



www.wood2good.eu

RESTRUCTURING THE WOOD SECTOR Best practices and innovative proposals

InnoBox Book

In partnership with:

With financial support
from the EU



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This publication was prepared on the basis of information provided by a variety of enterprises from the wood sector and that are established in France, Italy, Spain and the UK. The pictures displayed herein have been collected from the enterprises themselves.

The document was edited and published by POUR LA SOLIDARITÉ with the most valuable contribution from the Wood2Good project partners.

The authors wish to thank warmly the representatives of companies for their time and contribution to the elaboration of this publication.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the PROGRESS Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the consortium and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	1
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	2
INTRODUCTION.....	3
PROJECT PRESENTATION	5
1. BEST PRACTICES	7
Coulidoor (France)	7
Formabilio (Italy).....	10
Reverse (Italy)	13
Valcucine (Italy).....	16
Actiu (Spain).....	19
Micuna (Spain)	22
2. INNOVATIVE PROPOSALS.....	25
Menuiserie Thiebaud (France).....	25
Ikea France (France).....	28
Johnny Grey Studio (United-Kingdom)	31
Stewart Linford (United-Kingdom)	33
Trada BM (United-Kingdom).....	35

INTRODUCTION

Supporting employment in sectors that have been heavily affected by the economic crisis is one of the major challenges to address in the years to come at the level of the European Union. If the identified solutions to the economic crisis focus narrowly on financial and economic sustainability, the climate change ahead of us, direct consequences of our consumption habits, can be fought concurrently with the rise of unemployment in Europe.

As a matter of fact, wood is one of the most important industrial sectors in Europe with close to 3 million workers, and 375 000 enterprises generating an annual turnover of 122 billion euros¹. However between 2000 and 2012, employment in wood-based industries fell by 17%, the largest losses being recorded in furniture manufacturing (-28.6%). From 2008, the effects of the economic crisis have been felt extremely hard in the timber industry with an acceleration of the labour input reductions at a faster pace than the manufacturing average². The international competition to which the wood sector is submitted can be an element of explanation: the increase of raw material costs in Europe has intensified the already ongoing delocalisation mainly to Asian countries, where sustainable objectives are not as constraining as in Europe.



As for the climate change, many scientific researchers have already proven that the sustainable management of the forests and the development of wood-based products (such as building, furniture and so on) can help reducing CO₂ emissions. Indeed, given the high carbon sink capacity of our growing forests, wood is considered as a major source of renewable energy for the continent. Unfortunately, many Member States keep limiting the use of wood through discriminatory building regulations mainly justified by fire issues.

The EU2020 strategy for a "*smart, sustainable and inclusive growth*" has reoriented Europe towards social, environmental and health standards along with economic and growth targets. The 20% of renewable energy objective in the European energy mix that must be achieved by 2020 may boost the development of the timber industry towards the renewable energy sector. However, in view of all the other advantages the wood sector can offer in the fight against climate changes, the recent European decisions such as the agreement on Energy and Climate

¹ SWD(2013) 343 final.

² EUROSTAT, Forestry statistics overview, data from September 2013.

targets for 2030 may constitute an incentive for decision makers and stakeholders in the sector to develop the use of sustainable wood products. As already mentioned by the European Commission in its 2008 communication³, even though the wood sector faces new challenges, it also offers opportunities to implement innovative solutions so as to answer the fight against climate change and become the competitive sector it is expected to be in Europe.

Many initiatives have already been implemented in this respect. With this in mind, the present *InnoBox book* aims at presenting a selection of the most relevant best practices and innovative proposals of sustainable restructuring in the wood sector identified in the framework of the Wood2Good project. On the one hand, the best practices will highlight actions already initiated by companies, the implementation process they followed and the results to be expected. On the other hand, the innovative solutions will investigate on innovation and future practices to be developed with the aim to green the wood sector.

Thanks to this booklet, the consortium of the Wood2Good project hopes that the stakeholders should change their mind and not consider the restructuring as “the last chance of surviving” anymore but rather consider it as a new opportunity to recover competitiveness through innovation, contribute to fight climate change and overcome the labour input reduction challenge that the timber industry faces since almost 15 years.

Accompanying this *InnoBox book*, a Book of recommendations particularly addressed to decision makers was published as a synthesis of the project outputs. All the best practices and innovative proposals are also available in an InnoBox IT tool on the project website: www.wood2good.eu.

The Wood2Good consortium wishes you a pleasant and fruitful reading!

³ COM(2008) final.

PROJECT PRESENTATION

Wood2Good objectives

The Wood2Good project was developed with the main objective to analyse the current situation of the restructuring in the wood sector and establish recommendations addressed to decision makers so as to ensure a responsible change of wood SMEs towards a green economy.

