



New brand identity launched for Singapore's furniture industry

450 words

9 March 2008

17:09

[Channel NewsAsia](#)

English

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SINGAPORE : The Singapore Furniture Industries Council has launched a new brand identity - called Singapore Mozaic - for Singapore's furniture industry.

Twenty-seven furniture companies have come under this banner - to promote the Singapore Mozaic branding to the world.

For a start, the companies will be showcased collectively at the world-renowned Milan Furniture Fair next month, and other international events, including the Orgatec in Cologne and the Index Dubai later this year.

Information, Communications and the Arts Minister Lee Boon Yang said the launch is a 'timely initiative' to strengthen Singapore's international market share of world furniture exports, which currently stands at 0.7 percent.

He said the industry can confidently increase this share to 2 percent by 2015.

Dr Lee was speaking at the opening of the International Furniture Fair 2008 and 25th ASEAN Furniture Show at the Singapore Expo on Sunday.

He said, "This brand positioning will harness the collective strength of industry players to differentiate their products and to enhance the recognition of quality, design, reliability and value offered by the Singapore furniture companies.

"A distinctive brand positioning is fundamental to the industry's future growth. It will also help the industry to attract new investment and design talent to energise the industry with new ideas and innovative designs."

Andrew Ng, President, Singapore Furniture Industries Council, said, "The world global furniture growth is at 6 to 8 percent. And in Singapore we're seeing an annual growth of 15 percent...The industry is looking forward to the challenge by doing a lot of branding, design and product development.

"With the strong support from our Singapore government, such as **IE Singapore**, **SPRING Singapore**, and the various government agencies, (things) look promising..."

Meanwhile, Dr Lee said that the 2007 National Design Industry Study conducted by Ernst and Young showed that 44 percent of businesses acknowledged that design gives them a competitive edge - up from 32 percent in 2005.

He urged industry players to work with his Ministry's DesignSingapore Council to further internationalise Singapore's designs and design capabilities.

In terms of capability development, design is one of the disciplines being considered as part of the integrated learning approach for Singapore's future fourth university.

On Tuesday, the Education Ministry said that the university will break out of traditional boundaries to offer a cross-disciplinary education, emphasising 'solutions-directed research' to provide answer to problems face by the industry.

So Dr Lee said the design sector can look forward to future graduates of the fourth university with 'cross-disciplinary training'. And these talents will be a big boost to the design industry and Singapore as a whole. - CNA/ms

Document CNEWAS0020080309e43900b6

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