

SINGAPORE: DESIGN WONDERLAND IN THE MAKING

By **Nicole Liang**

Singaporean furniture is set for a metamorphosis, as local statutory boards inject a Design DNA into the industry.

SINGAPORE HAS IN recent years accelerated its pace in transforming its furniture industry into a design wonderland for the world. New this year, the Design DNA Programme was launched in March to boost overall design standards and capabilities of local furniture companies and designers. DNA here stands for Develop, Nurture and Accelerate.

Supported by SPRING Singapore, the programme will be implemented over the next three years to assist the furniture industry in fully leveraging design as a key competitive advantage and driver for future growth. Andrew Ng, President, Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC), said: "Design DNA will greatly enhance the Council's efforts in establishing the Republic as the Asian hub for furniture and design excellence."

This S\$1.4 million (US\$954,192) project is expected to benefit at least 300 designers in the following ways:

- Increase the number of design-led enterprises in the furniture industry
- Nurture and increase the pool of Singapore-based designers
- Drive design as a strategic differentiator and enabler for Singapore-based furniture enterprises to become more competitive in the domestic and international markets
- Position Singapore as a world-class furniture industry leader at the forefront of latest design trends, usage of materials, technologies, innovations and recognised for best business practices

The SFIC has set up a dedicated Design Development Unit to spearhead, enhance and formulate various initiatives for this programme. These activities will include design seminars, overseas design missions, an interactive e-platform for design

promotion and outreach, and a capabilities profiling of the furniture industry.

Besides SPRING, SFIC will also be working with International Enterprise (IE) Singapore and DesignSingapore Council on future projects and developments related to Design DNA.

"Coupled with SFIC's other current design initiatives, I am confident that the new programme will raise the bar in design excellence and encourage a more vibrant and robust design-led furniture trade in Singapore," Ng said.



Andrew Ng
President.



Other current and ongoing design initiatives include the Singapore Mozaic programme which was launched in March 2008. Like Design DNA, Singapore Mozaic is headed by the SFIC with support from IE Singapore and SPRING Singapore. As a B2B industry brand, Singapore Mozaic seeks to exemplify the best in Singaporean furniture in terms of quality, design, reliability and value.



Gavino Bed Set and Saverio Sideboard from Star Furniture

At the world's design Mecca in Milan, Singapore Mozaic exhibitors garnered national support from Singapore's Senior Minister, Goh Chok Tong, who visited the fair on 22 April 2009.

Six Singapore representatives showcased their latest collections under the Singapore Mozaic umbrella within a 160 sq m booth (L01/M02) located in Hall 13. In particular, Koda Ltd unveiled its Asolo dining and bedroom collections which were specially designed by multiple award-winning Italian designer Luigi "Gigi" Garbarino. Star Furniture Industries Pte Ltd premiered its clean and fresh Gavino Bed Set and Saverio Sideboard pieces.



Asolo dining range by Luigi "Gigi" Garbarino for Koda