In order to achieve this aim, the project's specific objectives are to:

1. Improve the comprehension of the situation in the wood sector in terms of employment and sustainable practices;
2. Foster the implementation of a real dialogue between the main stakeholders (social partners, public authorities, technological institutes) and exchanging information on the restructuring of the wood sector through case studies and national workshops;
3. Seek for best practices and innovations to be collected all over Europe;
4. Raise awareness on the restructuring issues in the wood sector and its solutions by sharing the conclusion of the activities led in each country through publications (*Book of recommendations* and *InnoBox Book*) and event organisation (European conferences).

Wood2Good main productions

2 transnational events:

- Launching conference - Brussels, March 2014;
- Final conference - Brussels, December 2014;

1 survey on the perceptions of the wood sector by the stakeholders;

1 report on bibliographical review to better the comprehension of the situation;

4 case studies and workshops in Spain, France, UK, Italy;

1 InnoBox online tool giving access to identified best practices and innovations;

1 InnoBox book presenting a selection of the best practices and innovations;

1 Book of recommendations addressed to decision makers;

1 project website: www.wood2good.eu

Start date

February 2014

End date

January 2015

Wood2Good partners

CEITE

Spain (coordinator)



POUR LA SOLIDARITÉ

Belgium



FEVAMA

Spain



FCBA

France



Verona Innovazione

Italy



EFEDOSZSZ

Hungary



Buckinghamshire New University

United-Kingdom



1. BEST PRACTICES

Coulidoor (France)



COULIDOOR®

COULIDOOR is a family business founded in France in 1986 and which is specialized in the design and manufacture of cupboards doors and custom-made storage solutions. Since 2012, the company is engaged in steps towards sustainable development in line with the social and environmental actions internally implemented since the inception of the firm.

Company's Description

History

COULIDOOR operates on 2 industrial sites and 3 logistic platforms covering the whole of French territory. Compared to most of the players in the furniture sector in France, COULIDOOR has the distinction of having incorporated its logistics in its daily activities and therefore the distribution of its products.

Year of creation: 1986

Number of employees: 210

Turnover: 35 M€ (2011)

Certifications: European label PEFC, "French origin" guarantee

Products & Services

COULIDOOR offers a complete range of cupboard doors associating steel or aluminium with shiny, matt, lacquered finishes, and a set of decoration and rich and trendy colours. In addition, the company produces tailor-made cupboards to offer dressing rooms fitting with the needs and desires of the consumers. Service-wise, COULIDOOR is known for its swiftness despite its producing to countermark tailor-made products (1 week for cupboard doors and 3 weeks for storage units).

Sub-sectors affected

Since its inception, the company has worked with its partners and suppliers in a cooperative mind-set and in responsible purchasing approach. This is particularly illustrated by the "French origin" guarantee attesting that the production as well as the supply are carried out by national partners. In the same spirit of synergies, COULIDOOR has set up partnerships with local suppliers such as Renault Trucks that now provides a set of 25 trucks of the COULIDOOR fleet.

Implementation Process

The dynamics of sustainable development is driven by the industrial Director of the group, which since 2012 relies on some of his staff: the person in charge of QSE, the HR Manager, as well as – more recently - sustainable development manager.

Since 2012, the company's policy for sustainable development is goes along with a strengthening of the management on strategic positions: a purchasing manager (2012), a financial controller (2013), an R&D engineer (2014) and a marketing director (2014). This allows disseminating the principles of sustainable development in the different strategic positions of the company: economic sustainability, innovation, and external communication.

Initiated practices

From 2012, the company consolidates its sustainable development policy by multiplying complementary actions:

Governance:

- Formalisation of a CSR Charter;
- Implementation of an energy management according to ISO 50 001;
- Enrichment of security actions in order to improve the health and wellbeing of employees at work.

Process:

- Launch of an optimization program regarding the consumption of raw materials and waste reduction;
- Test of new technologies such as rapid prototyping 3D printing.

Products:

- Launch of an eco-design approach for the company's products;
- Product Certification: PEFC for wood products, "French origin" guarantee to put forward a French production.

Recommendations

Nowadays, the success of a sustainable development approach in a firm is deeply rooted in the organisation of the enterprise. The Executive Committee must seize the issue, define a long-term strategy and ensure its support within the operational teams.

Conclusions

"Sustainable development" is a strategic approach for the company. Actions implemented since 2012, particularly in relation with external stakeholders, are still too recent to be assessed. They will help to strengthen the commitments of the company regarding customer satisfaction, supplier relations, innovation and respect of the environment. The establishment of a sustainable development scoreboard will enable the firm to objectively measure the progress made in this area.

More information

www.coulidoor.fr | www.ambiance-dressing.fr | www.coulisoft.fr

Keywords: Sustainable development, Eco-design, Health and safety, Energy, Waste

Formabilio (Italy)



"We have lived in Milan for the last 10 years and both of us are over 30 years old. We felt the need to make use of years of studies, work and skills acquired to create something in line with the values we believe in.

