

No. 17

imm cologne "prime": more first-time exhibitors than ever before

- Even more space dedicated to top-quality living-room and bedroom furniture
- Flexibility and individuality are the distinguishing features of the new collections
- First-time exhibitors using the imm cologne as a springboard for the German market and neighbouring European sales territories

Koelnmesse is reporting an extremely strong demand from exhibitors for space in the imm cologne's prime segment. In contrast to the 2011 event, it won't just be halls 4.1, 5.1 and 10.1 that are dedicated to top-quality living room and bedroom furniture, mainly from the high-end segment; in 2012, Hall 5.2 will be reserved for this prime-quality furniture as well. Whether they're looking for a modern interior, tables and chairs or dining room furniture – visitors to the prime segment will go home with a comprehensive overview of what the international market has to offer. They can also look forward to some groundbreaking world firsts in terms of multifunctionality and technology. Some exhibitors – including a great many who will be taking part in the imm cologne for the first time – are revealing a few of their trump cards in the run-up to the fair.

Alu-Style is one of the new providers who will be joining the furniture fair for the first time; accordingly, the Hungarians are coming to Cologne with high expectations. Up until now, Alu-Style has been better known as a player from the supplier industry and has been attending the furniture for many years as a visitor. Now the company wants to establish itself in the international furniture industry with its tried and tested systems for sliding doors, shelving, tables and walls. The company's trade fair presentation will focus on its sliding doors –



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including the new "Albatros" line. Alu-Style cites flexibility as the crucial trend of the future: the declared basis of all Alu-Style's products.

The new products from Wössner are designed for function, added value and comfort. In particular, new developments can be expected from the "Dining Collection" – such as three new bench collections that provide the same degree of seating comfort as a sofa. Wössner will of course be presenting matching occasional furniture again too. The Baden-Württemberg firm currently sees a very definite trend towards dining benches in leather and faux leather. The company, which looks back on more than a hundred years of history, also sees an increase in the share of solid wood furniture with individual surface accents such as split wood, faux stone and textured finishes. "The imm cologne has definitely gained significance again; in our eyes, it is the trend barometer for the national and international furniture industry. As the biggest international furniture fair of all, the imm is extremely important to us. Like no other trade show, it gives us the opportunity to get close to our customers, partners and competitors. Nobody can afford to miss the imm – it's where the course for 2012 will be set," says Wössner's head of sales Oliver Gutekunst.

Buroart Mobilya from Turkey is another of the first-time exhibitors. The modern office furniture producer chose the imm cologne as the ideal platform for gaining a stronger foothold in Europe. Buroart is hoping for the highest possible customer circulation within the hall, so that it can benefit from its placement in the prime segment by introducing as many visitors as possible to its new furniture.

Corpus is also celebrating its debut in Cologne. "We believe the imm cologne is a very respected international furniture show – that's why we've decided to exhibit there," says the Greek company. Corpus numbers amongst the wardrobe specialists in its native Mediterranean territory and offers a wide variety of different designs and dimensions. The imm cologne is an important part of the new international marketing strategy Corpus is pursuing.

Dolmenler is particularly keen to introduce visitors to the Rhine metropolis to its new chair "Charlie". The Turkish firm is hoping for new buyers, dealers and business partners from all over the world so as to market its high-quality

products even more efficiently. The Izmir-based manufacturer compares modern furniture creations designed to satisfy the modern demand for style in combination with ergonomics and comfort to the abstract work of artists. Dolmenler very much appreciates the fact that the imm cologne is so well organised, which gives manufacturers and buyers "the opportunity to share ideas and do business with one another."

Edelber is another of the names that will be featuring in the imm cologne's exhibition catalogue for the first time. The registered trademark for top-quality acrylic furniture was launched as recently as summer 2011 and stands for timeless, modern and elegant design with the highest standards of quality and workmanship. Similarly to Corpus, its presentation at the furniture fair is an important strategic step towards introducing Edelber to a broader audience. "It was the positive transformation the imm cologne has undergone that prompted us to show the Edelber brand there in 2012. We very much hope our expectations will be confirmed," says Lisa Krempel, head of marketing at Edelber. The characteristic features of the acrylic furniture: the possibility of customisation and a wide variety of material and colour combinations.

The booth of Elite Strom – yet another first-time exhibitor – will revolve around beds and mattresses. "The imm cologne is the central meeting point for exhibitors and decision-makers from all the world's major markets. We are delighted to be taking part in the 2012 event and look forward to sharing our passion for sleep products with the international visitors," says the Athens-based company.

In contrast to the many newcomers in the prime segment, Geha Möbelwerke from Hövelhof has been participating in the trade fair for many years. One of the interesting new products the Westphalian company has announced is an innovative folding door solution that looks certain to appeal not just to technology fans but to a wider audience as well. The innovative cabinet system enables the simultaneous opening and closing of two pairs of folding doors, either mechanically or electrically. The synchronised opening mechanism is an in-house development by Geha Möbelwerke. "Hall 5.1 has evolved into a competence centre for bedroom producers. The themes represented are highly attractive and therefore an 'absolute must' for bedroom furniture buyers," says

Gerd Körber, head of sales at Geha. "We see the imm 2012 as a platform for a broad international public that we want to make aware of our diversity and competency when it comes to attractive and individual bedroom furnishings."

Lenio is a young, up-and-coming company from Unterstadion in Baden-Württemberg. The highlight of its presentation at the trade fair will be the furniture created by 22-year-old designer Simon Hatzing, which includes a highly unusual coffee table. The young designer is very definitely not a fan of major trends: "I don't want to go with the mainstream. That's why I don't take my cues from the major trends, which most people tire of pretty quickly anyway," says Hatzing. "I'm already familiar with the imm cologne as a visitor. My motivation for becoming an exhibitor is the big, multilayered clientele – no other trade fair attracts such a broad spectrum of different people."

