational efficiency: working with accurate real-time data, available in

one place, means you and your team can do more. Better customer experience: unified commerce provides a single view of the customer, facilitating click and collect; buy in-store and have items delivered; get a quote in-store which can be accepted online; return online orders to store; reward loyalty for purchases; and empower store staff to respond to customers' queries with product, stock and inventory information. Reduced training and licencing costs.

'A modern, unified system, purpose built for the demands of modern retailing, OMNIS offers a suite of essential retail functionality on a single platform – no need to stitch together suboptimal solutions from different vendors.' Visit: www.iconography.co.uk/furniture





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Technicians continued to visit homes at times of need



New working

Castelan has maintained service levels

'To say that 2020 had been a difficult year for the furniture industry and the UK as a whole would be a distinct understatement. Despite everything that Covid-19 has thrown at us all, furniture retailers have continued to service their customers and open their stores during these difficult times,' says Martin Napper, Castelan Group ceo.

'For Castelan, the focus has been on ensuring the safety of our colleagues, as well as the customers and clients that we serve. Because of our investment in

our online claims-handling capabilities we managed to continue fully servicing our clients throughout the lockdowns, with barely an impact on our service levels. We have also kept our fully employed technician network fully operational where government guidance allows, visiting our customers and repairing their furniture in their times of need. Indeed, we have actually expanded our technician team, adding additional heads to ensure our lead times have remained under control.

'We also launched with a number of new clients during the first half of 2020, including Marks & Spencer for its Aftersales In-Guarantee service, and we partnered with The Very Group in relation to its retail insurance products. This is testament to our continued professional approach to our insurance and service offering as a trusted partner in the marketplace.

'We are preparing all of our clients for the FCA Value Measures regime that is

coming in 2021. Putting good value at the forefront of all our insurance products, and keeping our clients compliant at all times, will be a major focus for the next three months. We would be happy to talk to non-clients as well about your responsibilities under the Value Measures regime.

'May I take this opportunity to wish the whole of the furniture sector, and beyond, all the very best for 2021. Castelan stands ready to support you in delivering a range of fully compliant products and services that will see us continue to be your trusted partner of choice.'

Visit: www.castelanguroup.com



Service levels were unaffected by the pandemic





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Left: hand sanitiser was developed and distributed to local services **Above:** staff quickly worked from home

At heart

A focus on customer service has been vital

'Having been around for more than 100 years, Guardsman's priority is always to keep the customer at the heart of all we do and even through it all this year, the sentiment has not wavered,' says David Evans, Guardsman sales director.

'Keeping the customer at the heart has been our focus throughout the global pandemic. It's been the driving motivation towards the changes we have made, ensuring that both our retail and end-user customers feel supported and maintaining the peace of mind a Furniture Protection Plan brings.'

The company's proactive approach meant that it moved to remote working immediately, ensuring retailers and customers didn't lose a single day of support throughout the pandemic as the claims support staff fielded more than 86,000 calls.

In addition to being there to support its customers, logging over 47,000 claims from March to November, it sought to support the local community too. Utilising its strong supplier relationships, it was able to partner with industry-leading supplier Fenice to produce an effective hand sanitiser within a matter of days. Guardsman staff then united to deliver care packages of the product to local services in need, from care homes to nurseries and doctors' surgeries.

'The government restrictions in place meant that for a short while, our specialist technicians were not able to enter people's homes. This saw us focus

on our furniture care products to ensure customers could still care for and protect their furniture; and when so many were stuck in their homes, the need was paramount. As you will have seen, our furniture care products are going from strength to strength, with the product range increasing, fantastic reviews flooding in and sales booming. However, as soon as visits were allowed, we had PPE and new guidelines ready to go, allowing more than 23,000 technician visits to take place since restrictions eased,' says Evans.

'We took the government restrictions as an opportunity to ensure our specialist technicians remained elite by providing them with online infection control training. This, coupled with their access to and knowledge of EN14476 accredited

Covid-19 anti-microbial disinfectants means they are primed and ready to provide the specialist cleaning and disinfectant services that are so needed at this time.

'We are delighted to see so many of our retail partners make it through this challenging period and even flourish. Many have made the most of any quieter periods by re-taking the bespoke elearning we provide, to ensure they are selling both effectively and compliantly.'

'There is no question that we and others alike have faced one of our biggest challenges, but as the country goes on, we are standing stronger than ever, with exciting plans for 2021 and, united with our retail partners, providing unrivalled support.'

Visit: www.guardsman.co.uk



Technicians can offer specialist cleaning



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RECRUITMENT

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2. The ability to achieve sales targets, provide details of results and achievements;
3. The motivation and enthusiasm to grow and increase sales in the territory.

Applications should be emailed by **Tuesday 2 February 2021 at 12 noon** to recruit@ulstercarpets.com, or by post to The Monitoring Officer, Ulster Carpets, Castleisland Factory, Portadown, Co Armagh, BT62 1EE. To speak with a member of our team telephone 028 38334433.

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