We are a business venture that is ethical, able to take but also give, and creates wealth for the community. We have decided to invest in one of the most famous field - also badly hit by the crisis - of the 'Made in Italy': the furniture industry. We have reinterpreted the model, making full use of the crowdsourced creativity, managing enterprises already established in the area in a brand new way. We simply ask each player involved to be themselves: designers create, companies produce, users choose, give their opinion and then buy. This is the project we invested and believe in.

In few words this is Formabilio."

Maria Grazia Andali and Andrea Carbone, Founders of Formabilio

Company's Description

Formabilio is an Italian brand of eco-friendly furniture and home accessories:

- Conceived by designers from all over the world through online contests;
- Chosen by a community of design lovers;
- Manufactured by small companies of the 'Made in Italy' label and;
- Available online on the e-commerce platform it.formabilio.com.

Since January 2013, Formabilio has launched 41 contests for a total of 7600 submitted projects.

Sub-sectors affected

The sub-sectors affected are the following: furniture (2nd transformation) and e-commerce.

Implementation Process

Formabilio's products are the result of online design contests launched once a month on the company's platform and through their social media and other channels. The international furniture design competition is open to designers, creative people and design lovers over 18 years of age. Creative talents from all over the world can submit their ideas.

All the projects are public and can be discussed, evaluated and voted by a wide online Community composed of design enthusiasts, potential buyers and designers themselves. Through a voting mechanism, the online Community selects a top 10 products "powered by people". A Formabilio panel of design experts then selects the winning projects for production and sale.

Initiated practices

Crowdsourcing: Formabilio can be qualified as a crowdsourced brand because its products are conceived by designers from all over the world through online contests.

The project ideas are evaluated by a community of more than 106 000 registered users and those that receive the highest "score" qualify as finalists. An internal commission – made by Formabilio representatives, its manufacturers and design experts - chooses the winner projects to produce.

Made in Italy: Formabilio chooses small Italian manufacturers with craftsmanship production: Top Quality enterprises on which Italian manufacturing structure is based on.



Eco-friendly: Formabilio asks designers to think green, proposing innovative, eco-friendly and recyclable products. They encourage quality functioning products that reduce the impact of the waste generated and promote common policies to reduce the carbon footprint.

Results

"Everybody wins in Formabilio contests!" – So they say: the competing designers – that receive a fee of 7% on all the products sold - the small Italian manufacturers, the knowledgeable customers and the public at large.

Valorisation of the community:

Designers: *“Our crowdsourcing approach makes Formabilio the Design Brand with the highest number of human resources for the research and development of furniture designs”*. So far, the designers of Formabilio's community are 3 000 for a total of more than 7600 submitted projects and 132 winning ideas which will become actual Formabilio-branded products. Even though most of the designers come from Italy, after reaching creatives from all over Europe, the company is now expanding to USA, Mexico, Brazil, Russia, India, Japan, Philippines etc.

Design lovers: There are currently more than 106,000 members in the Formabilio community - mostly from Italy - with a higher concentration in large cities such as Milan, Rome, Turin and Naples. Among the design lovers who vote and buy Formabilio's products, there are many German, Austrian, Dutch, French and English citizens, and 51% of the subscribers are older than 31 years old.

Manufacturing companies: The companies chosen by Formabilio as its partners (16 at the moment) *“tell a unique story of handcraft and hard work”*. Formabilio conserves their know-how, consisting of techniques and skills passed down from generation to generation. *“Our partners work with motivation, humility and pride – the pride of being a part of this process that aims to promote and to increase the values of sustainability and Made in Italy”*.

Recommendations

Not to be afraid of criticism: *“We are prepared to listen and learn how to constantly improve”*. Formabilio encourages the web community to give suggestions, to comment on projects, products and buying system.

Conclusions

Formabilio is a design brand: Crowdsourced, Made in Italy, Eco-friendly.

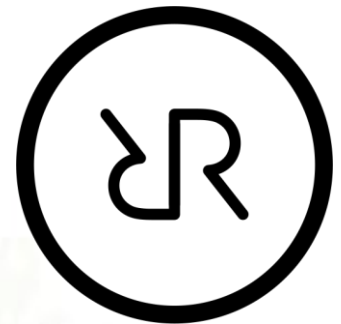
More information

Via Mazzini 4 - Cison di Valmarino - 31030 Treviso - ITALY

media@formabilio.com | it.formabilio.com

Keywords: Processes, Marketing

Reverse (Italy)



Company's Description

Born in 2010, Reverse evolved in 2013 from cultural association to a business project keeping a strong connection with the original philosophy and giving it a practical sense: Reverse now creates unique and customized design solutions built through low environmental impact techniques and using recycled materials.

