

by KENN BUSCH



interzum

- In the Face of Adversity, Innovation Rules

Probably the biggest innovation to be found at interzum this year is a new mindset. Yes, traffic was down, and yes, some of the familiar exhibitors had opted out or gone for other marketing approaches. But energy was high, exhibits were busy, and the number of new product concepts was nearly overwhelming.

As is always the case, in a tough economy the most agile and innovative companies find the resources to refine their offerings, expand their markets, and redefine themselves. What follows is a sampling of the highlights for panel-based furniture manufacturers. Take note...what happens at interzum will drive our industry for the next two years, and beyond!

Interprint's Bold Design Launch

Decor printer Interprint chose a different approach to exhibiting its design concepts - nesting them within Design Post, a converted post office two minutes walk from the halls of interzum that now houses 30 elite interior furnishings brands.

"The Design Post provides us with the possibility of not only presenting new décors in isolation but also in interplay with furniture, textiles and accessories of internationally renowned manufacturers," says Interprint managing director Holger Dzeia. "The effect of this interplay will be unique and very inspiring for our customers."

Taking laminates off of the chipboard and out into the real world of design is a bold but long overdue leap, and the Interprint exhibit struck a nerve with attendees. The concept was spearheaded by the company's new marketing manager, Ulrike Lukas.

Many of the new designs on display were printed with cylinders engraved with new laser technology, which the company says delivers higher fidelity results than traditional engraving techniques.



Walk the Line, Graffiti



Wiggles

Photos: Kenn Busch



Schattdecor's Foil Introductions

Schattdecor's stone decor Statuario Venato from its Smartfoil finish foil collection, made a dramatic statement at the company's impressive interzum stand. The convincing stone design is made more impressive by the new Smartfoil High Gloss finish.

Also new is the company's Postfoil 3D finish, which combine all the advantages of enhanced tactile realism with a distinctive matte/gloss finish. For example, the surface of the woodgrain decor Pinewood recalls sand-blasted wood with its 3-D look, placing it in line with the trend towards pronounced textures.

Schattdecor reports that even in the challenging market climate, the orders from first-time customers are at an all-time high.



*Statuario Venato
Photos: Kenn Busch*



Laricio Pine

Renolit Consolidates 3D Laminate Brands

Under the umbrella Renolit Design, well-known brands Alkor, Benecke-Kaliko and Cova have all found a new home.

The Renolit 3D Stock Range is split into two collections: Renolit Alkoren presents the company's selection of solid colours and woodgrains in fashionable colouring with traditional surface structures.

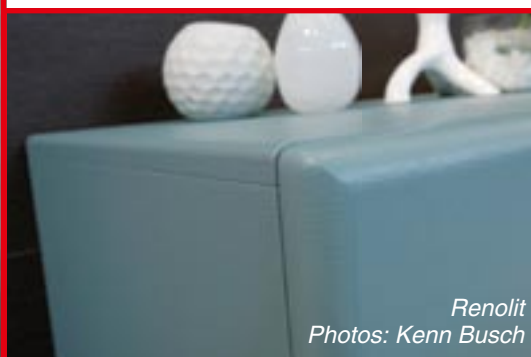
The Premier collection is Renolit Covaren and offers realistic woodgrain prints, fashionable solid colours and abstract prints, blended with superior surface finishes.

The 3D Custom Solutions product meets the increasing trend to individualisation and differentiation. This collection allows clients to select their favoured decor and vary it individually or to adapt technical specifications to customer-specific manufacturing processes.

Renolit's stand had several examples of touchable surfaces, from hand-scraped to oiled wood, products with enhanced scratch-resistant properties.



Renolits 3D laminates are highly formable, durable, and available in variety of textures



*Renolit
Photos: Kenn Busch*



Resopal's Innovations - Good for Business

Resopal showed off several significant innovations, with the goal of increasing the realm of HPL applications. The company's new Symalite waterproof substrate makes its SpaStyling product perfect for wet room wall and floor applications.

Symalite is glass-fibre reinforced polypropylene that, when sandwiched between two layers of HPL, is also significantly lighter than similar panels created with wood-based substrates.

FlexformPlus is a 0.8 mm Resopal laminate bonded to a fibrous leather substrate, which is in turn bonded to a slotted panel, developed by Georg Ackermann GmbH. The leather material compensates for stresses and prevents the slots from being visible on the front, and ensures stability and perfect bending, even when extremely small radii are involved.

In collaboration with Nolte Holzwerkstoff GmbH & Co. KG in Germersheim, Resopal supplies elements for doors, exhibitions, shopfittings

and interior design, furniture and kitchen worktops in a special lightweight version for all projects in which the focus is on cost savings, easy handling and environmental or health aspects.

"Rheinspan AirMaxx" is characterized by up to 30% lower weight than normal chipboard. This considerable saving is achieved by filling the board's core layer with tiny polystyrene balls in place of some of the wood chip. The resultant reduction in weight provides customers with potential savings and easy handling throughout the entire supply chain.

Processing and durability are identical with those of conventional chipboard.

Over the last three years, new Resopal innovations have accounted for 26% of the company's turnover, but almost 40% of its profit margins. Now that's how to make good use of an economic downturn.

For more details on the AirMaxx, please see our article on page 27.



*Rheinspan AirMaxx
lightweight substrate
Photo: Kenn Busch*

Blum Easy-Lift Systems

Blum has dramatically increased the user comfort of its Aventos bi-fold lift, up and over lift, lift up and stay lift. Thanks to the "Servo-Drive" electric system, lift systems now open and close as comfortably as Blum's tried and tested pull-out systems. The entire product range was presented for the first time at interzum.

A gentle touch on fronts suffices to open Blum's lift systems. And they close again just as conveniently at the press of a beautifully designed wireless switch (which is within easy reach in cabinet interiors). The tried and tested "Blumotion" effect, for a soft and silent closing action, comes into play once again.

This latest solution is in keeping with the current design trend towards handle-free furniture. Frequently, handle bars were needed to open handle-free furniture. Thanks to "Servo-Drive", wall cabinets can now have flush fronts.

Blum Aventos lifts



Hettich's Connectors for Lightweight Panels



Hettich unveiled a new kind of solution to connect furniture sides and shelves. This special connector for lightweight panel furniture construction is designed on the basis of the tried-and-true "Hettinject-System," and flexibly works with all materials used in lightweight building boards.

Attached to the side and hidden from view, the "Hettinject VB insert" connects the furniture pieces securely and sturdily. Through its extensor clamp, it can bridge the gaps between furniture faces and board material tolerances.

Hettich lightweight panel connection system