Malagic & Divani from Bosnia Herzegovina, founded in 2006 as part of the Malagic Group, is another first-time exhibitor. It too hopes its presentation at the imm cologne will generate contacts in Germany and its neighbouring markets. Besides upholstered beds, the company's range mainly consists of sectional sofas and upholstered chairs. "Merlin Magic" will be making its debut in Cologne. Besides generating new custom, Malagic & Divani is looking forward to checking out its fellow market players. "It will be interesting to see what new products other companies will be bringing to the fair – that's the only way to find out where your own company stands," explains Fatmir Malagic, owner of Malagic & Divani.

Belgian company Mobitec is coming to the imm cologne 2012 with some very concrete objectives. "We want to expand our business connections in the furniture trade at international level, especially in the Benelux countries, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, France, Norway and England, and it would also be great if we could gain a foothold in England, Norway, Denmark and Sweden. We're particularly interested in these markets in terms of furniture retailers, but also with regard to the contract business. In Cologne, we're intending to demonstrate our competitiveness at a broad international level," says Ralf Lötfering, Mobitec's head of sales for the DACH countries. The highlights of the Eupen-based company's trade fair presentation will be its innovative chair families that are suitable for both areas of its business, and of course its joint

brand presentations with JAB-Anstoetz and Kvadrat Fabric Collections. The keyword for Mobitec's new developments is "Cocooning" – for a snug and cosy home. "The entire Mobitec team is looking forward to its first imm cologne. Our European sales team is curious about our international appearance and the response it will generate. It is the first time we will be presenting ourselves to our large clientele in Germany. We've been doing some lateral thinking and come up with an interesting collection for specialist dealers and the contract business," says Lötfering.

Italian company Natisa is renowned for its contemporary tables and chairs. In future, however, the producer also wants to market modular libraries and has decided to make its debut presentation at the imm cologne. Even though the Southern Europeans would have preferred Hall 10 or 11 to 5.2, the company from Moimacco in Udine is hoping for a considerable image boost from its trade fair appearance. All Natisa's furniture designs are based on a high degree of eco-compatibility and combinations of top-quality natural materials.

"We would like to see the imm become more of an order-taking show again in the next few years," says the Paidi company from Hafenlohr. Right now, there's no escaping white furniture for children and youngsters – that's the biggest trend apparent at the moment. For the imm cologne 2012, the old established manufacturer is planning to present a new teen bedroom as well as a new range of play, loft and bunk beds – hopefully, says the Lower Franconian firm, in a setting within the prime segment where there will be other companies showing the same product group.

The Rumanian company Rus-Savitar sees the decisive trends in its segment as modularity and minimalistically designed furniture – as a way of restoring a little calm to consumers' everyday lives. According to the manufacturer from Dudestii Noi, naturalness is another very important aspect. "The imm cologne is the biggest furniture fair in Europe; it has a crucial influence on future trends and what furniture looks like," says Christian Alin Rusu, CEO of Rus-Savitar.

"The imm cologne is the one platform where you really ought to present yourself – and where you should keep an eye open for the design of tomorrow," says Eugénio Trigo, head of design at Trigodesignstudio. The

Lisbon-based studio has made it its business to design small editions of between 10 and 500 pieces that present a product in a new light. For the trade fair, Trigo has set itself the task of reinterpreting timekeeping and will be bringing an innovative electronic clock to Cologne for its international debut.

Trüggelmann's approach is classic rather than unconventional. The Bielefeld company's interesting new product launch for January goes by the name of "Logo classic", an elegant programme for cabinets, dressing rooms and walk-in wardrobes. The style of the furniture can be adapted to individual customer requirements: a multitude of fluted pilasters, cornices, plinths and panel elements ensures variety. But Trüggelmann won't be coming to Cologne on its own: "The joint appearance of Trüggelmann and Wehrsdorfer at the imm cologne 2012 represents a very special time in our furniture life. We're looking forward to some beautiful, new, design-savvy furniture ideas," says Regina Spatz, head of marketing at the Westphalian company. Wehrsdorfer will be presenting new products too, of course: "Maison", a classically elegant, sometimes even romantically inclined living room range with a passion for detail is intended to generate new business.

VM-Möbel-Design is counting both on its tried and tested products and new ideas. The TV and tea cabinets, for instance, have a permanent place at the Haßmersheim company's booth. The manufacturer has also announced an Audio Design Wall to suit any tastes that can also be integrated into wellness areas, auditoriums or shops. VM-Möbel-Design's biggest hope is that the Cologne event will generate new customers. "At the end of the day," says the firm's headquarters, "every new design has to sell." The finished pieces are made of exquisite and top-quality materials – with its retro look and, above all, the integration of up-to-the-minute technology, VM-Möbel-Design is very much in tune with the times. Interior architects have already realised just how universally usable products like the Audio Design Wall are. Now the company wants to strengthen awareness of its products amongst dealers and consumers as well.

That is exactly what Evergrowth, La Forme, Riviera and Venjakob are doing as well: by taking part in the Cologne trade fair, the companies are making an active contribution to their own success in 2012. And of course everybody is

hoping for high visitor levels and as many concrete orders as possible. The trade fair looks set to be a resounding success.

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Further information:
www.imm-cologne.com

imm cologne + LivingInteriors
16th to 22nd January 2012
9.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.
Public Days: 20th to 22nd January 2012

The information is based on voluntary statements by the exhibitors and is provided with no guarantee of completeness.