This approach is very time-intensive as it involves a significant part of artisanal work.

Reverse intercepts part of the production waste material of local companies, in order to give a new perspective to these goods that are ready to be disposed.

Reverse starts from products that are not used any longer; there is a lot of thinking about a circular dimension of reuse as waste material becomes the beginning of the production chain.

Reverse produces accessories, furniture elements, and common tools and organizes temporary exhibitions. It gives raw material a much higher value, working in strong connection with the local actors, creating a dynamic that is close to art and handcraft.

Reverse is managed by a young team (average age of 31!) of three partners with different backgrounds who can cover the following areas: management, design and production are handled with internally.

Sub-sectors affected

The sub-sector affected is the following: furniture (2nd transformation).

Implementation Process

Reverse aims to combine the company's profitability with the effectiveness of social benefits so as to have a positive impact on the community. For this reason, they try to involve local stakeholders such as municipalities, enterprises, schools and the local University.

Initiated practices

In order to spread and promote sustainability in its widest sense, Reverse organizes workshops for children and adults with the aim to stimulate a critical approach on consumption as well as to increase their ability to judge a product for its fabric and production quality.

Reverse is also managing a co-working space in Verona called “Canarin” where over 10 different projects are implemented, all of them sharing common interests such as the respect of the environment, sustainability in general and creativity: Reverse is a place for experimentation that stimulates collaboration. Besides, Reverse has its own laboratory to follow all phases of the process: from recovering the waste material to the production of new product, through designing.



Results

Through its work, Reverse tries to implement a relational economic model with the goal to create a shared value in order to increase the well-being of the community of the area.

Recommendations

“The workshops are the beating heart of the project: for cultural and educational aims”, Reverse organizes and coordinates workshops open also to non-experts, so that everyone can recycle and re-use waste products and become active recycling enthusiasts. This way and in just few hours all participants can make their own lamps, chairs and other objects. Miss Federica Collato, co-founder of Reverse, declares: *“Reverse’s project is person-oriented and focuses on everyone’s capacity to choose how to live, eat, and use tools and products. We believe that quality of life can substantially increase by taking care of one’s daily routine”*.

Conclusions

Involvement of local community:

- Workshops for children and adults;
- Involvement all the territory stakeholders;

- Unique and customized design solutions, built through low environmental impact techniques & using recycled materials.

More information

Via Giolfino 4 - 37133 Verona – ITALY

www.reverselab.it | info@reverselab.it

Keywords: Cascade use of wood, Recycling

Valcucine (Italy)



Company's Description

Valcucine was founded in 1980. It all started with the desire to produce in an eco-compatible way. The ethics of responsibility towards the environment are guidelines in the choices of the company and make them a best practice as their website states "*Man should not make marks in the sand that cannot be cancelled by the wind*".

Valcucine works for eco-sustainability by investing in four aspects:

- Recycling – designing kitchen cabinets that are 100% recyclable;
- Reduction – in the use of materials and with zero emissions of formaldehyde, that guarantee a long technical and aesthetic life. Valcucine also uses wood that does not come from the destruction of primary forests;
- Collecting and reutilizing – guarantees the collection and disposal of some kitchen lines at the end of their lifecycle;
- Endless guarantee – kitchens are designed to be dismantled and reconditioned so they can be used to make other products in the future.

Sub-sectors affected

The sub-sector affected is the following: furniture (2nd transformation).

Implementation Process

In Valcucine the principles of environmental sustainability are the core values of the company. Since its beginning the company invested in eco-sustainable processes and natural materials. With the slogan "*we have a dream, a world without waste!*" their continuous research allowed them to propose the first "sustainable" kitchens starting from 1988. Going far beyond only sustainable products, their projects also aimed at communicating these values to their workers, clients and a larger population.

Initiated practices

Among the different practices initiated by the company, we can highlight the following:

- Continuous improvement of their products which became more and more sustainable through the principles explained above ;
- Promotion and financing of BIOFOREST, the association for the regeneration of natural environments, which implemented two large projects for the reforestation and protection of the biodiversity in Ecuador and in Italy called "Operazione Otonga" and "Progetto Vinchiaruzzo". It has also created the "Progetto Occhione", an environmental education idea for middle schools in the province of Pordenone that includes the construction of a naturalistic laboratory and of a nursery of native species that are subsequently planted in flat lands that are made available by BIOFOREST ;
- Opening in 2010 of an Eco Bookstore in their Milan Showroom to raise awareness on sustainability. The bookstore promotes events and books on the topics: sustainability, bio-architecture, eco-design, ethics and other books/magazines related to social and environmental sustainability.



Results

Putting the concepts of environmental and social sustainability at the heart of the company's values had a positive impact on the following aspects:

- Getting visibility and being recognized as a "green" company;
- Putting the concept of sustainability at the heart of the innovation process allowed developing unique and functional products with a competitive advantage;
- Building a corporate culture based on ethics and a safe environment which would increase the satisfaction of the workers;
- Delivering functional and aesthetic kitchens which are collected, recycled and partly re-used;
- Continuously improving the company's products thanks to sustainability driven innovation.

Recommendations

Putting the values of sustainability at the heart of the company.

Conclusions

Valcucine is an example of how a clear and overall strategy of sustainability made a company successful from numerous points of view.

More information

Via L. Savio 11 - 33170 Pordenone - ITALY

www.valcucine.it

Keywords: Recycling

Actiu (Spain)



Company's Description

The company was established in 1968 as a small craftsman shop. Years later, a company specialised in household furniture was created and replaced the former craft shop. With a 45 years experience, the company can offer products that provide wellbeing to the users. The company received the Green Enterprise prize in 2011 which endorses the introduction of good practices in environmental management and the Green Good Design of Chicago prize.

Sub-sectors affected

The sub-sector affected is the following: furniture (2nd transformation).

Implementation Process

The initiative of the technology park arose as a result of the growing awareness on the responsibility to produce sustainable industrial wood; respecting the environment; and integrating innovation, sustainability, territory, industry and architecture.

The company has developed a production process that is sustainable, analysing the life cycle of the product to achieve a responsible consumption of resources and productive efficiency allowing costs stability. This process takes into account:

- ARCHITECTURE considered as a fundamental tool for innovation, so that the innovation, the space and the furniture conjugate in more comfortable and efficient work environments;
- TECHNOLOGY so as to improve the capacity of manufacturing towards growth, productivity and a higher international position. For example the technology has allowed coating all metal products organically, avoiding the emissions of CO₂ into the atmosphere;

- RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT by striving to be a leader in product design able to protect its products with patents for the concept, the design and the specifications;
- PRODUCTION AND LOGISTICS to make sure that the over 90,000 references of the company are adapted to the technical requirements of each project, with a guarantee of efficiency and quality (vehicles of last generation with minimal emission of polluting gases, sustainable packaging, etc.);
- HEALTH AT WORK by developing quality work places which have a decisive influence on the motivation, performance and health of the people.

Initiated practices

Most of the products were designed and produced in accordance with the relevant European regulation and following a strict quality control. It led the company to:

- Adopt the norm IN ISO 14006:2011 on environmental management for the design and development of the product;
- Use wood proceeding from certified forests and quickly renewable species;
- Adopt the Certificate of the Chain of Custody which guarantees that the wood used in the production process comes from a sustainable source;
- Engage in a Global Compact certification;
- Produce record cards on Environmental Product Declaration;
- Analyse the life cycle of the product (material, production, transport, use and recycling).

Results

ACTIU was the first European company in this sector to be certified with the LEED® GOLD certification by the US Green Building Council for its commitment in sustainability and the environmentally responsible construction thanks to its Technological Park, an energy sustainable complex.

The company is an example of sustainability since its processes include:

- Water collection through a rainwater collection system with a storage capacity of 12 000 m³;

- Solar installation that allows a negative carbon emission with an energy production of 7 million Kw/year, 6 times more than required, thanks to the largest industrial solar plant cover in Europe;
- Smart and efficient lighting , optimising the artificial light;
- Replanting thousands of indigenous plant species.

Recommendations

Sustainability begins with the incorporation of energetic efficiency aspects in the industrial process, the improvement of internal environmental quality, an efficient water use, the development of sustainable spaces and a selection of materials.

Conclusions

ACTIU is a solid example that sustainability should not be seen as an expense but as an investment that shortly impacts positively the company's results. LEED is a culture promoting healthy and friendly spaces for the employees. In this way a significant reduction of CO2 emissions, the conservation of waters and waste reduction are being implemented during the production process.

More information

Parque Tecnológico Actiu - Autovía CV. 80 - Salida Onil - Castalla P.O. BOX 11, P.C. 03420, Castalla, Alicante - SPAIN

Tel: 0034 966 560 700

Keywords: Energy, Training, Construction

Micuna (Spain)



Company's Description

MICUNA Group was founded in 1973. Its main activity was the manufacture of wooden cribs. For 30 years, it has been a trendsetter in the baby furniture industry to bring wood cribs to the market while metal cots were dominating. The company became the national market leader and is currently the fourth leading European company in the manufacture of cribs and furniture for children. MICUNA carries on business in order to achieve its mission: the child protection. In line with this mission, MICUNA is founded on several core values: solidarity, fair competition, safety and welfare of workers, respect of the environment, supporting mothers and working women, quality, safety and respect of children's right.

Sub-sectors affected

The sub-sector affected is the following: furniture (2nd transformation).

Costs	55.000,00 €
(and/or investment, return on investment, employment indicator...)	3 insulating closets for aqueous products and 3 application guns

Implementation Process

Phases of the process:

1. Definition of the investment project
2. Realisation of the technical analysis
3. Definition of the economical parameters
4. Providers' selection
5. Essays and adjustments with the chosen provider

6. Plots installation in the plant
7. Testing of water-based products on the surfaces

The most widespread finishes in infant furniture are the white lacquered and varnished wood. The most important point to merchandise those products is to check the non-toxicity of the paint used. With the objective of guaranteeing the safety of its products, the company began to use water-based solvents on wooden surfaces in order to avoid contamination and fulfill the quality standards. It implied some changes in the equipment and the conditioning of the facilities in order to work with new products.

Initiated practices

The company has moved from solvent products to water-based products. Coating for wood products are composed of resins, loads additives, solvents and pigments frequently mixed with mineral elements. When it evaporates, the solvent forms a film or coating. In the case of the aqueous solution, it has a unique solvent, water, which makes the finishes friendlier for the environment and for the user.

The new practice has several advantages:

- A volatile organic content is much simpler and cleaner to use;
- The products do not have any pungent and aggressive smell;
- The use of 'green' paints allow products accessing international markets which require processes and materials with a low environmental impact;
- The use of water-based paints avoids having to licensed firms for the management and treatment of hazardous waste.

Some barriers must be taken into account though:

- The cultural change involved by the passage from solvent products to water-based products requires all the actors of the manufacturing, production and sales processes to know the truth about the new products;
- Doubts remain regarding the drying times of the coatings. The final drying of aqueous systems depends on the evaporation of the liquid, depending on two parameters: temperature and humidity of the environment.

Results

The use of water-based varnishes and lacquers allow reducing up to 90% the emission of solvents with respect to traditional varnishes. It also guarantees that the

company's products meet the safety objectives by using non-toxic paints. The water-based products have a differential cost, which may vary between 20% and 40% depending on the manufacturer. However the medium-term benefits brought by these new coatings make them profitable products for the entrepreneur. In addition, the company is entering into new international markets thanks to this action and has a competitive advantage through the sale of 'green products'.

Recommendations

Thanks to investment in drying technologies, the company achieved a higher productivity as a result of the considerable reduction of drying times. This productivity increase solved another issue linked to the existence of products having shown a technical performance similar to traditional solvents and having led to a decrease in prices.

Conclusions

The adoption of an alternative technology has given the company a great environmental advantage. In addition to complying with the objective of total safety of manufactured furniture, no production costs increases had been noticed. Several benefits can be listed thanks to the use of water-based products:

- A lower CO₂ emission in the atmosphere;
- An improvement of the safety and the quality of the workplace;
- A decrease of fire hazards which means greater safety and a decrease of insurance premiums;
- The possibility to clean the machine with water;
- Significant savings in solvents;
- The absence of smell.

More information

Prolongación Albufera, S/N - 46430 Sollana (Valencia) - SPAIN

Tel: 0034 961 740 946. Email: info@micuna.com

Keywords: Processes, Marketing

2. INNOVATIVE PROPOSALS

Menuiserie Thiebaud (France)



For several years the THIEBAUD carpentry has implemented an eco-design approach in order to meet the growing demand for passive houses.

Type of innovation

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Competitiveness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative | <input type="checkbox"/> Internalization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Technological | <input type="checkbox"/> Time-managment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Productivity | |

Affection by Sector of the innovative solution

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Competitiveness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative | <input type="checkbox"/> Internalization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Technological | <input type="checkbox"/> Time-management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Productivity | |

Company's Description

The THIEBAUD carpentry is a wood or aluminium-wood windows and doors manufacturer. Thanks to its expertise in windows, THIEBAUD grows more and more on the market of passive houses.

Company's Previous status

Wood or aluminium-wood windows and doors manufacturer.

Innovative solutions

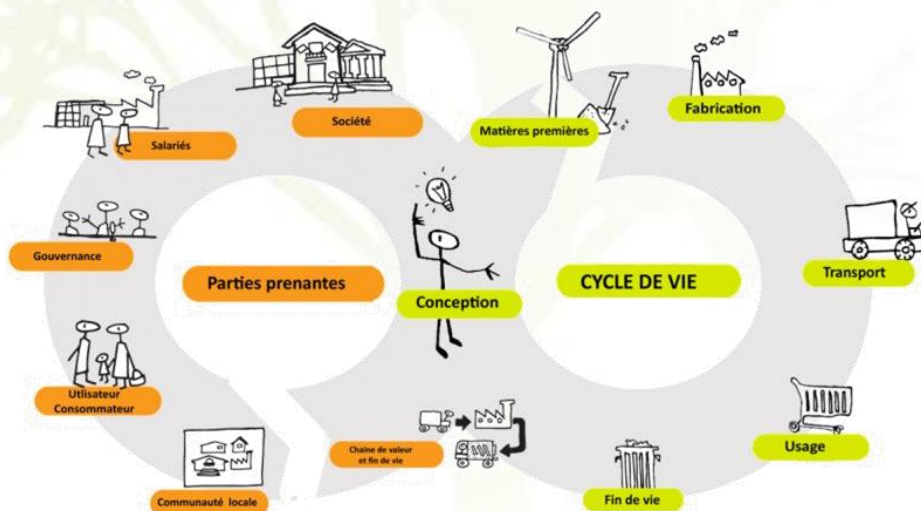
The company has developed and marketed a new type of windows - CAMELEWOOD ® - with reduced environmental impact taking into account the whole life cycle of windows. The CAMELEWOOD is made of FIR wood (from the Jura area), with internal frames as well as ecological outdoor stain frames that are removable and interchangeable. They have an excellent sealing performance and use a unique technology of laminated-screwed.

This is the first French product to be labelled "passive house". Two years after its first launch, it represents 40% of the company's sales.

Way of implementation

This window is the result an eco-design approach that also incorporates the social aspect of sustainable development.

This approach is based on two pillars: the life cycle of the product as well as the integration of stakeholders. It aims to identify the expectations and needs of the various stakeholders in the life cycle of the product: for each stage of the life cycle of the product or service, it is important to identify how the different stakeholders are involved in the process.



Credits: www.eco-conception.fr

Thus, each member of the THIEBAUD carpentry participates in the continuous improvement of the product and production process by freely expressing their ideas.

Outcomes

New markets; new products.

Recommendations

Aim high value added markets - such as passive-house – in order to increase the communication and visibility of the product/company.

Conclusions

Carpentry THIEBAUD has responded to a growing market by producing high quality wooden window. The CAMELEWOOD® window responds not only to the requirements of low-energy consumption building but also to an even stricter standard: the passive house or House without heating.

More information

www.fenêtres-franc-comtoises.com

Keywords: Energy, Recycling

Ikea France (France)



IKEA France recently implemented a furniture recycling service in order to extend the life of its products.

Type of innovation

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Competitiveness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative | <input type="checkbox"/> Internalization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Technological | <input type="checkbox"/> Time-management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Productivity | |

Affection by Sector of the innovative solution

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Competitiveness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative | <input type="checkbox"/> Internalization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Technological | <input type="checkbox"/> Time-management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Productivity | |

Company's Description

Distributor of furniture and home furnishing.

Company's Previous status

Distributor of furniture and home furnishing.

Innovative solutions

IKEA has implemented in the spring of 2013 a new service of part-exchange of IKEA furniture against vouchers: "Give a second life to your furniture".

DONNEZ UNE SECONDE VIE À VOS MEUBLES

Credits: www.ikea.com

This service was set up to promote the re-use of furniture and thereby improve the life expectancy of the IKEA products. The furniture is then resold in 'good find space' IKEA stores.

Way of implementation

The positive assessment of this approach reinforces the will for the brand to further implement its new strategy "People & Planet Positive", which anticipates, for example, the obligations foreseen in the law of Grenelle 2, which sets the target of 45% furniture being recycled.

At first, this initiative was temporary; however, it became perennial since January 1, 2014, in all the brand's stores.

IKEA is also engaged in recycling its waste own operational waste through this same program "People & Planet Positive". In 2013, more than 85% of the waste generated by the activity of IKEA was recycled. By August 2015, all materials used to produce furniture - including packaging- will be made with renewable, recyclable or recycled materials.

Outcomes

New services; Communication, attractiveness; Cost Reduction.

Recommendations

- Rethink the end of life of products to keep customers;
- Think of the end of life of the product from the design phase;

- Reuse end-of-life products to create new products.

Conclusions

This measure “*Give your furniture a second life*” is an example of the sustainable development strategy do place by IKEA and which seems to bear fruit as, in 2014, IKEA has increased more its activity despite the current economic conditions...

More information

http://www.ikea.com/ms/fr_FR/this-is-ikea/people-and-planet/energy-and-resources/index.html

Keywords: Energy, Footprint/blueprint, Recycling, Cost benefits, Marketing

Johnny Grey Studio (United-Kingdom)

JOHNNY GREY STUDIOS

Type of innovation

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Competitiveness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative | <input type="checkbox"/> Internalization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Technological | <input type="checkbox"/> Time-managment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Productivity | |

Affection by Sector of the innovative solution

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Competitiveness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative | <input type="checkbox"/> Internalization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Technological | <input type="checkbox"/> Time-management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Productivity | |

Company's Description

Johnny Grey Studio is a small furniture design company which uses wood as prime material. The design caters for all household needs.

Company's Previous status

A computer-based design company for furniture.

Innovative solutions

Johnny Grey Studio proposes a design kitchen (versus built-in units) to create a sustainable and ergonomic living space with utilisation of wood as prime material.

Way of implementation

Johnny Grey Studio uses wood to customise the design according to clients' living space needs and upscale wood in building habitable and sustainable space.

Outcomes

New design concepts; New use of wooded material; Upscale of wood waste.

Recommendations

Wood is a valued renewable resource to be considered in the design of habitable space; Make use of corners in designing interiors; Diversify to less-used materials in design.

Conclusions

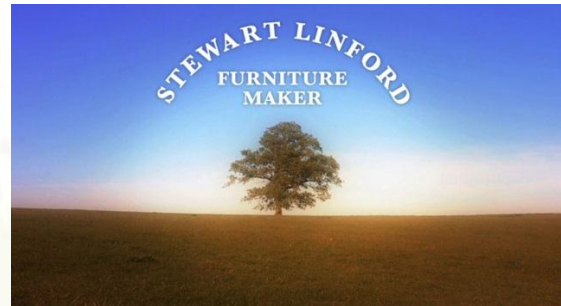
Johnny Grey Studio is at the forefront of wood utilisation in interior design. The company determination to succeed has seen wood now been used extensively all around habitable space and has created a successful design company in difficult economic time when wood as a material was considered to be expensive.

More information

www.johnnygrey.com

Keywords: Cascade use of wood; Footprint/blueprint; Cost benefits; Marketing

Stewart Linford (United-Kingdom)



Type of innovation

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Competitiveness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative | <input type="checkbox"/> Internalization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Technological | <input type="checkbox"/> Time-management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Productivity | |

Affection by Sector of the innovative solution

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Competitiveness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative | <input type="checkbox"/> Internalization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Technological | <input type="checkbox"/> Time-management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Productivity | |

Company's Description

Stewart Linford was established in 1976 as a chair manufacturing company. The business has grown and diversified over the years by building only bespoke furniture elements (such as a personalized motif or piece of carving).

Company's Previous status

Old building, not energy efficient, old technology, cash flow problems.

Innovative solutions

Stewart Linford has relocated to a modern building for purpose of location and diversification of the production. It has also rebranded itself to Luxury in Wood Ltd. and added quality sofas as products.

Way of implementation

Relocate; diversify production and income streams (e.g. living chair museum).

Outcomes

New products; new markets; job saved.

Recommendations

Discuss with bank lender; Identify adequate premises for relocation – e.g. close to a way of transport; Join forces with companies in similar situation, create a cluster.

Conclusions

The Stewart Linford understanding of the changes occurring in the market and the need to update technologically and downsize to fit for purpose location enabled a unique company to survive economic difficulties.

More information

www.stewartlinford.co.uk

Keywords: Cost benefits

Trada BM (United-Kingdom)

BM TRADA

Type of innovation

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Competitiveness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative | <input type="checkbox"/> Internalization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Technological | <input type="checkbox"/> Time-managment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Productivity | |

Affection by Sector of the innovative solution

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Competitiveness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative | <input type="checkbox"/> Internalization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Technological | <input type="checkbox"/> Time-management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Productivity | |

Company's Description

BM TRADA provides independent certification, testing, inspection, training and technical services to the wood-based industries. TRADA BM promotes the use of timber in the UK building industry.

Company's Previous status

Until recently Trada BM delivered its services through a number of individual companies: BM TRADA Certification Ltd, TRADA Technology Ltd, Chiltern International Fire Ltd (including Chiltern Dynamics), FIRA International Ltd (FIL) and a network of international offices. All other companies are now trading under the same name – BM TRADA – and adopt the new visual identity.

Innovative solutions

Consumers first; achieve a robust reputation through one brand; minimise costs.

Way of implementation

Limit financial commitments to minimise cash-flow & balance sheet risk; Help minimise the CO2 emissions of your business, employees & customers; Innovate to maximise the overall “wellbeing” factor for services provided.

Outcomes

BM TRADA has modernised its image and combined its strengths, without damaging its values, employees and the integrity of its services.

Recommendations

Revisit company clients list; Identify decline in repeat business; Revisit company message and brand; Work with stakeholders; Propose workable solutions that do not damage core business.

Conclusions

Companies need from time to time to review their businesses and customers' relation to identify if the individual identities make communications confusing, and that in an already complex business area, clarity and simplicity in communications is rare, but valued. Steps will need to be considered towards a single identity to strengthen company appeal.

More information

www.bmtradagroup.com

Keywords: Training; Marketing

December 2014

Publication coordination:

POUR LA SOLIDARITÉ – PLS
European think & do tank

www.pourlasolidarite.eu